

**VOTING IN 2012**  
**ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**  
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**VOTER REGISTRATION**

**When does a voter's registration expire due to inactivity?**

After no voting activity in 2 federal election cycles (4 years), a voter is placed on inactive status-however if you sign a petition, update your voter registration record or respond to letters from the Board of Elections requesting to update your voter record due to inactivity, you will have active status again.

**I'm not registered to vote. When is the last day to register for the Nov. 6th election?**

*Oct. 9th at 9:00 p.m. all cards need to be at the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections.*

**How do I register OR update my registration?**

For residents of Cuyahoga County, complete this Voter Registration Card [http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf\\_boe/en-US/Voter\\_regcard.pdf](http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf_boe/en-US/Voter_regcard.pdf), print it, sign (must have original signature) and mail it to the Board of Elections - 2925 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115.

Call the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections at 216-443-3298 for a Voter Registration Card to be mailed to you. Complete it and mail it back.

Voter Registration cards are also available at all public libraries.

Visit the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections for a list of registration locations in your city:  
<http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/voter-registration.aspx>

**How can I find out if I'm registered?**

If you receive a Voter Location Notice in the mail from the Board of Elections, it will confirm your voting information. The voting rolls are also updated on the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections website, <http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/home.aspx> There may be a delay in entering the data on the website from the date you registered, so please allow 7 to 10 business days. You may also call the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections at 216-443-3298.

**What are the qualifications to register and to vote in Ohio?**

You are qualified to register to vote in Ohio if you meet **all** the following

requirements:

1. You are a citizen of the United States;
2. You will be at least 18 years old on or before the day of the next general election. (If you will be 18 on or before November 8, you may vote in the primary election to nominate candidates, but you cannot vote on issues or party central committees until you are 18);
3. You will be a resident of Ohio for at least 30 days immediately before the election in which you want to vote;
4. You are not incarcerated (in prison or jail) for a felony conviction under the laws of this state, another state, or the United States;
5. You have not been declared incompetent for voting purposes by a probate court; and
6. You have not been permanently disenfranchised for violating the election laws.

You are eligible to vote in elections held in your voting precinct 30 days after you are duly registered to vote in this state. You may request an absentee ballot during that 30 day period.

**If I have a felony conviction, a misdemeanor conviction or I am on parole or probation, am I eligible to vote in Ohio?**

Yes, provided you are not currently incarcerated (in prison or jail) for that felony conviction and meet eligibility requirements required of all voters (such as you are a citizen of the United States).

**VOTE BY MAIL/ ABSENTEE VOTING**

**When does Vote by Mail/Absentee voting begin and end?**

**Primary and general elections:** Vote by Mail (Absentee) voting begins 35 days before the day of an election. At this time, In Person Early voting (In-house) ends the Friday before the election (except for voters hospitalized due to emergencies.) However, a federal judge has ordered that In Person Early voting hours be restored during the last 3 days before the November 6<sup>th</sup> election. The State of Ohio, as of this writing, has not complied pending an appeal. This situation is still developing.

Once absentee ballots are available for voting, any eligible voter may receive and return an absentee ballot:

- in person at the county board of elections office or,
- by U.S. Mail.

**Who is eligible to vote a Vote by Mail / Absentee ballot?**

Any qualified Ohio voter whose registration information is up to date may request and vote a Vote by Mail / Absentee ballot without stating a reason.

### **What is the application process for obtaining a Vote by Mail / Absentee ballot?**

Ohio law provides separate application processes for different classifications of Vote by Mail / Absentee voters (militia, armed services, overseas, etc.). In all cases, Vote by Mail / Absentee ballots must be applied for in writing. If you are properly registered to vote, you must submit your written request to the board of elections of the county in which your voting residence is located. Your request must contain certain information (described in the following sections) and your original signature. You may, but are not required to, use an application form prescribed by the Ohio Secretary of State (Form 11-A). [http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf\\_boe/en-US/Applications/absenteeApplication2012e.pdf](http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf_boe/en-US/Applications/absenteeApplication2012e.pdf)

\*If you **are not** an active duty member of Ohio's organized militia (including the Ohio Air National Guard, Ohio Army National Guard, Ohio Naval Militia, and Ohio Military Reserve), an active duty member of the U.S. armed services serving outside of Ohio, or a U.S. citizen residing outside of the U.S., you are considered a "regular" absentee voter.

### **How to Vote by Mail / Absentee**

Electors do not have to state a reason to request and vote a Vote by Mail / Absentee ballot. However, every application for a Vote by Mail / Absentee ballot must satisfy all the requirements set forth in Ohio Revised Code. The application [http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf\\_boe/en-US/Applications/absenteeApplication2012e.pdf](http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf_boe/en-US/Applications/absenteeApplication2012e.pdf) need not be in any particular form but shall contain the following:

- The elector's name
- The elector's signature
- The address at which the elector is registered to vote
- The elector's date of birth
- One of the following:
  - The elector's driver's license number;
  - The last four digits of the elector's social security number;
  - Copy of a current and valid photo identification, a military identification, current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document (other than a voter registration notification mailed by a Board of Elections) that shows your name and current address;
- A statement identifying the election for which the absent voter's ballots are requested;
- A statement that the person requesting the ballot is a qualified elector;
- If the request is for a primary election, the elector's party affiliation;
- The address to which the ballot shall be mailed if different from registered address

The board of elections will notify the applicant by mail if any required information is missing.

