

# LET ME VOTE

## Know Your Voting Rights

Michigan 2018

**ACLU**

Michigan

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## WHO CAN VOTE?

### Can I vote in Michigan?

You can vote in the:

- August 7 primary election if you are registered to vote by July 9, 2018.
- November 6 general election if you are registered to vote by October 9, 2018.

### Can I register to vote?

You can register to vote if:

- you're a U.S. citizen;
- you're a Michigan resident;
- you'll be at least 18 years old on Election Day; and
- you're not incarcerated after being convicted and sentenced for a misdemeanor or felony.

### What if I'm a student?

You can register to vote at whatever address you regard as your primary legal residence. This can be your school address or your home address – even if you're an out-of-state student at a Michigan school.

If you're an in-state student, Michigan law requires the address on your voter registration card to match the address on your driver's license or personal identification card. The Secretary of State will automatically change your Michigan's driver's license address to match the address entered on your voter registration form and send you a sticker for the back of your license to reflect the new address.

If you later move or decide to designate another address as your primary legal residence, you can do so for free by simply sending in a change-of-address form available at [www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos).

If you are already registered and have a Michigan driver's license or personal identification card, you can change your address online at [www.michigan.gov/expressos](http://www.michigan.gov/expressos).

### **What if I've been convicted of a crime?**

You can vote in Michigan if you are not currently incarcerated and serving a sentence for a misdemeanor or felony conviction. Your right to vote is automatically restored when you are released from incarceration.

You can vote if you are on probation or parole. You can also vote by absentee ballot if you're in jail awaiting trial or arraignment and are not serving a sentence.

### **What if I am homeless?**

You don't need a home to register, but you have to identify a place of residence, which can be a street corner, a park, a shelter, or any other place where you usually stay. You should also provide a mailing address, which can be a local shelter, advocacy organization, outreach center, or anyone else willing to accept mail for you.

## **REGISTRATION**

### **How do I register?**

You can register to vote:

- in person, by filling out a voter registration application at your county, city or township clerk's office or at any Secretary of State branch office;
- by mail, by filling out a mail-in voter registration application and mailing it to your local clerk;
- when you apply for services at any state agencies that provide public assistance (such as Medicaid, WIC, and food stamps) or services to people with disabilities; or
- through a voter registration drive, by filling out a voter

registration application and giving it to a private organization to turn in for you.

If you are registering in Michigan for the first time and plan to vote by mail on an absentee ballot, you should hand deliver your registration form or register in person. First-time Michigan voters who register by mail or through a voter registration drive can't vote by mail unless they are 60 or over, disabled, overseas voters, or request their absentee ballot in person at the clerk's office.

You can get mail-in voter registration forms from any county, city or township clerk's office, most libraries or at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote).

### **When is the registration deadline?**

You can vote in the:

- August 7 primary election if you are registered by July 9, 2018.
- November 8 general election if you are registered by October 9, 2018.

### **What if I miss the deadline?**

You won't be able to vote in that election, but you can register to vote for future elections.

### **What if I moved or changed my name?**

You should update your registration whenever you move. You can update your voter registration by mailing in a change of address form available at [www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos). If you are already registered to vote and you have a Michigan's driver's license or personal identification card, you can update your registration online at [www.michigan.gov/expresssos](http://www.michigan.gov/expresssos).

If you did not update your address after moving within a city or township, you can vote at your old precinct one last time and update your registration at that time. If you

moved to a different city or township within 60 days of the election, you can vote at your old precinct one last time. (On or after June 8 for the primary election and September 7 for the general election.)

If you moved to a different city or township more than 60 days before the election and didn't update your registration, you won't be able to vote in the election.

### **How do I know if I am registered?**

You can check your registration status at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) or by calling your local city or township clerk.

## **VOTING EARLY**

### **Can I vote before Election Day?**

Maybe. You can vote by absentee ballot before Election Day if you are registered to vote and you meet any of the following conditions:

- you're disabled;
- your religion prevents you from voting at the polls;
- you're a pollworker away from your regular polling place;
- you're at least 60 years old;
- you'll be out of your city or township on Election Day; or
- you're in jail awaiting arraignment or trial.

