

# 2014 ELECTION ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

*Making Your Voice Heard for  
Essential Hospitals and Patients*



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# Contents

<b>USING THIS TOOLKIT .....</b>	<b>4</b>
America's Essential Hospitals Staff Contacts.....	4
<b>ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY: A VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE .....</b>	<b>5</b>
When Is the Registration Deadline? .....	5
How Do I Register Someone to Vote? .....	5
Can a Public or Non-Profit Hospital Organize a Voter Registration Drive in the Hospital? .....	6
Setting up a Voter Registration Drive .....	6
<b>INCREASING YOUR VOICE: A LOCAL OP-ED STRATEGY .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Why Now? .....	8
Key Messages.....	8
Op-Ed Tips .....	8
Sample Op-Eds for States that Have Expanded Medicaid .....	9
Sample Op-Eds for States that Have Not Expanded Medicaid.....	13
<b>ENHANCING YOUR INFLUENCE: CANDIDATE OUTREACH STRATEGIES .....</b>	<b>17</b>
The Basics .....	17
Advanced Strategies: Building a Relationship.....	18
More Helpful Tips .....	19
Hosting a Hospital Visit .....	19
Hosting a Town Hall Meeting.....	20
Hosting a Candidates Forum .....	20
<b>AMPLIFYING YOUR VOICE: LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>ELECTION LAW GUIDELINES: LEGAL MEMORANDUM ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Federal Restrictions on Political Activities.....	28
Federal Restrictions on Gifts to Members of Congress and Staff .....	29
<b>HOW TO SEARCH POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION RECORDS .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>SAMPLE LETTER AND MATERIALS .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>VOTER REGISTRATION GUIDE .....</b>	<b>34</b>

## USING THIS TOOLKIT

With the 2014 elections just months away, the stakes for those who care about the future of our nation's essential hospitals are significant. The 435 members of the House and 36 senators who Americans will elect this November will play a central role in the future of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), as well as participate in the ongoing debate about health care quality and access.

Over the next few months, supporters of America's Essential Hospitals have a unique opportunity to educate members of Congress and their challengers about the role essential hospitals play providing high-quality care to communities across the country, including for our nation's most vulnerable populations.

This toolkit is designed for members of America's Essential Hospitals, providing resources to make a difference in the 2014 midterm elections—from organizing a voter registration drive to strategies for educating congressional candidates. The toolkit includes helpful tips, sample materials, and legal guidelines that should answer key questions you might have about your participation in the electoral process.

If you have questions, our team is always available.

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## ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY: A VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE

Exercising the fundamental right to vote begins with the simple step of registering. Non-profit organizations are not only permitted to engage in nonpartisan activities that encourage civic participation, such as registering people to vote, but are the perfect champions to lead the charge.

Because voter registration drives often focus on minorities, low-income individuals, and those newly eligible to vote, our hospitals are ideal venues for voter registration efforts—and hosting a registration drive is easy to do.

Some states have individual requirements, but the basic voter eligibility requirements are that the person be a U.S. citizen and 18 years old by the general election (November 4, 2014). Please refer to your state's specific requirements, if any, in the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) Guide listed below.

### When Is the Registration Deadline?

Registration deadlines are usually 30 days before the election (in many states it will be October 4, 2014). However, each state sets its own deadline, so check the state-specific information in the EAC Guide for your state's deadline.

Once an application is submitted, the individual should receive a confirmation by mail. Remind people to hold on to the confirmation card or letter, as it likely will specify where they vote. If an applicant does not receive a notification within a few weeks of submitting the application, he or she should call the local board of elections to check on the status.

### How Do I Register Someone to Vote?

The National Mail Voter Registration Application makes it easy to register a new voter. Follow these simple steps for your registration drive:

1. Print copies of the national application from the EAC Guide:
  - Use this National Voter Registration Application (English version):  
[http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/Documents/Federal%20Voter%20Registration\\_1209\\_English.pdf](http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/Documents/Federal%20Voter%20Registration_1209_English.pdf)
  - Use this National Voter Registration Application (Spanish version):  
[http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/Documents/Federal%20Voter%20Registration\\_1209\\_Spanish.pdf](http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/Documents/Federal%20Voter%20Registration_1209_Spanish.pdf)
2. Have the individual complete the entire application, including any state-specific information.
3. Each application must be signed and mailed to the address listed in your state-specific information in the EAC Guide. There is no cost. Hospital staff can mail the completed voter registration applications.

## **Can a Public or Non-Profit Hospital Organize a Voter Registration Drive in the Hospital?**

Yes. In fact, members of America's Essential Hospitals may generally engage in nonpartisan election activities, including organizing voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives. Similarly, voter education on health care issues is permissible, provided your hospital does not appear to favor or oppose any particular candidate or party.

Partisan activities, including endorsing or ranking candidates, are generally prohibited. But in most cases, hospital employees may engage in such activities in their individual capacities, as long as it is clear they are not acting on behalf of, or using the resources of, the hospital.

Members should consult local counsel before proceeding. State and local tax laws and other regulations may constrain a public or nonprofit hospital's activities, and nonprofit institutions must ensure that all activities are consistent with their stated purposes and within their corporate or statutory powers. See the legal memorandum on page 22.

## **Setting up a Voter Registration Drive**

### **1. Pick a week for your voter registration drive**

- The time period will depend on the registration deadline in your state.
- The best results are achieved by hosting a “voter registration week” (or a voter registration drive throughout a particular month, such as September).

### **2. Recruit staff and volunteers**

- Set up the registration table in a central location (e.g., the hospital lobby or outside the cafeteria).
- Recruit at least one person to staff the registration table at all times.
- Remind your staff and volunteers that this is a nonpartisan registration drive.
- Ensure they are trained by simply reading the voter registration materials and state rules.

### **3. Publicize the voter registration drive**

- Send an email to hospital employees informing them of the drive (e.g., just as you would for a blood drive or other activities within the hospital).
- Post a notice on your website and in hospital and volunteer newsletters, and post signs in common areas.

### **4. Prepare the voter registration material**

- Print copies of the National Voter Registration Application, English and Spanish versions.
- Print copies of the EAC Guide outlining your state's specific application requirements (if applicable).
- Print copies from the EAC Guide of “Frequently Asked Questions.”
- Print the address for mailing applications or provide preprinted labels or envelopes.

### **5. Encourage everyone to register**

- As employees or visitors pass by, volunteers should encourage those not registered

to do so.

- Make sure the individual signs the application and mails it to the state address specified in the EAC Guide.
- Hospital personnel can offer to mail the applications.

### **Additional Information**

For more information about registering to vote, visit one of the following websites:

- Election Assistance Commission      [www.eac.gov](http://www.eac.gov)
- League of Women Voters                [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)
- Project Vote Smart                        [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org)

## AMPLIFYING YOUR VOICE: A LOCAL OP-ED STRATEGY

As policymakers gear up for the November elections, now is the perfect time to send a strong message about the critical role of the nation's essential hospitals. We encourage each hospital to take advantage of the election season by pitching to local media an op-ed written by the hospital's CEO or board chair.

### Why Now?

Given the political season, policymakers and candidates are particularly attuned to local media stories. Throughout the month of August, policymakers will be home campaigning in their districts, which is why this is the ideal time for leaders of America's Essential Hospitals to try to place an op-ed in local newspapers and educate candidates about the impact essential hospitals have in communities. To maximize the impact, we encourage you to include the following:

- Thank policymakers for their support of their local hospital;
- Urge policymakers and candidates to ensure essential hospitals have the resources they need to provide care to all people.

### Key Messages

Attached are template op-eds you should customize with data and stories from your hospital and community. We have provided two versions each for states that have expanded their Medicaid program and states that have rejected Medicaid expansion. The key messages across all the templates are that we're not out of the woods with respect to the nation's health insurance crisis and that we must support essential hospitals because all people—not just the vulnerable—have a stake in keeping these hospitals strong.

### Op-Ed Tips

- Make sure your op-ed is timely, playing off something in the headline news.
- Include a local story (and local statistics) to demonstrate the impact your hospital has on your local community.
- Have prominent community leaders sign the op-ed, such as the hospital CEO, board chair, or other VIPs.
- Call on candidates to support essential hospitals and ensure that your hospital has the necessary resources to provide quality care to your state.
- Try to place the op-ed in the paper with the largest circulation.
- Once printed, maximize its impact through a variety of social media platforms.
- Send it to your congressional delegation.
- Share it with America's Essential Hospitals so we can also promote its distribution.

For more information, contact Director of Communications Carl Graziano at 202-585-0102 or [cgraziano@essentialhospitals.org](mailto:cgraziano@essentialhospitals.org).

## Sample Op-Eds for States that Have Expanded Medicaid

*Version A*

### Too Early for a Victory Lap in Battle to Expand Health Care Coverage

As we turn toward the 2014 election season and a certain renewal of vigorous debate on the merits of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), we face nearly as many questions as answers about the future of affordable health care—especially for the uninsured and other vulnerable people.

With the initial success of ACA coverage enrollment fading and new challenges to key components of the reform law arising—chief among them, recent court decisions on federal marketplace plan subsidies—the path to insuring all people remains unclear. Even here, in [state], and the more than two dozen other states that have done the right thing by expanding Medicaid, we're far from out of the woods.

Yet, there are those who suggest we can start scaling back our support of the safety net, that the ACA is doing its job, that reform succeeded with its initial enrollment surge, including about 5 million new Medicaid recipients. If this feels like a premature victory lap to you, you're not alone. [hospital name] and the nation's other essential hospitals—those that fill a safety net role in their communities—know significant challenges remain to solving the crisis of the uninsured.

Foremost are the millions of people here and across the nation who have yet to benefit from reform. Even with the help of federal subsidies for the private marketplace health plans—subsidies called into question with conflicting opinions last month by two federal appellate courts—health care will remain unaffordable for many families with limited financial means. A 2011 Commonwealth Fund study found that about one-quarter of families living at two to three times the poverty level cannot afford both subsidized premiums and Out-of-pocket costs if significant illness strikes. Many others remain out of the ACA's reach, including the nation's more than 11 million undocumented immigrants and the homeless.

These people will continue to come to [hospital name] and other essential hospitals for care, as they always have. And as we always have, we will care for them and other vulnerable patients with the highest-quality care possible, knowing that compensation for these services often will cover little or none of the costs.

This is the commitment [hospital name] has made to [community], the commitment all essential hospitals make to the communities they serve. In turn, we must commit to supporting these hubs of community health and well-being, safety, and economic vitality; we all have a stake in ensuring they thrive.

Why? Like all essential hospitals, [hospital name] touches all of us with vital services beyond its core commitment to the uninsured, underinsured, and other disadvantaged patients. Essential hospitals often provide a community's only source of specialized, high-acuity care, such as trauma, burn, and neonatal intensive care units. In the nation's 10 largest cities, a handful of essential hospitals house roughly one-third of all trauma, burn, and psychiatric beds. If you're badly injured in a car accident or house fire, an essential hospital likely will help you back to health.

Likewise, essential hospitals prepare for and respond to natural and other disasters—threats that don't discriminate by income or socioeconomic status. The rapid response and expertise of essential hospitals saved lives and limbs in the Boston Marathon bombings, the crash of Asiana Airlines flight 214 in San Francisco, Superstorm Sandy, and countless other events large and small that have put people and entire communities at risk.

Essential hospitals provide a training ground for the next generation of our nation's health care professionals, training on average 12 times as many professionals as other teaching hospitals. They ensure all people have access to high-quality health care by filling the ranks of physicians, nurses, and other providers on which we all depend. They also promote community health—and, in turn, productivity and economic vitality—with primary care, extensive ambulatory networks, and care coordination to keep people well and out of the emergency department.

*[hospital name]* and all of the nation's essential hospitals stand as providers of choice and cornerstones of their communities with these and other services. Your life or that of a loved one might one day depend on the degree to which we support hospitals that fill a safety net role.

So, rather than look for reasons to pull back from the front line in the battle to solve the nation's health insurance crisis, we should redouble efforts to ensure our essential hospitals and other elements of the nation's safety net have the resources they need to win this fight. This will require that policymakers at all levels, including our elected representatives in *[state capitol]* and Congress—and those who now seek office—work together and with us to find solutions.

This election season might well define what direction we take as a nation to finish the important work we started with the ACA. We call on all our leaders to remain vigilant against attempts to declare the battle won and work with the same dedication as our nation's essential hospitals toward meeting the health care needs of all

*Version B*

**Support for Essential Hospitals: As Important Now as Ever Before**

As the essential hospital for *[city or region]*, *[hospital name]* has led work to promote access to affordable health care under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Our efforts have made a difference by reducing the ranks of the uninsured in *[city or region]* and surrounding areas.

The state has done its part, too, by expanding Medicaid and making the same commitment to vulnerable people that we make daily as an essential hospital. We applaud our policymakers for doing the right thing for patients.

But many uninsured remain. And while the cost of their care is great—and largely uncompensated—they can continue to rely on essential hospitals to treat their wounds, heal their sickness, deliver their babies.

The question we now face, and that we must consider as we enter the 2014 election season, is this: Can essential hospitals still rely on us to support their mission?

**Essential hospitals are vital to *[insert region]***

By leading the way to enroll newly eligible patients in coverage through Medicaid and the ACA

insurance marketplaces, [hospital name] has improved the health and productivity of our population. During the ACA's initial enrollment period, [hospital name] helped [hospital-specific enrollment number] patients access affordable coverage options.

But the work of essential hospitals extends beyond helping the uninsured and other vulnerable people. It touches all of us, regardless of social or economic circumstance.

For many cities and regions, the essential hospital provides the primary source of high-acuity, lifesaving care for the sickest and most badly injured people. Trauma care and burn units, neonatal intensive care, emergency psychiatric treatment—all are among the core services essential hospitals provide to everyone, not just the uninsured.

We also train the next generation of health care professionals—physicians, nurses, and others. Essential hospitals train, on average, more than 12 times as many physicians as other U.S. teaching hospitals and ensure communities have an ample health care workforce at the ready.

Out in the community, essential hospitals deliver primary care and outpatient specialty services, promote public health, and work to coordinate care, all aimed at keeping people well and out of the emergency department—and avoiding costs that might otherwise fall on all of us.

Our hospitals also respond to natural disasters and other widespread emergencies—destructive storms, a terrorist's bomb, earthquakes, air disasters. None of us is immune to these threats and all of us depend on essential hospitals when tragedy strikes.

We do all of this on the narrowest of margins and with community funding support. Coverage expansion might one day supplant much of that funding, but that day remains far off—nationally, as many as 31 million people will remain uninsured in 2024, the Congressional Budget Office projects. Suggestions now that we can begin to scale back our support of essential hospitals are simply premature and possibly damaging.

