

Can I take election materials with me into my polling place?

- Yes, as long as they're for your own use. Examples include a sample ballot, a voter guide, or this brochure. If you leave immediately after voting, you can also wear political buttons or clothing in the polling place. But you're not allowed to distribute campaign materials within 50 feet of your polling place.

VOTER ID

Do I have to show ID?

- Rhode Island law requires you to show photo identification in order to vote by regular ballot at the polls. However, if you do not have photo ID and want to vote at the polls, you cannot be turned away, and must instead be given a provisional ballot.

What are the accepted forms of photo ID?

- Accepted forms of photo ID include a current and valid Rhode Island driver's license, Rhode Island voter ID card, state or federal ID card, U.S. passport, U.S. military ID card, student ID card from an institution of higher education located in the United States, or government-issued medical card.

What if I don't have any ID?

- You can cast a provisional ballot. A provisional ballot will not be fed through the voting machine. Instead, you will fill it out and sign it. Once the polls close, the Board of Canvassers will review the ballot. The ballot will be counted if the signature you provided matches the one on your voter registration. When you vote at the polling place, you will be given information explaining how you can find out whether your vote was counted.
- 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.
- You can also obtain a free voter ID through the Secretary of State's office. For information on how to obtain a voter ID card, contact the Secretary of State or visit <http://sos.ri.gov/elections/voterid/>.

PROBLEMS AT THE POLLS

What if I'm not on the voter list?

- Ask a poll worker to check the list again and confirm that you're at the right polling place.
- If you believe you're at the right polling place but your name isn't on the list, ask for a provisional ballot. You have the right to cast a provisional ballot as long as you're willing to swear that you believe you are registered to vote.

What if I go to the wrong polling place?

- Ask a poll worker to help you find the right polling place. You can also call your local Board of Canvassers, or look up your polling place at <http://sos.ri.gov/vic>.
- If nobody can determine where you're registered or you don't have time to go to the correct polling place, you can cast a provisional ballot. However, if you cast your provisional ballot at the wrong polling place, only your votes for federal office will be counted.

What if someone challenges my right to vote?

- Ask for a provisional ballot. You have the right to cast a provisional ballot even if you've been challenged.

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, call your local Board of Canvassers, or call one of the election hotline numbers listed at the end of this brochure. You also have the right to electronically record polling place activities, as long as it is done outside the enclosed voting area and does not hinder the election process.

What if I make a mistake on my ballot or the voting machine malfunctions?

- Tell a poll worker before you cast your vote. You have the right to a replacement ballot if you catch the error before you cast your ballot. If you haven't properly filled out the ballot and the voting machine rejects it, you have the right to a replacement ballot.
- If your voting machine malfunctions, you can request a different machine or a paper ballot.

How do I make a complaint?

- Ask the person in charge at your polling place. Candidates, political parties, and nonprofit groups may also have poll watchers at your polling place. If any of these people can't resolve your complaint, call your local Board of Canvassers, the state Board of Elections, or the Secretary of State.
- You can also call any one of the election hotline numbers listed below.

Rhode Island Secretary of State Elections Division:
(401) 222-2340 or <http://sos.ri.gov/elections/>

ACLU of Rhode Island:
(401) 831-7171

LET ME VOTE

KNOW YOUR VOTING RIGHTS

★ RHODE ISLAND ★

Primary Day is Tuesday, September 13, 2016
Election Day is Tuesday, November 8, 2016

This brochure is designed to help protect your right to vote. Keep it handy, and take it with you to the polls on Election Day.

QUICK TIPS FOR VOTERS

- **Check your voter registration status, update your information and locate your polling place** by calling your local Board of Canvassers or going to <https://vote.sos.ri.gov/>.
- Consider voting early by mail if you are eligible (more details inside). If you plan to vote at the polls, **consider avoiding peak voting hours** (7-9 a.m. and 5-7 p.m.).
- Bring photo identification to the polls. However, **if you do not have photo identification, you cannot be turned away and must be given a provisional ballot.**
- **Take your time and read all instructions carefully.** You have up to 10 minutes in the voting booth to cast your vote.
- **Ask for help** if you need it.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Rhode Island is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 2,000 members dedicated to defending the principles of liberty and equality embodied in the Constitution and our 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.



Information accurate as of August 12, 2016. Subject to change. For updated information, visit www.riaclu.org.

WHO CAN VOTE

Can I vote in Rhode Island?

- To vote in a RI election, you must be registered to vote at least 30 days beforehand. If you are unregistered in a Presidential election year, you can still vote for President and Vice President at your local Board of Canvassers.
- You can vote if you meet all of the following qualifications:
 - (1) You're a U.S. citizen;
 - (2) You'll be at least 18 years old on Election Day;
 - (3) You're a resident of Rhode Island;
 - (4) You're not incarcerated for a felony conviction; and
 - (5) You haven't been legally declared mentally incapable by a court.

