

10 TIPS

To Enhance Your Voting Experience

Know the voting process in your State before you vote in the next election. The following tips from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission may help enhance your voting experience.



1 Register to vote

Most States require citizens to be registered in order to vote. Make sure you understand the voter registration requirements of your State of residence. If you are not registered to vote, apply for voter registration no later than the deadline to register in your State. Contact your local or State elections office or check their Web sites to get a voter registration application and learn the deadline to register. The National Voter Registration Application form is available at http://www.eac.gov/voter_resources/register_to_vote.aspx.

2 Confirm your voter registration status

Once you register to vote, check your status with your State or local elections office several weeks before the last day to register to vote. That way, you can change your registration information if needed (for example: name, address, or other corrections) in time to vote.

3 Know your polling place location and hours

If you vote at a polling place on election day, confirm your polling place location. Make sure you know what time your polling place opens and closes.

4 Know your State's voter identification (ID) requirements

Some States require voters to show ID to vote. You can find out

what forms of ID your State accepts by contacting your State or local elections office or checking their Web sites.

5 Understand provisional voting

Federal law allows you to cast a provisional ballot in a Federal election if your name does not appear on the voter registration record, if you do not have ID, or if your eligibility to vote is in question. Your State may provide other reasons for voting by a provisional ballot. Whether a provisional ballot counts depends on if the State can verify your eligibility. Check with your State or local elections office to learn how to tell if your provisional ballot was counted.

6 Check the accessibility of your polling place

If you are a voter with minority language needs or you are a voter with special needs or specific concerns due to a disability, your polling place may offer special assistance. Contact your local elections office for advice, materials in a specific language, information about voting equipment, and details on access to the polling place, including parking.

7 Consider voting early

Some States allow voting in person before election day. Find out if your State has early voting in person or by mail and if so when, where, and how you can vote before election day. If you choose

to vote early by mail, know the deadlines for requesting and returning your ballot. Some States provide dropoff stations for mail ballots, and some States allow voters to return mail ballots to polling places on election day.

8 Understand absentee voting requirements

Most States allow voters to use an absentee ballot under certain circumstances. Check on the dates and requirements for requesting and returning an absentee ballot before election day. Absentee ballots often must be returned or postmarked before the polls close on election day. Determine your State's requirements for returning absentee ballots.

9 Learn about military and overseas voting

Special voting procedures may apply if you are in the U.S. military or you are an American citizen living overseas. You may qualify for an absentee ballot by submitting a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). Contact the Federal Voting Assistance Program or check its Web site: <http://www.fvap.gov>, for information relating to military and overseas voters.

10 Get more information

For more on these tips and for answers to other questions about the election process, visit http://www.eac.gov/voter_resources/contact_your_state.aspx or contact your State or local elections office.

