



## **LWV-VA ULTIMATE FAQs ON VOTING IN VIRGINIA**

(Current for November 5, 2024 General Election)

### **Q.1. What are the steps for voting in Virginia?**

A.1. Virginia has four steps for voting:

1. Register (Q.5-7)
2. Check registration (Q.8)
3. Vote
  - a. Early, in-person or by mail, begins 45 days before Election Day (Q.9-23)
  - b. Election Day, from 6 am to 7 pm (Q.24-28)
4. Watch for results (Q.29)

Details are provided in questions below.

### **Q.2. How can I contact my Local Registrar for more information? Where is my Local Registrar's Office?**

A.2. Your Local Registrar's contact information, including the location of your Local Registrar's Office is [online](#).

### **Q.3. Do many non-citizens attempt to vote, and how are they stopped?**

A.3. No. Only registered voters can obtain a ballot, and only U.S. citizens can register. Prosecution can carry heavy penalties, including deportation.

### **Q.4. What if I get a phone call saying that the date for the election has been changed?**

A.4. Ignore it. Election dates are set by law. If the date of an election is changed by the Governor for an emergency or by court order, you will be officially notified in writing, not by a phone call. Call your [local registrar](#), or check your local registrar's website, to confirm any notice of a change.

## **Registration**

### **Q.5. Am I qualified to register to vote?**

A.5. You must be a U.S. citizen who permanently resides in Virginia and is at least 18 years old on the General Election Day (your 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday cannot be after November 5, 2024). You are not eligible if you are already registered in another state and plan to vote there, or if you are currently “declared mentally incompetent by a court of law”. If convicted of a felony, you must have your right to vote restored by the Governor. You will be permitted to preregister to vote when you turn 16 years old.

### **Q.6. How do I register to vote in Virginia? What if my primary language is not English?**

A.6. Qualified Virginians may obtain a voter registration application:

1. Online, either through the [Citizen Portal](#) or your [Local Registrar’s Office](#) website.
2. In person, at Virginia government offices including the [Local Registrar’s Office](#) or other public locations which may include, depending on your area, a public library (may be located by the front door), the Department of Motor Vehicles (where registration is automatic), or through voter registration drives.
3. You can download an application [online](#) (Spanish, Vietnamese and Korean versions are available).

A completed paper application must be mailed or hand carried to your [Local Registrar’s Office](#). If you use a paper form, you should retain the receipt at the bottom of the form as proof of application. If an application for voter registration is rejected, you will receive a denial letter and a new application form from your [Local Registrar](#). Check for confirmation that you are registered, using the [Citizen Portal](#).

### **Q.6A. Can I register to vote even if I do not have a Virginia Driver’s License?**

A.6A. Yes, but you will have to complete a paper form and mail or deliver to your [Local Registrar](#), as listed in Q.6 above.

### **Q.7. Is there a deadline for registering to vote?**

A.7. Yes, the Regular Registration Deadline, including for the first time or updating an existing registration for address or other changes, for any general and primary election in Virginia is 22 days before Election Day to vote a regular ballot (for the November 5 General Election, the date is October 15). The process for Same Day Voter Registration with a Provisional Ballot is described in Q.7A.

**Q.7A. Can I register to vote on the same day I want to vote in-person, either during Early Voting or on Election Day?**

A.7A. Yes, Same Day Voter Registration (SDVR) begins the day after the Regular Registration Deadline (see Q.7) and ends on Election Day (for the November 5 General Election, SDVR starts October 16 and ends November 5), for in-person Early Voting and Election Day Voting. If you register and vote on the same day under SDVR, you will have to cast a Provisional Ballot. See Q.22A for an explanation of the Provisional Ballot process. You must register and vote at the same location. During Early Voting, you may register and vote at your [Local Registrar's](#) office or at a satellite voting location in the locality (city or county) where you live—not elsewhere in Virginia. On Election Day, you can only register and vote at your precinct polling place; you cannot vote at your local elections office.