What if I'm a student?

- You can register at the address you consider your primary legal residence. This can be your school or home address.

What if I've been convicted of a crime?

- If you were convicted of a misdemeanor you can vote. If you are incarcerated for a misdemeanor you'll have to vote by absentee ballot.
- If you were convicted of a felony, you can vote unless you're currently incarcerated for such an offense. If you're on parole or probation, you can vote at the polls.

What if I'm homeless?

- You don't need a home to register, but you do have to identify a place of residence (which can be a street corner, a shelter, or another place where you usually stay).

What if I've moved or changed my name?

- Update your registration every time you move or change your name.
- If you've moved to a new voting district (precinct) within your city or town on or before the registration deadline and didn't re-register, you can vote at your Board of Canvassers or the polling place for your new address.
- If you moved to a new voting district (precinct) within your city or town after the deadline, you can vote at your Board of Canvassers or the polling place for your old address.
- If you moved to a new city or town within the state between six months and 30 days before the election and didn't re-register, you can only vote at the Board of Canvassers of your old city or town. You will only be allowed to vote in federal and statewide races.
- If you moved to a new city or town within the state after the registration deadline, you can still vote at your old polling place in your old city or town.
- If you moved to Rhode Island from another state and didn't register before the deadline, you cannot vote.

How do I know if I'm registered?

- Check your registration status at <https://vote.sos.ri.gov/> or by calling your local Board of Canvassers.

REGISTRATION

How do I register?

- You can register to vote:
 1. **In person** by filling out a voter registration form at your local Board of Canvassers, located in your city or town hall;
 2. **By mail** by filling out a mail-in voter registration form and mailing it to your local Board of Canvassers or state Board of Elections;
 3. **Online** at <https://vote.sos.ri.gov/>; or
 4. **When you apply for services** at the Division of Motor Vehicles and state agencies that provide public assistance (such as Medicaid, WIC, and food stamps) or services to people with disabilities, and at armed forces recruitment offices. You may also be able to register at many other state and federal offices and agencies.
- You can get mail-in voter registration forms from your local Board of Canvassers, and from most libraries, offices of city and town clerks, colleges and high schools, or by calling (401) 222-2340, or going online at <http://sos.ri.gov/elections/forms>.
- If you're mailing your registration form, it must be postmarked 30 days before the election.

VOTING EARLY

Can I vote before Election Day?

- Probably. You can vote early by mail if for any reason you might not be able to vote at your polling place on Election Day, including if it would be physically difficult for you.

How do I get a mail ballot?

- You can get an application for a mail (absentee) ballot at your local Board of Canvassers or at <http://sos.ri.gov/divisions/elections/voters/vote-by-mail>. If your application is approved, the ballot will be mailed to you.
- Your completed application must be received by your local Board of Canvassers by 4 p.m., 21 days before the election.
- If something happens after the deadline that will prevent you from voting at the polls, you may be eligible for an emergency mail ballot. Contact your local Board of Canvassers for more information.

What's the deadline for returning my mail ballot?

- Your mail ballot must be received by the state Board of Elections by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

VOTING ON ELECTION DAY

When are the polls open?

- Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. (except in New Shoreham, where polls open at 9 a.m.). You have the right to vote if you're in line when the polls close.

Can I get time off from work to vote?

- Maybe. The 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.

Where do I vote?

- You have to vote at your assigned polling place, which is listed on the voter registration card you receive in the mail when you register. Keep in mind that the polling location on that card is subject to change, so it's worth re-checking ahead of time.
- Polling place locations will be published in a local newspaper before the election. You can also call your local Board of Canvassers or look up your polling place at <http://sos.ri.gov/vic>.

What if I have a physical disability and my polling place is not accessible?

- If you find this out before Election Day, call your local Board of Canvassers right away and ask for an alternative method of voting, such as an emergency mail ballot or reassignment to an accessible polling place. You have the right to an accessible polling place and an accessible voting machine.
- On Election Day, you can bring one or more people to assist you. This can be anyone you choose as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union. You will need to fill out an affidavit at the polling place.

Can I get a ballot in my native language?

- If you vote in Providence, Central Falls or Pawtucket, you have the right to assistance in Spanish. A designated poll worker is required to offer this assistance to you. If they don't, tell a poll worker that you want assistance in Spanish. You're also entitled to a translation of all ballots and other election materials.
- You also have the right to bring an interpreter with you to the polls or 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 of a physical disability or because you can't read the ballot, tell a poll worker when you get to your polling place. You can have someone, including the poll worker, assist you in the voting booth.
- If you need language assistance, bring an interpreter with you to the polls.
- If you need instructions on how to use the voting equipment, ask a poll worker. They are required to help you at any time you ask.