



VOTER REGISTRATION FAQS



1. Where can a person register to vote in Delaware?

- DMV (when getting/updating DL or State ID),
- Online at ivote.de.gov,
- Elections Offices,
- through the mail,
- Voter registration outreach events
- State Agencies (like DHSS when signing up for government programs)

2. How does the voter registration process at DMV work?

- Eligible individuals are registered to vote at DMV pursuant to the process provided in Delaware law (15 *Del. C.* § 2050A), Delaware's Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) law.
- The voter registration process is triggered whenever an individual visits DMV or uses DMV's online tool to apply for, renew, or update their Delaware Driver's License, Learner's Permit, or State Identification Card.
 - 1) First, the DMV checks whether the individual is registered to vote in Delaware.
 - 2) Second, if the individual is not registered to vote, the DMV checks the individual's eligibility to register to vote, based on age, and citizenship status.

2. How does the voter registration process at DMV work? (continued)

- 3) Third, if the individual is eligible to register to vote, the DMV sends to the Department of Elections the applicant's voter registration information, which includes their name, address, date of birth, driver's license or state identification number, address and mailing address, county of residence, citizenship status, and electronic signature. This constitutes the individual's voter registration application to the Department of Elections.
- 4) Fourth, the Department of Elections receives voter registration applications from DMV in regular batches, usually hourly, to process. The Department of Elections examines the applications for completeness and processes each application individually. As part of processing the applications, the Department of Elections verifies the applicant's voter registration information and voter eligibility. Once this information is verified, the DOE registers the individual to vote.

2. How does the voter registration process at DMV work? (continued)

- 5) Fifth, the Department of Elections mails each registrant whose application the Department verified a voter registration notice informing the individual they are registered to vote. In the letter, the DOE asks the registrant to verify their own eligibility to be registered to vote.
- 6) Sixth, if the registrant finds they are not eligible to vote upon their review, or they do not want to be registered to vote, they are instructed to use the form included in the mailing with the letter to complete and send to the DOE to cancel their registration.
- 7) Seventh, the DOE mails all eligible registrants a Delaware polling place card informing them of their assigned polling place.

3. How old do you have to be to register to vote in Delaware?

- 18 years of age by the date of the next General Election.

4. Can you pre-register to vote, if under the age of 18?

- Yes, but only at DMV. Per Delaware law, pre-registration to vote is available at DMV to 16 and 17-year-olds when they sign up for their driver's licenses or State IDs. Once the General Election is over, their record is updated in the State of Delaware voter registration system, and they are registered to vote in the Primaries and General Election of the next election cycle.

5. What form of ID do I need to present or submit when I register to vote?

- You need to provide something that shows your name and current address, such as one of the following:
 - Driver's License or State ID
 - Utility Bill, Bank Statement, Credit Card Statement
 - Copy of a government mailing, check, or your paycheck

6. When is the last day to register to vote?

- If you are not yet registered, the voter registration deadline is the 4th Saturday before a Primary and General Election. Once you are registered to vote, you do not have to re-register to vote for subsequent elections.

7. Is there a deadline by which I must change my address or name before an election?

- No, you may update your name and address when you go to vote, but we encourage you to update your record before election day, so your voting experience will be quicker and easier.

8. When are the party change deadlines?

- **Presidential Primary:** 60 days before the Presidential Primary.
- **Primary Election:** The Friday before the last Saturday in May.

9. I have always voted for candidates of a certain political party, but every time I try to vote in a Primary election, they tell me I am not eligible due to my political party affiliation. Why?

- In a General Election, you may vote for candidates of any party, no matter how you are registered. In Primary Elections, political party affiliation matters.
- Delaware is a “Closed Primary” State. If you are No Party (Unaffiliated/ Independent), you are not permitted to vote in Primary Elections. If you are not registered with the party, Democrat or Republican, you are not able to vote in the party’s Primary Election. You may check your voter record to see how you’re registered and update your record at [iVote.de.gov](https://www.iVote.de.gov).

10. How does the Department ensure that deceased voters are removed from the voter registration rolls in a timely manner?

- The Department works continually to maintain Delaware's voter registration rolls. The Department removes deceased voters in response to information provided automatically, monthly by Delaware's Office of Vital Statistics. The Department reports on these removals at each public Board of Elections meeting. The Department also participates in a multi-state consortium, called ERIC (<https://ericstates.org>), to improve our list maintenance related to voters whose deaths are reported out of state. The Department incorporates information from the federal social security database into these efforts. Of course, given the number of people involved and the amount of time needed to prepare and send each mass-mailing of polling cards, it is inevitable that a few polling place cards will be sent to deceased voters in each election cycle. The Department has a form on its website to allow family members to remove deceased voters from the voter rolls, if the death is not reported in the ordinary course for any reason. That form is available at: https://elections.delaware.gov/voter/pdfs/cancelreg_closerelative.pdf.

