

VOTER REGISTRATION GUIDE



Anyone can help register voters. Mississippi does not have an restrictions for who can help register voters. You cannot offer any incentives for registering.

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GATHER VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS

The Circuit Clerk's Office will usually provide you with at least 100 voter registration forms. You can also print them from the Secretary of State website at www.sos.ms.gov. The applications will have a return address on the form. The form is the same for new voters and those who need to change their name or address.

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KNOW EXACTLY HOW THE FORM SHOULD BE COMPLETED.

The Circuit Clerk can deny a voter application that is not completed correctly. Make sure it is legible. If the clerk cannot read it, they will reject the application. The form must be completely filled out. **Mailing address** (if different) and **Previous address** are the only two parts that can be left blank. It must be signed and dated.

Tip: Highlight the fields that must be completed.

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KNOW MISSISSIPPI'S VOTING LAWS

The Mississippi Secretary of State has a printable voter guide and information you need to know about voting. Search **Ya'll Vote** in your web browser to access MS voter information. It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the laws and have copies available for residents. We have also included information in this guide.

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DETERMINE WHAT OTHER INFORMATION YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE

Helping new voters understand reasons why to vote, providing help with how to vote, and basic information about what is on the ballot, choosing a party, and types of elected officials will help them overcome some of the uncertainty that often keeps many people from voting. Check out www.sos.ms.gov and ballotpedia.org. There are some restrictions for non-profits. Learn more about what a 501c3 can and cannot do at www.nonprofitvote.org

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PRACTICE WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO SAY

Ask if they are registered to vote at current address. This question will catch new and existing voters. Some people may not want to register. By taking the time to find out why and meet their objections, you may be able to change their mind. Don't be pushy, but do try to meet their objections.

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STEP 6. MAKE A PLAN TO COLLECT DATA FOR GET OUT THE VOTE (GOTV)

A successful voter registration campaign includes following up with anyone who registered with you. Data shows that contacting people multiple times before and on the day of the election significantly increases turnout. Over half of registered voters do not vote, especially in local elections and non-presidential years.

Get their permission to follow up. Use a pledge to vote for to collect contact information and permission to follow-up,

4 STEPS FOR ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO REGISTER TO VOTE

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Find out why they are saying “no.” Remember an excuse may hide a more basic reason. For example, she may say, “I really don’t have time,” when, in fact, they really mean, “I don’t want to take the time to register because I don’t believe voting matters.”

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Agree with them. Make yourself her friend, not an opponent. Let them know that you heard what they said and that you share their concern.

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Use their reason to convince them. Explain how their concern is really a reason they should register. For example, “That’s why I’m out here registering voters. I’m fed up with politicians getting away with that just because people like us aren’t voting.”

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Ask if you can help them fill out the registration form. Let them know that you’re a trained volunteer and can answer any voter registration questions that they may have.

Source: [National Homeless Coalition Voter Registration Guide](#)

GET OUT THE VOTE STRATEGIES

- Contact them after 3 weeks to make sure they received their voter card.
- Follow-up with a voter guide that provides information about the candidates. Make sure the guide meets 501c3 guidelines.
- Make sure they know when and where to vote and that they have the proper ID. Free IDs are available at the Circuit Clerk's office.
- Make sure they understand how to complete an absentee ballot if they need to so.
- If possible, offer rides to the polls on election day those who need it or find out if an organization in your community is offering rides.
- Send reminders to vote up 3 days or 2 weeks before AND on election day. This can include postcards, texts, and phone calls.



Everything you need to know about voting in Mississippi

Voting Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible to vote in Mississippi you must be:

- A resident of Mississippi for 30 days before the election
- At least 18 years old, or will be 18 by the next General Election
- Not declared mentally incompetent by a court
- Not convicted of a disenfranchising crime

Disenfranchising Crimes in MS: Based upon the most recent Attorney General's Opinion dated July 9, 2009, the following comprise disenfranchising crimes: Arson, Obtaining Money or Goods under False Pretenses, Armed Robbery, Perjury, Bigamy, Rape, Bribery, Receiving Stolen Property, Embezzlement, Robbery, Extortion, Theft, Felony Bad Check, Timber Larceny, Felony Shoplifting, Unlawful Taking of Motor Vehicle, Forgery, Statutory Rape, Larceny, Carjacking, Murder, Larceny Under Lease or Rental Agreement

You will need to provide your driver's license number or the last 4 digits of your Social Security number on your voter registration form. If you do not have a driver's license number or Social Security number and you are registering by mail for the first time, you must include one of the following with your application:

- A copy of current valid photo identification
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document showing your name and address

Once you are registered, you generally remain registered indefinitely, unless you move or no longer meet one of the qualifications to vote.