### **Even expansion doesn't eliminate uninsured**

While we certainly welcome Medicaid expansion, we know it's only one part of the larger answer to our coverage crisis.

Here and in other expansion states, many people simply earn too much to qualify for Medicaid and must turn to the ACA's private insurance marketplaces. But the premiums and copayments required by those plans often prove unaffordable, even with federal subsidies—and the subsidies themselves are in question following conflicting federal appellate court rulings in July.

Others will churn between Medicaid and marketplace eligibility as their incomes fluctuate. But if they can't realistically afford the marketplace, they're really churning between coverage and no coverage, losing access to services in the process. And those that can make the switch still might face financial strains that cause them to forgo needed care and a loss of familiar providers and continuity of care due to restrictive marketplace networks.

We also can't reach undocumented immigrants. The ACA doesn't cover this population, and more than 11 million undocumented immigrants live in the United States [*add regional numbers if these are significant*]. It is estimated that even with other sources of coverage, such as employer-

sponsored plans, more than 60 percent of undocumented immigrants will remain uninsured in 2016.

Then there are the homeless and others who just don't make it into our systems. They will fall through the cracks.

### Funding is crucial

So, many challenges remain and combine to create an uncertain future for essential hospitals and for the many life-saving services you or a loved one might one day need. *[hospital name]* is dedicated to caring for our community—it is our mission and our passion. But public support is key to our ability to do this. We must do all we can to invest in the health and economic prosperity of communities and protect and enhance the essential hospitals upon which we all rely.

We look to the future with strength and hope. *[hospital]* will continue to evolve with our health care system and improve the health of every single member of our community. We call on lawmakers and those aspiring to office to do their part to support us and all essential hospitals as a vital part of our American fabric.

## Sample Op-Eds for States that Have Not Expanded Medicaid

*Version A*

### We All Have a Stake in Medicaid Expansion

The 2014 election season will help write the next chapter in health care reform—especially here, in [state], and in the 23 other states that have refused to expand Medicaid. It could also set the tone for discussions on the future of the nation’s network of essential hospitals that care for the uninsured and other vulnerable people.

[hospital name] will follow those discussions closely—and you should too. Your life or that of a loved one might depend on the degree to which we support hospitals that fill a safety net role.

While that might sound far-fetched—especially if you’re insured, employed, and living comfortably—consider this: [hospital name] and other essential hospitals provide communitywide services that touch all lives and extend well beyond their core commitment to the uninsured, underinsured, and other disadvantaged patients.

Essential hospitals often provide a community’s only source of specialized, high-acuity care, such as trauma, burn, and neonatal intensive care units. In the nation’s 10 largest cities, a handful of essential hospitals house roughly one-third of all trauma, burn, and psychiatric beds. If you’re badly injured in a car accident or house fire, an essential hospital likely will help you back to health.

Likewise, essential hospitals prepare for and respond to natural and other disasters—threats that don’t discriminate by income or socioeconomic status. The rapid response and expertise of essential hospitals saved lives and limbs in the Boston Marathon bombings, the crash of Asiana Airlines flight 214 in San Francisco, Superstorm Sandy, and countless other events large and small that have put people and entire communities at risk.

Essential hospitals provide a training ground for the next generation of our nation’s health care professionals, training on average 12 times as many professionals as other teaching hospitals. They ensure all people have access to high-quality health care by filling the ranks of physicians, nurses, and other providers on which we all depend. They also promote community health—and, in turn, productivity and economic vitality—with primary care, extensive ambulatory networks, and care coordination to keep people well and out of the emergency department.

[hospital name] and all of the nation’s essential hospitals stand as providers of choice and cornerstones of their communities with these and other services. To suggest now, as some already have, that with the rise of the Affordable Care Act we can wind down public support for our nation’s essential hospitals is misguided and potentially a threat to anyone who needs lifesaving services.

We’re not out of the woods—far from it. In fact, in non-expansion states, we might be venturing farther into the darkness. The White House Council of Economic Advisers recently reported that 5.7 million people will be deprived of health insurance coverage in 2016 in [state] and the other states that have rejected expansion. Those left uninsured will not gain the law’s crucial benefits and states themselves will pass up billions in federal funding that could help strengthen their

economies. In fact, the council concluded, if every state expanded coverage, there would be 183,800 more jobs next year—boosting demand for goods and services and increasing overall economic activity.

The continuing high numbers of uninsured portend an unsustainable future for essential hospitals, which operate now with the narrowest of margins or, in many cases, at a loss. America's Essential Hospitals, an industry group that represents *[hospital name]* and more than 220 other essential hospitals, estimates that the shortfall in Medicaid expansion will result in \$53 billion more uncompensated care than hospitals would have experienced under a full national expansion.

If that outlook isn't bleak enough, consider also that a key federal funding source to help essential hospitals cover the cost of uncompensated care is slated for deep cuts—ultimately, about half of current levels—over the next decade. So, millions more uninsured patients and billions of dollars less in funding to care for them.

Rather than look for reasons to pull back from the front line in the battle to solve the nation's health insurance crisis, we should redouble efforts to give all people access to affordable health care coverage. This will require policymakers at all levels—our elected representatives in *[hospital name]* and in Washington, DC, and those who aspire to office—to work together and with us to find solutions.

Yes, this election season will reveal much about where we're headed in the seemingly endless health care reform debate. Demand that your lawmakers and candidates for office put us on a path toward Medicaid expansion. And call on policymakers to support the essential hospitals that open their doors to all, regardless of social or economic circumstance, and that one day might provide a lifeline for you and your family.

*Version B*  
**Support Essential Hospitals, Support Your Health**

We stand at a crossroads in the health care reform debate and the upcoming elections likely will influence our path forward. Will we give all people access to affordable health care? Or will we continue down the road to a diminished quality of life and higher costs for us all?

For *[hospital name]*, long at the forefront of work to realize reform's goal of high-quality care for all people, the answer is clear: *[state]* must expand Medicaid.

**Non-expansion costs all of us**

The issue of Medicaid expansion is larger than our single state's decision not to do it. While we have seen some pockets of improvement nationally, the big picture remains deeply troubling—especially regarding coverage projections and the prospect of hospitals digging out from under mountains of uncompensated care.

The congressional budget office projects as many as 31 million people will remain uninsured in 2024. And the White House Council of Economic Advisers recently reported that 5.7 million people will be deprived of insurance coverage in 2016 if *[state]* and the others that have rejected Medicaid expansion stay the course.

But insurance coverage won't be all they lose. Without coverage, they'll also miss out on regular and preventive care, greater financial security and productivity, and improved mental and overall health, the council reported.

So, why should you care? The economic vitality of your community, so closely tied to the health and well-being of all who live here, stands at risk. Also at risk are many lifesaving services you or a loved one might one day need—services provided at [*hospital name*] and hundreds of other essential hospitals across the country.

### **Essential hospitals are vital to [*city or region*]**

Above all, it is our duty as an essential hospital to care for the uninsured, Medicaid recipients, and other vulnerable patients. And we'll continue to do that as long as we can, regardless of [*state's*] position on Medicaid expansion and continued high levels of uncompensated care.

But to understand why all of us, rich or poor, have a stake in the future of essential hospitals, consider the many other services they provide.

For many cities and regions, the essential hospital provides the primary source of high-intensity, lifesaving care for the sickest and most badly injured people. Trauma care and burn units, neonatal intensive care, emergency psychiatric treatment—all are among the core services essential hospitals provide to everyone, not just the uninsured.

We also train the next generation of health care professionals—physicians, nurses, and others. Essential hospitals train, on average, more than 12 times as many physicians as other U.S. teaching hospitals and ensure communities have an ample health care workforce at the ready.

Out in the community, essential hospitals deliver primary care and outpatient specialty services, promote public health, and work to coordinate care, all aimed at keeping people well and out of the emergency department—and avoiding costs that might otherwise fall on all of us.

Our hospitals also respond to natural disasters and other widespread emergencies—destructive storms, a terrorist's bomb, earthquakes, air disasters. None of us is immune to these threats and all of us depend on essential hospitals when tragedy strikes.

### **Even expansion doesn't eliminate uninsured**

So, the benefits of Medicaid expansion are clear: communities made stronger by ensuring even the most vulnerable have access to high-quality health care, and relief for hospitals struggling to stay true to their mission of caring for all.

Expansion will take us far down the path to those goals, but we know it isn't a complete solution. Those who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid will need to purchase coverage through Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplaces—and for many, plan premiums and co-payments might prove unaffordable, even with federal subsidies. The subsidies themselves are in question following conflicting appellate court rulings in July, which makes Medicaid expansion even more of an imperative for [*state*].

Undocumented immigrants also fall into the gap. It is estimated that even with other sources of coverage, such as employer-sponsored plans, more than 60 percent of undocumented immigrants will remain uninsured in 2016. Then there are the homeless and others who just don't make it into our systems.

### Funding is crucial

The outlook certainly is challenging for vulnerable patients. That's why we must do all that we can now to invest in the health and economic prosperity of communities and protect and enhance the essential hospitals upon which we all rely.

Foremost on the list of things we can do is put ideologies aside and expand our Medicaid Program in *[state]*. Doing anything less with so much is at stake—and the health and economic costs far outweighing the nominal, federally supported price tag of expansion—simply would be irresponsible.

We look to the future with strength and hope. *[hospital]* will continue to evolve with our health care system and improve the health of every single member of our community. We call on lawmakers and those aspiring to office to do their part to support us and all essential hospitals as a vital part of our American fabric.

# ENHANCING YOUR INFLUENCE: CANDIDATE OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Campaigns offer a valuable opportunity to educate candidates—both incumbent legislators and their challengers—about your hospital’s role in the community and the issues that affect your facility and patients. This campaign season presents an ideal opportunity to meet with candidates and members of Congress and invite them to visit your hospital. By engaging elected officials and candidates during the coming months, you can influence key decision-makers who will ultimately determine the future of health care policy in our country.

## The Basics

If you do nothing else, send material to every candidate and incumbent, offering to serve as a resource on health care policy. Here are a few simple and important steps to take. And remember, what you do for one candidate you must do for all candidates in the same race.

- 1. Send an information packet to all candidates (incumbents and challengers)**
  - Send an introductory letter from the CEO and board president (see page 32 for a sample).
  - Provide a brief packet of information on your hospital; don’t assume the candidates are familiar with your facility.
  - More is not better. Campaigns are inundated with material. Send basic facts and statistics about the hospital, making connections to the state and district (e.g., the number of patients served or constituents employed).
  - Consider sending everything electronically, with links to key information.
  - Use the letter to invite the candidates to visit your facility and to meet with hospital leadership.
  - Copy the letter to VIP stakeholders who have a relationship with the candidate.
- 2. Follow up with a phone call**
  - Call the candidate’s or legislator’s office to follow up on the letter and to request a meeting.
  - Present yourself as a resource on health care policy.
  - Invite the candidate or legislator to visit your facility and meet with the hospital leadership and employees. This will be very appealing at this time of year.
  - Without a follow-up phone call, the material might not get noticed.
- 3. Finding the right staff contact**
  - For the mailing or email, send to the candidate or incumbent and copy the campaign manager.
  - When you call to follow up by phone, ask to speak with the campaign manager, issues director, or scheduler (in that order).
  - To find contact information for candidates running in a House or Senate race in your state, follow these steps:
    - Visit Project Vote Smart’s website.
    - Select your state from the pull-down menu to see a list of all the candidates running in Senate and House races.
    - Click a candidate for a brief bio and campaign contact information.

## **Advanced Strategies: Building a Relationship**

Developing and sustaining relationships with candidates and their staff members is essential to advancing your hospital's public policy agenda. In fact, investing in relationship-building—even before members are elected—can yield significant dividends down the road. Taking the time to reach candidates from neighboring districts is also critical, as your facility likely provides care to their constituents.

These strategies are a bit more time-consuming than simply sending material. But if you have the bandwidth, they are well worth it.

### **1. Get to know district staff (incumbents)**

- For incumbents, the district staff is often responsible for constituent services. During an election year, they may have more interest in meeting with you.
- This is an ideal time to meet with the district director so that your hospital has a relationship with local staff, as well as the legislative staff in DC.
- Call the district director and ask if he or she could meet with the hospital staff. For the meeting, bring a hospital board member or other stakeholder—particularly one with ties to the member or candidate. This will add to your clout and influence.

### **2. Get to know campaign staff (challengers/open seat candidates)**

- For a challenger or an open seat candidate, the campaign manager often becomes the chief of staff in DC. Getting to know the campaign manager early can position you well for later work toward reaching your goals.
- Request a meeting at the campaign headquarters and bring a few community leaders or other VIPs to showcase your community support. Explain the role your hospital plays in your community—both as a health care provider and as an employer.
- Review the key public policy issues that impact your hospital and offer to be a resource.
- Invite the staff and candidate to visit your facility.

### **3. Cultivating the relationship**

- Keep up the relationship through email exchanges and social media.
- Send candidates articles relevant to and supportive of your goals. Remember, whatever you send to one candidate, you must send to all candidates.

### **4. Engage your stakeholders**

- With increased competition for candidates' attention, take advantage of key hospital stakeholders who have existing relationships with members of Congress and candidates.
- These individuals can be effective in helping to educate incumbents and their challengers about your hospital and your broader policy agenda.
- Bring them with you to your meetings with candidates; ask them to sign a letter of invitation to tour your hospital; and ask them to join you when the candidates visit your facility.

### **Who are “grasstop” stakeholders?**

- Typically they are politically well-connected and have personal relationships with candidates or legislators (e.g., financial or political supporters).
- They may be influential due to the strength of their professional or community reputation (e.g., business leaders, union leaders, university presidents).
- They may serve on your board of trustees or foundation board, or they may be physicians or senior hospital management.

### **How do you find the most influential stakeholders?**

- Survey your boards, senior physicians, senior management, and other supporters to find out if they or anyone they know has a personal relationship with a legislator or candidates running in 2014.
- Review candidates’ contributor lists (Federal Election Commission reports are available online through [www.opensecrets.org](http://www.opensecrets.org); see page 29) to identify campaign donors who might be affiliated with your hospital.
- Provide stakeholders with educational materials and talking points and encourage them to reach out to candidates on the hospital’s behalf.

### **5. Arrange a hospital visit and tour**

- Urge campaign staff, incumbents, and challengers to visit your facility.
- When pitching a hospital tour, provide a highlight or focus for the visit (e.g., innovations, a new clinic, areas of specific interest to the legislator or candidate). Make it relevant to their needs.
- Visits can include a tour; meeting with your board, employees, and constituents; a candidate forum; town hall meetings; and other forums for learning and discussions.

