



Greetings! So happy to have you here! Did everyone have a chance to sign in?

## Who We Are

- Volunteers
- Goals
  - To inform you about your right to vote
  - To encourage you to vote at every opportunity
  - To motivate you to carry the message forward



Who we are. Volunteers who work elections, register voters and try to educate. We live in this community, believe passionately in the importance of voting and the value of our form of government. We want to share some of this passion with you.

Tell your family! Tell your friends! It's one of the most important things you can do for your community - encourage others to get out and vote. Don't forget to vote yourself!

Why Vote?

Why Vote?



## Why Vote?

- Voting is necessary, easy and it matters!
- Millions Do It Every Year
- Lots of Help Out There
  - To help you prepare
  - To help you at polling place



Who here has voted before? Was it hard? No, of course not.

Sometimes people don't vote because they think it will be hard. But if millions of others can do it, you can too!

There's a lot of help for you out there - for preparation (who's running, what are the issues, where to go to vote, etc). We will give you some specific sources later in this presentation.

At your voting location ("Polling Place") there will be helpful trained people who LIKE to answer your questions! They will tell you everything but who to vote for.

## Why Vote?

We have a Problem!

Though millions vote...

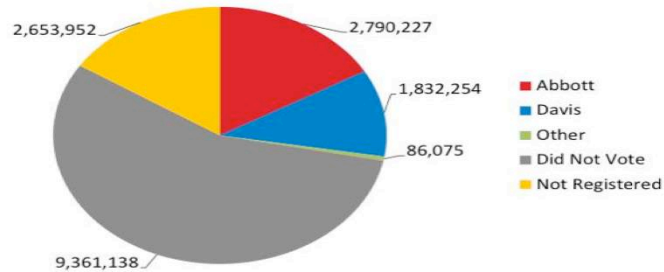
too many do not.



Still, even though it's easy and there's a lot of help out there, many people don't vote. Millions who could be voting do not. It's a national problem but especially it's a Texas problem. Voter turnout among people in Texas who are eligible to vote is often the worst in the nation. Poor turnout is a problem for a lot of reasons. That's why we're here - to help turn it around.

## Why Vote?

How Texans Voted (or Did Not Vote) in 2014



Source: Texas Secretary of State and United States Election Project. Based on 100% of precincts reporting.

Here's a chart that illustrates the problem. This chart represents all the people in Texas who were eligible to vote in 2014. It excludes people who are not eligible – people under 18, not citizens, serving a felony sentence. The red and blue wedges, and the tiny green wedge, are people who voted. What's the biggest wedge on here? The grey wedge. It's people who were eligible to vote, registered to vote, but just didn't show up. The yellow wedge is people who were eligible to vote but were not registered.

Now, 2014 was a very important election. We elected a governor, a senator, the whole state house of representatives and many other very powerful people. Yet the great majority of eligible voters did not participate. What would have been the outcome if even half of these people had voted? We will never know. Maybe it would have been exactly the same or maybe it would have been completely different.

The sad thing is all these people did not exercise their right to have a say in how they will be governed in Texas in the years to come.

What do you think of this?

## Why Vote?

- Elected Officials Make MANY Big Decisions
- Examples:
  - Schools
  - Voting
  - Social Security and Medicare
  - Immigration
  - Minimum Wage
  - Safety
  - Military



Low voter turnout is a problem because elected officials make many of the biggest decisions for our neighborhoods and our country.

Example: Schools. Everything to do with public schools is decided by elected officials - who gets to go, what is taught like vocational courses or college prep, where the schools are. They decide who is qualified to be a teacher and how many students will be in a classroom. Will pre-school be provided or not?

People who care about their future and about the future for their children will care about quality education.

Another example is safety. Safety is a huge item that we usually take for granted. When water comes out of the tap at home, how do you know it's safe to drink? Because government sets drinking water safety standards. When you shop at the grocery store, how do you know the food you buy won't make you sick? Again, it's government food safety standards.

For the sake of our future and the future of our children, we care about safety.

And on and on. Elected officials make huge decisions.

## Why Vote?

Politicians listen to  
people who vote!



