

Date Printed: 06/11/2009

JTS Box Number: IFES_74
Tab Number: 86
Document Title: How to vote in Massachusetts
Document Date: 1986
Document Country: United States --
Massachusetts
Document Language: English
IFES ID: CE02318



* 3 E D F 6 7 A 8 - 7 C E 4 - 4 A D B - A C 4 7 - 7 1 F 8 7 2 8 8 3 8 7 1 *

8 6 JUN REC'D

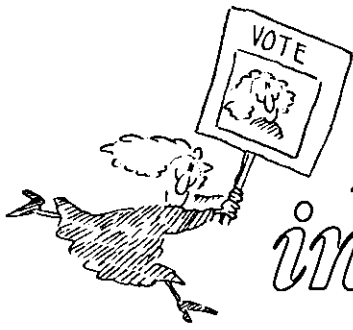
How to Vote in Massachusetts

20
ELECTIONS
A
Publication of State
Secretary of State
Michael J. Connolly

It's your turn now
Get
out and
VOTE!



The Elections Division staff and other
employees of the Secretary of State's
office urge you to vote.



How to vote in Massachusetts

Who may register to vote?

You must register if you want to vote.

Any citizen of the United States who is a Massachusetts resident and who will be 18 years old by election day may register to vote. Students from other states may register to vote in Massachusetts if it is their home, even if they live in dormitories. Once the student registers in Massachusetts, a notice of registration is mailed to the election officials of the student's former home. Students should check with their financial aid office for any effect on financial assistance.

How often must I register?

Just once. Registration is permanent in Massachusetts. You need register again only if you

- move to another city or town
- change your name

If you move within your community, notify your registrars of voters in writing.

When and where may I register?

There is no waiting period to be eligible to register. If you move, you may register to vote as soon as you move into your new home.

Most city or town clerks or election commissions will register you in your city or town hall during regular business hours and during special registration sessions before elections. Call your city or town clerk or election commission for specific times and places in your community.

Are there registration deadlines?

Yes. Registration is closed for a brief period before each election to allow election officials time to prepare the voting lists. Closings occur

- 28 days before presidential primaries, regular state primaries, and regular state elections.
- 20 days before city or town elections, town meetings, special primaries, and special elections.
- 10 days before special town meetings.

If you register during a "closed" period, you will be eligible to vote only in later elections.

How do I register?

Go to one of your local registration places. It might be helpful to bring some identification or proof of residence. You will be asked to complete an affidavit of registration which must be answered truthfully under penalty of perjury. The questions which you must answer are:

- name
- present residence
- residence as of January 1, if different
- last previous residence in another city or town
- name used at that residence, if different
- date of birth
- U.S. citizen
- occupation
- preferred party enrollment, if any

Upon registration, your name, address and party preference will be added to the voting list of your city or town. This list is used on election day to identify and check off the names of registered voters when they come to the polling place to vote.

How do I register if I am physically disabled?

Write to your local registrars of voters to request an application, fill it in, and return it so that your application is received no less than three days before the close of registration for the election. Two registration officers will come to your residence, rest home, or hospital and register you, if you cannot go out and register.

Where and when may I vote?

Polling places are usually located in your neighborhood. Voting hours vary. For state primaries and elections the polls must be open at 7:00 am and remain open until 8:00 pm. For city elections, polls must be open at least from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm. During town

elections, the polls must open by noon and remain open for at least four hours. If you are in line when the polls close, you may vote.

You can learn the exact hours and polling places in your community from your city or town hall or local newspaper.

Most polling places must be accessible to the elderly and persons with disabilities. To learn if yours is accessible, call your city or town clerk or election commissioner, or the Secretary of State's Elections Division.

How do I vote?

Sample ballots and instruction cards are posted at the polling place. Election officers are required by law to help if you do not understand the voting procedures.

When you enter the polling place, give your name, address, and, if it is a primary election, your party preference. You vote alone in the voting booth unless you ask for help. If you are physically disabled or cannot read, or read English, you may ask any person or two election officers for assistance.

If you should spoil a ballot, you may return it to an election official and you may then receive another ballot. If the second ballot is spoiled and returned to an official, you may request and receive only one additional ballot.

What if my name is not on the voting list?

If you have registered but your name has been omitted from the voting list, or is listed incorrectly, the election officer in charge of the polling place must call city or town hall to check your registration. If you are found to be correctly registered, you may vote.

If the election official is unable to confirm your registration, you should go to city or town hall. If your registration is correct, you may vote there immediately on an absentee ballot. You may, if you prefer, obtain a certificate from the registrar and return to your usual polling place to vote.

What if I am not allowed to vote?