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

You have to submit an application for an absentee ballot either by mail or in person. You can obtain an application at your clerk's office or download one at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote).

If you're a first time Michigan voter who registered to vote by mail or through a voter registration drive, you have to

submit your application in person at the clerk's office unless you're 60 or over, disabled, or an overseas voter.

If you have a last minute emergency that will prevent you from voting at the polls on Election Day, you can request an emergency ballot until 4pm on Election Day. Contact your city or township clerk for more info.

### **When can I apply for an absentee ballot?**

To apply for an absentee ballot, visit your local city or township clerk's office or mail your application to your city or township clerk's office. You can apply beginning 75 days before an election. (May 24 for the August 7 primary election and August 23 for the November 6 general election.)

Your application to have an absentee ballot mailed to you must be received by your city or township clerk by 2pm the Saturday before the election.

Your application to obtain an absentee ballot in person must be received by your city or township clerk by 4pm the Monday before the election.

### **When is the deadline for returning my absentee ballot?**

Your absentee ballot must be received by your clerk's office no later than 8pm on Election Day.

## **VOTING ON ELECTION DAY**

### **When is Election Day?**

The primary election is Tuesday, August 7, 2018.

The general election is Tuesday, November 6, 2018.

### **When are the polls open?**

Polls are open from 7a.m. to 8 p.m. You have the right to vote if you are in line when the polls close.

## **Can I get time off from work to vote?**

Michigan law doesn't require employers to give their employees paid or unpaid time off from work to vote, but your employer might have its own policy allowing you to do so. Ask your employer well before Election Day.

## **Where do I vote?**

On Election Day, you have to vote at your assigned polling place, which is listed on the Voter Identification Card that you receive in the mail after you register. If you don't have your card, you can call your local city or township clerk or look up your polling place online at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote).

## **What if my polling place is not accessible?**

If you find this out before Election Day, call your local clerk right away and ask for an assignment to an alternate site that is accessible. You have the right to an accessible polling place and an accessible voting machine.

On Election Day, you can also send someone into the polling place to request curbside voting on your behalf. Poll workers will bring a ballot outside so you can vote.

You can bring one or more people to assist you. If you're blind, disabled, or unable to read or write you have the right to have anyone you choose assist you as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union.

## **Can I get a ballot in my language?**

If you vote in Colfax Township or in the City of Fennville, you have the right to assistance in Spanish. If you vote in the City of Hamtramck, you have the right to assistance in Bengali. Assistance means you are entitled to a translation of all ballot and other election materials.

If assistance in your native language isn't available where you vote, you have the right to bring an interpreter with you to the polls or to get assistance in your language from



anyone you choose, including a poll worker, as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union.

### **What if I need help in the voting booth?**

If you need help because you are blind, disabled, or unable to read or write, tell a poll worker when you get to your polling place. You have the right to an accessible voting machine.

You also have the right to have anyone you choose assist you in the voting booth, as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union.

If you need instructions on how to use voting equipment in your precinct, ask a poll worker. Poll workers are required to help you any time you ask, even after you've entered a voting booth.

## **PHOTO ID**

### **Does Michigan law require me to show an ID to vote?**

No. Michigan law permits you to vote by either showing a photo ID, or signing an affidavit form stating that you do not have a photo ID with you. The accepted forms of photo ID under Michigan law include a Michigan driver's license or personal ID card, a driver's license from another state, a passport, a federal or military ID with a photo, a student ID with a photo, or a tribal ID with a photo.

### **What if I don't own a photo ID or don't bring it with me to the polls?**

Just ask the poll worker for the affidavit for voters who don't have ID. You have the right to cast a regular ballot without ID if you sign this form.

## **Do I have to show ID if this is my first time voting in Michigan?**

Possibly. If you're a first time voter in Michigan, federal law may require you to show some form of identification, but only if:

- you registered to vote by mail or registration drive without filing in the section of the form asking for your driver's license number, personal ID number, or last 4 digits of your social security number;
- you didn't provide some other form of identification when you registered; and
- you are not disabled, 60 or over, or an overseas voter.

If the first-time-voter ID requirements apply to you, you can show either a photo ID or another accepted document such as a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck stub, government check, or any other government document that shows your name and address.

