Voting 101

A Pocket Guide to Voting in the Natural State

Voter Registration ◆ Absentee Ballots ◆ Early Voting ◆ Voting Systems ◆ Military Voters

ARKANSAS
SECRETARY OF STATE
Elections Division

Voting 101

Election Calendar for 2014

	Voter Registration Deadline	Early Voting	Election Day
Primary & Nonpartisan General Election	Monday, April 21	May 5-May 19	Tuesday, May 20
Primary Runoff	Monday, May 12	June 3-June 9	Tuesday, June 10
Municipal Party Primary *(City Administrator)*	Monday, July 14	Aug. 5-11	Tuesday, Aug. 12
School Election	Monday, Aug. 18	Sept. 9-15	Tuesday, Sept. 16
School Election Runoff	Monday, Sept. 8	Sept. 30-Oct. 6	Tuesday, Oct. 7
General Election & Nonpartisan Runoff	Monday, Oct. 6	Oct. 20-Nov. 3	Tuesday, Nov. 4
General Election Runoff *(County & Municipal)*	Monday, Oct. 27	Nov. 18-24	Tuesday, Nov. 25

Arkansas Secretary of State

Mark Martin

Dear Arkansas Voter,

As a citizen, you have the most powerful voice in your government — your vote. When Election Day draws near, it is vital that your voter registration is current and that you understand the steps for casting your ballot. This booklet is your guide, from the registration application to your voting options.

Voting 101 spells out many of your voting rights, as well as how to register, how to update your registration, methods of casting a ballot and important dates and deadlines. The most important thing is to make sure you're ready to vote when the time comes. Educate yourself on the issues and the candidates who will be on your ballot. Most of all, make sure your registration is correct *before you go to the polls* Just visit **www.VoterView.org** to check your voter registration, then contact your county clerk for more information.

Sincerely,

Mark Martin

Arkansas Secretary of State

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Voter Registration

Registration Requirements

To register to vote, you must:

- ☑ Be a citizen of the United States
- ☑ Be an Arkansas resident (residing in Arkansas at least 30 days before the first election in which you will vote)
- ☑ Be age 18 or turn 18 on or before the next election
- ☑ Not be convicted of a felony without your sentence having been discharged or pardoned
- ☑ Not be presently adjudged as mentally incompetent as to your ability to vote by a court of competent jurisdiction

Where Can I Apply?

Register to vote at your local:

- ☑ County clerk's office in your home county
- ☑ Office of Driver Services, State Revenue Division (Application can be transmitted electronically or you can pick up a paper form to complete and mail in.)
- ☑ Local public library or Arkansas State Library
- ☑ Public assistance agencies (that provide services under Food Stamps, Medicaid, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), and the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) programs
- ☑ Agencies that offer state-funded programs and services to persons with disabilities.
- ☑ Military recruitment office
- ☑ Arkansas National Guard
- ☑ Voter registration drive

Apply by mail.

Obtain an application from:

- ☑ Your county clerk
- ☑ Secretary of State Elections Division, 1-800-247-3312
- ☑ Online at **www.sos.arkansas.gov/elections**

I.D. Requirements for Registration

If you are registering to vote by mail:

You must provide either your Arkansas driver's license number or the last four digits of your Social Security number on your Arkansas Voter Registration Application. If you don't have either a driver's license or Social Security number, check the box in #9 on the application.

If you check the box indicating that you do not possess either a driver's license or Social Security number, you should submit a photocopy of one of the following with your mail-in application:

1. Current and valid photo identification, **or**
2. A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or paycheck that shows your name and address, **or**
3. Other government document that shows your name and address.

If you do not provide a driver's license number, a social security number or an identification document that meets the above requirements, you may be required to vote a Provisional Ballot when you vote for the first time.

Registration Deadlines

- ***New Registration*** — You must submit your application to an official voter registration agency or mail it no later than 30 days prior to an election in which you wish to vote. The postmark on a mailed application will be its submission date.

- ***Voter Registration Drive*** — If you completed your application at a voter registration drive, the organizers must submit it to the county clerk or Secretary of State's office within 21 days of the date on the application and no later than 30 days prior to the next election.
- ***Address Change*** — If you are changing your residence to another county within the state, your updated registration must be received by the county clerk's office in the new county no later than 4 days before a scheduled election.