## **More Helpful Tips**

### **Hosting a Hospital Visit**

#### **1. Establish goals for the tour:**

- educating the legislator or candidate
- highlighting innovations and achievements
- identifying needs
- strengthening relationships
- enhancing public relations

#### **2. Develop a clear agenda, including these points:**

- whom the legislator or candidate will meet
- special interests of the legislator or candidate
- departments you will visit and the purpose of each tour stop
- option of the legislator or candidate to hold an informal “town hall” meeting with hospital employees
- overall message to be delivered
- media availability

### **3. Use the visit to strengthen relationships:**

- Identify specific stakeholders (e.g., trustees, physicians, community leaders) to join the tour.
- Coordinate with the legislator or candidate's press secretary to generate media coverage of the visit, if desired, and to determine the parts of the tour that would be open to the media.
- Encourage the legislator or candidate to make a public statement in support of your policy agenda.
- Use social media to amplify the visit, including posting on your website, Twitter, Facebook, and other channels.

#### **Hosting a Town Hall Meeting**

- A town hall meeting hosted by the hospital offers a unique forum to engage candidates and legislators on issues of concern to your facility.
- As a public facility, you will need to provide the same opportunity for all candidates running for the same office (i.e., you cannot offer to host a town hall for one candidate, but not for the others); see the legal guidelines, page 22.
- The moderator of the town hall plays a particularly important role by helping to keep the questions and discussion focused on issues of concern to your hospital.
- If you plan to organize such a forum, the advocacy staff at America's Essential Hospital is available to help you.

#### **Hosting a Candidates Forum**

- Hosting a forum for candidates is a highly effective way to engage candidates on your issues, but can also be very time-intensive; this is a particularly good model when a congressional seat is open.
- Extend an invitation to all candidates running for the same office—or, at a minimum, to all candidates that meet certain threshold requirements (e.g., polling above a certain level); provide the same briefing material to all candidates. See the legal guidelines, page 22.
- Secure a knowledgeable, neutral, and effective moderator and prepare suggested questions.
- After the event, you may publicize or post on your website candidates' statements and positions on key issues, provided you do not characterize the comments or rank the candidates.

## AMPLIFYING YOUR VOICE: LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA

Today, social media can shift the national debate or a local campaign in a matter of minutes, let alone hours, making it more important than ever for essential hospitals to take advantage of these tools to advance their policy agenda. It is not surprising that social media has, therefore, become an indispensable tool for members of Congress, candidates, and political campaigns.

In the same vein, essential hospitals can leverage social media to enhance and amplify their outreach efforts with candidates and legislators. In particular, social media can be an important vehicle to learn about candidates, influence candidates, and engage stakeholder networks.

Social media is a powerful tool enabling you to impact the dialogue on health care and other related issues, while reinforcing the hospital's image and importance in the eyes of policymakers and campaigns. A strong digital presence can help energize your network and amplify a message. Hospitals must be careful not to post anything that could be construed as favoring or opposing a particular candidate, yet they can pass along information on candidate statements, issue positions, and campaign appearances.

The opportunities are vast. But given limited resources, the following are three effective ways to use social media to enhance your election outreach. If you are interested in more advanced activities, please contact Maya Linson at [mlinson@essentialhospitals.org](mailto:mlinson@essentialhospitals.org).

### 1. Listen: Follow candidates on social media

Candidates and incumbents are on Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms. Hospitals can use these tools as effective ways to learn and monitor what candidates are saying about health care. Here are a few simple tools to use:

- **Follow candidates on Twitter.** This may be one of the most important ways to learn about your candidates—and what is important to them. Also, if you follow them, they may follow your hospital, giving you another opportunity to influence them.
- **Visit the campaign websites for the congressional candidates running in your state or district and neighboring districts.** All will post some information about their position on health care and give you an idea of where they stand on the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid expansion, and other key issues of concern.

Note: Members of Congress often employ different Twitter, Facebook, and website account for their campaigns. You can often find the campaign Twitter account by visiting the congressional campaign website and following the social media icons.

### 2. Talk: Use social media to engage candidates

Ideally, your hospital will engage directly with candidates through social media to influence their actions and policy views. There are numerous ways to accomplish this, but here are a few that have the best chance of success and impact:

- By following candidates on Twitter, encourage candidates to follow your hospital

and leadership on Twitter. While the candidate might not follow an unknown individual, they likely will follow the institution, CEO, board chair and government relations director.

- Post hospital-relevant content on your platforms (e.g., articles, speeches, facts, success stories) that will resonate with candidates to influence their thoughts on issues. When posting, be sure to use hashtags associated with key issues, such as #Medicaid, to increase your visibility.
- Retweet and share any relevant statements that a candidate says about your issue, being careful not to include statements of support or opposition.
- Post candidate statements on issues relevant to your facility, being sure to treat all candidates equally and not selecting certain candidates' statements over others. Tweet at the candidate's Twitter handle when you post to keep them engaged.

### **3. Engage: Use social media to engage your network**

Last, but certainly not least, use your social media platform to engage your hospital stakeholders. Social media is a tremendous tool to educate your network about the candidates and the issues. Here are a few additional ideas for the election season:

- Provide a list of candidate questions for your followers to ask candidates at town hall meetings or other campaign appearances. Place the list on your website or Facebook page.
- Tweet one question per week for the next 10 weeks. Encourage your followers to follow the candidates.
- Write a blog about how to be an informed voter. Topics could include the top five questions to ask a candidate on health care or a review of candidates' positions if you have an open congressional race.
- Create an online voter guide on your website and other social media platforms with unbiased profiles of the congressional candidates running in your district and those surrounding your hospital. You may link to candidates' websites if you present links to all candidates for the same office and do so in a neutral manner.
- Identify upcoming candidate events that are open to the public so your followers can attend and engage the candidates.
- Remind your network to vote.

Before embarking on the use of social media in the context of a campaign, be sure to consult with hospital legal counsel to be certain you are complying with all applicable federal and state laws.

# ELECTION LAW GUIDELINES: LEGAL MEMORANDUM ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY



Eyman Associates, PC  
202-567-6201  
[www.eymanlaw.com](http://www.eymanlaw.com)

DATE July 2014  
TO America's Essential Hospitals member CEOs  
FROM Eyman Associates PC  
RE Federal constraints on election activities

MEMORANDUM

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America's Essential Hospitals asked for a summary of the federal legal constraints on member election activities, particularly the conduct of voter registration and education in connection with the upcoming elections. The summary below very briefly outlines the constraints generally applicable to public or tax-exempt hospitals and health systems. The summary is followed by a brief discussion of this issue, as well as summary charts providing general rules governing campaign contributions and congressional gift rules not covered within the main scope of the memorandum.

## I. Summary

Members of America's Essential Hospitals generally may engage in a wide variety of nonpartisan election activities. For example, organizing voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives is a public service, benefiting the health system's client population and the community at large. Providing voter education on health issues and encouraging public debate also can be nonpartisan activities. In each of these situations, however, care must be taken not to favor or oppose any particular candidate or party. Partisan activities are often prohibited, depending on the institution's status and on state and local law. In most cases, members' employees may engage in partisan activities in their individual capacities, as long as it is clear they are not acting on behalf of or utilizing the resources or authority of the hospital or health system.

Briefly, partisan activities are those that support or oppose a particular candidate for office or political party, e.g., endorsing or ranking candidates, or acting to assist or give favorable or preferential treatment to a particular candidate or party. Particularly for members with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, registration, education, and similar efforts should be conducted in a scrupulously nonpartisan manner, with no hint of bias for or against any candidate or party.

Members should consult local counsel before proceeding. State and local tax law and other regulations may constrain a public or nonprofit health system's activities, and nonprofit health systems must ensure that all activities are consistent with their stated purposes and within their corporate or statutory powers.

## II. Discussion

This discussion provides additional information as to the permissibility under federal law of election activities such as voter registration and candidate education efforts by typical members of America's Essential Hospitals.

### A. Public Health Systems

Except for possible application of federal tax law and the Hatch Act<sup>1</sup> or related provisions<sup>2</sup>, addressed below, there are no generally applicable federal limits on a public health system's right to engage in partisan election activities, although this may be constrained by local law or practical realities. Furthermore, even a public employee subject to these federal constraints may engage in partisan activities in her individual capacity as long as she does not call upon her "official authority or influence."<sup>3</sup>

The federal Hatch Act prohibits federal employees, acting in their official capacities or using their official authority or influence, from engaging in partisan political activities. It seems unlikely that the Hatch Act would apply to most public hospitals, although many states have their own versions of this law. Also, similar federal restrictions can apply to state agencies that are wholly or partially funded by the federal government;<sup>4</sup> this has been held by some courts to include State Medicaid agencies.<sup>5</sup>

Federal law imposes no general restriction on the right of public health systems and their employees to engage in nonpartisan election activities, and the federal Hatch Act and related provisions do not regulate nonpartisan activities.<sup>6</sup>

### B. Tax-Exempt, Nonprofit Health Systems

Under federal tax law, tax-exempt charitable (or "501(c)(3)") organizations are "absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office."<sup>7</sup> Violation of this ban on partisan political activities (often referred to as "political campaign intervention") can result in an IRS warning, imposition of excise taxes, and even permanent revocation of the organization's tax-exempt status. Political campaign intervention includes (but is not limited to), contributions to political campaign funds, explicit candidate endorsements, or public statements of position (verbal or written) made by or on behalf of an organization in favor of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 5 U.S.C. §§ 7321-7326.

<sup>2</sup> In particular, 5 U.S.C. § 1501, *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 1502(a); see also *McKechnie v. McDermott*, 595 F. Supp. 672, 674-75 (N.D. Ind. 1984). The U.S. Office of Special Counsel has issued a series of FAQs, including recent FAQs on the use of social media, to assist public employees in distinguishing between activities in their official versus individual capacity. Hatch Act FAQs, available at [www.osc.gov/Pages/HatchAct-FAQs.aspx](http://www.osc.gov/Pages/HatchAct-FAQs.aspx).

<sup>4</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 1501(4).

<sup>5</sup> *Alexander v. Merit Sys. Protection Bd.*, 165 F.3d 474, 481-82 (6<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1999).

<sup>6</sup> E.g., 5 U.S.C. § 1502; compare *Williams v. Merit Sys. Protection Bd.*, 55 F.3d 917, 920 (4<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1995) (partisan activity is a *per se* violation of the Hatch Act) with *Bauers v. Cornett*, 865 F.2d 1517, 1524 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1989) and *Blaylock v. Merit Sys. Protection Bd.*, 851 F.2d 1348, 1354 (11<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1988) (nonpartisan activity is permissible under the Hatch Act).

<sup>7</sup> *Political and Lobbying Activities*, [www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Charitable-Organizations/The-Restriction-of-Political-Campaign-Intervention-by-Section-501\(c\)\(3\)-Tax-Exempt-Organizations](http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Charitable-Organizations/The-Restriction-of-Political-Campaign-Intervention-by-Section-501(c)(3)-Tax-Exempt-Organizations) (adapted from IRS Pub. 1828 (Feb. 2004), available at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1828.pdf>); see generally IRS Rev. Rul. 2007-41, available at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/rr2007-41.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., IRS FS-2006-17, *Election Year Activities and the Prohibition on Political Campaign Intervention for Section 501(c)(3) Organizations*, February 2006, available at [www.irs.gov/uac/Election-Year-Activities-and-the-Prohibition-on-Political-Campaign-Intervention-for-Section-501\(c\)\(3\)-Organizations](http://www.irs.gov/uac/Election-Year-Activities-and-the-Prohibition-on-Political-Campaign-Intervention-for-Section-501(c)(3)-Organizations) (hereinafter "IRS FS-2006-17").

On the other hand, federal tax law places few restrictions on nonpartisan activities, provided that they are consistent with the organization's exempt purposes and do not constitute a substantial portion of its total activities.<sup>9</sup> In addition, federal tax law does not restrict an exempt organization's employees from engaging in partisan political activity in their individual capacities, although they should make it clear that their actions and views do not represent those of the organization.<sup>10</sup> This includes an organization's leadership; the prohibition on political campaign intervention is not intended to restrict free expression on political matters or important issues of public policy by leaders of organizations speaking for themselves. However, for their organizations to retain their 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, leaders cannot make partisan comments in official organization publications or at official functions of the organization, cannot use the organization's financial resources or personnel in such efforts, and should disclaim any endorsement of their actions by the organization.<sup>11</sup>

### C. Distinction Between Partisan and Nonpartisan Activities

Partisan activities are those that support or oppose a particular candidate for office or political party. "Activities that constitute participation or intervention in a political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate include, but are not limited to, the publication or distribution of written statements or the making of oral statements on behalf of or in opposition to such a candidate,"<sup>12</sup> as well as making or soliciting contributions to or for candidates.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, activities such as voter education, voter registration, get-out-the-vote drives, and candidate education programs are permitted under federal tax law and the Hatch Act, if conducted in a scrupulously nonpartisan manner.<sup>14</sup> But any such activity evidencing bias for or against one candidate or party is prohibited.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the determination of whether activities are nonpartisan or constitute political campaign intervention is highly fact-specific, and members should consult with local counsel as to the permissibility of specific activities. The following descriptions relay general IRS guidance on activities members are most likely to undertake.

*Candidate appearances:* If a tax-exempt hospital invites a candidate to speak in their capacity as a candidate, the organization must take steps to ensure that: it provides an equal opportunity to all political candidates seeking the same office (i.e. the speaking invitations and events must be substantially similar)<sup>16</sup>; it does not indicate any support for or opposition to the candidate (at the event or in communications concerning the candidate's attendance); and, no political fundraising occurs.<sup>17</sup> A 501(c)(3) organization may also organize a candidate forum, in which all the candidates appear together and answer questions posed by a moderator or by members of the audience. In this instance, the hospital must ensure that candidates are treated fairly and impartially, for example, by making efforts to ensure that each candidate is given an equal chance to speak, by using a nonpartisan independent panel to develop questions that cover a broad range

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<sup>9</sup> *Political and Lobbying Activities*; see generally IRS Rev. Rul. 2007-41.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> IRS Rev. Rul. 2007-41; see also IRS Presentation, Political Campaigns and Charities: The Ban on Political Campaign Intervention, available at [http://www.stayexempt.irs.gov/Mini-Courses/Political\\_Campaigns\\_and\\_Charities/political-campaigns-and-charities.aspx](http://www.stayexempt.irs.gov/Mini-Courses/Political_Campaigns_and_Charities/political-campaigns-and-charities.aspx) (hereafter "IRS Mini-Course").

<sup>12</sup> IRS Rev. Rul. 2007-41.

<sup>13</sup> IRS Mini-Course.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> *Political and Lobbying Activities*.

<sup>16</sup> IRS Mini-Course.

