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7 1 Days until the November 8, 2016 General Election: Register to Vote

Required Identification for Voting in Person

Press Release: Voters who cannot obtain one of the seven forms of approved photo ID have additional options at the polls

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Frequently Asked Questions

On August 10, 2016, a federal district court entered an order changing the voter identification requirements for all elections held in Texas after August 10, 2016 until further notice. As a result, voters who have obtained an acceptable form of photo identification for voting listed below are still required to present it in order to vote in person in all Texas elections. The acceptable form of photo identification may be expired up to four years. Voters who have not been able to obtain one of the forms of acceptable photo identification listed below, and have a reasonable impediment or difficulty to obtaining such identification, may present a supporting form of identification and execute a Reasonable Impediment Declaration, noting the voter's reasonable impediment to obtaining an acceptable form of photo identification, and stating that the voter is the same person on the presented supporting form of identification.

This requirement is effective immediately.

Here is a list of the acceptable forms of photo ID:

- Texas driver license issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS
- Texas personal identification card issued by DPS
- Texas license to carry a handgun issued by DPS
- United States military identification card containing the person's photograph
- United States citizenship certificate containing the person's photograph
- United States passport

With the exception of the U.S. citizenship certificate, the identification must be current or have expired no more than 4 years before being presented for voter qualification at the polling place.

Election Identification Certificates are available from **DPS driver license offices** during regular business hours. **Find mobile station locations here.**

Here is a list of the supporting forms of ID that can be presented if the voter cannot obtain, and has a reasonable impediment or difficulty to obtaining one of the forms of acceptable photo ID:

- Valid voter registration certificate
- Certified birth certificate (must be an original)
- Copy of or original current utility bill
- Copy of or original bank statement
- Copy of or original government check
- Copy of or original paycheck
- Copy of or original government document with your name and an address (original required if it contains a photograph)

After presenting a supporting form of ID, the voter must execute a Reasonable Impediment Declaration.

Procedures for Voting

When a voter arrives at a polling location, the voter will be asked to present one of the seven (7) acceptable forms of photo ID that is current or expired no more than four years. If a voter has not been able to obtain one of the seven (7) acceptable forms of photo ID, and has a reasonable impediment or difficulty to obtaining an acceptable form of photo ID, the voter may present a supporting form of ID and execute a Reasonable Impediment Declaration, noting the voter's reasonable impediment to obtaining an acceptable form of photo ID, and stating that the voter is the same person on the presented form of supporting form of ID.

Election officials will still be required by State law to determine whether the voter's name on the identification provided matches the name on the official list of registered voters ("OLRV"). After a voter presents their ID, whether it's an acceptable form of photo ID or a supporting form of ID, the election worker will compare it to the OLRV. If the name on the ID matches the name on the list of registered voters, the voter will follow the regular procedures for voting.

If the name does not match exactly but is "substantially similar" to the name on the OLRV, the voter will be permitted to vote as long as the voter signs an affidavit stating that the voter is the same person on the list of registered voters.

If a voter possesses an acceptable form of photo ID but does not have it at the polling place, the voter will still be permitted to vote provisionally. The voter will have (six) 6 days to present an acceptable form of photo identification to the county voter registrar, or fill out the natural disaster affidavit referenced in the Exemption/Exceptions section below), or the voter's ballot will be rejected.

Exemption/Exceptions:

Voters with a disability who do not have an acceptable form of photo ID may also apply with the county voter registrar for a **permanent exemption**. The application must contain written documentation from either the U.S. Social Security Administration evidencing he or she has been determined to have a disability, or from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

evidencing a disability rating of at least 50 percent. In addition, the applicant must state that he or she has no acceptable form of photo identification. Those who obtain a disability exemption will be allowed to vote by presenting a voter registration certificate reflecting the exemption, and will not need to execute a Reasonable Impediment Declaration. Please contact your county voter registrar for more details.

Voters who have a consistent **religious objection** to being photographed and voters who do not present any form of acceptable photo identification as a result of certain natural disasters as declared by the President of the United States or the Texas Governor, may vote a provisional ballot, appear at the voter registrar's office within six (6) calendar days after election day, and sign an affidavit swearing to the religious objection or natural disaster, in order for your ballot to be counted. Please contact your county voter registrar for more details.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What kind of photo identification is required to qualify to vote in person??

- The following is a list of acceptable photo IDs at the polling place: Texas driver license issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS
- Texas personal identification card issued by DPS
- Texas license to carry a handgun issued by DPS
- United States military identification card containing the person's photograph
- United States citizenship certificate containing the person's photograph
- United States passport

2. My acceptable photo ID is expired. Will it still work?

With the exception of the U.S. citizenship certificate, the acceptable photo identification must be current or have expired no more than 4 years before being presented for voter qualification at the polling place.