If you submit your application close to an election registration deadline, you are strongly advised to follow up with your county clerk BEFORE Election Day.

When an election deadline is near, there is one method of application that will ensure your eligibility: apply in person with your county clerk.

How Do I Know I'm Registered?

- Consider yourself registered when — and only when — you receive an acknowledgment from your county clerk. This may take several weeks, regardless of your method of application.
- If you do not receive a notice within two weeks of applying, call your county clerk or go to **www.VoterView.org** and enter your name and date of birth to see if your application has been processed.

Special Registration Issues

If you are registered in another state or county:

- If you have moved to Arkansas from another state, notify the voter registrar in your previous state of residence to request cancellation. Be sure to submit a new registration application to your county clerk in Arkansas.

- If you have moved from one county to another within Arkansas, you must transfer your registration to your new county of residence.
- For questions about transferring your registration, please ask your county clerk for assistance.

If you are a college student attending college OUTSIDE of your home county:

You must decide which county you consider "home." If you plan to live in your home county after college, then list your parents' address as your residence. If you do NOT intend to return there, you may list your college address as your residence. *Remember*: you must keep your address CURRENT on your voter registration. That's one reason college students often list their parents' address, which may not change as often.

If you own property in more than one county:

You must register to vote wherever you actually "live or reside." Owning property or a business in a county does not constitute residency in that county.

If you are in the military:

For voting purposes, military service members, their families and U.S. citizens residing overseas may use the address where they resided before entering service or their legal U.S. residence as the address where they register to vote. You may register to vote using an Arkansas Voter Registration Application or a Federal Post Card Application (*FPCA SF-76*). The FPCA simultaneously serves all states and territories as both a registration form and application for an absentee ballot.

Military personnel may contact their county clerk, the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) or their Voting Assistance Officer for further information or to obtain a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). Call 1-800-438-8683 or e-mail the program at vote@fvap.gov or go to **www.fvap.gov.**

For Arkansas-specific information, visit:
www.sos.arkansas.gov/military

Updating Your Voter Information

Once you're registered, it's important to update your voter information whenever you move or have a legal name change. Keeping your record current can help avoid delays on Election Day. It's easy to do using the Arkansas Voter Registration Application.

If you move within Arkansas:

Complete a Voter Registration Application, checking the box for "This is an address change" and completing the bottom half of the form. Submit it to the county clerk in your new county no later than 4 days before a scheduled election. Otherwise, you will not be eligible to vote in your new county for that election.

Counties will periodically mail notices to voters who have not voted in several elections. If you receive such a notice, it is important that you mark your correct address and return the notice to the county clerk so your registration can be updated.

The Secretary of State performs another safeguard: routinely checking for duplicate registrations across the state. Just to make sure, it's best for you to notify the county clerk in your old county and confirm that your registration has been transferred.

If your name changes:

If you legally change your name due to marriage, divorce or other reason, complete a Voter Registration Application and check the box for "This is a name change," making sure to complete the bottom half of the form.

FAQs on Voter Registration

Q: Am I registered to vote when I send in my Voter Registration form?

A: No, submitting your Voter Registration Application at a state agency, in a voter registration drive or through the U.S. Postal Service does NOT guarantee your registration. You should follow up on the status of your registration just as you would on any other personal business matter. Before considering yourself a registered voter, you must receive an acknowledgment of your registration from the county clerk.

Unfortunately each Election Day, many would-be first-time voters do not have their ballots counted because they are not actually registered to vote. Many believed they had registered months before, but failed to follow up when they did not receive a voter registration card from their county clerk.

The process of voter registration is convenient, but it also places responsibility on the registrant to ensure the process is completed.

FOLLOW UP ON YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION BEFORE ELECTION TIME!

It's easy to check the status of your registration by calling your county clerk or visiting:

www.VoterView.org

If your application has been processed, you'll find your name, voting district and polling place on that website. If not, you are not yet a registered voter and should contact your county clerk before Election Day. Remember, you must register to vote at least 30 days prior to Election Day.

Q: I would like to vote in the county where I work because I'm more involved there than the county where I live. Can I register to vote in the county where I work?

A: No. Arkansas law requires you to register in the county where you reside.

Q: My neighbors were born in South America but they vote in every election here. Is that legal?

