

2016 North Carolina Voting FAQs

Who is eligible to register to vote in North Carolina?

To register to vote in NC, you must be: (1) a US citizen by birth or naturalization; (2) at least 18 years old on Election Day; (3) not serving an active felony sentence, including probation or parole; (4) a resident of the county for at least 30 days before the next general election. You must register as a new voter if you move to a new county.

How do I register to vote?

Your completed and signed registration form must be postmarked or delivered to your county Board of Elections by October 14. If you miss the voter registration deadline, you may register and vote at an early vote location October 20 – November 5. You cannot register on Election Day (November 8).

Can teenagers preregister to vote?

A 16 or 17 year old who won't be 18 on Nov. 8 may use the registration form to preregister. They cannot vote but will be placed in the queue to become registered when they reach voting age. They may use the regular registration form by answering "No" to the question about being 18 and providing their date of birth.

Where and when do I vote?

There are three options for voting in North Carolina.

Absentee voting by mail: You must request an absentee ballot using a form from the Board of Elections. A photocopy of the online form may be used. The request form or "application for an absentee ballot" must be **received** at the county Board of Elections by 5 pm on November 1. The ballot must be received at the local Board by 5 PM on Election Day or it must be postmarked by Election Day and arrive in the mail by 5 PM on Nov. 14. (Tip: Mail dropped in a box often does not receive a postmark; when the date is important, take the item inside the post office to be hand postmarked. The ballot can be hand-delivered to an Early Voting location or the county Board of Elections office only by the voter or the voter's near relative. You do not need an "excuse" to vote absentee.

In-person early voting: The Early Voting period is October 20 to November 5. You may vote at any early vote location in **your** county of residence; locations and hours vary by county. If you need to register or update your registration, you can do so at an early vote location in your county.

In-person on Election Day, Nov. 8: Each polling place is open between 6:30 am and 7:30 pm on Election Day. (You must be allowed to vote if you are in line or inside the polling place at the closing time on Election Day or during Early Voting.) Go to your correct polling place on Election Day, but if you cannot you can cast a provisional ballot at any precinct's polling place in your county. Your vote will count for all contests on the ballot at your home precinct (e.g., mayor, US Senate).

Do I need an ID to vote?

Photo ID is not required to vote in North Carolina except in two situations. **One:** New voters in a county may need to show an ID if the address or ID number on their registration form could not be verified; they will need to show (a) any photo ID or (b) one of these with their name and current address: a utility bill, bank statement, payroll stub, or a government document (license, bill, letter, etc.). **Two:** A citizen using same-day registration and voting during the Early Voting period must show one of these with their name and current address: (a) a government photo ID or (b) one of the items in (b) above.

I am a college student. Am I allowed to register and vote using my campus address?

Where you register and vote depends on where you call “home.”

- College Address: You can call your college community your home if you do not have a clear “intent to return” to another place, like your parent’s address, after you graduate.
- Parent/Guardian’s Address: If you clearly intend to return to this address after graduation, then register with it as your home. If you register at a parent’s address, you will either need to vote absentee by mail, vote in your home county during Early Vote, or vote at your home precinct on Election Day.

You may use either address if you have no clear plan about where you will next live. Make a choice. It’s a crime to vote from two addresses.

Can I vote if I was convicted of a crime?

People convicted of a felony in any state may register and vote in NC after serving their sentence, including probation or parole. No document certifying the restoration of citizenship rights is needed, but you must register again. You do not lose your right to vote in NC if you owe restitution or a civil fine, if you are serving a misdemeanor sentence, or if you are charged but not convicted of a crime.

What if I have a problem when I vote?

If you have a problem or question about voting, call the national Election Protection hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683) or NC Hotline 888-OUR-VOTE.

North Carolina Key Election Dates	
First Day Absentee Ballots Mailed	September 9
Voter Registration Regular Deadline	October 14
One-Stop Early Vote w/Same-Day Registration	October 20 – November 5
Deadline for Receipt of Absentee Ballot Request at County Board of Elections	November 1 at 5:00 p.m.
Deadline to Return Absentee Ballot	November 8 at 5:00 pm, or if postmarked on Nov. 8, it must be received by November 14
Election Day	November 8

Key Tips for 2016:

- No straight-party voting. Prepare to vote in every contest.

- You may take a reminder list of your choices inside the poll on paper or a cell phone.
- No photos allowed inside the poll, not even a selfie.
- Fastest time to vote: mid-morning or mid-afternoon on Monday or Tuesday during Early Voting.
Slowest time: last Saturday or end of Election Day.
- Use Early Voting: Many problems can be fixed that would be a hassle or worse on Election Day.
- Focus rides-to-polls efforts on Early Voting: Take all citizens, registered or not, from any precinct.
- Use and share the Election Hotline for questions or problems: 888-OUR-VOTE (888-687-8683)

All of this information is available in more detail at ncvoter.org