**Q.7B. Can I register to vote at the same time I vote by mail during Early Voting?**

Q.7B. No, the Same Day Voter Registration process only applies to in-person voting.

## **Check Registration**

**Q.8. How do I know if my registration was accepted?**

A.8. After you have submitted your registration form, you should receive a voter registration card or other correspondence from your Local Registrar confirming your status within two weeks. If you did not receive this correspondence, you should contact your [Local Registrar](#) to make sure your application was processed. You can also confirm your status with the [Citizen Portal](#). You should confirm your status even if you used the Same Day Voter Registration process, described in Q.7A.

**Q.8A. How does Virginia maintain its voter registration lists? Does the LWV-VA review the list of purged voters; and, if not, is the list by jurisdiction available to the public?**

A.8A. Many voters read about what other states do for voter registration maintenance and assume that Virginia does the same. However, the process in Virginia leaves very few voters without an opportunity to vote, unless they register to vote in another state. There is only one voter registration list in Virginia, and all maintenance is managed at the state level. Currently, the LWV-VA does not have the capability to review purged voter lists for accuracy. However, given the ease that voters have to check their own registration status online, we recommend voters do that now, particularly before the Regular Registration Deadline (see Q.7). General registrars must notify voters by mail if their registration is cancelled, and a new law requires that the cancellation notice be sent by email, if the registrar has the voter's email address.

## **Voting – Early Voting (September 20 – November 2 for November 5 General Election)**

### **Q.9. I have confirmed that I am a registered voter; can I vote early?**

A.9. Yes. You no longer need a special reason to vote early. You may vote in-person or by mail ballot.

### **Q.10. What are my In-Person options for Early Voting? Do I need an ID? Can I vote Curbside?**

A.10. You have many options to vote In-Person during the Early Voting Period; contact your [Local Registrar](#) for hours:

1. In-person at your [Local Registrar's](#) Office for 45 days before Election Day, which includes the Saturday before Election Day (for the November 5 General Election, between September 20 and November 2). Registrars may provide Early Voting on a Sunday before Election Day.
2. In-person at Satellite Locations (optional by jurisdiction; contact your [Local Registrar](#) for locations and when they will open)

You will not be asked to complete an application to vote early In-Person. You will be asked to present one of the same acceptable forms of ID as needed to vote In-Person on Election Day (described in Q.27). As with In-Person voting on Election Day, curbside voting and/or equipment for voters with permanent or temporary disabilities, whether mental or physical, or age 65 plus, or during a declared medical emergency, is available for those who request the service.

### **Q.11. If I want to Vote by Mail, how and when do I obtain my ballot? Can I receive a ballot if I am in jail?**

A.11. You MUST REQUEST a Vote by Mail ballot be mailed to you before the deadline (for the November 5 General Election, 5 pm, October 25). There are many ways to apply for a ballot; you must complete the application carefully and include all required information, including your correct, registered address (you can request that your ballot be sent to a temporary address):

1. Online: Use the [Citizen Portal](#), if you have a Driver's License or other ID from the Department of Motor Vehicles.
2. Paper Application: complete and return to [Local Registrar](#)
  - a Obtain application from [Citizen Portal](#), [Local Registrar](#), or public library
  - b Deliver the application to your [Local Registrar's Office](#) before the deadline: by hand, FAX or mail.

Registrars mail the ballots to those voters whose applications are accepted. If your application for an absentee ballot is rejected, you will receive a denial letter and a new application from your Local Registrar. New for the November 5 General Election, jail officials are required to give registered voters in jail the ability to obtain and submit absentee ballots.

**Q.12. Can I ask that I receive Vote by Mail ballots for every future election?**

A.12. Yes, you can request to be placed on a Permanent Absentee List, which means you will automatically receive a ballot in the mail every election year. You will need to make sure you keep your address updated, as needed. Use the [Citizen Portal](#), to check your address.