When elected officials are making all these big decisions, what criteria do they use? The truth is that politicians do listen to the voters! Sometimes when they make bad decisions that are not for the good of the community it's because they don't know what people want or need. That happens when people aren't talking to them and, especially, aren't voting. Politicians can't read your mind!

Can you think of a law the government has passed that you don't agree with? You may not agree with it but the majority of people who voted did agree with it.

Think of something the government does that you really like. If elected officials passed it, it was because the people who voted for them wanted it.

Does that make sense to you?



## Why Vote?

An elected office is a job like any other job!

Voters make hiring decisions!



Elected officials don't just make pretty speeches and show up for festivals - they actually go to work and do things. So it's serious business when you vote. You are actually making a hiring decision. Think about the job you're hiring these people to do when you vote and treat it seriously.

Vote for the person you think will do the best job based on what that person has done in the past and what that person says about the future.

What do you think an employer should do when an employee does not do a good job? They fire them.

It's the same with your elected officials. If they aren't doing what the people want, then the people should throw them out! Voters have the power to do that.

## Why Vote?

- “We the People” are responsible for ensuring that good people are elected
- If we want our communities to be healthy with opportunity for all, we must participate in the voting process



When elected officials don't make good decisions, whose fault it is? It's ours - we're the ones that hired them!

Here are some examples of how politicians listen to the people who vote. Have you ever wondered why the streets may be better in some parts of town than in others? If you look you will almost always find that the areas with good streets are where voter turnout is high, and the areas with lots of pot holes are where voter turnout is low. The elected officials responsible for maintaining streets are more sensitive to areas where everybody votes and people talk to them.

Another example - senior citizens in this country have great government programs like Social Security and Medicare. That's because seniors as a group are very good voters. Elected officials are very responsive to the needs of senior citizens. Young people on the other hand are typically poor voters, so their voices in government are small.

It's natural for elected officials to be more sensitive to the people who vote. They may not even know that nonvoters have issues, or may assume they don't care.

Remember that – elected officials listen to the people who vote.

It's necessary to have participation all across the community to make sure there's a balance, that one side isn't getting all the attention while another is ignored. Widespread voter participation is very important to keeping all the whole community healthy.

## Why Vote?

“I voted.....but my guy lost!  
Why should I vote again?”



Here's a fact. When you vote, you are not going to always win. Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. Usually, a little more than half the voters win, a little less than half lose. It hurts when you lose.

But the only time you don't matter is when you don't vote at all. For one thing, politicians need to know who is for their policies and who is not. If they know a lot of the people they represent were pulling for the other guy, it will affect their behavior. Maybe they will still vote the same way but if they know a lot of people are on the other side, they may not fight as hard. Does that make sense?

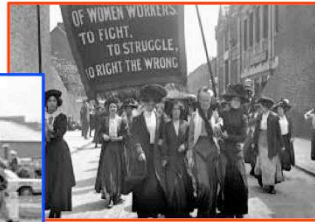
Another thing is loyalty. It's important for our character that we be loyal to the people and issues we believe in. You need to defend your beliefs by being educated, speaking up and voting. In the long run, if you are right, you'll persuade others to see it your way. But if you get apathetic and drop out, that will never happen.

In other words, if you never vote, you will never win.

What do you think about that?

## Why Vote?

- It is the responsible thing to do.
- It is the right thing to do.



Finally, hundreds of thousands of Americans have died to protect our form of government where your vote counts. Millions more have struggled and sacrificed to earn and keep their right to vote – such as women at the turn of the last century and African Americans from the time of the civil war. People in countries that don't have a system like ours with honest and fair voting would give anything to have it. So please don't take it for granted, and don't let those brave people down who have sacrificed so much to build what we have. It's not only your privilege to vote, it's your responsibility.

It's the right thing to do.

## Why Vote?

Questions  
And  
Answers

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# Voter Jeopardy!

## Category: Why Vote?



Answer: Elected officials listen to them.

Question: Who are the voters?



Answer: Decisions about schools, immigration, taxes, streets, police, social security, etc.

Question: What decisions do elected officials make?



Answer: The people ultimately responsible for the decisions made by elected officials.

Question: Who are the voters – and the people who don't vote?