<sup>17</sup> 2007-14; see also *Political and Lobbying Activities*, adapted from IRS Pub. 1828 (Feb. 2004, available at [www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0,,id=120703,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0,,id=120703,00.html)).

of issues, by using a nonpartisan moderator, etc.<sup>18</sup>

*Voter registration/get out the vote drives:* 501(c)(3) organizations undertaking such efforts must not target particular voting blocs or engage in such activities with an express expectation that they will help a particular candidate.<sup>19</sup> For example, voter registrations should not be based on party affiliation; they should avoid mentioning the candidates or political parties in written or spoken communications about the drive or registration activity; and any services related to these efforts (e.g., transportation) should be offered to all regardless of political persuasion.<sup>20</sup>

*Voter education guides and other educational efforts:* Educational efforts undertaken by tax-exempt hospitals must not endorse, rank, or favor any candidates.<sup>21</sup> If a tax-exempt organization publishes a compilation of candidate positions, a questionnaire used to solicit such positions and the publication itself must not show a bias or preference in content or structure with respect to the views of a particular candidate.<sup>22</sup> Voter guides should cover a broad range of issues and refrain from judging the candidates on their positions.<sup>23</sup> (Note that distributing statements prepared by others that favor or oppose any candidate for public office will violate the prohibition.)

*Issue advocacy:* 501(c)(3) organizations are permitted to engage in issue advocacy related to their charitable mission. However, especially during election years, organizations should be careful not to cross into prohibited political campaign intervention. An organization risks intervening in a political campaign when its message invites the recipient to compare a candidate's position on an issue with the organization's views. The message does not need to expressly urge a vote for or against a candidate or mention a candidate by name, but rather could refer to political party affiliations or other distinctive features of a candidate's platform or biography. Even a statement that does not explicitly urge its audience to vote a certain way might implicitly support or oppose a candidate if the statement mentions an election, expresses approval or disapproval of a candidate's positions or actions, or raises an issue on which the candidates disagree. On the other hand, risk of being viewed by the IRS as partisan may be mitigated if, for example, the organization's statement is part of an ongoing series of communications on the same issue that are made irrespective of the timing of any election or is related to something other than the election—for example, a scheduled vote on specific legislation.<sup>24</sup>

*Postings on a tax-exempt hospital's website:* If an organization posts something on its website that favors or opposes a candidate for public office, the organization will be treated just as if it made those statements orally or through distributed printed material.<sup>25</sup> An organization may be at risk of participating in partisan activities, as well, if it posts links to other websites that advocate for or against a candidate. Posting links to candidate-related material does not necessarily constitute political campaign intervention. The IRS will review the context for the link

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<sup>18</sup> IRS FS-2006-17.

<sup>19</sup> See *American Postal Workers Union v. U.S. Postal Service*, 764 F.2d 858, 863 (D.C. Cir. 1985) (expressing doubt as to whether Postal Service could prohibit employees from participating in nonpartisan voter registration activity under the Hatch Act); see also *AFGE, AFL-CIO v. O'Connor*, 747 F.2d 748, 750 (D.C. Cir. 1984) (discussing opinion by Merit Systems Protection Board counsel that labor organization could conduct nonpartisan voter registration drive at their worksites as long as it had not endorsed a candidate).

<sup>20</sup> IRS Mini-Course.

<sup>21</sup> IRS Rev. Rul. 2007-14; IRS FS-2006-17.

<sup>22</sup> See, e.g., IRS Rev. Rul. 2007-41; IRS FS-2006-17.

<sup>23</sup> IRS Mini-Course.

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> IRS Memorandum for All EO Revenue Agents, Political Campaign Activity on the Internet, July 28, 2008, available at [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/internetfielddirective072808.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/internetfielddirective072808.pdf); see IRS Rev. Rul. 2007-41.

on the organization's website, whether all candidates are represented, any exempt purpose served by offering the link, and the directness of the links between the organization's website and the web page that contains material favoring or opposing a candidate for public office. An organization may permissibly provide links to official campaign websites of the candidates if: "there is a link to every candidate's official website; the links are presented in an educational context and are for informational purposes only; and the links are presented in a consistent, unbiased manner."<sup>26</sup> Note that an organization could also risk political intervention where it takes a position on an issue and also provides information about candidate positions on that issue, whether done on separate parts of the organization's website, or where one element is on the website and the other is not.<sup>27</sup>

#### D. Important Caveats

These comments are limited to the effect of federal law on a typical member's voter registration and candidate education activities, rather than state or local laws. Many states have their own "Hatch Acts" or other restrictions on election involvement by public entities. State and local tax law or other regulations may also constrain a health system's activities, and in some cases, its status under these laws as a public or private institution may not be clear. Finally, all activities must be consistent with the organization's stated purposes and within its corporate or statutory powers. For these and other reasons, members should consult with local counsel as to the permissibility of specific activities.

Attached below for general reference are basic overviews of federal rules governing campaign contributions and gifts to congressional members and staff. Again, members of America's Essential Hospitals should consult with local counsel as to the scope of their application and the permissibility of specific contributions or activities.

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<sup>26</sup> IRS Mini-Course; see also, IRS FS-2006-17.

<sup>27</sup> IRS Memorandum for All EO Revenue Agents, Political Campaign Activity on the Internet, July 28, 2008.

## Federal Restrictions on Political Activities

Entity	Nonpartisan Political Activity	Partisan Political Activity	Political Contributions to:				Host Fundraiser	Sponsor a PAC
			Candidate	PAC	State/Local Party	National Party		
Individual acting in individual capacity	Yes	Yes	\$2,600 per election*	\$5,000 per year	\$10,000 per year	\$32,400 per year*	Depends on status as public employee. <i>Consult counsel.</i>	Yes
501(c)(3) charitable organization	Yes, but activity must be truly nonpartisan and balanced.	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
State/local public entity	Likely <i>Consult counsel</i>	<i>Consult counsel</i>	Unlikely <i>Consult counsel</i>	Unlikely <i>Consult counsel</i>	Unlikely <i>Consult counsel</i>	Unlikely <i>Consult counsel</i>	Unlikely <i>Consult counsel</i>	<i>Consult counsel</i>
501(c)(6) trade association	Yes	Limited activity, restricted primarily to communications with members <sup>◊</sup>	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
PAC (not multicandidate)	Yes	Yes	\$2,600 per election*	\$5,000 per year	\$10,000 per year	\$32,400 per year*	Yes	N/A
PAC (multicandidate)	Yes	Yes	\$5,000 per election	\$5,000 per year	\$5,000 per year	\$15,000 per year	Yes	N/A

\* These contribution limits are increased for inflation in odd-numbered years. Note that overall biennial contribution limits on individual political contributions (set at \$48,600 to all candidates and \$74,600 to all PACs and parties) were eliminated by the Supreme Court in the April 2014 McCutcheon v. FEC decision.

◊ The Supreme Court decision in Citizens United v. FEC overturned the campaign finance law prohibition on independent expenditures of general treasury funds for “express advocacy” for federal candidates and “electioneering communications.” Tax law still requires that partisan activity not be the “primary activity,” and some circumstances could result in a tax on political expenditures. The FEC is still in the process of revising related regulations; consult counsel.

### Sources for FEC Information:

- Contribution Limits for 2013-2014 (<http://www.fec.gov/pages/brochures/contriblimits.shtml>).
- Campaign Guide for Congressional Candidates and Committees, June 2014 (<http://www.fec.gov/pdf/candgui.pdf>).
- Campaign Guide for Corporations and Labor Organizations, 2007 (<http://www.fec.gov/pdf/colagui.pdf>)

## Federal Restrictions on Gifts to Members of Congress and Staff (House and Senate Ethics Rules)

General Gift Limit	Special Rules for Gifts From Registered Lobbyists	Selected Exceptions (do <i>not</i> count towards gift limits/prohibitions*)		
		De Minimis or Outside Scope of Rules:	Based on Source:	Based on Activity:
• Less than \$50 per gift (non-cash) • Less than \$100 total per source per year	Registered lobbyists and lobbying organizations are prohibited from making <i>any</i> gifts (unless subject to exemption)*	Gifts of a nominal value (under \$10)  Refreshments of a nominal value offered other than as part of a meal  Informational materials	Paid for by <i>federal/state/local government entity</i>  From relative  From personal friend (if gift because of friendship and limited to \$250)	Training session  Charity event (not substantially recreational)  Widely attended event  Opportunities or benefits available to wide group  Personal hospitality  Benefits from outside activities  Campaign or political events  In-state constituent event (no lobbyists)  Travel to in-state constituent event, if meet other requirements (Senate)
• Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Tickets</li><li>◦ Food</li><li>◦ Travel</li></ul> • Applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Member</li><li>◦ Staff</li><li>◦ Relative of either (if gift based on relationship to Member or Staff)</li></ul>	No travel expenses may be paid <sup>†</sup>  No personal hospitality (unless based on personal friendship)  No contributions for congressionally-sponsored retreats or conferences  No contributions to legal expense funds	Non-monetary prizes or awards  Commemorative items (in-person)  Nominal value home-state products for display or free distribution  Campaign contribution  Contribution to legal expense fund  Travel (considered reimbursement under certain conditions) <sup>†</sup>	From fellow member  Accredited institutions of higher education and 501(c)(3) organizations <i>may</i> be exempt from certain travel restrictions  Pension from former employer  Bequest/inheritance	Campaign or political events  In-state constituent event (no lobbyists)  Travel to in-state constituent event, if meet other requirements (Senate)  Incident to a visit of a business site, meal or local transportation, if meet other requirements (House)

<sup>†</sup>Travel in connection with duties may be paid by private entities (that do not employ or retain lobbyists) and be considered reimbursement and not a gift, but a lobbyist or foreign agent may not accompany a Senator, officer, or employee “at any point throughout the trip”—including the event. If travel is paid for by a private organization that employs or retains lobbyists, generally it must be limited to a one-day trip, a lobbyist may not accompany a Member, officer, or staff member on “any segment of the trip”—excluding the event—and the lobbyist can have only de minimis involvement in planning.

# HOW TO SEARCH POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION RECORDS

## Important Facts to Remember:

- All Information is public, provided by the Federal Election Commission (FEC).
- The FEC requires the recording of political contributions of \$200 or more (in the aggregate for the calendar year).
- The Center for Responsive Politics is the primary research group that tracks money in politics. Through its website, [www.opensecrets.org](http://www.opensecrets.org), you can easily track FEC data, including contributions to candidates and political committees, as well as contributions by individuals. This can be a useful tool for identifying hospital stakeholders engaged in the political process.

### 1. Search for Contributions Made by a Specific Person

- Go to [www.opensecrets.org](http://www.opensecrets.org).
- Under **Most Viewed** (bottom right corner of the home page), click **Donor Lookup**.

The screenshot shows the OpenSecrets.org homepage. At the top, there's a news summary from the Chicago Tribune about women voting. Below that, the 'OpenSecrets in the News' section features articles from TIME, ThinkProgress, and The Hill. To the right, under 'Regularly cited by', there are three examples of independent expenditures: 'Women Vote!' (\$14,481), 'Put Alaska First PAC' (\$3,035), and 'Indep Insurance Agents & Brokers/America' (\$39,169). A link to 'More Independent Expenditures' is also present. On the far right, a sidebar titled 'Most Viewed' lists several topics, with 'Donor Lookup' circled in red. At the bottom, there's a call-to-action for users to 'Count Cash & Make Change.' and a newsletter sign-up form. The footer includes links to About Us, Politicians & Elections, Influence & Lobbying, News & Analysis, and Resources.

Women Vote!  
AGAINST: Clarke, Hansen      \$14,481

Put Alaska First PAC  
AGAINST: Sullivan, Dan      \$3,035

Indep Insurance Agents & Brokers/America  
FOR: Kingston, Jack      \$39,169

More Independent Expenditures >

Most Viewed

For First Time, Most Lawmakers are Worth \$1 Million-Plus >

McCutcheon v FEC >

Political Nonprofits >

Super PACs >

Donor Lookup >

Count Cash & Make Change.

OpenSecrets.org is your nonpartisan guide to money's influence on U.S. elections and public policy. Whether you're a voter, journalist, activist, student or interested citizen, use our free site to shine light on your government.

Join our mailing list and get our weekly money-in-politics newsletter.

Enter your email address  Sign Me Up

About Us      Politicians & Elections      Influence & Lobbying      News & Analysis      Resources

- Complete at least one field (e.g., First and Last Name of Donor, State of Donor) or, to narrow your search, multiple fields.

The screenshot shows the CRP Donor Lookup page. On the left, there's a sidebar with a donation call-to-action and a 'Find Your Representatives' section. The main area is titled 'Donor Lookup' and contains fields for searching by First and Last Name, Election cycle(s), State of Donor, Zip Code of Donor, Occupation / Employer of Donor, and Recipient. There's also a note about soft money restrictions and a 'Submit' button at the bottom.

**We follow the money. You make it possible.**

Thanks to support from individuals like yourself, our work makes possible the daily examination of the industries, organizations and individuals trying to influence the democratic process.

**Make a Donation Today >**

**Find Your Representatives**

Street City, State Zip Code

**Access Blocked - Content Alert**

The URL: <http://googleads.g.doubleclick.net/client=ca-pub-2601770384716403&format=300x2> was blocked

- The link you are accessing has been blocked by the Barracuda Web Filter because it matches a blocked

**Donor Lookup**

Find Individual and Soft Money Contributors

This database contains millions of records, so try to be as specific as possible when submitting a query as it will significantly reduce the time it takes to receive your results. If you have questions, concerns, or technical problems, please contact us at [apis@crp.org](mailto:apis@crp.org).

Can't find what you're looking for? You can always buy our custom data

First and Last Name of Donor

Use company name for soft money donations

Election cycle(s) to search:  Order the results by:

Relevance  
 Name of donor  
 Amount donated  
 Date of donation

State of Donor

Zip Code of Donor

Occupation / Employer of Donor

Recipient  
(Name of federal candidate, PAC, or party committee)

Please note: CRP *does not* provide street address or phone information for contributors.

Search for soft money only (1990-2002)

**Submit**

- Select the **Election cycle(s)** to search (or leave blank to search all cycles).
- Click **Submit** at the bottom of the page.
- If you get too many results, narrow your search with additional information:

#### Example

Search the name “Smith” in Montana:

- Type “Smith” in the **First and Last Name** field (first name is not required).
- Select **Montana** from the list of states.
- Select **2012** from **Election Cycle(s)**.
- Click **Submit** at the bottom of the page.

Your search should produce 95 results.

## 2. Search for Contributions to a Candidate

- Go to [www.opensecrets.org](http://www.opensecrets.org).
- Under **Most Viewed**, click **Donor Lookup**.
- Enter a specific **Election Cycle(s)** or leave blank for all cycles.
- Enter a **Recipient** (i.e., the name of the candidate or incumbent).
- Click **Submit** at the bottom of the page.

