

Many incarcerated citizens are not aware that they may be eligible to register and vote in District of Columbia elections. There are issues on the ballot that may affect inmates, their family or their community.

Department of Corrections staff provide voter registration applications for inmates to register to vote; and, the Board of Elections hand delivers their ballots before Election Day.

Voter Registration Requirements

If you are an inmate in a District of Columbia Department of Corrections facility and want to register to vote, you must meet the criteria below:

- Be a citizen of the United States
- Be a resident of the District of Columbia
- Be at least 16 years old
- Have not been found by a court to be legally incompetent to vote
- Do not claim residence to vote outside of the District of Columbia

You may register to vote in D.C. elections if you are an inmate:

- Awaiting or on trial for a criminal offense
- Serving time for a misdemeanor offense

You may not register to vote in D.C. elections if you are an inmate:

- Incarcerated for conviction of a felony offense

How to Register to Vote

The District of Columbia Department of Corrections is a District of Columbia National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) designated agency. You may register at the time of intake at the D.C. Jail or up fifteen (15) days before any election by completing a Voter Registration Application. You must provide either the last four digits of your social security number or your DMV-issued identification number. When filling out the application, you may use either your DC home residence, or the address of the D.C. Jail or the Correctional Treatment Facility (CTF).

If you wish to vote in primary elections, you may register with one of four qualified political parties: Democratic, Republican, DC Statehood Green or the Libertarian party. You may register as an independent or with no party, or check “other” and register with a minor party to participate in general and special elections only.

Once your Voter Registration Application has been processed by the Board of Elections, a Voter Notification Card will be mailed to you stating that you are now registered. You may register to vote at any time, but to be eligible for an upcoming election, you must register at the agency at least 15 (fifteen) days before that specific election. The Department of Corrections’ authorizing agent will submit the application to the Board for processing.

The D.C. Board of Elections encourages eligible citizens to exercise their voting rights.

Voting an Absentee Ballot

If you think you will be in custody on Election Day, you must request an absentee ballot. You must be registered before applying for an Absentee Ballot.

You can vote if you have maintained residency in the District for 30 days before an election. Use the correctional facility address in the mailing address section on the application. Be sure to review your absentee ballot application before submitting it.

A Board of Elections’ official will pick up your application from the agency and return it to the Board for processing.

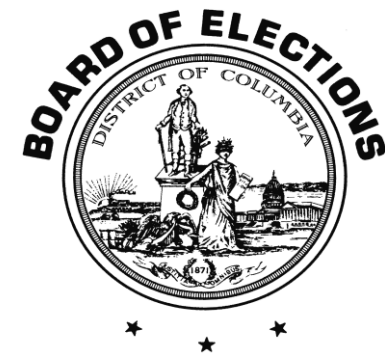
Delivery of your Absentee Ballot

DC Board of Elections’ officials will hand-deliver your absentee ballot in a secure envelope within one week of Election Day. You will be allowed to vote a secret ballot that will be sealed in a return envelope. BOE officials will be available to answer questions, assist you with marking or reading your ballot, if you request assistance. Remember to sign the back of the return Absentee Ballot Envelope to ensure your vote is counted. A Board official will collect the ballots and bring them back to the Board of Elections for counting along with the other absentee ballots.





Guide to Voting for Incarcerated Citizens



DC Board of Elections
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 250 North
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-727-2525
Toll Free: 866-328-6837
TDD: 202-639-8916 . Fax: 202-347-2648
www.dcboee.org . @DCBOEE
 Facebook.com/DCBOEE

Release from Custody

If you requested an Absentee Ballot Application, but are released before your ballot is delivered, **you can still vote!** Just go to the polling place assigned to your residence address (If you don't know the location, you can check online at www.dcboee.org) and let the polling place official know that you did not receive your requested absentee ballot, and you want to vote a *Provisional ballot*.

Re-Registering to Vote

When you are released from the correctional facility, you should re-register if **your residence or mailing address changes** so that election notices can be mailed to you at the correct address. Otherwise, your election material may be sent to the correctional facility and returned to the Board as undeliverable mail. If you registered to vote and were later convicted of a felony, simply re-register upon release.

Why Vote?

- There may be candidates who support your ideals; and issues on the election ballot that may affect how citizens, inmates and their families live their lives – healthcare, prison reform, the environment and many other important topics. Inmates are encouraged to exercise their voting rights.

- *District residents who have been convicted of a felony and are no longer in jail, and meet the other voter registration requirements, are eligible to register and vote immediately upon release.*
- Voting allows people to remain connected to their community, even if detained in jail.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Can I vote if I'm in jail?

A. You may register and vote if you are in jail awaiting trial or serving time for a misdemeanor offense.

Q. How do I vote if I'm incarcerated?

A. Once registered to vote, you must apply for an absentee ballot. Board of Elections officials will hand-deliver your ballot within a week of Election Day.

Q. Can I request assistance in voting my ballot?

A. Yes. Board officials are available to assist you with casting your ballot, if you request assistance.

Q. Can I vote if I'm a convicted felon and on parole or probation?

A. Unless incarcerated, District residents can register and vote even if they are on probation or parole.

Questions? Call 202-727-2525

Visit www.dcboee.org

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