A: If they are naturalized U.S. citizens and meet all of the other requirements for registering to vote, then they are eligible to register and vote. (*See page 5 for registration requirements.*) Anyone who is a naturalized citizen meeting these legal requirements may vote if they have registered at least 30 days prior to the election. *(A.C.A. § 7-5-201)*

Q: I got married last summer and changed my name. I recently re-registered using my married name. What should I do to be sure that my previous registration in my maiden name is canceled?

A: Complete the "name change" portion on the bottom half of the voter registration application to inform your county clerk of the change.

Q: Can anyone distribute Voter Registration Applications and Applications for Absentee Ballots?

A: Yes, ANYONE may distribute these applications.

Voter Registration Applications and a guide to conducting a voter registration drive are available from the Secretary of State; applications collected during a voter registration drive must be returned to the Secretary of State or the local county clerk within 21 days after the date on the application or no later than 30 days prior to the next election.

Applications for Absentee Ballots are available from your county clerk *(see pages 37-43 for contact information)*.

Q: My daughter wants to transfer her registration from our hometown to her college campus. Can she do that?

A: Students may be considered residents of the place where they lived prior to becoming a student. However, a student may intend to reside in their new location and be registered there. Of course, no one can be registered and vote in more

than one place and must decide where he or she intends to reside. This also applies to people on temporary job assignments in other areas of the state. *(A.C.A. § 7-5-201)*

Q: My husband and I are retired. We spend winters at home in south Arkansas and summers in Colorado. What residence should we use to determine where we are entitled to register and vote?

A: This is a decision you will have to make, but you must choose only one voting location. Many factors affect residency, but in general, your residence is where your family lives, where you physically reside, the place you intend to return to live, where your driver's license says you live, where you claim your homeowner's property tax exemption, etc.

Q: I registered to vote at our county fair a little over a month before the election. When I went to vote, I was told that I was not registered. What should I do?

A: You are not legally registered until the county clerk records your registration. Arkansas law requires organizers of voter registration drives to submit those applications within 21 days of the drive and no later than 30 days prior to an election (the registration deadline). If they did not do so, you would not be eligible to vote in that election.

However you register, you should follow up if you do not receive confirmation from your county clerk within two weeks. Before the registration deadline, check with your county clerk or visit **www.VoterView.org** to make sure your application was received and processed.

Voting 101 — Casting Your Ballot

Now that you're a registered voter, the next step is to get informed about candidates and issues and get ready to cast your ballot! Check inside the front cover of this booklet for upcoming election dates. To make voting as easy and convenient as possible, Arkansas offers three voting methods. You can choose to:

☑ *Vote at the Polls on Election Day*

Vote at your poll on Election Day, 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Your precinct and polling site are assigned by your county election commission based on where you live. A voter registration card issued by your county clerk will show your precinct, or you can visit **www.VoterView.org** to find your registration details and polling site. *(See page 17 for more on voting at your polling site.)*

☑ *Vote Early*

Early voting begins 15 days before a preferential primary or general election and 7 days prior to all other elections. (See inside front cover for specific dates.)

In most counties, early voting for all precincts is conducted at the county clerk's office. However, some counties have other "off-site" early voting locations around the county. The county clerk will post early voting locations, and local newspapers will often publish the designated sites.

During a preferential primary or a general election, early voting is available 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, ending at 5 p.m. on the Monday before the election. Off-site early voting hours may vary by county; watch your local newspaper or contact your county clerk for information.

During all other elections (runoff, school election, etc.,), early voting is available during your county clerk's regular office hours.

- If your name or address has changed, you may update your information at the early voting site by completing a new registration application.

☑ *Vote by Absentee Ballot*

Another method of casting a ballot in Arkansas is by Absentee Voting. You may vote absentee if:

1. You will be unavoidably absent from your polling site on Election Day, ***or***
2. You will be unable to attend your polling site due to illness or physical disability.

To vote absentee, contact your county clerk to request an Absentee Ballot Application that can be mailed, faxed or emailed to you, or you may pick one up in person. Others may assist you in obtaining and returning your absentee ballot, but there are specific guidelines they should be aware of. (*See page 34 for more information and deadlines for absentee voting.*)

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Voting at the Polls

Whether you vote early or on Election Day, the procedure for casting your ballot is very similar. Make sure you're ready and are familiar with the candidates and issues on your ballot.