### Example

Search for contributions to Rep. Steven Daines (R-MT) in the 2012 election:

- Select 2012 from **Election Cycle(s)**.
- Type “Steven Daines” in the **Recipient** field.
- Click **Submit** at the bottom of the page.

Your search should produce 1,470 results, listing everyone who donated to Rep. Daines’ campaign in the 2012 election cycle.

## 3. Search for Contributions to a Political Party Committee

In addition to donating to individual campaigns, many people contribute to party committees, including:

- Republican National Committee
- Democratic National Committee
- National Republican Senatorial Committee
- Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee
- National Republican Congressional Committee (House)
- Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (House)

To view contributions to party committees:

- Go to [www.opensecrets.org](http://www.opensecrets.org).
- Under **Most Viewed**, click **Donor Lookup**.
- Select the fields for your search (e.g., **Election Cycle(s), State**).
- For **Recipient**, type the committee name (e.g., DNC or Republican National Committee).
- Click **Submit** at the bottom of the page.

### Example

Searching for everyone in Montana who gave money to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) in the 2012 election cycle:

- Select 2012 from **Election Cycle(s)**.
- Select **Montana** in the **State of Donor** field
- Enter “DNC” in the **Recipient** field
- Click **Submit** at the bottom of the page

Your search should produce 179 results, listing everyone who contributed to the DNC in the 2012 election cycle.

## SAMPLE LETTER AND MATERIALS

### Introduction and Hospital Visit Invitation Letter

#### Hospital Letterhead

Dear [incumbent or candidate]:

On behalf of the board and staff at [hospital name], we proudly provide the enclosed information about our hospital and invite you to visit us soon, at a time of your convenience. We look forward to meeting you and showing you how [hospital name] improves [city/region name or “the community”] with high-quality, innovative care.

In addition to touring our hospital, you would meet our board leadership, senior management, and other members of our professional team. [insert names and titles of key stakeholders] hope to join the meeting and accompany you during your visit.

As you know, [hospital name] is a vital part of our region's health care delivery system. We provide access to the best possible care for all members of our community. Here are a few key facts about [hospital name]:

- number of patients you serve
- number of people you employ
- areas of health care expertise
- other noteworthy or distinguishing characteristics

[hospital name] and other essential hospitals provide more than \$7.7 billion in uncompensated care annually—nearly 17 percent of all uncompensated care nationwide. We train 12 times as many physicians as other U.S. teaching hospitals, and are the primary providers of trauma, burn, and neonatal intensive care in most communities.

Our government relations director, [insert name], will contact your office to schedule a visit and to answer any questions you might have. In the meantime, you can contact [government relations director's name] at [phone number, email address].

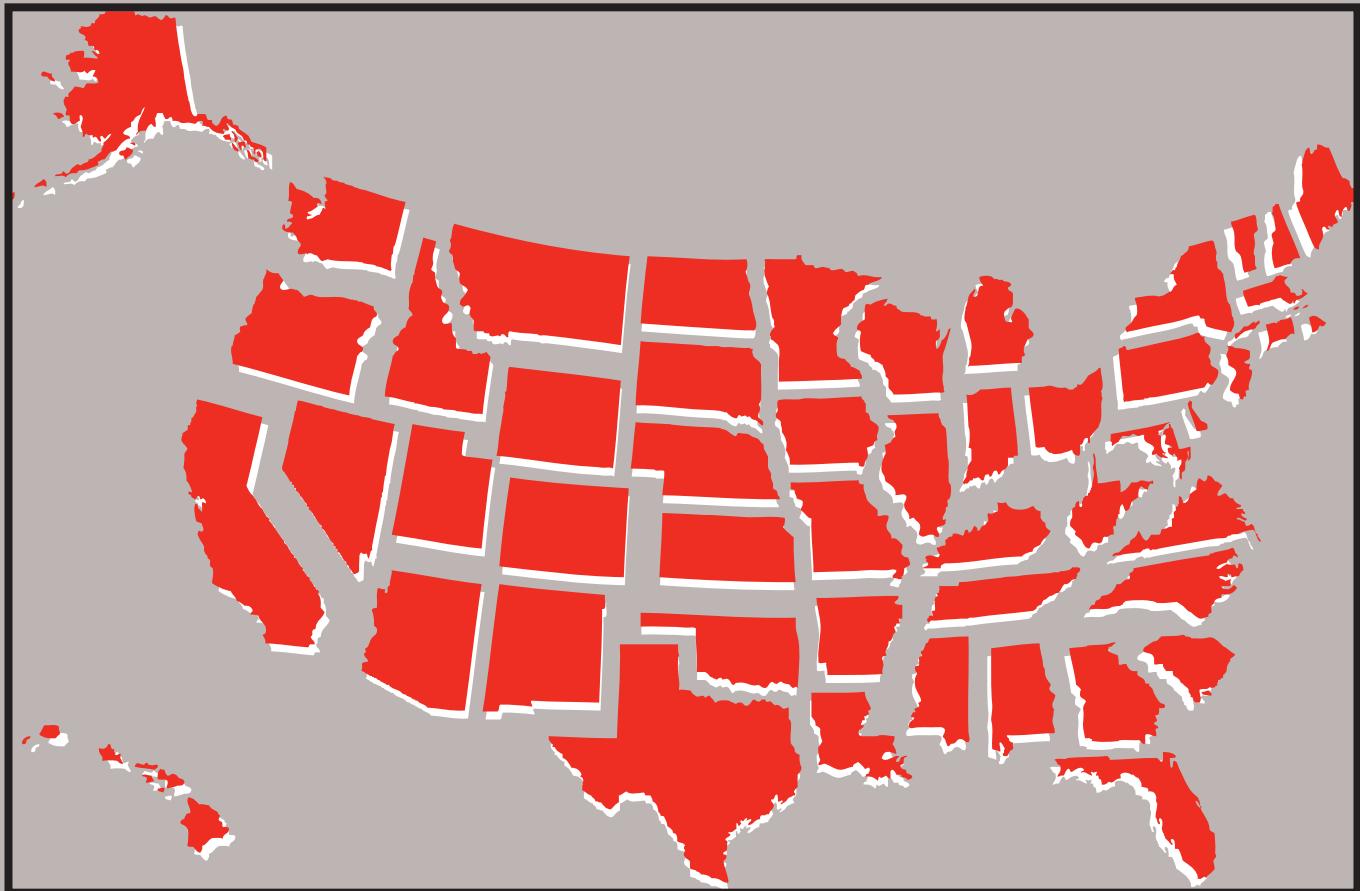
We look forward to serving as a resource for you and your staff on important health care issues and to working with you to strengthen our nation's essential hospitals.

Sincerely,

[CEO/board chair]

cc: [key stakeholders/contacts]

# **Register To Vote In Your State By Using This Postcard Form and Guide**



**For U.S. Citizens**

# General Instructions

## Who Can Use this Application

If you are a U.S. citizen who lives or has an address within the United States, you can use the application in this booklet to:

- Register to vote in your State,
- Report a change of name to your voter registration office,
- Report a change of address to your voter registration office, or
- Register with a political party.

## Exceptions

Please do not use this application if you live outside the United States and its territories and have no home (legal) address in this country, *or* if you are in the military stationed away from home. Use the Federal Postcard Application available to you from military bases, American embassies, or consular offices.

**New Hampshire** town and city clerks will accept this application only as a request for their own absentee voter mail-in registration form.

**North Dakota** does not have voter registration.

**Wyoming** law does not permit mail registration.

## How to Find Out If You Are Eligible to Register to Vote in Your State

Each State has its own laws about who may register and vote. Check the information under your State in the State Instructions. All States require that you be a United States citizen by birth or naturalization to register to vote in federal and State elections. Federal law makes it illegal to falsely claim U.S. citizenship to register to vote in any federal, State, or local election. You **cannot** be registered to vote in more than one place at a time.

## How to Fill Out this Application

Use both the Application Instructions and State Instructions to guide you in filling out the application.

- First, read the Application Instructions. These instructions will give you important information that applies to everyone using this application.
- Next, find your State under the State Instructions. Use these instructions to fill out Boxes 6, 7, and 8. Also refer to these instructions for information about voter eligibility and any oath required for Box 9.

## When to Register to Vote

Each State has its own deadline for registering to vote. Check the deadline for your State on the last page of this booklet.

## How to Submit Your Application

Mail your application to the address listed under your State in the State Instructions. Or, deliver the application in person to your local voter registration office. The States that are required to accept the national form will accept copies of the application printed from the computer image on regular paper stock, signed by the applicant, and mailed in an envelope with the correct postage.

## First Time Voters Who Register by Mail

If you are registering to vote for the first time in your jurisdiction and are mailing this registration application, Federal law requires you to show proof of identification the first time you vote. Proof of identification includes:

- A current and valid photo identification or
- A current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or government document that shows your name and address.

Voters may be exempt from this requirement if they submit a **COPY** of this identification with their mail in voter registration form. If you wish to submit a **COPY**, please keep the following in mind:

- Your state may have additional identification requirements which may mandate you show identification at the polling place even if you meet the Federal proof of identification.
- Do not submit original documents with this application, only **COPIES**.

## If You Were Given this Application in a State Agency or Public Office

If you have been given this application in a State agency or public office, it is your choice to use the application. If you decide to use this application to register to vote, you can fill it out and leave it with the State agency or public office. The application will be submitted for you. Or, you can take it with you to mail to the address listed under your State in the State Instructions. You also may take it with you to deliver in person to your local voter registration office.

Note: The name and location of the State agency or public office where you received the application will remain confidential. It will not appear on your application. Also, if you decide not to use this application to register to vote, that decision will remain confidential. It will not affect the service you receive from the agency or office.

# Application Instructions

Before filling out the body of the form, please answer the questions on the top of the form as to whether you are a United States citizen and whether you will be 18 years old on or before Election Day. If you answer no to either of these questions, you may not use this form to register to vote. However, state specific instructions may provide additional information on eligibility to register to vote prior to age 18.

## Box 1 — Name

Put in this box your full name in this order — Last, First, Middle. Do not use nicknames or initials.

*Note:* If this application is for a change of name, please tell us in **Box A** (*on the bottom half of the form*) your full name before you changed it.

## Box 2 — Home Address

Put in this box your home address (legal address). Do **not** put your mailing address here if it is different from your home address. Do **not** use a post office box or rural route without a box number. Refer to state-specific instructions for rules regarding use of route numbers.

*Note:* If you were registered before *but* this is the first time you are registering from the address in Box 2, please tell us in **Box B** (*on the bottom half of the form*) the address where you were registered before. Please give us as much of the address as you can remember.

*Also Note:* If you live in a rural area but do not have a street address, *or* if you have no address, please show where you live using the map in **Box C** (*at the bottom of the form*).

## Box 3 — Mailing Address

If you get your mail at an address that is different from the address in Box 2, put your mailing address in this box. If you have no address in Box 2, you **must** write in Box 3 an address where you can be reached by mail.

## Box 4 — Date of Birth

Put in this box your date of birth in this order — Month, Day, Year. *Be careful not to use today's date!*

## Box 5 — Telephone Number

Most States ask for your telephone number in case there are questions about your application. However, you do **not** have to fill in this box.

## Box 6 — ID Number

Federal law requires that states collect from each registrant an identification number. You must refer to your state's specific instructions for item 6 regarding information on what number is acceptable for your state. If you have neither a drivers license nor a social security number, please indicate this on the form and a number will be assigned to you by your state.

## Box 7 — Choice of Party

In some States, you must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention. To find out if your State requires this, see item 7 in the instructions under your State.

If you want to register with a party, print in the box the full name of the party of your choice.

If you do **not** want to register with a party, write "no party" or leave the box blank. Do **not** write in the word "independent" if you mean "no party," because this might be confused with the name of a political party in your State.

*Note:* If you do not register with a party, you can still vote in general elections and nonpartisan (nonparty) primary elections.

## Box 8 — Race or Ethnic Group

A few States ask for your race or ethnic group, in order to administer the Federal Voting Rights Act. To find out if your State asks for this information, see item 8 in the instructions under your State. If so, put in Box 8 the choice that best describes you from the list below:

- American Indian *or* Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black, *not of* Hispanic Origin
- Hispanic
- Multi-racial
- White, *not of* Hispanic Origin
- Other

## Box 9 — Signature

Review the information in item 9 in the instructions under your State. Before you sign or make your mark, make sure that:

- (1) You meet your State's requirements, and
- (2) You understand **all** of Box 9.

Finally, sign your **full** name or make your mark, and print today's date in this order — Month, Day, Year. If the applicant is unable to sign, put in **Box D** the name, address, and telephone number (optional) of the person who helped the applicant.

# Voter Registration Application

**Before completing this form, review the General, Application, and State specific instructions.**

Are you a citizen of the United States of America? Will you be 18 years old on or before election day? <b>If you checked "No" in response to either of these questions, do not complete form.</b> (Please see state-specific instructions for rules regarding eligibility to register prior to age 18.)				This space for office use only.		
1	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name(s)			
2	Home Address		Apt. or Lot #	City/Town	State	Zip Code
3	Address Where You Get Your Mail If Different From Above			City/Town	State	Zip Code
4	Date of Birth  Month Day Year	5	Telephone Number (optional)	6	ID Number - (See item 6 in the instructions for your state)	
7	Choice of Party (see item 7 in the instructions for your State)	8	Race or Ethnic Group (see item 8 in the instructions for your State)			
I have reviewed my state's instructions and I swear/affirm that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ I am a United States citizen</li> <li>■ I meet the eligibility requirements of my state and subscribe to any oath required.</li> <li>■ The information I have provided is true to the best of my knowledge under penalty of perjury. If I have provided false information, I may be fined, imprisoned, or (if not a U.S. citizen) deported from or refused entry to the United States.</li> </ul>						
				Please sign full name (or put mark) ▲		
				Date:    Month    Day    Year		

**If you are registering to vote for the first time:** please refer to the application instructions for information on submitting copies of valid identification documents with this form.

## Please fill out the sections below if they apply to you.

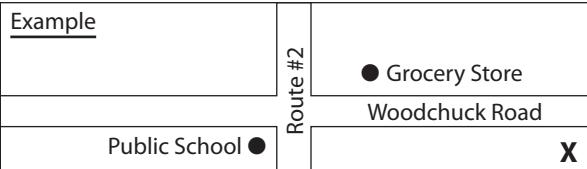
If this application is for a **change of name**, what was your name before you changed it?

A	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name(s)			
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If you were **registered before but this is the first time you are registering from the address in Box 2**, what was your address where you were registered before?