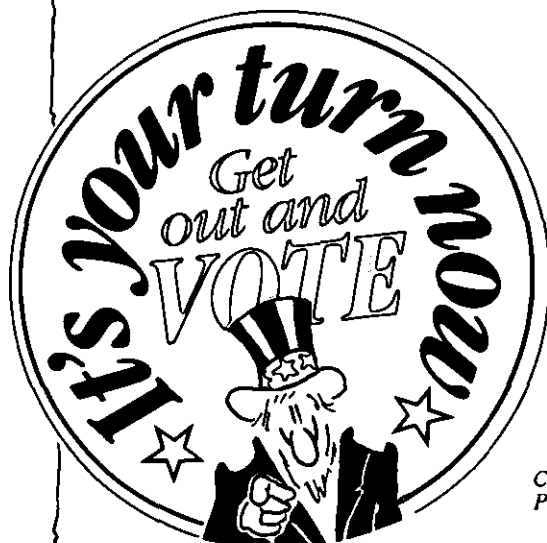
If you claim the right to vote but are not allowed to vote, you must be allowed to mark an "escrow ballot." These ballots will be kept in a separate envelope and will be counted if you are later found eligible to vote and if the election is close enough for these ballots to make a difference.

How can I vote in a primary?

If you stated a political party preference when you registered, you will be given the ballot of that party when you vote in a primary. If you are not enrolled in a party (an independent), you may still vote in a primary. You ask for the party ballot you prefer. When you request a party ballot, you automatically become listed as a member of that party.

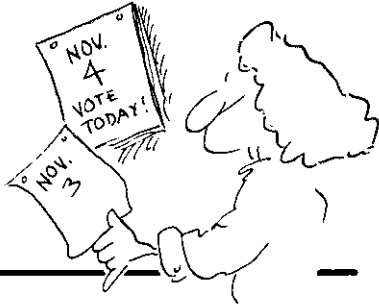
May I change my party designation?

Yes. If you want to change parties or drop your membership in a party after a primary, you may do so immediately after voting by filling out a card which is available at the polls and returning it to the registrars of voters. You may change your party enrollment in person or by mail at any time. The change does not take effect until the card has been processed by the registrars.



Cartoons by Chris Demarest
Photo by T.C. Fitzgerald

'86 Elections Calendar



August 16

Required Saturday voter registration session, 12 noon to 8 pm

August 19

Last day to register to vote* or change party enrollment before State Primary

September 16

STATE PRIMARY

October 4

Required Saturday voter registration session, 12 noon to 8 pm

October 7

Last day to register to vote* before State Election

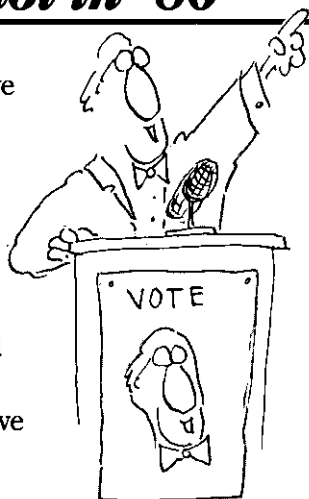
November 4

STATE ELECTION

* Registration is open during normal business hours throughout the year in most City or Town Clerk's or Election Commission's offices. See "Are there registration deadlines?" on the other side of this pamphlet.

On the ballot in '86

- U.S. Representative
- Governor*
- Lt. Governor*
- Secretary of State
- Attorney General
- Treasurer
- Auditor
- Governor's Council
- State Senator
- State Representative
- District Attorney
- Sheriff
- County Commissioner



* Governor and Lt. Governor run as team in State Election

Publications about Elections



How to Vote in Massachusetts

(Available in English, Spanish and Portuguese)

How to Vote Absentee in Massachusetts

(Available in English, Spanish and Portuguese)

Your Rights as an Elderly or Disabled Voter

(Available in English, Spanish and Portuguese)

Boards of Registrars and Election Commissions

(Their duties, how to become a member)

Local Lists

(An explanation of street and voting lists)

Don't Stand There . . . Run!

(A guide to potential candidates for national, state and county offices)

Ballot Questions

(How to get a question on a state or local ballot)

Petition Series

(Detailed information about each kind of ballot question)

Local Charter Procedures

Election Officers

(Clerks, inspectors, wardens – who may be one, what the duties are)

Vacancies in Elective Office

(How a position is filled)

Redistricting in Massachusetts

Residency for voting purposes

(What is legal residency in Massachusetts for voting purposes)

Special Voter Registration Sessions

(How to request)

Running for Office as a Sticker or Write-in Candidate

Election Day Legal Summary

P.D. 43 Elections Statistics

(How each of the state's cities and towns voted in the last election)

Legal Remedies for Election Problems

Massachusetts General Laws

(Compilation of those laws which pertain to elections)

Enrollment Figures

(February and August)

Maps

Congressional
Senatorial
Representative

Lists

Elected Officials

Congressional

Constitutional Officers

Senators in General Court

Representatives in General Court

Counties, Cities and Towns in Massachusetts

Districts

Congressional

Senatorial

Representative

Councillor

District Attorney

Selectmen

City and Town Clerks

Mayors

County Officers

These publications are available at the State Bookstore, Room 116, State House, Boston, and at the Elections Division, Room 1705, One Ashburton Place, Boston.



***For further information,
please contact:***

Michael J. Connolly,
Massachusetts Secretary of State
Elections Division
Room 1705, One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 727-2828,

or

1-800-462-VOTE (toll-free)
and, for the hearing impaired, a TDD number:
1-800-462-8685