

# Election Day FAQ



## What is a primary election?

A primary election is held when more than one candidate wants a party's nomination and has successfully completed all the steps to get on the ballot. The winner of a primary election runs as that party's nominee in the general election held in November. If only one candidate is seeking a party's nomination, no primary is held for that office.

You can only vote in a primary election held by the party **you** belong to. For example, if you are a registered member of the Working Families Party, you can only vote in the Working Families Party primary, not the Democratic or Republican primary.

## Can I vote in the primary election?

If you are a registered voter who is enrolled (by the deadline) in a party that is holding a primary election, you can vote in the primary. Check with the [BOE](#) if you are not sure you are eligible.

## What is a runoff primary election and can I vote in that?

If no candidate for a citywide office (mayor, public advocate, or comptroller) receives at least 40% of the vote in the primary election, a runoff primary election is held between the two candidates who received the most votes. If you were eligible to vote in a primary, you are also eligible to vote in any runoff primary held by the party you are enrolled in.

## What is a general election and can I vote in that?

In the general election, candidates from different parties compete to win elected office. You can vote for any candidate running on any party line for each office on the ballot. You can also vote "yes" or "no" on ballot proposals. All voters who registered by the deadline are eligible to vote in the general election.

## What is a ballot proposal?

A ballot proposal is a question placed on the ballot for voters to decide. Ballot questions may involve bond issues, or proposed amendments to the New York State Constitution or the New York City Charter. In some cases, an individual or group submits a petition to place a question on the ballot.

## I don't know if I'm registered to vote—how can I find out?

Use the [Voter Registration Look-up](#) (run by the NY State Board of Elections) to check your registration status online, or call the [voter hotline](#) for assistance.

## Could my registration have expired?

Your registration has no expiration date, but it may be moved to inactive if you did not vote in the last two federal elections, or if you moved and did not update your address with the [BOE](#).

### **What if I moved within New York City since the last time I voted?**

When you move, New York State law requires you to change your address with the BOE within 25 days. You do this by submitting a new voter registration form and filling in the information on the form, including information in the box labeled “Voting information that has changed.” Fill in your new and old address, check the box for the party you wish to be enrolled in (do this even if you were enrolled in a party at your old address), and provide any other requested information. If you moved but you didn’t change your address with the BOE before the deadline, you should go to your **new** polling place and vote by affidavit ballot. Call 866-VOTE-NYC to find out whether your change of address has been processed.

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

You should receive a voter card in the mail 2–3 weeks after registering to vote that contains your poll site information. You can also check online by using the Board of Elections [poll site locator](#).

### **What if I can’t get to my polling place on Election Day?**

You can vote by absentee ballot if you are unable to get to your polling place due to absence from the county or New York City on Election Day; temporary or permanent illness or physical disability; hospitalization; duties related to primary care of one or more individuals who are ill or disabled; or detention in a veterans administration hospital, jail, or prison, awaiting trial or action by a grand jury, or in prison for a conviction of a crime or offense that was not a felony.

There are two ways to vote by absentee ballot: by mail or in person.

**To vote absentee by mail**, call **866-VOTE-NYC** to request an absentee ballot application or download it from [the BOE’s website](#). Fill out the application and mail it to your BOE borough office by the deadline. The BOE will send you an absentee ballot. Fill it out and mail it by the deadline to your [BOE borough office](#).

**Absentee voting in person:** Absentee voting in person begins as soon as the ballots are available (at least 32 days before an election) and ends on Election Day. It is conducted at your [BOE borough office](#) Monday–Friday and on the weekend prior to Election Day, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and until 9:00 p.m. on Election Day.

**Please note:** If the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot by mail has passed and you cannot appear at your poll site on Election Day because of an accident or sudden illness, you can send a representative to your BOE borough office with a written letter of authorization to obtain an absentee ballot on your behalf. A completed application and your completed ballot must be returned to your [BOE borough office](#) by 9:00 p.m. on Election Day.

### **I’m not sure who’s running in my district, where can I find out more about candidates?**

NYC Votes mobile web, [www.nycvotes.org](http://www.nycvotes.org)

### **I was convicted of a felony, can I register and vote?**

If you have been convicted of a felony you can register and vote after you complete your sentence and/or parole. If you are awaiting sentencing, are on felony probation, or were convicted of a misdemeanor, you are able to register and vote. If you are unsure about your status please contact your parole/probation officer.

**I am currently homeless, can I register and vote?**

Yes, you have the right to vote. Fill out a voter registration form and write a location where you can be found, such as “Bench on Central Park on 86th Street,” as the address where you live. Write the address of a shelter, a P.O. Box, or family members address as the address where you receive mail. Your voter card will be sent to this address and you will be assigned a poll site according to the address where you live.

**Do I need any identification to vote on Election Day?**

In most cases you will not need an ID to vote. As a first time voter you may be asked for a photo ID to verify you are who you claim to be. A valid ID is any valid photo ID with your name as well as utility bills or bank statements with your name and address.

**I am a registered voter but cannot find my name on the voter rolls in my poll site, can I vote?**

Yes, if your name does not appear in the voter rolls and you are at the correct poll site you may vote by affidavit ballot. You should double check your [voter registration status](#) and [poll site location](#) to verify your information before asking your poll worker for an affidavit ballot. Your ballot will be counted after the Board of Elections verifies your registration.