If you aren't able to show any of these documents, you still have the right to cast a provisional ballot. That ballot won't be counted, however, unless you bring ID to your clerk's office before the close of business on the sixth day after the election. (August 13 for the primary election and November 12 for the general election.) If you have time and have ID at home or work, it's usually better to get your ID and return to the polls to cast a regular ballot.

## **PROBLEMS AT THE POLLS**

### **What if I'm not on the voter list?**

First, ask the poll worker to check the list again and to confirm that you're at the right polling place for your address. If the poll worker doesn't find you on the list, you can show your voter ID card or registration receipt that shows it's your correct precinct and be permitted to vote a regular ballot.

If you are at the right polling place but your name is not on the voter list and you do not have your voter ID card or registration receipt, then ask for a provisional ballot. You have the right to cast a provisional ballot even if your name isn't on the voter list, as long as you are willing to swear that you believe you registered to vote.

### **What if I go to the wrong polling place?**

Go to the right polling place. You can ask a poll worker to help you find the polling place where you are registered. You can also call your city or township clerk or look up your polling place online at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote).

If you can't figure out where you're registered, go to the polling place you think is most likely to be the right one for you and ask for a provisional ballot.

You have the right to cast a provisional ballot even if you are not sure that you are at the right polling place.

### **What if some challenges my right to vote?**

Ask to be sworn in and answer whatever questions are necessary to establish your eligibility. Once you truthfully answer questions that show you're eligible, you have the right to cast a regular ballot.

### **What if someone tries to intimidate or harass me?**

Tell a poll worker right away. If the poll worker is the problem, tell a poll watcher and call your local clerk or an election hotline number listed in this booklet.

### **What if I make a mistake on my ballot or the optical scanner malfunctions?**

If you make a mistake or spoil your ballot, tell a poll worker before you put it in optical scanner. You have the right to a replacement ballot as long as you catch the mistake before you put it in the scanner.

If your ballot is rejected by the scanner, ask for a replace-

ment immediately. By law, you have the right to vote another ballot.

## How do I make a complaint?

First, ask the person in charge of your polling place. He or she can handle most routine complaints that arise on Election Day.

Candidates, political parties, and nonprofit groups may also have poll watchers outside your polling place who might be able to assist you.

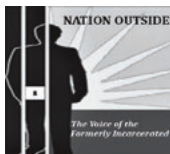
If any of these people ask you who you voted for, or if they cannot resolve your complaint, call your local clerk or call the Michigan Bureau of Elections at 517-373-2540. You can also call one of the election hotline numbers listed in this booklet.

## TIPS TO AVOID PROBLEMS

- **Check your voter registration status** 45 days before the election at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) or by calling your local city or township clerk. Get registered or update your registration 30 days prior to the election, if necessary.
- **Vote before Election Day** using absentee voting, if you are eligible.
- **Make a plan to vote.** Locate your polling place two weeks before the election. Plan how you will get to the polls on Election Day and what time you will go.
- **Review a sample ballot before Election Day** at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote). You can even print it out, mark it ahead of time and bring it with you to the polls.
- **Vote during lunch or after work to avoid the rush.** Remember polls close at 8pm.
- **If you have photo ID, bring it with you to the polls** to make the process go faster. If you have your voter ID

card, registration receipt, or any other official documents that show your eligibility to vote, bring those too.

- **Read all instructions carefully** and ask for help if you need it.
- **Take your time.** The poll workers may impose a reasonable limit on the time you can remain in the voting booth.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Call one of the hotlines below for more information on your voting rights:

**Election Protection Hotline**  
**866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)**

**Michigan Bureau of Elections**  
**517-373-2540**

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
**800-253-3931**

# ACLU

Michigan

**2966 Woodward, Detroit, MI 48201**  
**313.578.6800**  
**[www.aclumich.org](http://www.aclumich.org)**

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is a nationwide, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 1.5 million members dedicated to defending the principles of liberty and equality embodied in the Constitution and our nation's civil rights laws.

The ACLU does not endorse or oppose any candidate or party, but we believe that no civil right is more important in our democracy than the right to vote.

**This booklet is designed to help protect your own right to vote. Keep it handy and take it with you on Election Day.**



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