Now we're going to have a game. It's called Jeopardy. You may have seen it on TV. There's a twist to it. Instead of me asking a question and you giving the answer, I'm going to give you the answer and you're supposed to guess the question. Your response will only count if you give it in the form of a question. Ok?

## What Government Does

# What Government Does



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There's not just one government - there are several layers of government each with different responsibilities. We vote for the leaders separately. We're going to go over the main ones and talk about some of their major responsibilities.

## What Government Does: Local (City and School District)

### Headed by Mayor and City Council or School Board

- Public Safety
  - Police
  - Fire
  - Ambulance
- Streets
- Water, Sewer, Garbage
- Parks and Recreation
- Zoning
- Schools



Start with the city and school district – local government. The local government leaders – the ones you get to vote for -- are the Mayor, City Council and School Board members.

Note some of the major responsibilities of the city and school district.

Who knows who is the mayor of your city? Can you name your school board representative? If you don't know, look them up on-line.

*(Note the photo of the building on the slide is Dallas City Hall where the Dallas Mayor and City Council work.)*



## What Government Does: County

### Headed by County Judge and Commissioners Court

- Parkland Hospital
- Sheriff's Office and Jail
- County Roads
- Public Clinics
- Elections



The next level up of government is the County. It covers a larger geographic area than a city or school district. Many county officials are elected. Some of the top ones are the County Judge, County Commissioners, Sheriff, District Attorney, etc.

A County Judge really isn't a judge at all. It's just a title. The County Judge is the elected head of the County Government, comparable to the Mayor of a city. He or she presides over the Commissioner's Court.

And the Commissioners Court isn't a court at all. Again, it's just an anachronistic title. The Commissioners Court is like a City Council. The commissioners make policy decisions for the county government.

Around here we have a both a city and a county with the same name - Dallas. That's unusual. Don't let it confuse you! If some one says "Dallas", do they mean the city or the county? In most places the city and county have different names, for example, Fort Worth is the largest city in Tarrant County.

Note some of the things the County does.

Who can name the County Judge of Dallas County? Can you name any of our other elected county officials? If you don't know, look them up on-line.

*(the photo is of the Old Red Courthouse in Dallas, where County government used to reside. These days it's mostly a museum and the County Government meets in a newer building nearby.)*

## What Government Does: State

Headed by Governor and others, State Legislature (House of Representatives and Senators) and State School Board

- Shares Responsibility with Local & Federal
- School Finance
- School Curriculum
- Medicaid
- Highways



Next up is the state.

Many of our state officials are elected, including the governor, state representatives and senators, lieutenant governor, etc. The House of Representatives and the Senate together make up our state legislature.

The state has many responsibilities, some of which are shared with other governments. School Finance and curriculum responsibilities, for example, are shared between state and local government. Responsibility for Medicaid is shared with the Federal Government, both in terms of who is eligible and who pays.

Who can name our current governor? Who can name their state senator or state representative? If you don't know, look them up on-line.

*(photo is of the State Capital in Austin where the State Legislature meets every two years.)*

## What Government Does: Federal

### Headed by President and Congress (House of Representatives and Senators)

- Social Security
- Medicare
- Medicaid (shared with State)
- Military Matters
- Education (Pell grants, special ed, school lunch & breakfast)
- Regulates banks, credit cards, safety, transportation, environment, etc



Next there is the federal government. Its the largest. Federal elected officials are the President and Congressional Representatives and Senators. The terms “Representative” and “Congressman/Congresswoman” are interchangeable.

Note that the Representatives and Senators have the same titles as our state level legislators but they have completely different responsibilities

In our system of government with its checks and balances – none of these big parts of the federal government – president, house of representatives or senate – can make major decisions on its own. To make major decisions, all three have to agree. If you want the federal government to do something important, you must work to elect a president, US representatives and US senator that agree with you. If any one branch disagrees, it won’t happen. Is that clear?

Note some of the key responsibilities of the federal government.

Can you name the president and vice president? Who can name your US congressman/ congresswoman? Texas has two Senators – can you name them? If you don’t know, look them up on-line.