B	Street (or route and box number)	Apt. or Lot #	City/Town/County	State	Zip Code
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If you live in a rural area but do not have a street number, or if you have no address, please show on the map where you live.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Write in the names of the crossroads (or streets) nearest to where you live.</li> <li>■ Draw an X to show where you live.</li> <li>■ Use a dot to show any schools, churches, stores, or other landmarks near where you live, and write the name of the landmark.</li> </ul>				NORTH ↑
C	Example  	Route #2 ● Grocery Store Woodchuck Road Public School ●	X	

If the applicant is unable to sign, who helped the applicant fill out this application? Give name, address and phone number (phone number optional).

D	
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**Mail this application to the address provided for your State.**

# FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

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# Voter Registration Application

**Before completing this form, review the General, Application, and State specific instructions.**

Are you a citizen of the United States of America?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	This space for office use only.		
Will you be 18 years old on or before election day?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
<b>If you checked "No" in response to either of these questions, do not complete form.</b>						
(Please see state-specific instructions for rules regarding eligibility to register prior to age 18.)						
<b>1</b>	(Circle one) Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms.	Last Name		First Name		Middle Name(s)
<b>2</b>	Home Address			Apt. or Lot #	City/Town	State
<b>3</b>	Address Where You Get Your Mail If Different From Above				City/Town	State
<b>4</b>	Date of Birth  Month Day Year		<b>5</b>	Telephone Number (optional)	<b>6</b>	ID Number - (See item 6 in the instructions for your state)
<b>7</b>	Choice of Party (see item 7 in the instructions for your State)		<b>8</b>	Race or Ethnic Group (see item 8 in the instructions for your State)		
<p>I have reviewed my state's instructions and I swear/affirm that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ I am a United States citizen</li> <li>■ I meet the eligibility requirements of my state and subscribe to any oath required.</li> <li>■ The information I have provided is true to the best of my knowledge under penalty of perjury. If I have provided false information, I may be fined, imprisoned, or (if not a U.S. citizen) deported from or refused entry to the United States.</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 40px; margin-top: 10px;"></div> <p style="text-align: right;">Please sign full name (or put mark) ▲</p> <p>Date: <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; vertical-align: middle;"></span> / <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; vertical-align: middle;"></span> / <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; vertical-align: middle;"></span>      Month Day Year</p>						

**If you are registering to vote for the first time:** please refer to the application instructions for information on submitting copies of valid identification documents with this form.

## **Please fill out the sections below if they apply to you.**

If this application is for a **change of name**, what was your name before you changed it?

<b>A</b>	Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms.	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name(s)	(Circle one) Jr Sr II III IV
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If you were **registered before but this is the first time you are registering from the address in Box 2**, what was your address where you were registered before?

<b>B</b>	Street (or route and box number)	Apt. or Lot #	City/Town/County	State	Zip Code
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If you live in a rural area but do not have a street number, or if you have no address, please show on the map where you live.

<b>C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Write in the names of the crossroads (or streets) nearest to where you live.</li> <li>■ Draw an X to show where you live.</li> <li>■ Use a dot to show any schools, churches, stores, or other landmarks near where you live, and write the name of the landmark.</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 100px; margin-top: 10px; position: relative;"> <div style="position: absolute; top: 0; right: 0; font-weight: bold;">NORTH ↑</div> <div style="position: absolute; top: 10px; left: 10px; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Example</div> <div style="position: absolute; bottom: 10px; left: 10px; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Route #2</div> <div style="position: absolute; bottom: 10px; left: 50px; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Public School ●</div> <div style="position: absolute; bottom: 10px; left: 320px; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Grocery Store</div> <div style="position: absolute; bottom: 10px; left: 320px; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Woodchuck Road</div> <div style="position: absolute; bottom: 10px; left: 450px; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">X</div> </div>	
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If the applicant is unable to sign, who helped the applicant fill out this application? Give name, address and phone number (phone number optional).

<b>D</b>		
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**Mail this application to the address provided for your State.**

# FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

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# State Instructions

## Alabama

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — Voter registration is closed during the ten days preceding an election. Applications must be postmarked or delivered by the eleventh day prior to the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your social security number is requested (by authority of the Alabama Supreme Court, 17-4-122).

**7. Choice of Party.** Optional: You do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** You are required to fill in this box; however, your application will not be rejected if you fail to do so. See the list of choices under the Application Instructions for Box 8 (on page 2).

**9. Signature.** To register in Alabama you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Alabama and your county at the time of registration
- be 18 years old before any election
- not have been convicted of a felony punishable by imprisonment in the penitentiary (or have had your civil and political rights restored)
- not currently be declared mentally incompetent through a competency hearing
- swear or affirm to "support and defend the Constitution of the U.S. and the State of Alabama and further disavow any belief or affiliation with any group which advocates the overthrow of the governments of the U.S. or the State of Alabama by unlawful means

and that the information contained herein is true, so help me God"

**Mailing address:**

Office of the Secretary of State  
P.O. Box 5616  
Montgomery, AL 36103-5616

## Alaska

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** You must provide one of the following identification numbers; Alaska Driver's License or Alaska State Identification Card Number. If you do not have an Alaska Driver's License or Alaska State Identification Card, you must provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number. If you do not have any of these identification numbers, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned to you for voter registration purposes. This information is kept confidential. Having this information assists in maintaining your voter record and may assist in verifying your identity (Title 15 of the Alaska Statutes).

**7. Choice of Party.** You do not have to declare a party affiliation when registering to vote. If you do not choose a party, you will be registered as Undeclared. Alaska has a closed primary election system. Each recognized political party has a separate ballot listing only candidates from that political party. Voters registered as a member of a political party may only vote that party's ballot. Voters registered as undeclared or non-partisan may choose one

ballot from the ballots available.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Alaska you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be at least 18 years old within 90 days of completing this registration
- be a resident of Alaska
- not be a convicted felon (unless unconditionally discharged)
- not be registered to vote in another State

**Mailing address:**

Division of Elections  
State of Alaska  
PO Box 110017  
Juneau, AK 99811-0017

## Arizona

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 29 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your completed voter registration form must contain the number of your Arizona driver license, or non-operating identification license issued pursuant to A.R.S. § 28-3165, if the license is current and valid. If you *do not have* a current and valid Arizona driver license or non-operating identification license, you must include the last four digits of your social security number if one has been issued to you. If you do not have a current and valid driver license or non-operating identification license or a social security number, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned by the Secretary of State.

# State Instructions

**7. Choice of Party.** If you are registered in a political party which has qualified for ballot recognition, you will be permitted to vote the primary election ballot for that party. If you are registered as an independent, no party preference or as a member of a party which is not qualified for ballot recognition, you may select and vote one primary election ballot for one of the recognized political parties.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Arizona you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Arizona and your county at least 29 days preceding the next election
- be 18 years old on or before the next general election
- not have been convicted of treason or a felony (or have had your civil rights restored)
- not currently be declared an incapacitated person by a court of law

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State/Elections  
1700 W. Washington, 7th Floor  
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2888

## Arkansas

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your completed voter registration form must contain your state issued driver's license number or nonoperating identification number. If you do not have a driver's license or nonoperating identification, you must include the last four digits

of your social security number. If you do not have a driver's license or a nonoperating identification or a social security number, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned by the State.

**7. Choice of Party.** Optional. You do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Arkansas you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- live in Arkansas at the address in Box 2 on the application
- be at least 18 years old before the next election
- not be a convicted felon (or have completely discharged your sentence or been pardoned)
- not claim the right to vote in any other jurisdiction
- not previously be adjudged mentally incompetent by a court of competent jurisdiction

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State  
Voter Services  
P.O. Box 8111  
Little Rock, AR 72203-8111

## California

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 15 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** When you register to vote, you must provide your California driver's license or California identification card number, if you have one. If you do not have a driver's license or

ID card, you must provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number (SSN). If you do not include this information, you will be required to provide identification when you vote.

**7. Choice of Party.** Please enter the name of the political party with which you wish to register. If you do not wish to register with any party, enter "Decline to State" in the space provided.

California law allows voters who "decline to state" an affiliation with a qualified political party or who affiliate with a nonqualified political party to vote in the primary election of any qualified political party that files a notice with the Secretary of State allowing them to do so. You can call 1-800-345-VOTE or visit [www.ss.ca.gov](http://www.ss.ca.gov) to learn which political parties are allowing nonaffiliated voters to participate in their primary election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in California you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of California
- be at least 18 years of age at the time of the next election
- not be imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony
- not currently be judged mentally incompetent by a court of law

Signature is required. If you meet the requirements listed above, please sign and date the registration card in the space provided.

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State  
Elections Division  
1500 11th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

# State Instructions

## Colorado

Updated: 03-28-2008

**Registration Deadline** — 29 days before the election. If the application is received in the mails without a postmark, it must be received within 5 days of the close of registration.

**6. ID Number.** Your completed voter registration form must contain your state issued driver's license number or identification number. If you do not have a driver's license or state issued identification, you must include the last four digits of your social security number. If you do not have a driver's license or a state issued identification or a social security number, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned by the State.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Colorado you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Colorado 30 days prior to the election
- be 18 years old on or before election day
- not be confined as a prisoner or serving any part of a sentence under mandate

**Mailing address:**

Colorado Secretary of State  
1700 Broadway, Suite 270  
Denver, Colorado 80290

## Connecticut

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 14 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Connecticut Driver's License Number, or if none, the last four digits of your Social Security Number.

**7. Choice of Party.** This is optional, but you must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Connecticut you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Connecticut and of the town in which you wish to vote
- be 17 years old. You can vote when you turn 18
- have completed confinement and parole if previously convicted of a felony, and have had your voting rights restored by Registrars of Voters.
- not currently be declared mentally incompetent to vote by a court of law

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State  
Elections Division  
30 Trinity Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

## Delaware

Updated: 03-28-2008

**Registration Deadline** — The 4th Saturday before a primary or general election, and 10 days before a special election.

**6. ID Number.** Your completed voter registration form must contain your state issued driver's license number or nonoperating identification number. If you do not have a driver's license or nonoperating identification, you must include the last four digits of your social security number. If you do not have a driver's license or a nonoperating identification or a social security number, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned by the State.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Delaware you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a permanent resident of Delaware
- be at least 18 years old on the date of the next general election
- felons are eligible to vote if certain requirements are met: fines and sentence completed at least five years prior to application date; felony convictions can not be disqualifying felonies, which are murder, sexual offenses, or crimes against public administration involving bribery or improper influence or abuse of office.
- not be mentally incompetent

**Mailing address:**

Commissioner of Elections  
111 S. West St., Suite 10  
Dover, DE 19904

# State Instructions

## District of Columbia

Updated: 10-29-2003

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Federal law now requires that all voter registration applications must include either the applicant's driver's license number or the last four digits of the applicant's social security number in order to be processed.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in the District of Columbia you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a District of Columbia resident at least 30 days preceding the next election

- be at least 18 years old on or preceding the next election
- not be in jail for a felony conviction
- not have been judged "mentally incompetent" by a court of law
- not claim the right to vote anywhere outside D.C.

**Mailing address:**

District of Columbia Board of Elections & Ethics  
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 250  
Washington, DC 20001-2745

## Florida

Updated: 09-12-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 29 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** If you have one, you must provide your Florida driver's license number or Florida identification card number. If you do not have a Florida driver's license or identification card, you must provide the last four digits of your social security number.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** You are requested to fill in this box. See the list of choices under the Application Instructions for Box 8 (on page 2).

**9. Signature.** To register in Florida you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a legal resident of both the State of Florida and of the county in which you seek to be registered
- be 18 years old (you may pre-register if you are 17)
- not now be adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting in Florida or any other State
- not have been convicted of a felony without your civil rights having been restored pursuant to law
- not claim the right to vote in another county or state
- swear or affirm the following: "I will protect and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Florida, that I am qualified to register as an elector under the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida, and that I am a citizen of the United States and a legal resident of Florida"

**Mailing address:**

State of Florida  
Department of State  
Division of Elections  
The R.A. Gray Building  
500 South Bronough St, Rm 316  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

## Georgia

Updated: 03-28-2008

**Registration Deadline** — The fifth Monday before any general primary, general election, or presidential preference primary, or regularly scheduled special election pursuant to the Georgia Election Code. In the event that a special election is scheduled on a date other than those dates prescribed by the Georgia Election Code, registration would close on the 5th day after the call.

**6. ID Number.** Federal law requires you to provide your full GA Drivers License number or GA State issued ID number. If you do not have a GA Drivers License or GA ID you must provide the last 4 digits of your Social Security number. Providing your full Social Security number is optional. Your Social Security number will be kept confidential and may be used for comparison with other state agency databases for voter registration identification purposes. If you do not possess a GA Drivers License or Social Security number, a unique identifier will be provided for you.

**7. Choice of Party.** You do not have to register with a party to take part in that party's primary, caucus or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** You are requested to fill in this box. See the list of choices under the Application Instructions for Box 8 (on page 2).

**9. Signature.** To register in Georgia you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a legal resident of Georgia and of the county in which you want to vote

# State Instructions

- be 18 years old within six months after the day of registration, and be 18 years old to vote
- not be serving a sentence for having been convicted of a felony
- not have been judicially determined to be mentally incompetent, unless the disability has been removed

**Mailing address:**  
Elections Division  
Office of the Secretary of State  
1104 West Tower  
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. SE  
Atlanta, GA 30334-1505

## Hawaii

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your full social security number is required. It is used to prevent fraudulent registration and voting. Failure to furnish this information will prevent acceptance of this application (Hawaii Revised Statutes, Section 11-15).

**7. Choice of Party.** A “choice of party” is not required for voter registration.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Race or ethnic group information is not required for voter registration.

**9. Signature.** To register in Hawaii you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of the State of Hawaii
- be at least 16 years old (you must be 18 years old by election day in order to vote)

- not be incarcerated for a felony conviction
- not be adjudicated by a court as “non compos mentis”

**Mailing address:**  
Office of Elections  
State of Hawaii  
802 Lehua Avenue  
Pearl City, HI 96782

## Idaho

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 25 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Enter your driver's license number. If you have no driver's license, enter the last 4 digits of your social security number.

**7. Choice of Party.** You do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Idaho you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- have resided in Idaho and in the county for 30 days prior to the day of election
- be at least 18 years old
- not have been convicted of a felony, and without having been restored to the rights of citizenship, or confined in prison on conviction of a criminal offense

**Mailing address:**  
Secretary of State  
P.O. Box 83720  
State Capitol Bldg.  
Boise, ID 83720-0080

## Illinois

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 28 days prior to each election.

**6. ID Number.** Your driver's license number is required to register to vote. If you do not have a driver's license, at least the last four digits of your social security number are required. If you have neither, please write “NONE” on the form. A unique identifier will be assigned to you by the State.

**7. Choice of Party.** Party registration or preference is not required for voter registration. However, when you apply for a primary ballot, you must indicate your party preference for that election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** A signature is required. If signature is missing from registration form, you will be notified your registration is incomplete.