What to Expect When Voting

- An election official will ask you to state your name, address and date of birth.
- The election official will ask you to provide photo I.D.
- If you registered by mail after January 1, 2003, are a first time voter, and did not submit the required I.D. with your voter registration application, you may be required to show additional I.D. to vote a regular ballot. Types of, which must show the name and address of the voter, include a current and valid photo I.D. or a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document.
- If you are a first time voter and you don't present the necessary additional identification, the election official will instruct you on voting a Provisional Ballot. *(See page 22 for Provisional Ballot procedure.)*
- In a primary election, you must state the party primary in which you wish to vote. If you don't wish to cast a party ballot, you may choose to vote in the nonpartisan races only (which may include judicial and prosecuting attorney races, and other local issues such as tax increases).
- In a primary election, you're allowed to vote only one party's ballot or the nonpartisan ballot. The election official records which party's ballot you choose.
- Next, you will sign the Precinct Voter Registration List, and the election official will add your name to the list of voters.

- The election official will give you a ballot or direct you to a voting machine. *(See below for the voting system in your county.)*
- You will go alone to a voting booth and mark your ballot. You are allowed 5 minutes to vote.
- If you vote a paper ballot, you will deposit it into the ballot box or an electronic scanner.

Your Voting System

Depending on each county's chosen voting system, voters in Arkansas use either an electronic touchscreen (also called direct-recording electronic, or DRE) or optical-scan paper ballots. Check the lists below for your county's equipment, then read more about it on the next pages.

iVotronic Touchscreen Only *(see page 19)*

Arkansas	Crawford	Greene	Little River	Prairie
Boone	Crittenden	Hempstead	Marion	Randolph
Bradley	Cross	Hot Spring	Miller	Searcy
Calhoun	Dallas	Independence	Mississippi	Sharp
Clark	Desha	Izard	Montgomery	Van Buren
Clay	Drew	Jackson	Nevada	White
Cleburne	Franklin	Jefferson	Perry	Woodruff
Cleveland	Fulton	Johnson	Phillips	Yell
Conway	Grant	Lafayette	Polk	

Optical Scan & Accessible iVotronic *(see pages 19 & 20)*

Central Tabulator			*Precinct Tabulator*	
Ashley	Lee	Saline	Baxter	Sebastian
Benton	Lincoln	Scott	Craighead	St. Francis
Carroll	Logan	Sevier	Garland	
Chicot	Lonoke	Stone	Pike	
Faulkner	Madison	Washington	Poinsett	
Howard	Monroe		Pope	
Lawrence	Newton		Pulaski	

Accessible ELECTronic DRE *(see page 21)*

Columbia
Ouachita
Union

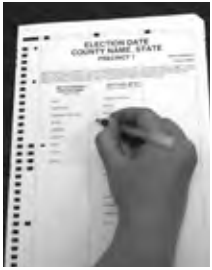
The iVotronic Touchscreen

With the exception of Columbia, Ouachita and Union counties, each polling site has at least one iVotronic touchscreen machine that
is accessible to voters with disabilities. Special features allow voters with limited mobility or impaired vision to vote privately without assistance. The iVotronic also has a paper record that remains in the machine but allows voters to verify their vote as it's made. Officials will use the paper printout for any recounts that may result.

1-2-3-VOTE! on the iVotronic

1. ***Activate Ballot —*** A poll worker will activate the machine.
2. ***Select*** — Touch the box containing the name of the candidate or issue you wish to choose. To change your selection, touch the box again or touch a different box. The iVotronic will not allow over-votes (selecting more than the allowed number in one race.)
3. ***Review*** — After completing the last ballot page, touch "review" and carefully check your choices. To change a vote, touch the box you wish to change, then touch your new selection. You may also review choices as they're made on the paper record to the left of the screen.
4. ***VOTE!*** — When finished making your choices, press the flashing red "VOTE" button to cast your ballot, then select the green "Confirm" button. When the "Thank You for Voting" screen appears, you have successfully cast your ballot.

Optical Scan Ballot



With the optical scan system, voters mark paper ballots that are fed into a scanner located at either the polling site (precinct tabulator) or at a central location in the county (central tabulator). The scanner "reads" the ballots electronically and totals the votes after the polls close.