**Q.13. Can I Vote by Mail if this is my first election after registering or changing my registration by mail?**

A.13. Yes. However, for Elections involving Federal Offices (Congressional or Presidential, including the November 5 General Election), you will need to include a copy of a [qualified ID](#) with your completed ballot, as explained in your ballot instructions (this applies for the November 5 General Election).

**Q.14. What do I receive from my Local Registrar in my Vote by Mail ballot package?**

A.14. You will receive:

- Your ballot in an envelope that has an IMB (barcode) on it (keep the envelope for tracking purposes)
- Envelope A, containing the ballot
- Envelope B, in which the voter must place the completed (i.e., voted) ballot.  
Note: some jurisdictions do not provide this extra envelope.
- Outer return envelope, and
- Instructions (follow carefully)

The information on Envelope B (or the outer return envelope, if no Envelope B is provided) is part of the security system used by your Local Registrar, who will check-in your ballot when received, using that barcode and making sure you have signed the envelope and provided other required identification information. This prevents someone from voting twice by claiming their Vote by Mail ballot was lost, destroyed or misplaced, and requesting a replacement ballot. Your signature and identification information on the envelope is your attestation that this is your ballot. That signature will not be matched to your registration or DMV signature.

**Q.15. How do I deliver my Vote by Mail ballot to my Local Registrar?**

A.15. You have four options for delivering your Vote by Mail ballot; but, in all cases, you prepare your ballot and use the envelopes exactly the same:

1. By USPS mailbox or Post Office (must be postmarked on or before Election Day). While the law allows you to mail your ballot as late as on Election Day, you are strongly urged to mail your ballot at least two weeks before the Election, because the ballot must arrive at your Local Registrar's Office by noon the Friday after Election Day (for the November 5 General Election, on November 8).
2. Hand carry to your [Local Registrar](#) on or before Election Day (some will provide curbside service upon request).
3. By commercial delivery service (such as FedEx or UPS), delivered to your Local Registrar on or before the polls close at 7 pm on Election Day.
4. By delivery to a Drop Box (at Satellite locations and Local Registrar's Office before Election Day; at polling locations on Election Day; satellite locations during the Early Voting period at the option of your Local Registrar; check your ballot instructions for details).

**Q.16. Am I required to put a stamp on my Vote by Mail outer envelope?**

A.16. No. Virginia localities are required to pay for the postage for USPS mail service.

**Q.17. Do I need someone to witness and sign my Vote by Mail ballot envelope?**

A.17. No. Witness signatures are no longer required.

**Q.18. How do I know if my Vote by Mail ballot has been accepted and processed? What if I made a mistake?**

A.18. Pay close attention to the instructions you receive with your Vote by Mail ballot, so your vote can be counted. Virginia offers electronic bar code ballot tracking services, so you can check the status of your Vote by Mail ballot. Use the [Citizen Portal](#) to see dates for your ballot's processing stages. If you have questions regarding the status of your ballot, contact your [Local Registrar](#). If your ballot is misdelivered or you made a mistake completing your ballot, and you notify your Local Registrar (or go to your Local Registrar's office or Satellite location to vote in-person), indicating that you did not receive your ballot, you can be issued a replacement ballot, and your original ballot will be voided.

Virginia offers voters a chance to correct missing information on their Vote by Mail ballot, if the voter's ballot is received by their Local Registrar on or before the Friday before the election (November 1 for the November 5 General Election). Your Local Registrar will contact you, and give you an opportunity to correct the mistake, up to noon on the Friday after the election (for the November 5 General Election, on November 8).

**Q.19. What do I do if I made a mistake when I marked my ballot? Can I get a new ballot? Cross out my mistake?**

A.19. Contact your [Local Register](#) as soon as possible if you make a mistake on your Vote by Mail ballot; you cannot cross out your mistake. You must obtain a new ballot from your Local Registrar or vote in-person.

