



Candidate Filing

Q. During statewide election years, when does candidate filing open? When does it close?

A. Candidate filing opens 145 days before the primary, and closes 85 days before the primary.

Q. How do I find forms and information to run as a presidential, independent, write-in or minor-party candidate?

A. Information is on the SOS webpage at <http://sos.mt.gov/Elections/Filing/Information>. If you are interested in running as a presidential candidate, an independent, write-in candidate or as a candidate of a party that has not qualified for the ballot in Montana, or to form a political party, you may also contact Elections and Government Services at (406) 444-5346 or by email at soselections@mt.gov.

Voter Registration

Q. How do I register, update my registration, find out if my registration is still on file, or find out the location of my polling place?

A. For information about registering to vote, visit <http://www.sos.mt.gov/Elections/Vote>. You may also contact your [county election administrator](#) to register or update your registration or visit [My Voter Page](#) to find out if you are registered to vote, where you are registered to vote, the location and directions to your polling place, the status of your absentee ballot, and to view a sample ballot.

Q. What is late registration and what are the dates that it opens and closes?

A. Late registration is an option for people who miss the regular registration deadline. It is available starting the day after the close of regular registration, up until the close of polls on election day, and must be done at the county election office (or at the location designated by the election administrator), not at a polling place.

Late registration is closed from noon to 5 p.m. on the day before the election. Although you can drop off a registration card during this time, you will not receive your ballot unless you return to the election office on Election Day.

If you wish to avoid the possibility of long lines, register by the close of regular registration or as soon as possible after the start of the late registration period.

Q. Are late registration totals available? What years are available?

A. [Late registration](#) totals from 2006 through the present are available.

Absentee Voting

Q. Does Montana have “early voting”? Does Montana have in-person absentee voting before Election Day? When does it start?

A. Montana does not have true early voting, but does have in-person absentee voting that allows electors, as soon as absentee ballots are available, to receive, mark and submit an absentee ballot in person at the election office or by mail to the election office. However, ballots are not counted until election day. Early-in person absentee voting does not require a reason and starts as soon as ballots are available – by not later than 30 days before an election.

Q. Who can vote absentee in Montana?

A. Since October 1, 1999, anyone who wishes to vote absentee in Montana may do so, without having to specify a reason.

Q. How do I request an absentee ballot?

A. Request to be placed on the [Absentee List](#) to receive all ballots for which you are eligible by mail, or print an [Application for Absentee Ballot](#) from the Secretary of State website, fill it out, and drop it off at the county election office or fax or mail the form to your county election office.

Q. When are the first and last days to request an absentee ballot?

A. There is no earliest day to apply for an absentee ballot. An application for absentee ballot must be received by the election office by noon the day before election day.

Q. What if I become ill and will not make it to the polls on Election Day?

A. If you request an absentee ballot because of a sudden illness or health emergency occurring between 5 p.m. of the Friday preceding the election and before close of polls

on election day, you may ask your county election administrator to have a special absentee election board bring an absentee ballot to you.

Q. *Can people request to be placed on an absentee list?*

A. Yes. The [Application for Absentee Ballot/Absentee List](#) includes the option to receive ballots for subsequent elections. In order to stay on the list, citizens must respond to confirmation mailings that will be sent in January of each even-numbered year.

Identification at the Polls

Q. *What ID do I have to show when I vote at the polls?*

A. When voting at the polls, a current photo ID showing the elector's name; or a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, voter registration confirmation, government check or other government document showing the elector's current name and current address must be presented.

Q. *What if I forget my ID when I vote at the polls?*

A. If you do not have any of the items listed above, you can still vote by requesting and filling out a "Polling Place Elector ID" form.

Or, you can vote a provisional ballot. Your provisional ballot will be counted if you provide one of the items on the list to the county election office by 5:00 p.m. the day after the election, or mail it to the county election office postmarked by the day after the election.

Voting Systems Equipped for People with Disabilities

Q. *Are there voting systems in Montana that are equipped for people with disabilities?*

A. Yes, they are referred to as AutoMARKs, and there is one at every polling place for elections for federal office. The AutoMARK is helpful for individuals with sight impairment, and can also be used by individuals with mobility impairments. You can find out more about the AutoMARK at <http://sos.mt.gov/Elections/Disabilities>.

Q. *What if I do not choose to use the AutoMARK voting system?*

A. The AutoMARK is optional; a person can choose to use it, regardless of disability status. If a voter with a disability chooses not to use an AutoMARK the voter has the option to have either an election judge or an individual chosen by the elector assist the voter in marking their ballot. For more information, please review the relevant statute, [13-13-119](#), MCA.