*(the photo is of the White House in Washington, where the President live and works.)*

## What Government Does: Judicial

- **Many judges are elected**
  - County judges
  - State judges (including Texas Supreme Court)
- **Some judges are appointed**
  - Federal judges (including US Supreme Court)
  - Municipal (city) judges



Finally, there are the judges. Many judges are elected. They do diverse things - criminal, civil, family, appeals, state supreme court, etc. There are a lot of them. In some elections, most of the positions on the ballot will be for judges. There may be dozens of them in a large county like Dallas.

Federal judges including the US Supreme Court and municipal judges are not elected but appointed.

## What Government Does: Relationship to Jobs

- Government Jobs
- Taxes
- What Employers Want
  - Prepared Workforce
  - Safe Communities
  - Quality of Life



These days everybody is thinking about jobs. What does government have to do with jobs? It's a lot - some direct and some indirect.

Government is a big employer. Did you know 4 of the top 15 employers in Dallas County are governments? For example, the Dallas Independent School District employs about 15,000 people.

Taxes, which are set by government, have an influence on jobs. For one thing, if taxes on a business are too high, they will stifle hiring. That's just common sense. Also, taxes can motivate businesses to locate in one place or another. All else being equal, a business would prefer to locate to a place where the taxes it has to pay are low.

Also, government has a lot to do with whether an area is an attractive place for a business to locate. For example, business needs an educated workforce. Some want to hire people with a high school degree, some need a college degree or certain skills. Government has a lot to do with the level of education in the local workforce, and therefore whether a place is an attractive location for a business.

But that's not all. Businesses want a safe community to operate in. Very few are willing to locate to an area with a high crime rate. The crime rate will be a shared responsibility between a neighborhood and the city police department.

Also, many employers want a certain quality appearance in the neighborhood where they operate. It may be important to them that the streets are in good repair, and the sidewalks are not all cracked and the medians mowed.

So you see, the government has to strike a balance where taxes are concerned. Taxes cannot be so high that they discourage business in an area, but they have to be adequate to provide the sort of environment and workforce that a business needs. It's a constant struggle for government to find the right balance.

Can you think of other ways government influences jobs?

What Government Does:

## Taxes and Fees

- Government services are paid for through taxes and fees.
- You decide: more services or less taxes and fees?



All the good things that government does don't come for free. They are paid for with taxes and fees. A lot of the controversies in elections have to do with how much people are willing to pay for government services and who's going to do the paying. For example, some people may want to upgrade the schools and they are willing to pay more taxes to do it, while others think schools are overfunded and want to cut taxes.

This are some of the things to think about when you prepare to vote.

Remember – your side in an election will not always win – but the outcome is very important to you so let your voice be heard by voting.

What Government Does:

## Change is Slow!

- Rome wasn't built in a day!
- Don't get discouraged if things move slowly (*as long as they are moving!*)



ONE FINAL WORD: Most of the big things government does take time. You know the saying "Rome Wasn't Built in a day"? Well, that's true of most government programs. For example, a bond program that people voted for to build schools might take 5 or 10 years or more to complete, but that doesn't make it any less important. Government programs are often big and complicated and take years or even decades to accomplish. Sometimes people are disappointed when the changes they voted for don't happen right away but big things done right take time. When things are rushed is when we see problems. Try to keep this in mind when you are voting.

## What Government Does

Questions  
And  
Answers

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# Voter Jeopardy!

## Category: What Government Does



Answer: It handles fire, streets, water, police, parks, sanitation, zoning, etc.

Question: What does a city do?



Answer: It shares many responsibilities with others, both federal and local.

Question: What does the state of Texas do?



Answer: They run the federal government together.

Question: What do the President plus Congress (House of Representatives and Senate) do?

## Nuts & Bolts of Voting

### The Nuts and Bolts of Voting



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We've talked about why we need to vote and what government does. Now we're going to talk about how.

## Nuts & Bolts of Voting

- **Remember** – You won't win every time you vote but it's still important to try.
- **Remember** – Voting is Necessary... and Easy!
- Millions vote every year
- Lots of help for new voters:
  - To help you prepare to vote
  - Helpful people at the polling place



Just a reminder - voting is easy!

But you do need to prepare before you go.

## Nuts & Bolts of Voting

- Who Gets to Vote
  - 18 years old or older to vote (17 years 10 months to register)
  - US citizen
  - Not serving a felony sentence
  - Not declared mentally incapacitated
- Voter Registration
  - Have to be registered with county



Who knows the requirements to vote in Texas?

