

# Voting Rights Guide 2018



DISABILITY  
**RIGHTS**  
MAINE 

This manual is intended to provide a simple yet informative overview of voting rights of individuals with disabilities. This manual is not a substitute for legal advice. If you have specific questions or need assistance with a particular issue, please contact Disability Rights Maine (DRM).

Upon request, this manual is available in alternative formats.

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## **CAN I VOTE?**

**YES! You can always vote. Your disability does not affect your right to vote.**

### **Does the polling place have to be accessible to me?**

Yes, every polling place must be accessible.

All polling places must have:

- Accessible parking spaces;
- At least one accessible entrance that is connected to an accessible entrance route;
- An accessible voting area; and
- An Accessible Voting System.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that polling places be accessible. If your polling place is not accessible to you on Election Day, call Disability Rights Maine at 1.800.452.1948. You can also call the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office at 207.624.7650.

### **Can I have someone help me vote?**

Yes, you may ask a friend or family member to help you vote.

The only people who cannot help you vote are your employer and your union official.

### **If I want to vote without someone helping me, so that my vote is private, can I do so?**

Yes! If you want your vote to remain private, you may use the Accessible Voting System.

If you are interested in learning more about Maine's Accessible Voting System, visit <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/accessiblevoting.html>

## REGISTERING TO VOTE

### Am I eligible to register to vote?

You are eligible to register to vote in Maine if you:

- Are a citizen of the United States;
- Are a resident of Maine and the county where you plan to register;
- Are at least 17 years old at the time you register; and
- Will be at least 18 years old before the next general election.

### Can I find out if I am already registered to vote?

Yes. To find out if you are already registered to vote, you can contact your town or city clerk.

To find the contact information for your town or city clerk, visit this website: <http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/munic.html> and search for your town or city.

### How do I register to vote?

You can choose to register to vote in-person at your town office or city hall, your local Bureau of Motor Vehicles Office, or by mail.

**Registering in-person** - If you are registering in-person, you may show your Maine Driver's License, Maine State ID, or provide your Social Security Number.

**Registering by mail** - If you are registering by mail, you will need one of the following forms of identification:

- A copy of your Maine Driver's License or valid photo ID;
- A utility bill;
- A bank statement;
- A paycheck; or
- A current government document that shows your name and address.

## **Is there a deadline to register to vote?**

It is never too late to register to vote! If you register to vote in person, you may register on Election Day.

If you choose to register by mail, you must register by the close of business 21 days before Election Day. For the November 6, 2018 election, the deadline to register by mail is **Tuesday, October 16, 2018.**

## **WHAT TO EXPECT ON ELECTION DAY**

### **When can I vote on Election Day?**

Most polling places in Maine are open from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. Depending on how many people live in your town, however, your polling place may open as early as 6 a.m. or as late as 10 a.m. Call your town office to check the hours.

### **Where do I go to vote?**

On Election Day, you must go to your polling place to cast your vote. Your polling place depends on where you live.

If you do not know where your polling place is, you may call your town or city clerk to find out.

You can also find your polling place by visiting this website: [http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter\\_looku\\_p.php](http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/voter_looku_p.php)

### **Do I need to bring anything with me when I go vote?**

If you are registered to vote on Election Day, you do not need to bring anything with you to the polling place.

If you are not registered to vote on Election Day, you must bring a form of ID with you to the polling place in order to vote.

Note: If you forget your ID, you can cast a “provisional ballot”. You may be asked to show your ID after the election in order to make sure your vote counts.

### **How do I mark my ballot?**

Each ballot will explain how to mark your choices.

If you have any questions, you may ask for help from an election official.

If you make a mistake, you may fold your ballot, give it to an election official and ask for a new ballot.

### **Does my guardian have to come with me to the voting place to help me vote?**

Under the Help America Vote Act, you have the right to vote by yourself. Your guardian does not need to be with you when you vote.

If you are told that you may not vote alone, contact Disability Rights Maine at 1.800.452.1948. You can also contact the Elections Division of the Secretary of State’s Office at 207.624.7650.