### **To receive your Vote by Mail / Absentee ballot:**

1. By mail: Unless you are a member of the U.S. Uniformed Services or a U.S. citizen residing outside the country, you must mail your properly completed Vote by Mail / Absentee ballot application bearing your original signature to the board of elections of the county in which your voting residence is located. The board must receive your request by noon on the Saturday before the election.
2. In person: You may go to the board of elections office of the county in which your voting residence is located during regular business hours after absentee ballots are available for voting, but no later than 6 P.M the Friday before the election, and request, receive and vote your ballot at the board office.
3. If you or your minor child is in the hospital on Election Day: Regardless of where you or your minor child is hospitalized in Cuyahoga County, you must submit a properly completed and signed request to the board of elections of the county in which your voting residence is located by 3 p.m. on Election Day. To be eligible under this provision, you or your minor child must be confined in a hospital because of an unforeseeable medical emergency. Your application must specify where, why and when you or your minor child came to be hospitalized. If you or your minor child is hospitalized in the same county where you are registered to vote, two representatives of the board of elections can deliver the ballot to you, wait while you mark the ballot, and return your voted ballot to the board office. Additionally, you may include in your absentee ballot application [http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf\\_boe/en-US/Applications/AVNursingHome11B.pdf](http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf_boe/en-US/Applications/AVNursingHome11B.pdf) a request that your county board of elections give your unmarked ballot to a designated relative – your spouse, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandfather, grandmother, brother, sister, son, daughter, adopted parent, adopted child, stepparent, stepchild, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece – who shall deliver the ballot to you in the hospital and return your voted ballot to the board office no later than 7:30 PM Election Day.

**For your Vote by Mail / Absentee ballot to be counted, it must be received as follows:**

1. If cast from anywhere in the U.S. and you **return it by mail**, it must be postmarked\* (the day before the election) and received by the board of elections no later than 10 days after the election.
2. If you are a voter outside the U.S. on Election Day, your ballot envelope must be signed and submitted for mailing no later than midnight EDT the day before Election Day and received no later than 10 days after the election in order to be counted.
3. If returned in-person to the board of elections, absentee ballots must be received at your local county board of elections on Election Day by 7:30 p.m. (the close of the polls).

\* Postmarked does not include a date marked by a postage evidence system such as a postage meter.

**Reasons for rejecting Vote by Mail / Absentee ballots**

A board of elections in determining whether to count a Vote by Mail / Absentee ballot must apply the rules set forth in Ohio Revised Code 3509.07.

Thus, a vote shall not be accepted or counted if election officials find that:

- the statement accompanying an absentee voter's ballot is insufficient, or
- the signatures does not correspond with the person's registration signature, or
- the applicant is not a qualified elector in the precinct, or
- the ballot envelope contains more than one ballot of any one kind, or any voted ballot that the elector is not entitled to vote, or
- Stub A is detached from the absent voter's ballot, or
- the elector has not included with the elector's ballot any identification required as referenced in the "How to Apply" section above, or
- the ballot was not placed and sealed inside the completed Identification Envelope

## **VOTING AT THE POLLS**

### **What kind of ID do I need to bring to the polls?**

Ohio law requires that every voter, upon appearing at the polling place to vote on Election Day, to announce his or her full name and current address and *provide proof of the voter's identity*. The forms of identification that may be used by a voter who appears at a polling place to vote on an Election Day include:

- A current and valid photo identification card issued by the State of Ohio or the United States government; or
- A military identification ("military ID"); or
- An original or copy of a current utility bill; or
- An original or copy of a current bank statement; or
- An original or copy of a current government check; or
- An original or copy of a current paycheck; or
- An original or copy of a current other government document, other than a voter registration acknowledgement notification mailed by the board of elections, that shows the voter's name and current address.

### **I didn't bring the proper ID with me to the polls – for example, I brought my driver's license but forgot it lists my old address, what happens then?**

If you want to cast a regular ballot, you would have to return to the polls with proper identification – such as a utility bill that shows your current address. (Please refer to the full list in the previous answer). You have another option. You may cast a provisional ballot and you must bring the missing information down to the Board of Elections within 10 days after the election. If you fail to provide that information, your vote will not be counted in the official certification of the election.

### **I believe my voting qualifications and/or my right to a regular ballot was improperly challenged. What recourse do I have?**

Please ask to see the presiding judge at the voter assistance table at your polling location. That person will call the Board of Elections to assist you in that situation. You may also choose to report the incident and seek advice from a voter protection group, such as **1-866-OurVote** ([www.866ourvote.org](http://www.866ourvote.org))

## RESOURCES

### Cuyahoga Board of Elections Phone Numbers

General Information Phone Numbers	
Service	Number
Voter Information Hotline	216.443.3298
General Information	216.443.3200
Bilingual Information (Spanish)	216.443.3242
Fax	216.443.6633
Hearing Impaired	Ohio Relay Service 711
Campaign Finance Information	216.443.6509
Pollworkers	216.443.3277

### Link to Cuyahoga County Board of Elections Website

<http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/home.aspx>

### Link to Voter Information Guide

[http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf\\_boe/en-US/2012/VoterInformationGuide2012.pdf](http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf_boe/en-US/2012/VoterInformationGuide2012.pdf)

**Voters who live outside of Cuyahoga County may consult the Ohio Secretary of State's website to obtain contact information for other county Boards of Elections**

### Link to Ohio Secretary of State website

<http://www.sos.state.oh.us/>