11. How can I change my political party affiliation?

- You may update your record at iVote.de.gov.
- You may visit the Department of Elections office in your county to update your party.
- You may call or email the DOE office to mail you a voter registration form to complete to update your party.

12. Do I have to be registered to vote in order to vote in school elections?

You do not have to be registered to vote in order to vote in school elections.

In order to vote in school elections, you must:

- Be a citizen of the United States and the State of Delaware.
- Live in the school district for which the election is being conducted.
- Be 18 years of age on or before the day of the election.

13. What steps does the Department take to keep its voter registration files up to date?

- Mail sent by the Department (e.g., polling place cards), mail from other State agencies, or mail from elected officials that is returned as undeliverable, the Department initiates the process of address verification. This entails mailing a verification mailing to the same address with the option for the recipient to either indicate they reside at the same address, that they have moved within the State, or that they have moved out of State and that we may cancel their voter registration. If we do not receive a reply from the voter, and 60 days have elapsed from the date of the mailing of the verification mailer, the voter is placed in inactive status. If a voter in this status has no further contact with the Department/does not update their address with the Department and does not vote in the next two consecutive General Elections, the voter will be removed from the voter registration rolls after that second General Election has occurred (by June 1st of the year following that General Election). [NOTE: This process is outlined in federal law [the National Voter Registration Act], which is also incorporated into Delaware Code.]

Continued on Next Slide



13. What steps does the Department take to keep its voter registration files up to date?

- Each month the Department receives a list of **Deceased** persons from the Office of Vital Statistics, which is matched against the State of Delaware voter registration database. When those records are matched, the Department removes the record from the voter registration system.
- The Department receives monthly reports from the Division of Motor Vehicles of individuals reported to them as deceased. The Department verifies the information, then removes these voter records as deceased.
- Deceased records are also removed when the Department receives notification by signed correspondence by a close relative (spouse, sibling, child) or a notification that a voter has passed away and the Department is able to confirm it via an online obituary or through Vital Statistics.

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13. What steps does the Department take to keep its voter registration files up to date?

- The Department removes records of voters who **move out of Delaware** and register in a new State. The Department processes these removals when it receives correspondence from other States letting Delaware know that voters who are registered in Delaware have registered in their new State, or when the Department receives a signed letter or a cancellation form signed by the voter themselves or a close relative reporting he/she has moved out of Delaware.
- Additional ways the Department may remove records of voters confirmed as moving out of state are detailed in the following slides.

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13. What steps does the Department take to keep its voter registration files up to date?

- The Department is a member of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) [Improving Voter Registration For Member States \(ericstates.org\)](http://ericstates.org), a consortium of 32 states and District of Columbia that securely share information regarding individuals who have registered to vote or to obtain a driver's license or state ID in an ERIC member states to identify voters who have moved from one member state to another. Membership in ERIC permits the Department to reach individuals who are believed to have moved out of the state at their new address in another ERIC member state. Via the State's membership in ERIC, the State also received information from the United States' Postal Service's (USPS) National Change of Address (NCOA) list. Access to this list enables the Department to identify those individuals who have been registered to vote in Delaware, but who have notified the USPS that they have moved to another state. Access to the NCOA list provides the Department a tool to reach voters who have moved out of Delaware to a non-ERIC-member state to verify if they have, in fact, moved out of Delaware. Membership in ERIC also provides the Department access to those reported as deceased via the Social Security Administration (SSA).

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14. What steps does the Department take to keep its voter registration files up to date?

- The Department also now receives monthly reports from the Division of Motor Vehicles of individuals who have surrendered their Delaware driver's license or Delaware state ID. While this list will likely include individuals already potentially reported as moved out of state from other sources (i.e., ERIC, Vital Statistics, SSA), receiving this data provides yet another potential source of information that the Department may use to ensure that our voter registration rolls may be updated.

15. What if I get a piece of mail from the Department of Elections for someone who does not live at my address?

- Please write, “Not at this Address” on the front of the piece of mail.
- Place in a mailbox or take it to the Post Office.
- The USPS will mail the mail piece back to the Department of Elections.
- The Department of Elections will begin the address verification process per the federal National Voter Registration Act.
- Since two mailings must come back as undeliverable in order to fulfill the mailing requirements for removal, the Department will send another mailing to the voter’s address on file to verify their address. If the you receive another the mailing for the same person, please **repeat** the same process:
 - Please write, “Not at this Address” on the front of the piece of mail.
 - Place in a mailbox or take it to the Post Office.