1. 17 years 10 months of age
2. A US citizen
3. Not currently serving sentence for a felony (once sentence is served, a person gets their voting rights back)
4. Not declared by the court to be mentally incapacitated

In Texas, you have to register with the county before you vote. If you are a new voter you have to be registered at least 30 days before that election in order to vote.

After you register, within a few weeks you'll get a voter registration card in the mail. You should take it with you when you vote, but if for some reason you don't have it with you, you can still vote. More on this subject in a few minutes.

The good news is, once you are registered, you are registered for good unless you change your name or move. Do not have to re-register every time you vote.



# Nuts & Bolts of Voting

Voter  
Registration  
Card →

VOTER REGISTRAR  
888-887-2646 / 872-647-1999  
28719 REDDAUD BLVD., SUITE 1922  
MCKINNEY, TX 75069  
www.collincountytx.gov

Secretary of State's Office  
Elections Division  
1-800-252-VOTE (8682)

2014 – 2015 Sample

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

VOTER REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE  
(Certificado de Registro de Ciudadano)  
COLLIN COUNTY (condado de Colón)

VIUD (VIUD)	Gender (Sexo)	Mailed from (Votado desde)	CONGRESS (Congreso)	STATE SEN (Sen. Estado)	STATE REP (Rep. Estado)	COM	JP
Year of BIRTH (Año de Nacimiento)	Pass No. (Pas. No.)	Year (Año)	CITY (Ciudad)	CITY DIST (Circunscripción)	ISO (Circunscripción)	ISO DIST (Circunscripción)	BBDE

Name and Permanent Residence Address (Nombre y dirección residencial permanente)

Name and Mailing Address (Nombre y dirección de correo)

Sample

VOTER MUST SIGN PERSONAL NAME AND SIGNATURE AT POLLING PLACE IF ABLE TO DO SO (El votante debe firmar su nombre y dirección residencial permanente al votar, así como su nombre)

Demographic Blog News image - free use with attribution

This is the card you will get in the mail about 30 days after you register. It is good for two years. You will get a new one in the mail automatically every two years. The color changes each time the new cards are issued.

You do not have to present this card to vote in person but it has useful information on it – for example it has your precinct number and what legislative districts you are in.

If you forget to take this card with you when you go to vote, it's ok. You don't have to present it in order to vote.

# Nuts & Bolts of Voting

## Vocabulary lesson:

- **Partisan Election**
  - Candidates run by political party (Republicans, Democrats, etc)
  - Examples: President, Congress, County
- **Primary Election versus General Election**
  - These are **PARTISAN** elections
  - Primaries are run by parties where parties choose their candidates
  - General elections are where candidates from different parties compete against one another
- **Non Partisan (no political party affiliation)**
  - Local (city council, school board)
  - Constitutional amendments, bond elections, etc.
- **Runoffs**



**Partisan elections**-Partisan means an election has to do with a political party - Republicans or Democrats (or a minor party like the Greens or Libertarians). A big election in November of even numbered years is a partisan election. There are only partisan elections in even numbered years (unless there's an unexpected vacancy in an office, in which case there might be a special election at any time.)

A **Primary** is a preliminary partisan election where major political parties (Republicans and Democrats) choose the candidates that will represent them in a big General Election. A Primary is a political party function. Think of it like the playoffs for football games. The winners in a primary go to the super bowl – the **General** election – and compete against each other for the big prize. Primaries usually take place in March in Texas. You have to chose which Party's primary you are going to vote in - you can only vote in one primary. If you vote in the Republican primary there won't be anyone but Republicans on your ballot. If you vote in the Democratic primary there will only be Democrats on your ballot.

The winners of the primary go on to the **General Election** in November where they compete against one another. Just because you vote for one party in a primary that doesn't mean you have to vote for the same party in the General Election in November. You can vote for anyone you want on the ballot in November. You can vote for some Democrats and some Republicans if you want.

