

Wisconsin Elections Commission

State of Wisconsin

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 28, 2016

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Top 10 Things Voters Should Know for Election Day

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Elections Commission today released its list of the top 10 things Wisconsin voters should know for Election Day, Tuesday, November 8.

The most important thing voters should know is that a photo ID will be required to vote.

Most people already have the photo ID they need to vote like a Wisconsin driver license, ID card or other DMV-issued document. Voters can also use military and veteran's IDs, some student IDs, tribal IDs, or a certificate of naturalization. The full list is available at www.bringit.wi.gov.

Your photo ID does not need to have your current address, and your name on your ID does not have to exactly match the name on the poll list.

If you do not have a photo ID on Election Day, or if poll workers say your ID is not acceptable, you can still cast a provisional ballot that will be counted if you bring an acceptable ID to the clerk's office by 4 p.m. the Friday after the election.

Number two is that voters still have time to get a photo ID.

If you don't have an acceptable photo ID, you can get one for free after just one visit to a Wisconsin DMV office through the ID Petition Process (IDPP), said Michael Haas, administrator of the Wisconsin Elections Commission.

"Just bring whatever identifying documents you have like a birth certificate and proof of your current address, but if you don't have one, the DMV will still give you a document with your photo that you can use for voting," he said. Starting the week of Oct. 31, the DMV will send you the photo ID document by overnight delivery. Voters who find they do not have an acceptable ID on Election Day should go to the DMV as soon as possible.

Third on the list – there are important exceptions to the photo ID law.

Military voters and permanent absentee voters do not need a photo ID to vote. Becoming a permanent absentee voter is an excellent option for voters who have difficulty making it to the polls on Election Day due to age, disability, infirmity or illness. To become a permanent absentee voter, contact your municipal clerk's office as soon as possible.

Fourth, absentee voters should mail their ballots back ASAP.

The law has changed and absentee ballots must be delivered to the municipal clerk's office by Election Day or they will not be counted. When your ballot is postmarked does not matter. To give USPS enough time to do its job, the Elections Commission urges absentee voters to put their ballots in the mail one week before Election Day.

Fifth, make sure you know when and where to vote.

Polls are open in Wisconsin from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, November 8.

“Wisconsin voters can find the most accurate information about voting at MyVote.wi.gov, including where their polling place is and whether their registration is current,” said Haas. “If you're not sure, take a few minutes to visit the My Vote Wisconsin website. It could save you time and headaches on Election Day.”

People who do not have internet access can check their status with their municipal clerk's office.

My Vote Wisconsin also has sample ballots so voters can familiarize themselves with their choices before they arrive in the voting booth.

Sixth, voters can register at the polling place on Election Day.

“If you check My Vote Wisconsin and find you're not registered, don't panic,” Haas said. “Election Day registration ensures that everyone who is qualified to vote will get to vote. Wisconsin, unlike many other states, has had registration at the polls since 1976, so very few voters will likely be forced to vote on a provisional ballot.”

To register on Election Day, Wisconsin voters must provide a proof of residence document. It can be a driver license or state ID card with the voter's current address. It can also be a current utility bill, lease, university ID card or other official document showing the voter's name and current address. For a list of acceptable documents, visit the Elections Commission website. You must be a resident of your ward for 10 days to register, but the document does not need to be 10 days old. Voters who have a valid Wisconsin driver license will be required to use their license number to complete the registration form. Otherwise, they may use a state ID card number or last four digits of their Social Security number.

Seventh, voters should know what to do if they witness problems at the polling place.

“If you see voter fraud, voter intimidation, electioneering or misconduct by election officials, your first point of contact should be the Chief Election Inspector at the polling place,” said Haas. “Most concerns can be resolved then and there, but if that doesn't work, contact your municipal clerk's office or local law enforcement.”

Complaints or issues that are not resolved to the voter's satisfaction should be reported to the Wisconsin Elections Commission. Voters can go online and report problems at <http://elections.wi.gov/complaints>, or they can call 1-866-VOTE-WIS. Haas noted that the Commission will be open extended hours on Election Day to assist voters. Phones will be answered from 6 a.m. until at least 11 p.m. on Election Day.

The remaining things a voter should know are:

- 8. Election observers must follow the rules:** Election observers are welcome at every polling place, but they must obey the instructions of the Chief Election Inspector, and may not interact with voters. Only Wisconsin electors may challenge another voter's eligibility, and there are specific criteria and limitations on challenges. Observers who disobey will be asked to leave, and may not observe at other polling places on Election Day. Rules for election observers are available at the polling place and online: <http://elections.wi.gov/publications/brochures/observer-rules>
- 9. Leave political items at home:** Voters are asked not to wear political clothing or paraphernalia to the polling place on Election Day. The Chief Election Inspector may ask voters to remove or cover up political items, or to leave the polling place if they are judged to be electioneering or creating a disturbance.
- 10. Get in line before the polls close:** Voters standing in line waiting to vote when the polling place closes at 8 p.m. on Election Day will be permitted to vote.

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The Wisconsin Elections Commission is responsible for administration and enforcement of election laws in Wisconsin. The Commission is made up of six Commissioners – four appointed directly by the State Senate Majority Leader, Speaker of the Assembly and the Minority Leaders in the State Senate and Assembly. The remaining two Commissioners are by the Governor with confirmation by the State Senate from lists of former municipal and county clerks submitted by the legislative leadership in each party.