

## Arc Guide to Voting

Voting is how Americans choose elected officials. Sometimes we also vote to decide issues. Eligibility to vote has been a legal and political issue throughout American history.

People with disabilities have not always had voting rights. We must work to keep the right to vote.

### Why bother to vote?

Elections have consequences. People we elect have the power to make laws that affect our day to day life. If you do not vote, you are leaving decisions about issues important to you in the hands of others.

### Eligibility to vote in Minnesota

Citizens who meet all of the following:

- 18 or older
- Residents of Minnesota for at least 20 days
- No legal restrictions that stop you from voting due to a felony. Restrictions include currently serving a felony conviction sentence, probation, parole or supervised release.

### Are people with disabilities aloud to vote?

- People with disabilities have the right to vote like any other citizen.
- People under guardianship have the right to vote unless restricted in their guardianship papers.

### Registration

- You can register to vote as early as age 17 as long as you will be 18 by the time of the next election.
- You need to register again if you change your name or have moved since the last election.
- You need to register again if you did not vote in the last 4 years.

[Check the status](#) of your voter registration.

There are several ways to register to vote in Minnesota:

- Driver's License or Minnesota ID Renewal
  - Check a box on your renewal form and be automatically registered.
- [Register online](#)
  - Provide your address, Minnesota Driver's License or Minnesota ID. If you do not have a driver's license or Minnesota ID, you can use the last four digits of your Social Security number.
- [Register using paper](#)
  - Download a Minnesota Voter Registration Application and complete the information. The application is available in multiple languages.
  - You may see printed registration postcards to mail. However, you must pay the postage yourself.
- Registration online or by paper must be received at least 21 days before the election. It must be received by the Secretary of State's office or county election office. After that, registration must take place at the polls.
- [Register at the polls on Election Day](#)

Pick one of the following ways to provide documentation needed to register at the polls:

  - Show a valid Minnesota driver's license, Minnesota ID or Tribal ID with your name and current address on it.
  - Photo identification: (expired is okay) which could include one of the following:
    - U.S. passport
    - Military or veteran's ID
    - School issued High School
    - College or Technical College ID and some document that shows your current address. This could be a utility bill, lease, college fee statement, credit card bill, or insurance statement
  - Find a registered voter from your precinct who can confirm you live at an address in the precinct.
  - If you have previously voted in the same precinct during the last election, provide your updated address to poll workers.
  - If you registered to vote within 20 days of the election, you will receive a Notice of Late Registration. Take card to the polling station to prove your address.
  - If you live in a licensed residential facility, a [staff person can confirm](#) you are a resident of the precinct. Staff needs to bring confirmation of employment.

## Ways You Can Vote

- **Voting Early**  
Early voting in Minnesota starts 46 days before the election. Here are the ways to vote early:
  - [By Mail](#)  
Request an application for an absentee ballot and return to the local election office where you live.
  - In person at a [local elections office](#)
  - [Agent delivery](#)  
Unable to go to the polling station or county election office due to disabilities or illness? You may request that a person (agent) pick up your ballot and bring to you.
- **Election Day Voting**  
[Polling stations](#) are open from 7AM to 8PM.

### **Accessibility Assistance for Persons with Disabilities**

[Accommodations](#) exist for persons with disabilities. To ensure equal access to voting, polling places are required to meet disability specific legal requirements.

- **Barrier Free**  
Stairs or steps cannot prevent people with disabilities from using the polling station
- [Curbside Voting](#)  
If a disability stops you from going in the building, ask for a ballot delivered to your car.
- [Ballot Marking Machines](#)  
A ballot marking machine helps you mark your ballot. It does not count votes
- **Enforcing Rights**  
Make a complaint if there are problems with accessibility or other issues. A [complaint](#) can be completed and returned to the county attorney for further investigation.

You will receive an “I Voted” sticker after you turn in your ballot. Wearing this sticker at your workplace or in public might encourage others to vote on Election Day. Encourage everyone you know who is eligible to vote!

### **Resources**

[www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting](http://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting)

[Self-Advocate Voting Resources](#)

**For more information or advocacy services, contact The Arc Minnesota at 833.450.1494 or visit [www.arcminnesota.org](http://www.arcminnesota.org). (Please note: *This document is not legal advice. No information should replace the advice of an attorney.*)**

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