**Non Partisan Elections**-This means the election has nothing to do with a political party. When you vote for City or School District officials, you will not be voting by party as they are non-partisan positions. Other examples are state constitutional amendment elections, bond referendums, city charter referendums. Non-partisan elections are often held in May and sometimes at other times of the year.

**A Runoff election**-happens where there are more than two people running for one office and no one get more than half the votes. Then the top two vote getters run against each other in a runoff election. The winner of the runoff is the overall winner. Runoffs are very common after primary and local elections. Stay alert after a primary or a local election in case there is a runoff. You haven't finished with voting until you've also voted in the runoff.

There's an election coming up in \_\_\_\_\_. Who knows what kind of election it will be?

## Nuts & Bolts of Voting

- **Before you go: Do your homework!**
  - Think about how you are going to vote before you go.
  - Print out a sample ballot, mark it up and carry it with you into the voting booth if you need to.
- **Things to know before you go**
  - Where am I going to go
  - When am I going to go
  - What's on my ballot



The last thing you want to do is show up to vote and realize you don't know who to vote for. Preparation is not hard at all if you know where to go for information.



## Nuts & Bolts of Voting

- **Early voting (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!!!)**

- Starts two weeks prior to election day
- Weekend and evening voting times available
- Vote ANYWHERE in your county that's convenient
- Seldom are there long lines

- **Election Day Voting**

- Must vote in your precinct



You have two options for when to vote if you are going to vote in person: Vote early or vote on election day.

We strongly recommend early voting. It runs for about two weeks before election day. The reason we recommend early voting is you won't risk losing your vote if election day comes and you get sick, or if your car breaks down, or you get tied up at work so you miss your chance.

In addition, during early voting you can vote anywhere in the County where there's a polling place so for many it's more convenient. (if you wait until election day, you must vote at your precinct polling place, which will be near where you live). Also, seldom will you have to wait in a line if you vote early. It's more common to have to wait in a line on election day.

During early voting you'll have the option to vote on the weekend and on several evenings.

In Texas, in most counties, voting is electronic for early voting and we use paper ballots for election day voting. There are technical reasons for this. Some counties – Collin, Lubbock and Travis and a few smaller counties – use electronic voting all the way through. I think as time goes on we'll see more and more of the electronic voting on election day.

Some people prefer to vote on election day and if you do, that's fine too. For some, it seems more official to vote on election day, and they want to have maximum time to gather all important information before voting.

## Nuts & Bolts of Voting

- Your Ballot May be Lengthy
  - Look it up in advance so no surprises
  - Don't have to vote on every single contest if not comfortable
- Straight Party Voting
  - Option for partisan general elections



Do your homework and be prepared when you go vote. In a perfect world you'd vote in every single contest on your ballot. But if you honestly don't feel prepared for some of the contests, or can't make up your mind, it's ok to skip them. You do not have to vote on every contest and really, it's best just to vote for the ones you feel prepared to vote on.

If you like - and I do this sometimes - you can go on-line and print out your ballot before you go vote and mark it up for who you intend to vote for. Then you can take that marked up sample ballot with you when you vote to serve as a reminder. There are restrictions at the polling place - you can't talk about candidates out loud and you can't display any campaign literature (t-shirts, political buttons, flyers, etc) but it's perfectly ok to take your personal notes, or even a newspaper clipping, with you into the voting booth to prompt your memory.

You may not, however, use any electronic device like a cell phone or tablet to prompt your memory in a polling place. Any information you use has to be hard copy.

The big partisan election ballots may be particularly lengthy. In the case of a primary election, usually held in March, remember you are voting in a political party election, so everyone on your ballot will be from the same political party - all Democrats or all Republicans. Vote for the candidates in the party of your choice that you feel will be best for the job if they win.

For the other big partisan election, the general election in November, there will be candidates from all the political parties on the ballot. For this election, you have an option to make it simpler, which is called straight party voting, or straight ticket voting. When you vote a straight ticket you just push the button (or shade in the box if you are voting on a paper ballot) for the party of your choice and a vote is automatically recorded for every candidate in that party on the ballot. Don't try to mix and match - in other words, don't both vote straight and also try to vote for individual candidates. Just do one or the other. If you want to vote for some of one party and some of the other, it's best to go down the ballot and vote in each contest separately and not try to vote a straight ticket.

