



Student Voting Guide for Massachusetts

Registration Deadlines and Election Dates

Applications must be received or postmarked 20 days before Election Day

Election Day is November 4, 2014

Where to vote

Polling place locator: <http://www.wheredoivotema.com/>

Cast your ballot in the correct precinct so your ballot will count fully. Sometimes, polling places have more than one precinct. Confirm your polling place and precinct number ahead of time!

Register at School or Home?

Residency Requirements and Students:

Students have two choices about where to register to vote:

- School residence: Students are free to establish voting residence in their college community. You can establish residency if you intend to remain in your college community for the time being and have no definite plans to return to your former (parents') home. Future events that might lead to leaving the area do not prevent you from having an intent to remain in Massachusetts for the time being.
- Home residence: Some students may choose to register or remain registered at their home address if they intend to return there after college. In this case, a student might need to vote by absentee ballot.

Absentee Voting

If you are a registered Massachusetts voter who will be away because of school, physical disability, or religious belief, you may vote an absentee ballot from the city or town in which you are registered. Absentee ballot

applications are available [on the website of the Secretary of State](#) or at your local election office. Though you may submit an application as late as noon the day before the election, it is best to submit the application as soon as possible. There is also an "Absentee Ballot Application by a Family Member" that a relative can use to request a ballot for you. The application can be mailed or hand-delivered to your local election office before noon the day before Election Day (but preferably sooner).

Your absentee ballot must be received before the polls close, but you cannot deliver an absentee ballot directly to the polling place on Election Day. If you know you are going to be away from your residence on Election Day, you may request to complete your application and cast your ballot in a single visit. If you still want to vote at the polls after receiving an absentee ballot, you must go to the county clerk, who will issue a certificate permitting you to vote in person.

ID Requirements & Student IDs

- You must only present identification when voting in person or mail a copy when voting by mail if all of the following apply: you (1) are a first-time voter, (2) registered by mail or registration drive, and (3) did not include a copy of an ID with the application.
- Acceptable forms of ID include a Massachusetts driver's license or state ID card. You may also use a utility bill, a bank statement, a government-issued check, a paycheck, or any other government document that has your name and address. If your student ID does not contain your local address, an alternative form of identification must be provided.
- If you cannot show ID, you have the right to cast a provisional ballot.

www.campusvoteproject.org

A Project of the Fair Elections Legal Network

FAIR ELECTIONS
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According to the U.S. Supreme Court, students have the right to register and vote in their college towns if they meet the same requirements as everyone else. Misinformation, such as claims that registering to vote at school may jeopardize eligibility for financial aid or insurance, are sometimes used to discourage students from voting locally.

Common Questions from Out-of-State Students

Will voting in Massachusetts affect my federal financial aid?

Federal financial aid such as Pell Grants and Perkins and Stafford loans will not be affected by where you register to vote. Registering in Massachusetts will also not affect your dependency status regarding FAFSA (Free Applications for Federal Student Aid).

Will I lose my scholarship if I register to vote in Massachusetts?

Generally, no. But if you receive scholarship money from a state, county or town, or a private entity (i.e., an entity other than the federal government) you should confirm with the entity providing the scholarship that residency in a particular place is not a requirement of the scholarship and/or that voter registration in Massachusetts will not affect your eligibility.

Will registering to vote in Massachusetts affect my driver's license or car registration?

Registering to vote in Massachusetts makes you a resident for the purposes of your driver's license and vehicle registration. If you drive your vehicle in Massachusetts, you have 30 days from when you register to vote to register your vehicle and get a Massachusetts driver's license. For more information, contact the Massachusetts Department of Motor Vehicles.

What do residency and domicile mean?

Residency and domicile are legal terms that states use to describe where you currently live and where you intend to remain for the foreseeable future.

Will registering to vote in Massachusetts prevent my parents from claiming me as a dependent on their taxes?

No. Students are often told that registering to vote in a different state from their parents will make them lose their dependency status. This is not true. Where you register to vote will have no effect on your parent's tax status.

Does being an in-state or out-of-state student for tuition purposes affect my right to vote?

No. You may choose to vote in your college community or back home even if you are an out-of-state student.

This Guide was prepared by FELN staff who are not licensed to practice law in Massachusetts and FELN intends that the information contained herein is used only as a general guide.

This document should not be used as a substitute for consultation with a licensed Massachusetts legal professional.

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