



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Attorney General and Secretary of the Commonwealth Joint Guidance KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: Voting in Massachusetts

The right to vote is protected under Massachusetts law. The Attorney General's Office and the Secretary of the Commonwealth are committed to ensuring that every eligible voter can cast their ballot freely, safely, and without intimidation, interference, or discrimination, and to ensuring that ballot is counted.

This guide provides information about voting options, voter rights, and what to do if you experience a problem at the polls.

For more information about voting in Massachusetts, visit the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Elections Division at mass.gov/vote or call 1-800-462-VOTE.

KEY DATES:

State Primary, Tuesday, September 1

- **Voter registration deadline:** Saturday, August 22
- **Early in-person voting period:** Saturday, August 22 – Friday, August 28
- **Deadline to request a mail-in ballot:** 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 25

General Election, Tuesday, November 3

- **Voter registration deadline:** Saturday, October 24
- **Early in-person voting period:** Saturday, October 17 – Friday, October 30
- **Deadline to request a mail-in ballot:** 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 27

VOTER REGISTRATION

You can register to vote [online](#), [by mail](#), or [in person](#). To register to vote in Massachusetts, you must be:

- A U.S. citizen
- A Massachusetts resident
- At least 16 years old (you may vote if you will be 18 on or before Election Day)
- Not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction

You can check your voter registration status online at mass.gov/vote. If you have questions about your registration, contact your [local election official](#) or the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Elections Division at **1-800-462-VOTE**.

VOTING IN MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts voters have several options for casting their ballot:

- [Vote early in person](#)
- [Vote early by mail](#)
- [Vote by absentee ballot](#)
- [Vote in person on Election Day](#)

YOUR RIGHTS AT THE POLLS

You have the right to vote if you are eligible and registered.

To vote in Massachusetts, you must be a United States citizen, a Massachusetts resident, at least 18 years old and register at least 10 days before the election in which you seek to vote. You have the right to cast your ballot without intimidation, harassment, or interference. If your name isn't on the voting list at your polling location or you believe there is a listing error, you have the right to request and cast a provisional ballot.

You have the right to vote if you are in line by 8:00 PM.

Polling locations are open from 7:00 AM until 8:00 PM on Election Day. If you are in line by 8:00 PM, do not leave. You have the right to cast your ballot.

You have the right to vote free from intimidation, harassment, or interference.

Massachusetts law prohibits anyone from interfering with your right to vote or attempting to intimidate voters. Examples of voter intimidation may include threatening or harassing voters, blocking access to a polling location, interfering with someone while they are registering to vote or casting a ballot, or using threats or coercion to influence someone's vote.

You have the right to ask for help.

Poll workers are available to answer questions and provide instructions about the voting process. If you are unable to mark your ballot due to physical disability or inability to read, you can receive assistance. You may designate a person of your choice to assist you or request that the election official assist you in completing your ballot.

By law, all polling locations in Massachusetts must be accessible. Voters with disabilities may use an accessible voting booth or accessible ballot marking device that can read, translate, and

mark ballots, receive assistance from a person of their choice when voting, or use the accessible vote-by-mail system. More information on voting accessibility can be found, [here](#).

Law Enforcement at Polling Places

State law requires each polling place have a local police officers or constable present to assist election officials and help ensure that voters are able to access and leave polling places safely. Law enforcement officers cannot interfere with your right to vote or intimidate voters. The Attorney General's Office has authority to file a lawsuit to enforce these protections if local, state, or federal law enforcement uses intimidation tactics at a polling place. If you have concerns about law enforcement activity at a polling location, speak with the polling location's warden and contact the Attorney General's Office.

Observers at Polling Places

Any person is permitted to observe elections in Massachusetts. An observer is any person who wishes to watch the voting process. The term "observer" may refer to a campaign worker, a member of the press, an "election protection" or "election integrity" volunteer, a "federal monitor" sent by the Department of Justice or any other member of the public interested in watching the process.

All of these observers are afforded the same rights and have the same level of access. Observers have the right to watch the voting or counting process from outside the voting area, challenge a voter's ballot for legal cause, take photos of the room or activities, take silent video of the location and voting process, request the count on the ballot box at reasonable intervals and speak to the Warden if any issues arise.

Observers are present to observe - not to interact or interfere. If the Warden or local election official determines that an observer is interfering with voting, obstructing a voter, illegally challenging ballots, or being disruptive, the Warden may order that the observer be removed.

Observers cannot speak to any voters inside the voting location, address questions or concerns to anyone except the Warden or local election official, wear or display anything intended to aid or defeat a candidate or question on the ballot, speak on the phone inside the voting location, record audio within the polling place, challenge ballots with intent to intimidate or determine for whom someone is voting, or carry a firearm, unless actively on duty as a law enforcement officer.

A local police officer or constable must be stationed at every polling place on Election Day to assist election officials in enforcing the election laws. Observers found to be violating the law may be subject to criminal or civil penalties. If necessary, issues with observers should be escalated to the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Elections Division immediately.

