

# Voting

Voting is one of the most important rights of a US citizen. It allows people to choose leaders they feel will best represent their needs on the local, state, and federal levels. You can make real change by being an educated voter in your community.

## Step 1: Register to Vote

- Because federal and state elections are run by the states, no two states rules for registration are exactly the same. To find out the specifics of your state, contact your state or local election office (<https://www.usa.gov/election-office>). \*North Dakota does not require voters to register.
- There are many ways to register to vote. You can go online to [vote.gov](http://vote.gov) to complete the application, download, and submit the National Mail Voter Registration Form, or go in person at the Department of Motor Vehicles, Armed Services Recruitment Centers, or your local state and county public assistance offices.
- Registration deadlines differ from state to state but are usually anywhere from 15-30 days before the election. To find out the registration deadline for your state, visit <https://www.vote.org/voter-registration-deadlines/> or visit your state or local elections office.
- Requirements:
  - *Citizenship* - Only US citizens can vote in the US elections.
  - *Age* - If you are under the age of 18, check with your state to determine your registration options. If you are older than 18, you are age eligible to vote in every state.
  - *Identification* - Whether you need an ID and what kind will depend on your state.

## Step 2: Decide who you want to vote for

- Research the candidates running for office and find which ones who best support your beliefs. If the candidate is currently holding an office or has held office in the past, you can see their voting record on [Congress.gov](http://Congress.gov).
- Watch debates, log on to candidate's webpages, attend rallies, and reference voting guides to learn more about the candidates. If there are

certain issues that concern you, reach out to trusted advocacy groups to see where they stand on the issue, if they are publicly supporting a candidate, and why.

## Step 3: Vote!

- In person - at your assigned polling place. For the most updated information about your polling place and hours of operation or to request accommodations, contact your state/territorial election office.
- By mail - if you are temporarily living in another place, active military, or overseas.
- Early - Many states offer early voting to avoid long lines on Election Day.
- Accessibility - As a voter with a disability, you have the right to vote privately and independently. You are also entitled to an accessible polling place with voting machines for voters with disabilities. You may choose to bring someone with you to help you vote or ask for assistance at your polling place. Specific requirements for physical accessibility of polling places include:
  - Wheelchair-accessible voting booths
  - Entrances and doorways that are at least 32 inches wide
  - Handrails on all stairs
  - Voting equipment that is accessible to voters who are blind or visually impaired