**Q.20. I live outside the US. How can I obtain a Vote by Mail ballot?**

A.20. If you live outside the US, you can use the [Citizen Portal](#) to complete a Vote by Mail application, or you can obtain the application [online](#). Start the process early, because it will take time for your ballot to reach you by mail and for your ballot to return to your registrar in the mail. Voters who are overseas or stationed outside the state while in the U.S. military and who have not received a state ballot in time may fill out a [Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot](#) and either email a scanned copy to [info@elections.virginia.gov](mailto:info@elections.virginia.gov) or fax it to 804-371-0194.



**Q.20A. I am print disabled, can I receive my Vote by Mail ballot electronically? What other accommodations are available to voters like me?**

A.20A. If you are print disabled and have access to an electronic ballot-marking tool with screen reader assistive technology (such as, on your computer), you may request that you receive your absentee ballot electronically, so that you can use this tool. If you choose this option for voting absentee, your ballot will be delivered by email. Virginia's Department of Elections has more [details](#) on this process and other rules to assist voters with disabilities.

**Q.21. Can I trust the USPS mail system? Did Virginia receive a letter from the Postmaster General in 2020, expressing concern about mailing ballots in the Commonwealth?**

A.21. While the Postal Service has coordinated trustworthy vote-by-mail programs for years, including Virginia's absentee voting system, there was a concern in 2020 that a large number of voters could cast a ballot this way in the November election. In 2020, the Postal Service warned Virginia that the state had mailing deadlines that could leave voters disenfranchised, but those deadlines were changed to ensure that all voters can vote. Additionally, Virginia's Department of Elections and your Local Registrar work with the US Post Office to make deliveries efficient and to ensure that postal workers can identify and prioritize election mail. However, the USPS may change its delivery processes for an area, so we advise applying for your Vote by Mail ballot as soon as possible and mailing your ballot back not later than two weeks before Election Day if possible (October 22 for the November 5 General Election).

Additionally, you can vote your Vote by Mail ballot using a Drop Box provided by your [Local Registrar](#) (see Q.15)

**Q.22. Can I vote In-Person if I requested a Vote by Mail ballot?**

A.22. Yes. On Election Day, you can bring your Vote by Mail ballot to your polling location (during Early Voting, you can go to your Local Registrar's Office or to any Satellite location available in your locality). That ballot will be voided, and you can vote In-Person. If you do not bring your Vote by Mail ballot to your polling place on Election Day, you will need to vote a Provisional Ballot, as described in Q.22A, to ensure your Vote by Mail ballot was not voted (during Early Voting, you can sign a form certifying that you will not vote your Vote by Mail ballot and vote a regular ballot).

Additionally, you can drop off your completed Vote by Mail ballot to a Drop Box at your polling location, without having to vote In-Person.

**Q.22A. What is a Provisional Ballot? How do I find out if my Provisional Ballot is counted?**

A.22A. A Provisional Ballot is the same as a regular ballot, except that it is not counted (scanned) at the polling location and is reviewed later by your local Electoral Board. The polling location officer will ask you to insert your ballot into a special envelope, which you will sign, and the ballot will be processed after the election by your local Electoral Board. The Electoral Board will be provided details relating to your ballot (such as evidence showing that you haven't previously voted). If the local Electoral Board approves your Provisional Ballot, it will be counted by your Local Registrar the same as a regular ballot. Virginia's Department of Elections has more [details](#).

**Q.23. What if an emergency forces me to miss the application or voting deadlines for Early Voting? What is Emergency Voting?**

A.23. You can request an emergency absentee ballot if you were unable to meet the application deadline for a Vote by Mail ballot, or miss the Early In-Person voting period, because of hospitalization or illness involving you or a member of your family or another emergency that justifies receiving such a ballot. If you need an emergency ballot, you must request it from your [Local Registrar](#) by 2 p.m. on the Monday before Election Day (November 4, for the November 5 General Election). You can get an application from that office or by downloading a [copy](#) from the state Elections Department website. If approved, your Local Registrar will provide the ballot to your designated representative so it can be delivered to you. That ballot must be returned to your [Local Registrar](#) before polls close at 7 p.m. on Election Day. That ballot cannot be returned to the voter's local precinct polling location.

