

Hosting a Voter Registration Drive

Rules and Tools

Rules and responsibilities

- You must return any completed forms you collect to your county elections department no later than five days after you receive them, or before the voter registration deadline (whichever is first). You may put all the forms in one envelope and return them by mail or in person.
- You must give a voter registration form to anyone who asks, regardless of party affiliation, race, age, etc. Forms must be equally available to everyone. You can print a voter registration form from our website and make as many copies as you'd like.
- You may hand out small tokens while you are registering voters. However, you cannot pay or bribe people to vote. Therefore, you must give any "freebies" to anyone who asks, regardless of their voter registration status or intention to vote. This ban on bribery includes waiving admission to events. Free buttons featuring the official elections website are available for you to distribute at your on-campus events.
- No partisan materials may be handed out as part of a College Civics voter registration drive. Party representatives (student clubs, candidates, elected officials) may be part of the drive, as long as equal opportunity is given to all partisan groups to participate.
- Be sure that students registering to vote know the rules of eligibility. You cannot refuse someone a registration form, but accidentally violating voter registration laws could lead to trouble for some students (such as a Running Start student who is not yet 18, or a foreign exchange student who is not a U.S. citizen).
- As students submit their voter registration forms, check to make sure they have filled in all the boxes and signed at the bottom. Incomplete forms could lead to students not receiving their ballots. Avoid this potential problem by checking forms when they are submitted.

Tools for a successful drive

- Washington State voter registration forms, available in eight languages (English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Cambodian, Laotian, and Russian)
- Pens and clipboards for completing paper forms
- Laptop or tablet computers for online registration at www.vote.wa.gov
- Super trendy FREE voting buttons, available to order from our website
- “Register to Vote Here!” posters, available to download from our website

Tricks of the trade

- DO NOT sit behind a table. A clipboard is a voter registration volunteer's best friend. Walk up to people and ask if they need to register or update their address.
- Be a voter registration freeloader. Talk to groups organizing events, set up a table with voter registration info and get your team out into the crowd with clipboards to register voters on the spot.
- Set up a permanent voter registration station. A computer station in the student union building, library, dining hall, etc. makes it easy for students to register or update their addresses.
- Collect “pledge to vote” cards from students registering. Ask the students to address a postcard to themselves with a reminder to vote. When it’s time to vote, send the postcards to students as a reminder that they promised “I will vote.” Rock to Vote has postcards available, or you can make your own version.

Student Voter FAQ

Many student voters have questions about voting; bring this information to your voter registration drive.

Am I eligible to vote?

To register to vote, you must meet all of the following qualifications:

- A citizen of the United States
- A legal resident of Washington State (this includes college students)
- At least 18 years old by Election Day
- Not under the authority of the Department of Corrections
- Not disqualified from voting due to a court order

I don't know if I'm registered to vote. How can I check?

Look up your voter registration status using MyVote at www.vote.wa.gov. If your status is listed as "inactive," you need to update your address.

When is the registration deadline?

New applications or address updates must be postmarked or submitted online no later than the Monday four weeks before Election Day. If you are not already registered in Washington, you may register in person at your County Elections Office until the Monday one week before Election Day. Applications and updates submitted after the deadline will take effect after the next election.

Do I need to update my address every time I move?

Yes. To receive your ballot, you must update your voter registration address. You can change your address online with MyVote, or send in a print copy of a new voter registration form.

What's the difference between my residential and mailing addresses?

Your *mailing address* is where you will receive your ballot. Your ballot can be sent to any address. Your *residential address* must be a Washington address. This address determines which candidates and measures will be on your ballot.

Can I register using my school address?

Yes. You may register using either your home or school address. If you live on campus, you may list your dorm room or campus apartment as your residential address. PO boxes may not be used as residential addresses, but can be used as mailing addresses.

Can I register in Washington if I'm an out-of-state student?

Yes. You may register to vote if you have lived in Washington at least 30 days. You must use your Washington address as your residential address. You may vote in only one state.

Can I vote if I'm studying abroad?

Yes. Your ballot will be sent to you anywhere in the world if you submit an updated mailing address.

May I vote in two places?

No! You may only be an active voter in one county in one state. Should you accidentally receive two ballots, vote only once. It is a felony to vote twice in the same election.