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*EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER*

**REGIONAL OFFICES:**

**Houston** - 1500 McGowen, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77004  
713-974-7691 (Voice/TDD) 1-800-880-0821 • 713-974-7695 (Fax)

**SAN ANTONIO** - 6800 Park Ten Blvd, #208-N, San Antonio, TX 78213-4202  
210-737-0499 (Voice/TDD) 1-800-880-8401 • 210-737-2403 (Fax)

**Austin** - 7800 Shoal Creek Blvd., Suite 142-S, Austin, TX 78757-1014  
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**Lubbock** - 1001 Main Street, Suite 200, Lubbock, TX 79401-3309  
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**EL PASO** - 300 East Main Drive, Suite 205; El Paso, TX 79901-1357  
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## HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE IN TEXAS

### Who May Register to Vote in Texas?

Any United States citizen residing in Texas who:

- Is at least 18 years old on Election Day;
- Has not been finally convicted of a felony, or if a prior felon, has completed all punishment (including incarceration, parole, supervision, or probation), or has received a pardon; and
- Has not been declared totally mentally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote by a court in a guardianship order.

Note: Some people with guardians can still vote. If you have a guardian and want to know if you can vote, or want to have your right to vote restored, call Advocacy, Inc. at 1-888-796-VOTE (8683).

### How Do I Register to Vote?

**By mail** – Just get a registration form, fill it out, and mail it in. Registration forms look like postcards. They are available in many languages. Request a voter registration application at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/regvr.shtml> or call 1-888-796-VOTE (8683).

**In person** -- Register or receive a form at any of the following places:

- Department of Public Safety offices (where you go to get a driver's license);
- County voter registrar offices (In most counties, the office is part of the county tax assessor-collector's office, but in some counties, it is part of the county clerk or elections administrator's office. You can ask the county courthouse for the office location.);
- Public libraries;
- Any office of Advocacy, Inc. (call 1-800-252-9108 to find the nearest Advocacy office);
- Any office of a state agency that provides public assistance (Department of Transportation, Texas Workforce Commission, Local Workforce Center - One Stop); and/or
- Any office that provides state-funded programs that help people with disabilities (Department of Aging and Disability Services, Department of State Health Services, Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, etc.).

The offices that have the registration forms should also help you complete the forms, unless you refuse assistance. In addition, political parties, advocacy groups, and private citizens can give out application forms. If they do, they must help you register, too, whether or not you agree with their politics or point of view.

## **Do I Have to Have a Photo Identification to Register to Vote?**

No, you do not have to have a driver's license or state identification to register to vote. If you have a driver's license or state identification, you must put the number on the voter registration application. If you do not have a driver's license or state identification, you can instead give the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number. If you don't have a driver's license, state identification, or Social Security Number, just check the box that says that. You may still register to vote, but you will have to show some proof of identification in person when you go to vote or by mail if you are voting by mail.

Acceptable identification includes:

- a driver's license or personal identification card from Texas or any other state. (It does not matter if the card has expired);
- a birth certificate or similar document;
- United States citizenship papers;
- United States passport;
- Mail addressed to you from a governmental entity; or
- Copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows your name and address.

## **What is the Deadline to Register to Vote Before an Election?**

- You must register 30 days before an election to be eligible to vote in that election.
- If you are registering by mail, your application form must be postmarked at least 30 days before the election.

## **What If I Have a Disability and Can't Leave the House?**

- You can either register by mail, or
- If an agency is providing you with services in your home, and if they offer voter registration services, they must provide those voter registration services at your home.

## **What If I Am Staying in a Hospital or Other Institution That Is Not in My Home County?**

If you reside in an institution, or somewhere else that is not in the same county as your permanent address, you can register to vote by mail in the county where your permanent address is. Then you can vote at your current residence with a vote-by-mail ballot. (See handout on Alternative Voting Options.)

## **What If I Need Help Registering?**

Anyone you choose can help you register by reading the registration form to you and helping you fill it out. You can also request assistance submitting your application to the county from deputy voter registrars, staff of voter registration agencies, and your spouse, parent, or child (so long as that family member is a registered voter in the county or is eligible and has applied for voter registration). If someone else is helping you, you should be present when the registration is placed in the mail or taken to the county voter registrar.

## What if I Need Help Signing the Application?

If you cannot sign your name, because you can not read or have a disability, just make your mark in the signature area and have anyone you like to sign their own name to attest to your mark. That person is called a “witness.” The witness must sign their own signature, print their name, and provide their residential address just like a assistant, but should instead circle “witness.” If you cannot make a mark, just have the “witness” print your name in the signature blank, provide their own signature, printed name and address below, and then write anywhere on the application that you “cannot make a mark.”

## Can my Relatives Register Me to Vote?

With your permission, your spouse, parent or child may fill out, sign, and/or send an application for you if that person is a registered voter or has applied for voter registration. This person is known as your "agent." Your agent must also write their relationship to you on the card. Ex. “parent.”

## Is There a Way to Find out If I Am Already Registered to Vote?

You can call the Secretary of States office a1.800.252.8683: This is the same number you would call to request an application by mail or to seek answers to any voting related question. You can also check the Secretary of State website at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/>.

## What Happens After I Register?

- Once you submit a voter registration application, a voter registration certificate (proof of registration) will be mailed to you within 30 days.
- Voter Registration Certificate - Check your certificate to be sure all information is correct. If there is a mistake, make corrections and return it to the voter registrar immediately.
- When you go to the polls to vote, present your certificate as proof of registration. Remember, if you did not present identification when registering to vote as a first-time voter, the poll worker will also ask you to show identification along with your certificate.
- If you do not have your certificate you may vote without it by signing an affidavit at the polling place and showing some other form of identification (driver's license, birth certificate, copy of electric bill).
- If you lose your certificate, notify your county Voter Registrar in writing to receive a new one. You can just use a registration application and choose “request for a replacement card.”
- You will automatically receive a new certificate every two years, if you haven't moved from the address at which you are registered.

## How Do I Make Changes to My Voter Registration Certificate?

If you move within the same county, promptly notify the Voter Registrar, in writing, of your new address by:

- Correcting your current voter registration certificate on the back and returning it to the Voter Registrar;
- Filling out a new voter registration application form and checking the "change" box;
- Making simultaneous changes to your driver's license and voter registration when you apply for or update your driver's license;

- Request changes to your name and/or address on your voter registration card online at: [www.texasonline.state.tx.us/tolapp/sos/SOSACManager](http://www.texasonline.state.tx.us/tolapp/sos/SOSACManager); or
- Contact any of the designated voter registration offices.

You will receive a new certificate with your new address. You will be able to vote in your new precinct 30 days after your change of address is submitted.

## What if I Move to Another County?

- You must re-register! Fill out a new application and mail it, or take it in person, to the Voter Registrar of your new county, or register in any way that is listed above. You will be registered 30 days after your application is submitted. You will receive a new certificate.

## What if I Change my Name?

- Promptly notify the Voter Registrar, in writing, of the change using the same steps as for HOW TO MAKE CHANGES TO A VOTER REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE.
- You will receive a new certificate 30 days after your name change notice is submitted.
- You may continue to vote during this period. If you do not have your certificate in hand, you may sign an affidavit at the polls and present a form of identification.

**If you need assistance in registering to vote, have questions regarding voting, or feel that any of your voting rights have been violated please contact:**

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[www.sos.state.tx.us](http://www.sos.state.tx.us)

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