To register in Illinois you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Illinois and of your election precinct at least 30 days before the next election
- be at least 18 years old on or before the next election
- not be in jail for a felony conviction
- not claim the right to vote anywhere else

**Mailing address:**  
State Board of Elections  
1020 S. Spring Street  
Springfield, IL 62704

# State Instructions

## Indiana

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 29 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your state voter ID number is your ten digit Indiana issued driver's license number. If you do not possess an Indiana driver's license then provide the last four digits of your social security number. Please indicate which number was provided. (Indiana Code 3-7-13-13)

**7. Choice of Party.** Leave blank.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Indiana you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- have resided in the precinct at least 30 days before the next election
- be at least 18 years of age on the day of the next general election
- not currently be in jail for a criminal conviction

**Mailing address:**

Election Division  
Office of the Secretary of State  
302 West Washington Street,  
Room E-204  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2743

## Iowa

Updated: 03-28-2008

**Registration Deadline** — Must be delivered by 5 p.m. 10 days before the election, if it is a state primary or general election; 11 days before all others.\* Registration forms which are postmarked 15 or more days before an election are considered on time even if received after the deadline.

\*If you fail to meet the voter registration deadlines above you can register and vote by following the guidelines for election day registration. You can find these on the Iowa Secretary of State's website: <http://www.sos.state.ia.us/pdfs/elections/EDRbrochure.pdf>.

**6. ID Number.** Your ID number is your Iowa driver's license number (or Iowa non-driver identification number) if you have one, if not then the last four digits of your social security number. The ID number you provide will be verified with the Iowa Department of Transportation or the Social Security Administration.

**7. Choice of Party.** You may, but do not have to, register with a party in advance if you want to take part in that party's primary election. You may change or declare a party affiliation at the polls on primary election day.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Iowa you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Iowa
- be at least 17-1/2 years old (you must be 18 to vote)
- not have been convicted of a felony (or have had your rights restored)
- not currently be judged by a court to be "incompetent to vote"
- not claim the right to vote in more than one place
- give up your right to vote in any other place

**Mailing address:**

Elections Division  
Office of the Secretary of State  
Lucas Building-1st Floor  
321 E. 12th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319

## Kansas

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — Postmarked or delivered 15 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your completed voter registration form must contain your state issued driver's license number or nondriver's identification card number. If you do not have a driver's license or nondriver's identification card, you must include the last four digits of your social security number. If you do not have a driver's license or a nondriver's identification card or social security number, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned by the State. The number you provide will be used for administrative purposes only and will not be disclosed to the public. (KSA 25-2309).

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Kansas you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Kansas
- be 18 by the next election
- have completed the terms of your sentence if convicted of a felony; a person serving a sentence for a felony conviction is ineligible to vote
- not claim the right to vote in any other location or under any other name
- not be excluded from voting for mental incompetence by a court of competent jurisdiction

# State Instructions

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State  
1st Floor, Memorial Hall  
120 SW 10th Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66612-1594

## Kentucky

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 29 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your full social security number is required. It is used for administrative purposes only and is not released to the public (KRS 116.155). No person shall be denied the right to register because of failure to include social security number.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Kentucky you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Kentucky
- be a resident of the county for at least 28 days prior to the election date
- be 18 years of age on or before the next general election
- not be a convicted felon or if you have been convicted of a felony, your civil rights must have been restored by executive pardon
- not have been judged "mentally incompetent" in a court of law
- not claim the right to vote anywhere outside Kentucky

**Mailing address:**

State Board of Elections  
140 Walnut Street  
Frankfort, KY 40601-3240

## Louisiana

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** You must provide your Louisiana driver's license number, if issued. If not issued, you must provide at least the last four digits of your social security number, if issued. The full social security number may be provided on a voluntary basis. Neither the registrar nor the Department of State shall disclose the social security number of a registered voter or circulate the social security numbers of registered voters on commercial lists (R.S. 18:104 and 154; 42 U.S.C. 405).

**7. Choice of Party.** If you do not list a party affiliation, you cannot vote in the Presidential Preference Primary and party committee elections. Political party affiliation is not required for any other election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** You are requested to fill in this box. See the list of choices under the Application Instructions for Box 8 (on page 2).

**9. Signature.** To register in Louisiana you must:  
• be a citizen of the United States  
• be a resident of Louisiana. Residence address must be address where you claim homestead exemption, if any.

- be at least 17 years old, and be 18 years old prior to the next election to vote
- not currently be under an order of imprisonment for conviction of a felony
- not currently be under a judgment of interdiction for mental incompetence

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State  
Attention: Voter Registration  
P.O. Box 94125  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9125

## Maine

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — Delivered 10 business days before the election (or a voter may register *in-person* up to and including election day).

**6. ID Number.** You must list your valid Maine driver's license number. If you don't have a valid Maine driver's license, then you must provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number. Voters who don't have either of these forms of ID must write "NONE" in this space.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention (unless otherwise permitted by a political party).

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Maine you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Maine and the municipality in which you want to vote
- be at least 17 years old (you must be 18 years old to vote)

**Mailing address:**

Elections Division  
Bureau of Corporations,  
Elections and Commissions  
101 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0101

# State Instructions

## Maryland

Updated: 06-26-2008

**Registration Deadline** — 9:00 p.m. 21 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** If you have a current, valid Maryland driver's license or a Motor Vehicle Administration identification card, you must enter the driver's license or identification number. If you do not have a current, valid Maryland driver's license or Motor Vehicle Administration identification card, you must enter at least the last 4 digits of your social security number. However, please note, the disclosure of your full Social Security number is voluntary. The statutory authority allowing election officials to request your full Social Security number is Election Law Article, Section 3-202, Annotated Code of Maryland. The number will be used only for registration and other administrative purposes. It will be kept confidential.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Maryland you must:

- be a U.S. citizen
- be a Maryland resident
- be at least 18 years old by the next general election
- not be under guardianship for mental disability
- not have been convicted of buying or selling votes
- not have been convicted of a felony, or if you have, you have completed serving a court ordered sentence of imprisonment,

including any term of parole or probation for the conviction.

**Mailing address:**

State Board of Elections  
P.O. Box 6486  
Annapolis, MD 21401-0486

## Massachusetts

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 20 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Federal law requires that you provide your driver's license number to register to vote. If you do not have a current and valid Massachusetts' driver's license then you must provide the last four (4) digits of your social security number. If you have neither, you must write "NONE" in the box and a unique identifying number will be assigned to you.

**7. Choice of Party.** If you do not designate a party of political designation in this box, you will be registered as unenrolled. Unenrolled voters may participate in party primaries. However, an unenrolled voter must enroll in a party on the day of the Presidential Preference Primary in order to participate in that primary.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Massachusetts you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Massachusetts
- be 18 years old on or before the next election
- not have been convicted of corrupt practices in respect to elections

- not be under guardianship with respect to voting
- not be currently incarcerated for a felony conviction

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Elections Division, Room 1705  
One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108

## Michigan

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your completed voter registration form must contain your state issued driver's license number or state issued personal identification card number. If you do not have a driver's license or state issued personal identification card, you must include the last four digits of your social security number. If you do not have a driver's license or a state issued personal identification card or a social security number, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned by the State.

**7. Choice of Party.** A "choice of party" is not required for voter registration.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Michigan you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be 18 years old by the next election
- be a resident of Michigan and at least a 30 day resident of your city or township by election day
- not be confined in a jail after being convicted and sentenced

# State Instructions

**Notice:** Michigan law requires that the same address be used for voter registration and driver license purposes. Therefore, if the residence address you provide on this form differs from the address shown on a driver license or personal identification card issued by the State of Michigan, the Secretary of State will automatically change your driver license or personal identification card address to match the residence address entered on this form. If an address change is made, the Secretary of State will mail you an address update sticker for your driver license or personal identification card.

**Caution:** If you register by mail, you must vote in person at your assigned precinct the first time you vote, unless you are:

- disabled as defined by state law;
- 60 years of age or older; or
- temporarily residing overseas.

## Mailing address:

Michigan Department of State  
Bureau of Elections  
P.O. Box 20126  
Lansing, MI 48901-0726

## Minnesota

Updated: 12-31-2008

### Registration Deadline —

Delivered by 5:00 p.m. 21 days before the election (there is also election day registration at polling places).

**6. ID Number.** You are required to provide your Minnesota driver's license or state ID number to register to Vote. If you do not have a Minnesota driver's license or state ID then you will have to provide

the last four digits of your social security number. If you have neither, please write "none" on the form.

**7. Choice of Party.** Leave blank.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Minnesota you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Minnesota for 20 days before the next election
- maintain residence at the address given on the registration form
- be at least 18 years old on election day
- if previously convicted of a felony, your felony sentence has expired or been completed, or you have been discharged from the sentence
- not be under a court-ordered guardianship in which the right to vote has been revoked
- not be found by a court to be legally incompetent to vote.

## Mailing address:

Secretary of State  
60 Empire Drive, Suite 100  
St. Paul, MN 55103-1855

## Mississippi

Updated: 05-07-2010

**Registration Deadline —** 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** You are required to provide your current and valid driver's license number or, if you don't have one, the last four digits of your social security number.

**7. Choice of Party.** Mississippi does not have party registration. Therefore, you do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Mississippi you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- have lived in Mississippi and in your county (and city, if applicable) 30 days before the election in which you want to vote
- be 18 years old by the time of the general election in which you want to vote
- have not been convicted of murder, rape, bribery, theft, arson, obtaining money or goods under false pretense, perjury, forgery, embezzlement, armed robbery, extortion, felony bad check, felony shoplifting, larceny, receiving stolen property, robbery, timber larceny, unlawful taking of a motor vehicle, statutory rape, carjacking, or bigamy, or have had your rights restored as required by law
- not have been declared mentally incompetent by a court

*Note:* State law changed by federal court order in 1998 and by state legislation in 2000. We now accept the form as registration for voting for all state and federal offices.

## Mailing address:

Secretary of State  
P.O. Box 136  
Jackson, MS 39205-0136

## Local county addresses:

You also may return completed applications to the county circuit clerk/registrar where you reside. A complete list of county circuit clerk/registrars is available on Mississippi's website at [www.sos.ms.gov](http://www.sos.ms.gov).

# State Instructions

## Missouri

Updated: 09-12-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 28 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your completed voter registration form must contain your state issued driver's license number. Your completed voter registration form must also include the last four digits of your social security number. (Section 115.155, RSMo). If you do not have a driver's license or a social security number, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned by the State. Any electronic media, printouts or mailing labels provided under this section shall not include telephone numbers and social security numbers of voters. (Section 115.157, RSMo).

**7. Choice of Party.** You do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To vote in Missouri you must:

- isang mamamayan ng Estados Unidos
- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Missouri
- be at least 17-1/2 years of age (you must be 18 to vote)
- not be on probation or parole after conviction of a felony, until finally discharged from such probation or parole
- not be convicted of a felony or misdemeanor connected with the right of suffrage
- not be adjudged incapacitated by any court of law

- not be confined under a sentence of imprisonment

### Mailing address:

Secretary of State  
P.O. Box 1767  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1767

## Mailing address:

Secretary of State's Office  
P.O. Box 202801  
State Capitol  
Helena, MT 59620-2801

## Nebraska

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — The third Friday before the election (or delivered by 6 p.m. on the second Friday before the election).

**6. ID Number.** You must provide your Montana driver's license number. If you do not have a Montana driver's license number then you must list the LAST FOUR DIGITS OF YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER. If you have neither a driver's license, nor a social security number, please write "NONE" on the form. The state of Montana will assign to you a unique identifying number.

**7. Choice of Party.** Montana does not require party registration to participate in any election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Montana you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be at least 18 years old on or before the election
- be a resident of Montana and of the county in which you want to vote for at least 30 days before the next election
- not be in a penal institution for a felony conviction
- not currently be determined by a court to be of unsound mind
- meet these qualifications by the next election day if you do not currently meet them

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Nebraska you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Nebraska
- be at least 18 years of age or will be 18 years of age on or before the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November
- not have been convicted of a felony, or if convicted, have had your civil rights restored
- not have been officially found to be mentally incompetent

### Mailing address:

Nebraska Secretary of State  
Suite 2300, State Capitol Bldg.  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4608

# State Instructions

## Nevada

Updated: 05-07-2010

**Registration Deadline** — The deadline for mail-in registration is the fifth Saturday before any primary or general election. In person registration remains available until 9:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday preceding any primary or general election. You may register to vote in person only by appearing at the office of the County Clerk/Registrar of Voters.

**6. ID Number.** You must supply a Nevada's Driver's License Number or Nevada ID Card Number if you have been issued one. If you do not have a Driver's License Number or Nevada ID Card Number, you must supply the last four digits of your Social Security Number. If you do not have a Social Security Number, please contact your County Clerk/Registrar of Voters to be assigned a unique identifier.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention. If you register with a minor political party, or as a Nonpartisan you will receive a Nonpartisan Ballot for the Primary Election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Nevada you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- have attained the age of 18 years on the date of the next election
- have continuously resided in the State of Nevada, in your county, at least 30 days and in your precinct at least 10 days before the next election

- have your civil rights restored if you were convicted of a felony
- not be determined by a court of law to be mentally incompetent
- claim no other place as your legal residence

### Mailing address:

Secretary of State  
Elections Division  
101 North Carson Street  
Suite 3  
Carson City, NV 89701-4786

Applications may be returned to the Secretary of State's office at the address above, but to avoid possible delays, you are advised to return your completed voter registration applications directly to your local county election official.

### Local county addresses:

To meet registration deadlines, especially during the two weeks before the close of the mail-in registration deadline, return completed applications to your respective County Clerk/ Registrar of Voters. A complete list of County Clerk/Registrar of Voters and registration deadlines is available on Nevada's website: [www.nvsos.gov](http://www.nvsos.gov).

## New Hampshire

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — New Hampshire town and city clerks will accept this application only as a request for their own absentee voter mail-in registration form, which must be received by your city or town clerk by 10 days before the election.

New Hampshire town and city clerks will accept this application only as a request for their own absentee voter mail-in registration form. You need to fill in only Box 1 and Box 2 or 3.

The application should be mailed to your town or city clerk at your zip code. These addresses are listed on the Secretary of State web site at <http://www.state.nh.us/sos/clerks.htm>

It should be mailed in plenty of time for your town or city clerk to mail you their own form and for you to return that form to them by 10 days before the election.

## New Jersey

Updated: 03-28-2008

**Registration Deadline** — 21 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** The last four digits of your Social Security number OR your New Jersey Driver's License number is required for voter registration. If you do not possess either of these identifications, please write "NONE" on the form. The State will assign a number that will serve to identify you for voter registration purposes.

