



# VOTING IN MAINE



*Making*  
★ **Your Vote** ★  
*Count*



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®  
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EDUCATION FUND



# Why Vote

## ★ Why vote?

You can help make important changes in the way your town, state and country are governed.

## ★ Is my vote private?

Yes, your vote is private. No one will know how you vote unless you tell them.

## ★ Who can vote?

***You must first register to vote.***

You can **vote** in Maine if you are:

- A citizen of the United States
- A resident of Maine
- Age 18 or older

## ★ When is Election Day?

- Election Day is the Tuesday after the first Monday in November for general elections.
- Election day is always the 2nd Tuesday in June for primary elections. Sometimes general and primary elections are combined with city or town elections.
- City or town elections can happen at other times and are determined by the city or town.

## ★ What will I be voting for?

You may choose candidates or elected officials.

You may answer questions by voting Yes or No:

- Referendum – you choose to pass a law
- Bond – you choose what projects will be funded with loans to the state



# Register to Vote

## ★ How do I register to vote?

***You can register to vote in Maine if you are:***

- An 18-year-old citizen of the United States residing in Maine.
- A 17-year-old citizen who will turn 18 by Election Day. You may then also vote in the June primary.
- Convicted of a crime or in jail. If you are in jail, you register to vote in the town where you lived before going to jail and vote by absentee ballot.
- Homeless.

***You can register to vote in Maine:***

- By mail. Your registration needs to be received by your city or town clerk by the Tuesday three weeks prior to the election.
- In person: At a voter registration drive; Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV); city or town hall; or at your voting place on Election Day.

***You must fill out a voter registration card.***

You **must complete the front and back** of the card:

- Sign and date the card.
- You do not have to join a political party to vote. If you do not want to join a political party, check “Unenrolled” on the registration card.
- For detailed instructions, go to:  
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/voterguide.html>

## ★ What is a political party?

- A political party is a group of people who share similar ideas about how the government should work.
- When you register to vote, you can join a political party if you want. It is free. You can change your party registration.
- Examples of political parties include:  
Democratic, Maine Green Independent, and Republican.



# Before You Vote

## ★ Where do I go to vote?

To find out where you vote:

- Call your city hall or town office.
- Go to [http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter\\_lookup.php](http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter_lookup.php)
- Vote by absentee ballot (more information on page 5).

## ★ What time can I vote?

Voting places open between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. on Election Day. The opening time is not the same for all cities and towns.

***All voting places close at 8:00 p.m.***

Closing times will vary in city or town elections.

## ★ How can I avoid the crowds?

Voting places tend to be less crowded from 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

## ★ What if my name is not on the list at the voting place?

- The election clerk will help you.
- You may need to register to vote.
- You may be sent to a different voting place.
- You may need to vote a challenged ballot.

## ★ Do I need an I.D. (Identification Card)?

You should bring your I.D. and proof of your address (example is driver's license and electric bill) if:

- You are a first-time voter.
- You have moved.
- You need to register to vote on Election Day.

***Don't worry – no eligible voter can be turned away.***



# At My Voting Place

## ★ What will I do at the voting place?

When you get to your voting place, you will need to tell the election clerk your name and address. Your name will be on a list if you are registered to vote.

- The election clerk will give you a ballot or ballots.
- A ballot is the paper on which you mark your votes.
- You will go into a private voting booth and complete your ballot.
- You will put the ballot in the ballot box or a machine.

## ★ What if I need help at the voting place?

Ask an election clerk for help if you have any questions. Election clerks can help you fill out a ballot and give you a new one if you need it. You will not be the only one with questions!

## ★ How do I fill out the ballot?

- Each ballot tells you how to mark your choices.
- If you have a question, ask an election clerk.
- You do not have to vote for everything. Only the parts you vote on will count.
- Check your ballot.
- If you make a mistake, you can ask for a new ballot.

## ★ What if I can't read the ballot?

- You can get help.
- A friend or a relative can help you. Your helper does not have to be a voter or be old enough to vote.
- An election worker can help you with your ballot.
- Your employer or union official cannot help you vote.
- The ExpressVote system will be available if you want to see a large print ballot or hear a ballot read to you.



# Absentee Ballots

## ★ What is absentee voting?

- You don't have to go to your voting place on Election Day to vote.
- Complete an absentee ballot at home and mail it to your city or town clerk.
- Complete an absentee ballot in person at your city or town office.

If you are registered to vote, you can ask for an absentee ballot. You must do so by the Thursday before the election.

## ★ How do I get an absentee ballot?

- Ask for an absentee ballot from your city or town office. Absentee ballots are usually available 30 days before the election.
- Request an absentee ballot online from the Division of Elections at <http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/AbsenteeBallot/index.pl>
- You can also ask for an absentee ballot for an immediate family member. The city hall or town office will tell you who is considered an immediate family member.

## ★ What do I do with my absentee ballot?

- Fill out the ballot. Remember, you don't have to vote on every question. It is okay to leave questions blank.
- Mail or deliver your ballot to your city/town clerk's office by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

## ★ How do I request an absentee ballot after the Thursday before the election?

You must complete a special application for one of these reasons:

- You will be out of town unexpectedly all day on Election Day.
- You have a disability.
- You live on an island and are unable to get to the voting place on Election Day.
- You have an illness and cannot leave home or treatment facility.

**Your city or town clerk must receive your absentee ballot by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.**



# More Information

## ★ How do I find my city or town clerk?

You can find the address and phone number for your city or town clerk at: <http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html>

## ★ You can also contact:

Office of the Secretary of State  
Division of Elections  
101 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0101

Phone: 207-624-7650

Email: [cec.elections@maine.gov](mailto:cec.elections@maine.gov)

Website: <http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/index.html>



## League of Women Voters of Maine Education Fund

The League of Women Voters of Maine Education Fund conducts voter service and citizen education activities. It is a nonpartisan, nonprofit public policy educational organization which:

- Builds citizen participation in the democratic process.
- Studies key community issues at all government levels in an unbiased manner.
- Enables people to seek positive solutions to public policy issues through education and conflict management.

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