



Voter's Bill of Rights – New York State A NYPIRG Fact Sheet

Do I need any ID to vote in the elections?

Probably not, but bring it just to be safe. Only voters registering for the first time in NY may have to show ID at the polls in order to vote on the machine or submit your ballot into the machine/scanner. All that is required is "current and valid photo identification" with your name and picture. Government documents, utility bills, or bank statements with your name and address are also acceptable. It is always your right to vote on a paper affidavit ballot, even if you have no ID or your ID is rejected by poll workers. Contact your local Board of Elections or NYPIRG for more info.

I recently moved within New York State, but didn't re-register. Can I vote?

Yes. If you registered at an old address, but have moved to another address within NYS, you can vote without having to re-register. Go to the polling site for your new address. Your name won't be in the poll book but you have the right to vote on a paper "affidavit ballot." If you have questions, ask the poll worker for the voting rights flyer that details this and other rights. If you happen to have moved nearby and are still within the same Election District, you can vote with a normal ballot and use the scanner/tabulator.

Can I vote if my name isn't on the voter list?

Yes. The first thing to do if you are "not in the book," is to make sure the poll worker double checks that you are at the correct table and site. Many people's Election Districts or poll sites change every year, meaning you might need to vote at a different table or location than you're used to. If your name is not on the list, or your signature is missing, you have a right to vote by a paper "affidavit ballot." You will be asked to sign an oath saying you are registered, mark a paper ballot, and seal it in an envelope. Elections officials will later check their records to see if you are registered and if you were at the right poll site. If yes, your vote will be cast. If not, you will receive a notice. If you have questions, ask the poll worker for a "voting rights" flyer; they are required to have one. The flyer will also tell you about your right to get a court order to vote on a machine. You can vote even if you recently moved within NYS - see above. Note that you need to be registered in a political party to vote in their Primary election.

What if the scanner or machine is broken? Can I still vote?

Yes. You have the right to vote by a paper "emergency ballot." Make sure you fill in the circle for your candidate completely. It should be returned to the poll workers who should put it in a special box. It will be opened and counted that night just as if it were on the scanner/machine. You can also come back later and see if the machine has been repaired if you haven't 'checked in' yet at your table.

Can I bring someone with me to help me vote? Are there accessible machines at the poll site?

Yes. You have the right to have anyone you choose assist you to cast your vote, as long as it's not your union representative or employer. You can also ask for a pair of poll workers—a Democrat and a Republican—to assist you. Every poll site also has ballot marking devices that are accessible to voters with disabilities. All voters are allowed to use them.

What if I need a translator?

Some polling sites in New York State are required to have multi-lingual ballots and poll site materials, and translators fluent in Spanish, Chinese, Korean and/or Bengali. Your local Board of Elections can tell you if your site is covered.

Other important rights

- You are entitled to vote as long as you are in line by 9:00 pm on Election Day. Early voting hours differ.
- You may take any information into the polls with you. But you can't solicit votes for a candidate or issue on the ballot, or electioneer, within 100 feet of the poll site entrance.
- Most polling places are accessible to people with disabilities. If yours is not, you may ask to have your records transferred to a nearby accessible polling place. (You may also vote by absentee ballot. Try to request an absentee ballot at least a month before Election Day.)
- Your right to vote may be "challenged" by someone at the polls. You'll have to sign an oath swearing you're eligible, but you still get to vote.
- All poll workers are required to wear an ID badge with their name