Voter Registration Deadline: In person registration at the county clerk's office must be done at least 30 days before the election. In most cases, circuit clerks and municipal clerks are available to register voters between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Mail in registration applications must be postmarked 30 days prior to the election. Verify



Voter Registration: It is a good idea to verify your registration status because voting records are often purged (removed from the polls). Your registration can be removed if you have been registered in another county or state or if you have not voted in a while. Contact your voter registrar's office or search for your registration here to verify your status. https://www.msegov.com/sos/voter_registration/amiregistered/Search.

Early Voting: Early voting does not exist in Mississippi. However, you may vote absentee ballot in person at your local circuit clerk's office (office hours vary, check with your local clerk's office).

Absentee Ballot Information: You are eligible to vote absentee if you are a qualified and registered voter who will be absent from your county of residence on Election Day or are:

- A disabled war veteran who is a patient in any hospital and a citizen of Mississippi
- A citizen of Mississippi temporarily residing outside the territorial limits of the United States and the District of Columbia
- An employee engaged in interstate transportation
- A student, teacher or administrator
- An employee engaged in offshore employment, or as an employee on a vessel or other watercraft
- An employee, businessperson, professional, tradesman or worker required to be over 50 miles away from the county of residence on election day due to employment
- A person with a temporary or permanent physical disability
- 65 years of age or older
- A parent, spouse or dependent of a person with a temporary or permanent disability hospitalized more than 50 miles from home county and with such person
- A member of a congressional delegation

U.S. military personnel and overseas citizens can find information on how to register to vote and request an absentee ballot at the Overseas Vote Foundation.



You must request an absentee ballot within 45 days of the election. You may return the absentee ballot in-person at the circuit clerk's office on or before three days before the election or by mail by 5 pm the day before the election. If you are sending the ballot by mail, it must be notarized. Please check with your voter registrar to determine if you are entitled to vote absentee and to learn the procedures for doing so.

Voter Registration for College Students: As a college student, you can choose where you want to register to vote. You can register at your campus address or register at your permanent home address. If you choose to register at your permanent address, you may vote in that district on election day or cast your ballot by absentee. You must request an absentee ballot within 45 days of the election. You may return the absentee ballot in-person at the circuit clerk's office on or before three days before the election or by mail by 5 pm the day before the election. If you are sending the ballot by mail, it must be notarized.

Polling Place Locator: Visit the MS Secretary of State's website to locate your polling place: <https://www.sos.ms.gov/pollingplace/Pages/default.aspx>.

Voter ID: Photo ID is required in order to vote. You must show one of the following forms of ID - expired photo IDs are acceptable as long as they are not more than 10 years old:

- A driver's license
- Photo ID card issued by a branch, department or entity of the State of Mississippi
- US passport
- Government employee ID card
- Firearms license
- Student photo ID issued by an accredited Mississippi university, college or community/junior college
- US military ID
- Tribal photo ID
- Any other photo ID issued by any branch, department, agency or entity of the US government or any state government
- Mississippi Voter ID Card.



All circuit clerk's offices are able to issue a FREE Mississippi Voter Identification Card to any eligible Mississippi voter who does NOT have any other form of acceptable photo ID. You may call toll-free 1-844-MSVOTER (1-844-678-6837) if you need a ride to a circuit clerk's office to get a Voter ID or if you have any questions.

You will need to complete an ID Application (found on the Secretary of State's website) and bring one of the following forms of identification to receive a free voter ID.

- A Photo Identity Document
- Social Security Card
- Voter Registration Card
- Utility Bill
- Birth Certificate or Verification
- Medicaid Card
- Medicare Card
- Paycheck or Government Check
- Bank Statement
- W-2 Form
- Other Government Document

Voting by affidavit: If you do not bring your ID or your name is not listed on the poll books, you have a legal right to vote by affidavit. You must show your ID to the municipal or circuit clerk's office within five days after the election. You are entitled to receive written information at the time of voting on how to determine if the vote was counted and, if not, why not.

PLEDGE TO VOTE

I pledge to use my vote and my voice to uplift the issues impacting me and my community.

By providing my information, I am agreeing to be contacted by MS Rising Coalition with information, updates, and reminders to vote. By providing my cell phone number, I agree to receive calls and texts.

NAME:

EMAIL:

CELL:

Would you like to volunteer?

NAME:

EMAIL:

CELL:

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NAME:

EMAIL:

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