**Voting – Election Day**

**Q.24. In previous elections, some states cut the number of polling stations and used larger voting centers to reduce the possibility of coronavirus infections. Is Virginia?**

A.24. No. As of now, under Virginia law, every precinct in the state must have a polling station operating on Election Day. Some precinct stations can be consolidated, provided special approval is given by local governments and the Department of Elections.

**Q.25. When are polls open on Election Day?**

A.25. Polls open at 6 a.m. and close at 7 p.m. If you are in line by 7 p.m., you will be allowed to vote. You can check the [Citizen Portal](#) or with your [Local Registrar](#) to make sure you arrive at the correct polling location. As a reminder, on Election Day, you can vote a regular ballot only at the one precinct to which you are assigned. If you try to vote at another precinct, you will be required to vote a Provisional Ballot, which the local Electoral Board will review and will likely reject after the election. Learn more about Provisional Ballots under Q.22A.



**Q.26. Will my polling location be safe? Can I use Curbside voting?**

A.26. Yes, your Local Registrar will follow Department of Elections guidelines for making sure your polling location is safe from medical, harassment or other threats. Requirements will be adjusted if Virginia reinstates a medical emergency. (Election officers cannot deny a ballot to someone who is not wearing a mask.) Curbside voting and/or equipment for voters with permanent or temporary disabilities, whether mental or physical, or age 65 plus, or during a declared medical emergency, is available for those who request the service.

**Q.27. Do I need a photo ID to vote in-person? If I use a driver's license, can it be expired? If I use a student ID, does the school have to be in Virginia?**

A.27. Virginia passed a law in 2020 that eliminated the requirement that voters show a photo ID to vote. However, voters still need to show a [qualified ID](#), including:

- Virginia DMV-issued Driver's License or Identification Card (even if expired)
- Valid United States Passport
- U.S. Military ID
- Any ID card issued by the U.S., Virginia, or a local Virginia government
- Any valid photo student ID card issued by a U.S. university or community college (includes official digital option)
- Valid student ID issued by a public school or private school, or institution of higher education, in Virginia (includes official digital option)
- Valid tribal ID, from Virginia recognized tribe
- Voter ID card issued by the Department of Elections
- Employer-issued photo ID card
- Government nursing home resident ID
- Any other current government document containing the name and address of the voter
- Any current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document with your name and address (may be digital)

If you do not have a qualified ID, you can sign an ID Confirmation Statement to confirm who you are (under penalties for perjury). Or, you can vote by Provisional Ballot, which means you have to provide a qualified ID or signed ID Confirmation Statement to your Local Registrar by noon the Friday after the election. You will receive detailed instructions on how to provide that information when you complete your Provisional Ballot. See Q.22A for more information on Provisional Ballots.

**Q.28. How do I volunteer at a polling station?**

A.28. Most Local Registrars are eager to sign up polling station volunteers and election officers. You can do so through your [Local Registrar's office](#). To be an election officer, you must be a registered voter in Virginia who does not hold an elected office or work for an elected official. A registered Virginia voter can work at any polling place in Virginia. You should be available between 5 am and 9 pm, and you will receive compensation.

## **Election Results**

### **Q.29. When can I expect to receive results of an election?**

A.29. Election results must be certified to be final. The Virginia Department of Elections publishes [unofficial results](#) for all Virginia elections on its website on the night of the election. Local results are normally certified on the Friday after the election or on the following Monday. Election officials have to count all the ballots, including mail ballots that can be received up to noon on the Friday after Election Day (November 8, for the November 5 General Election), and any Provisional Ballots that are accepted. This means final election results in Virginia cannot be available until after then. Additionally, some jurisdictions may have routine audits that could delay certification. Early Voting results (both in-person and Vote by Mail ballots) have to be reported by precinct. Voter patience will help support accurate results.

**Still have questions? Please email them to [voterservices@lww-va.org](mailto:voterservices@lww-va.org)  
Questions on Election Day? Call 866-OurVote**