### **Can I bring my service animal with me to the polling place when I vote?**

Under the ADA, individuals with disabilities may bring their service animal with them to the polling place.

A service animal is defined as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks that are directly related to the person’s disability.

## **ABSENTEE VOTING**

### **What is absentee voting and how does it work?**

Absentee voting allows you to cast your ballot without having to travel to your polling place.

You must be a registered voter in order to vote by absentee ballot. Once you are registered, apply for an absentee ballot, fill out the ballot when it arrives in the mail, and mail or deliver the ballot to your town or city clerk.

### **How do I get an absentee ballot?**

You can apply for an absentee ballot online, or by e-mail, mail or by telephone:

**Online:** You can request an absentee ballot online

<https://www1.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/AbsenteeBallot/index.pl>

**By Telephone:** You may call your town or city clerk to request a ballot and they will mail one to you.

**By Mail:** To ask for an absentee ballot by mail, you must fill out an absentee ballot application and mail it to your town or city clerk. You can get an absentee ballot application from your town or city clerk.

### **When can I apply for an absentee ballot and when must it be returned to my town or city clerk?**

You may apply for an absentee ballot as early as three months before Election Day. Absentee ballots must be returned to your town or city clerk by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

For the November 6, 2018 election, absentee ballots will be available beginning October 8, 2018.

Remember: You should ask for an absentee ballot early enough so that you have plenty of time to fill it out and return it to your town office or city hall before Election Day.

### **Do I need to apply for an absentee ballot for each election?**

Yes, you must apply for an absentee ballot for each election in which you want to vote by absentee ballot.

## **Can I vote by absentee ballot in-person somewhere?**

Yes! You can fill out an absentee ballot at your town clerk's office as soon as absentee ballots are available.

## **Is there a deadline to request an absentee ballot?**

For the 2018 General Election, the deadline to request an absentee ballot, including a ballot voted in-person with your town clerk, is **Thursday, November 1, 2018**.

However, there is an exception to this deadline for people who have "special circumstances."

**Special circumstances** include a physical disability, or an incapacity or illness that leaves you unable to leave home or a treatment facility. If you are in one of these 'special circumstances' and miss the absentee ballot deadline, you can fill out a Special Circumstances application and still get an absentee ballot. The application must be signed by the voter. You can get a Special Circumstances application from your town clerk or by calling the Secretary of State's Office at 207.624.7650.

## **Is there another way to receive an absentee ballot?**

You may make a written request for a "third person" (someone other than the voter or the voter's immediate family member) to obtain and hand-deliver an absentee ballot.

You must designate, in a written request or application, the specific third person who will handle and deliver the ballot.

Only this designated third person may handle the absentee ballot.

Ballots cast in this way must be witnessed by either a notary public, a municipal clerk, a clerk of courts, or 2 other witnesses.

## VOTING CHECKLIST

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   |   |
| <p><b>Register to Vote!</b></p> <p>Where is my town clerk?</p> <p>Do I want to register in-person or by mail?</p> <p>Do I have an ID and proof of where I live?</p> |   |
| <p><b>Get Informed!</b></p> <p>Who are the candidates?</p> <p>What issues are important to me?</p> <p>Where can I get more info?</p>                                |   |
| <p><b>Plan Ahead!</b></p> <p>Where is my polling place?</p> <p>Do I need a ride?</p> <p>Do I want to request an absentee ballot?</p>                                |   |
| <p><b>Cast My Vote!</b></p>   | <p><b>My vote, My voice, My choice!</b></p> |

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### Important Dates

**Maine General Election:  
2018**

Deadline to register by mail:

Deadline to request an absentee ballot:  
2018

**November 6,**

October 16, 2018

November 1,

### Important Notes

There is no cut-off date for registering to vote in-person in Maine!

You can register in-person at your town office up and until Election Day.

You can also register to vote at your polling place directly, when you show up to vote.

If you register to vote on Election Day, try your best to bring ID!

### Important Contacts

**Disability Rights  
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