Is this clear? Questions?

# Nuts & Bolts of Voting

## Texas Photo ID



When you vote in person, you'll be required to show a photo ID. The type of photo ID has to be one of these seven:

1. Texas drivers license
2. Texas identification card
3. Texas concealed handgun license
4. US passport
5. US naturalization papers (with photo)
6. US military ID (several forms)
7. Texas Election Certificate

Note that several IDs are NOT allowed for voting:

1. Employer ID
2. Student ID

The name that you use to register to vote should match the name on your photo ID.

If you vote by mail (to qualify you must be 65 years old or older, out of the county during the entire period of an election including early voting, or disabled) instead of in person, you do not have to have a photo ID.

## Nuts & Bolts of Voting

- **Where to find nuts and bolts information**

- Where do I go to vote?
- When is the polling place open?
- Where can I check my registration status?
- Where can I get a sample ballot?

- **Two big sources:**

- Your County Elections Office
- The Texas Secretary of State



Your county elections office – for me it is Dallas County Elections – is the very best source for answers to almost all of the nuts and bolts questions you might have. The larger counties will have most of the information on-line where it's easy to find, and have trained staff who can help on on the phone.

Remember that – during an election, your county elections office may be your best friend!

You can also find much useful information on the Texas Secretary of State website. It may be difficult to find specifics like where your polling place is and you won't be able to find your ballot, but you can check your registration status and update your registration.

So tell me – where do you go to find your polling place? To find your sample ballot? To check your registration status?

## Nuts & Bolts of Voting

### Where Can I Find Out About Candidates & Issues?

- League of Women Voters
  - Voters Guide (hard copy)
  - Vote411.org
  - Candidate Forums
- Newspapers
  - Dallas Morning News Voter Guide
  - Dallas Morning News Editorials
- Google
- Candidate and Party Websites
- For Judges: [Committee for a Qualified Judiciary](#)
- Talk to Trusted Friends and Organizations



This is the most common question of all! There is a huge amount of information available to research elections if you just look for it. Don't rely on just one source. Voting is too important. Check out several sources, then use your judgment.

LWV has very good non-partisan information. Voters Guides are published in hard copy for major elections where you can compare candidates side by side. The on-line guide, Vote411, is available for nearly every election. The LWV also often hosts candidate forums where you can hear the candidates in person.

Newspapers usually have two types of information - non-partisan like the LWV voters guide and editorial, where the newspaper expresses its opinion on the candidates and issues and recommends how it thinks readers should vote. A good newspaper like the Dallas Morning news will also provide good coverage of issues in advance of an election.

Judges in a big county like Dallas can be especially difficult for people like us to evaluate. There may be dozens of judges on a lengthy ballot. Fortunately, in Dallas there is a website that offers professional evaluations of candidates for judge that is well respected. Try the Committee for a Qualified Judiciary. Other counties may offer similar sites.

Finally, do talk to trusted friends and organizations. Keep in mind, of course, that everybody has an opinion and you may not always agree even with your friend, but it is useful to understand the thinking processes of friends and organizations you respect when you are trying to formulate your own opinions.

## The Nuts & Bolts of Voting

Questions  
And  
Answers

?

?

?

?

?

# Voter Jeopardy!

## Category: Nuts & Bolts of Voting



Answer: Vote at a polling place of your choice two weeks before election day, at a convenient time.

Question: What is "Early Voting"?



Answer: Elections where political parties choose their candidates for the General Election.

Question: What is a "Primary Election"?



Answer: A really good source for nuts and bolts information about an election.

Question: What is your county elections department?

## Can I Ask a Favor?

### Be a Warrior for Voting!!!

- Cherish and defend your right to vote!
- Spread the word!
- Talk to family
- Talk to friends
- Talk to strangers
- Get out the vote!



Can I ask you a favor?

Voting is so important! Will you please tell your family, tell your friends! It's one of the best things you can do for your community and your family. Be an informed voter, and help to spread the word!

Do you see Uncle Sam's attitude on this slide? He's pretty serious. He's almost fierce. I think that's the way we should be about voting. It's a very big deal. We need to get serious about it.

If there are any more questions I'll try to help you with them now. Otherwise, thank you so much for your participation!