**7. Choice of Party.** New Jersey's voter registration form does not provide a check-off for political party affiliation. A newly registered voter or voter who has never voted in a political party primary election can declare party affiliation at the polling place on the day of a primary election. In New Jersey, a primary election is only held for the Democratic and Republican parties. A voter may also file a

# State Instructions

political party declaration form to become a member of a political party. If a declared voter wished to change party affiliation he or she must file a declaration form 50 days before the primary election, in order to vote.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in New Jersey you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be at least 18 years of age by the time of the next election
- be a resident of this State and county at your address at least 30 days before the next election
- not be serving a sentence or on parole or probation as the result of a conviction of any indictable offense under the laws of this or another state or of the United States

**Mailing address:**

New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety  
Division of Elections  
PO BOX 304  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0304

## New Mexico

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 28 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your full social security number is required. This registration card containing your social security number will become part of the permanent voter registration records of your locality, which are open to inspection by the public in the office of the county clerk. However, your social security number and date of birth will remain confidential and will

not be disclosed to the public. Computerized listings of limited voter registration information (without social security number or birth date) are available to the general public, and are furnished upon request to incumbent election officeholders, candidates, political parties, courts and non-profit organizations promoting voter participation and registration, for political purposes only (\$1-5-19B, NMSA 1978).

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in New Mexico you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of the State of New Mexico
- be 18 years of age at the time of the next election
- not have been denied the right to vote by a court of law by reason of mental incapacity and, if I have been convicted of a felony, I have completed all conditions of probation or parole, served the entirety of a sentence or have been granted a pardon by the Governor.

**Mailing address:**

Bureau of Elections  
325 Don Gaspar, Suite 300  
Santa Fe, NM 87503

## New York

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 25 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Federal law requires that you provide your driver's

license number to register to vote. If you do not have a driver's license then you will have to provide at least the last four digits of your social security number. If you have neither, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned to you by your State.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must enroll with a party if you want to vote in that party's primary election or caucus.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in New York you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of the county, or of the City of New York, at least 30 days before an election
- be 18 years old by December 31 of the year in which you file this form (*Note: You must be 18 years old by the date of the general, primary, or other election in which you want to vote*)
- not be in jail or on parole for a felony conviction
- not currently be judged incompetent by order of a court of competent judicial authority
- not claim the right to vote elsewhere

**Mailing address:**

NYS Board of Elections  
40 Steuben Street  
Albany, NY 12207-2108

## North Carolina

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — Postmarked 25 days before the election or received in the elections office or designated voter registration agency site by 5:00 p.m. 25 days before the election.

# State Instructions

**6. ID Number.** Provide your North Carolina driver's license number, or North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles ID number. If you do not have a driver's license, then list the last four digits of your social security number.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party to vote in that party's primary unless that party allows unaffiliated voters to vote in its primary. If you indicate a political party that is not a qualified party, or indicate no party, you will be listed as "Unaffiliated".

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** You are required to fill in this box. However, your application will not be rejected if you fail to do so. See the list of choices under the Application Instructions for Box 8 (on page 2).

**9. Signature.** To register in North Carolina you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of North Carolina and the county in which you live for at least 30 days prior to the election
- be 18 years of age by the day of the next general election
- have your rights of citizenship restored if you have been convicted of a felony
- not be registered or vote in any other county or state

**Mailing address:**

State Board of Elections  
P.O. Box 27255  
Raleigh, NC 27611-7255

## North Dakota

Updated: 03-01-2006

North Dakota does not have voter registration.

## Ohio

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your social security number is requested. Providing this number is voluntary. This information allows the Board of Elections to verify your registration if necessary (O.R.C. 3503.14). [Federal law requires that you provide your driver's license number to register to vote. If you do not have a driver's license then you will have to provide at least the last four digits of your social security number. If you don't have either number you will have to write "NONE" on the form and the State will assign you a number.]

**7. Choice of Party.** You do not register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election. Party affiliation is established by voting at a primary election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Ohio you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Ohio
- be 18 years old on or before election day. If you will be 18 on or before the day of the general election, you may vote in the primary election for candidates only.
- not be convicted of a felony and currently incarcerated
- not be found incompetent by a court for purposes of voting

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State of Ohio  
Elections Division  
180 E. Broad Street — 15th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

## Oklahoma

Updated: 10-29-2003

**Registration Deadline** — 25 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** The last four digits of your social security number are required. (Oklahoma Title 26, Section 4-112) In addition, your Oklahoma driver's license number is requested.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Oklahoma you must:

- be a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Oklahoma
- be 18 years old on or before the date of the next election
- have not been convicted of a felony, for which a period of time equal to the original sentence has not expired, or for which you have not been pardoned
- not now be under judgment as an incapacitated person, or a partially incapacitated person prohibited from registering to vote

**Mailing address:**

Oklahoma State Election Board  
Box 528800  
Oklahoma City, OK 73152-8800

# State Instructions

## Oregon

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 21 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Federal law requires that you provide your driver's license number to register to vote. If you do not have a driver's license then you will have to provide at least the last four digits of your social security number. If you have neither, you will need to write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will instead be assigned to you by your State.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Oregon you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Oregon
- be at least 18 years old by election day

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State  
Elections Division  
141 State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97310-0722

## Pennsylvania

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before an election or primary.

**6. ID Number.** You must supply a Driver's License Number, if you have one. If you do not have a Driver's License Number, you must supply the last four digits of your

social Security Number. If you do not have a Social Security Number, please write "NONE" in the box.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** You are requested to fill in this box. See the list of choices under the Application Instructions for Box 8 (on page 2).

**9. Signature.** To register in Pennsylvania you must:

- be a citizen of the United States at least one month before the next election
- be a resident of Pennsylvania and your election district at least 30 days before the election
- be at least 18 years of age on the day of the next election

**Mailing address:**

Office of the Secretary of  
the Commonwealth  
210 North Office Bldg.  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0029

## Rhode Island

Updated: 03-28-2008

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** The applicant shall be required to provide his/her Rhode Island driver's license number if the applicant has been issued a current and valid Rhode Island driver's license. In the case of an applicant who has not been issued a current and valid driver's license he/she must provide the last four (4) digits of his/her social security number. An applicant, who has neither, will be assigned a unique identifying number by the State of Rhode Island.

**7. Choice of Party.** In Rhode Island, a person must register with a party if he/she wishes to take part in that party's primary election. A person who fails to register with a party at the time of registration may, if he/she chooses, register with a party on the day of that party's primary and take part in that party's primary election. If a person does not register with a party, he/she can still vote in general elections and non-partisan primary elections.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Rhode Island you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Rhode Island for 30 days preceding the next election
- be 18 years old by election day
- not be currently incarcerated in a correctional facility due to a felony conviction
- not have been lawfully judged to be mentally incompetent

**Mailing address:**

Rhode Island State Board of  
Elections  
50 Branch Ave.  
Providence, RI 02904-2790

## South Carolina

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your full social security number is required. It is required by the South Carolina Code of Laws and is used for internal purposes only. Social security number does not appear on any report produced by the State Election Commission nor is it released to any unauthorized

# State Instructions

individual. (South Carolina Title 7-5-170)

**7. Choice of Party.** You do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** You are required to fill in this box. Your application may be rejected if you fail to do so. See the list of choices under the Application Instructions for Box 8 (on page 2).

**9. Signature.** To register in South Carolina you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be at least 18 years old on or before the next election
- be a resident of South Carolina, your county and precinct
- not be confined in any public prison resulting from a conviction of a crime
- never have been convicted of a felony or offense against the election laws, or if previously convicted, have served your entire sentence, including probation or parole, or have received a pardon for the conviction
- not be under a court order declaring you mentally incompetent
- claim the address on the application as your only legal place of residence and claim no other place as your legal residence

**Mailing address:**

State Election Commission  
P.O. Box 5987  
Columbia, SC 29250-5987

## South Dakota

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline —** Received 15 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your driver's license number is requested. If you do not have a valid driver's license, you must provide the last four digits of your social security number.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in South Dakota you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- reside in South Dakota
- be 18 years old by the next election
- not be currently serving a sentence for a felony conviction which included imprisonment, served or suspended, in an adult penitentiary system
- not have been adjudged mentally incompetent by a court

**Mailing address:**

Elections, Secretary of State  
500 E. Capitol  
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

## Tennessee

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline —** 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your full social security number is required. Social security number, if any, is required for purposes of identification and to avoid duplicate registration (TCA 2.2.116).

**7. Choice of Party.** You do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Optional.

**9. Signature.** To register in Tennessee you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Tennessee
- be at least 18 years old on or before the next election
- not have been convicted of a felony, or if convicted, have had your full rights of citizenship restored (or have received a pardon)
- not be adjudicated incompetent by a court of competent jurisdiction (or have been restored to legal capacity)

**Mailing address:**

Coordinator of Elections  
Tennessee Tower, Ninth Floor  
312 Eighth Avenue, North  
Nashville, TN 37243

## Texas

Updated: 03-01-2006

**Registration Deadline —** 30 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** You must provide your driver's license number to register to vote. If you do not have a driver's license then you will have to provide at least the last four digits of your social security number. If you have neither, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will instead be assigned to you by your State.

**7. Choice of Party.** You do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Texas you must:

- be a citizen of the United States

# State Instructions

- be a resident of the county in which the application for registration is made
- be at least 17 years and 10 months old (you must be 18 to vote)
- not be finally convicted of a felony, or if a convicted felon, you must have fully discharged your punishment, including any incarceration, parole, supervision, period of probation or be pardoned.
- have not been declared mentally incompetent by final judgment of a court of law

**Mailing address:**

Office of the Secretary of State  
Elections Division  
P.O. Box 12060  
Austin, TX 78711-2060

## Utah

Updated: 03-28-2008

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election for mail-in applications; 15 days before the election for walk-in registrations at the county clerk's office.

**6. ID Number.** Your completed voter registration form must contain your state issued driver's license number or nonoperating identification number. If you do not have a driver's license or nonoperating identification, you must include the last four digits of your social security number. If you do not have a driver's license or a nonoperating identification or a social security number, please write "NONE" on the form. A unique identifying number will be assigned by the State.

**7. Choice of Party.** Declaring a party is not required in order to register to vote. However, Utah's

election law allows each political party to choose whom it will allow to vote in its primary election. If you do not affiliate with a party, you may be restricted from voting in the primary.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Utah you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- have resided in Utah for 30 days immediately before the next election
- be at least 18 years old on or before the next election
- not be a convicted felon currently incarcerated for commission of a felony
- not be convicted of treason or crime against the elective franchise, unless restored to civil rights
- not be found to be mentally incompetent by a court of law

**Mailing address:**

Office of the Lieutenant Governor  
P.O. Box 142325  
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

## Vermont

Updated: 07-29-2008

**Registration Deadline** — Delivered to the town clerk before 5:00 PM on the Wednesday before the election.

**6. ID Number.** You must provide your Vermont Driver's license number, or if none, the last 4 digits of your Social Security number. If you do not have a Vermont Driver's license or a Social Security number, please write "NONE" on the form. The Secretary of State's office will assign you a unique identifying number.

**7. Choice of Party.** Vermont does not require party registration to participate in any election.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Vermont you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Vermont
- be 18 years of age on or before election day
- have taken the following Oath: You solemnly swear (or affirm) that whenever you give your vote or suffrage, touching any matter that concerns the state of Vermont, you will do it so as in your conscience you shall judge will most conduce to the best good of the same, as established by the Constitution, without fear or favor of any person [Voter's Oath, Vermont Constitution, Chapter II, Section 42]

By signing in Box 9, you are attesting that you have sworn or affirmed the Vermont voter's oath as printed above.

**Mailing address:**

Office of the Secretary of State  
Director of Elections  
26 Terrace Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609-1101

## Virginia

Updated: 11-10-2010

**Registration Deadline** — Delivered 29 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Your full social security number is required. Your social security number will appear on reports produced only for official use by voter registration and election officials and, for jury selection purposes, by courts.

# State Instructions

Article II, §2, Constitution of Virginia (1971).

**7. Choice of Party.** You do not have to register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Virginia you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Virginia and of the precinct in which you want to vote
- be 18 years old by the next May or November general election
- not have been convicted of a felony, or have had your civil rights restored
- not currently be declared mentally incompetent by a court of law

**Mailing address:**

State Board of Elections  
1100 Bank Street, 1st Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219

## Washington

Updated: 10-29-2003

**Registration Deadline** — 30 days before the election (or delivered in-person to the local voter registration office 15 days before the election).

**6. ID Number.** You must provide your driver's license number. If you do not have a Washington driver's license, you must provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number. Failure to provide this information may prevent your registration from being processed.

**7. Choice of Party.** You are not required to designate your party affiliation to register in Washington.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in Washington you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a legal resident of Washington State, your county and precinct for 30 days immediately preceding the election in which you want to vote
- be at least 18 years old by election day
- not be convicted of infamous crime, unless restored to civil rights

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State  
Voter Registration by Mail  
P.O. Box 40230  
Olympia, WA 98504-0230

## West Virginia

Updated: 09-12-2006

**Registration Deadline** — 21 days before the election.

**6. ID Number.** Enter your driver's license number. If you do not have a driver's license number, enter the last four numbers of your social security number. If you do not have a driver's license number or a social security number, an identification number will be assigned to you.

**7. Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention (unless you request the ballot of a party which allows independents to vote)

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.

**9. Signature.** To register in West Virginia you must:

- be a citizen of the United States

• live in West Virginia at the above address

- be 18 years old, or to vote in the primary be 17 years old and turning 18 before the general election
- not be under conviction, probation, or parole for a felony, treason or election bribery
- not have been judged "mentally incompetent" in a court of competent jurisdiction

**Mailing address:**

Secretary of State  
Building 1, Suite 157-K  
1900 Kanawha Blvd. East  
Charleston, WV 25305-0770

## Wisconsin

Updated: 09-12-2006

**Registration Deadline** — Twenty (20) days before the election (or completed in the local voter registration office up to 5:00 pm. 1 day before the election, or completed at the polling place on election day).

**6. ID Number.** Provide your driver's license number, if you have no current and valid driver's license, the last 4 digits of your social security number or DOT-issued ID card number.

**7. Choice of Party.** Not required.

**8. Race or Ethnic Group.** Not required.

**9. Signature.** To register in Wisconsin you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Wisconsin for at least 10 days
- be 18 years old
- not have been convicted of treason, felony or bribery, or if you have, your civil rights have been restored

## State Instructions

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- not have been found by a court to be incapable of understanding the objective of the electoral process
- not make or benefit from a bet or wage depending on the result of an election
- not have voted at any other location, if registering on election day

**Mailing address:**

State Elections Board  
17 West Main Street, Suite 310  
P.O. Box 2973  
Madison, WI 53701-2973

### Wyoming

Updated: 03-01-2006

Wyoming by law, cannot accept this form unless State law is changed.