3. What if a voter does not have any of the acceptable forms of photo ID?

If a voter cannot obtain an acceptable form of photo ID, and the voter has a reasonable impediment or difficulty to obtaining such ID, the voter may still cast a regular ballot by presenting a supporting form of ID and executing a Reasonable Impediment Declaration, noting the voter's reasonable impediment to obtaining an acceptable form of photo ID, and stating that the voter is the same person as the person on the presented form of supporting form of ID.

Here is a list of supporting forms of ID:

- Valid voter registration certificate
- Certified birth certificate (must be an original)
- Copy of or original current utility bill
- Copy of or original bank statement
- Copy of or original government check
- Copy of or original paycheck

- Copy of or original government document with your name and an address (original required if it contains a photograph)

A **permanent exemption** is available for voters with documented disabilities who have not obtained one of the acceptable forms of photo ID. Voters with a disability may apply with the county voter registrar for a permanent exemption. The application must contain written documentation from either the U.S. Social Security Administration evidencing the applicant's disability, or from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs evidencing a disability rating of at least 50 percent. In addition, the applicant must state that he or she has no valid form of acceptable photo ID. Those who obtain a disability exemption will be allowed to vote by presenting a voter registration certificate reflecting the exemption.

If a voter (a) does not have one of the acceptable forms of photo identification listed above, which is not expired for more than four years, and a voter does not have a reasonable impediment to obtaining one of these forms of identification or (b) has, but did not bring to the polling place, one of the seven forms of acceptable photo identification listed above, which is not expired for more than four years, the voter may cast a provisional ballot at the polls. However, in order to have the provisional ballot counted, the voter will be required to visit the voter registrar's office within six calendar days of the date of the election to either present one of the above forms of photo ID OR submit one of the temporary affidavits addressed below (e.g., religious objection or natural disaster) in the presence of the county voter registrar while attesting to the fact that he or she does not have any of the required photo IDs.

Affidavits are available for voters who have a consistent religious objection to being photographed and for voters who do not present a form of acceptable photo identification as a result of certain natural disasters as declared by the President of the United States or the Texas Governor within 45 days of the day the ballot was cast.

4. What is a reasonable impediment?

Reasonable impediments include lack of transportation, disability or illness, lack of birth certificate or other documents needed to obtain acceptable photo ID, work schedule, family responsibilities, lost or stolen photo ID, or photo ID applied for but not received. You may also describe another reasonable impediment you have on the Reasonable Impediment Declaration form.

5. What if a voter does not have <u>any</u> form of ID with them at the polling place and they do not have a disability exemption?

If a voter has not obtained an acceptable form of photo ID, and does not have or does not bring a supporting form of ID to present in connection with a Reasonable Impediment Declaration, if the voter does not have a reasonable impediment to obtaining an acceptable form of photo ID, or if the voter has, but did not bring with them, an acceptable form of photo ID, the voter may cast a provisional ballot at the polls. However, in order to have the provisional ballot counted the voter will be required to visit the county voter registrar's office within six calendar days of the date of the election to either present an acceptable form of photo ID OR submit one of the temporary affidavits addressed above (religious objection or natural disaster) in the presence of the county voter registrar.

6. My name on my approved photo ID and/or my supporting ID document does not exactly match my name on my voter registration card. Can I still vote?

Election officials will review the ID and if a name is "substantially similar" to the name on their list of registered voters, you will still be able to vote, but you will also have to submit an affidavit stating that you are the same person on the list of registered voters.

7. What does "substantially similar" mean?

A voter's name is considered substantially similar if one or more of the following circumstances applies:

1. The name on the ID is slightly different from one or more of the name fields on the official list of registered voters.
2. The name on the voter's ID or on list of registered voters is a customary variation of the voter's formal name. For example, Bill for William, or Beto for Alberto.
3. The voter's name contains an initial, middle name, or former name that is either not on the official list of registered voters or on the voter's ID.
4. A first name, middle name, former name or initial of the voter's name occupies a different field on the presented ID document than it does on the list of registered voters.

In considering whether a name is substantially similar, election officials will also look at whether information on the presented ID matches elements of the voter's information on the official list of registered voters such as the voter's residence address or date of birth.

8. Is there any change in the process for voting by mail?

There is no change in the process for voting by mail for most voters. Specifically, there is no change in procedure for voters who are voting by mail after their first time voting by mail, and for first time voters who would otherwise not be required to present identification under the federal Help America Vote Act in order to vote by mail.

9. Does the address on my ID have to match my address on the official list of registered voters at the time of voting in order for it to be acceptable as ID?

No. There is no address matching requirement.

10. Is the DPS Election Identification Certificate still going to be available?

Yes. The Election Identification Certificate is now available, and will be still be a form of acceptable photo ID. Information regarding how to obtain an election identification certificate can be found at **www.dps.texas.gov**. You may also contact DPS by telephone at (512) 424-2600 for more information.

We hope you have found this information helpful. Should you need additional information, please contact our office via telephone at 1-800-252-VOTE (8683) or **email us**.

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