Scanners at the precinct will alert voters to over-voted races and under-voted ballots. In counties that use a central tabulator, voters must check their ballots very carefully before placing in the ballot box. Once the ballot is accepted by the machine or dropped into the ballot box, it is final.

1-2-3-VOTE! on Optical Scan Systems

1. ***Receive Ballot*** — A poll worker issues a paper ballot and directs you to a voting booth.

2. ***Select*** — To select your candidate, use a black or blue pen (do not use red) to fill in the oval beside the candidate's name you wish to choose.

3. ***Review*** — Check your ballot carefully for overvotes or undervotes and for any votes you may wish to change. If you make a mistake, simply ask the poll worker for another ballot; you may spoil up to two ballots and vote a third.

4. ***VOTE!*** — Place your ballot in the optical scanner (in precinct tabulator counties) or in the ballot box (in central tabulator counties).

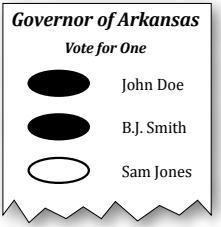
The ELECTronic DRE

The ELECTronic voting system features a large ballot mounted on a touch-sensitive panel. For each voter, poll workers activate the system and choose the appropriate ballot style using a panel on the back of the machine. The voter then touches numbered boxes beside each choice. Flashing lights indicate races for which the voter has not yet voted.

1-2-3-VOTE! on the DRE

1. ***Activate Ballot*** — A poll worker activates the machine.
2. ***Select*** — Select a candidate by touching the numbered box next to your choice.
3. ***Review*** — After completing your ballot, check over each race to make sure your selections are marked as you intended. If you make a mistake, just touch the numbered box next to your corrected choice.
4. ***VOTE!*** — When finished reviewing your choices, press the "Vote" button.

Avoiding the "Overvote"



An Overvote — *This ballot would not be counted.*

An overvote is a ballot marked with more than one choice for the same race or issue, such as two candidates in the same race. Overvotes cannot be counted, so it's important to make sure you don't make that mistake. If you vote a paper ballot (absentee or optical scan ballots), check your choices very carefully to ensure they're marked correctly. If you make a mistake, simply ask an election official for a new ballot before you drop yours in the ballot box. Electronic voting machines will automatically prevent overvotes, but it's still important to double check your responses.

Provisional Voting

There are several reasons why you may be asked to vote a Provisional Ballot including:

- Your name does not appear on the precinct voter registration list;
- You are unable to comply with identification requirements for mail-in registrants who failed to provide the necessary identification when registering to vote;
- The precinct voter registration list indicates that you requested an absentee ballot or voted during early voting; **or**
- Your vote is challenged by a registered poll watcher (candidates or representatives of candidates, parties or ballot issues who are permitted inside the polling site as observers, but are not official poll workers).

If your vote is challenged, a poll worker must inform you of that fact and the person making the challenge must complete a Challenged Ballot Form and you must be given the opportunity to vote a Provisional Ballot.

Procedures for casting a Provisional Ballot:

1. An election official will inform the voter.
2. If applicable, the poll watcher will complete a Challenged Ballot Form.
3. The election official will write the voter's name and address on the list of provisional voters.
4. The voter will complete a Voter Affirmation form in which the voter affirms that he or she is registered in the precinct and is eligible to vote in the election.
5. The election official will give the voter the proper ballot after removing the stub and placing it in the ballot stub box.
6. The voter will mark the ballot, then place it in the

Provisional Ballot Envelope and seal it.

7. The sealed Provisional Ballot Envelope should be placed in the Provisional Voter Envelope, along with the Challenged Ballot Form (if applicable) and the Voter Affirmation. In most counties, the Challenged Ballot Form and the Voter Affirmation will be printed on the outside of the Provisional Voter Envelope.
8. The poll workers will set the Provisional Voter Envelope aside, separated from the regular ballots, until the county board of election commissioners determines whether the votes may be counted.
9. The election official will provide the voter with written instructions on how to determine whether the provisional vote was counted, and, if not, the reason the vote was not counted. (In most cases, the election commission will mail a notice to the voter.)
10. Before the results of the election are certified, the election commission must determine whether the Provisional ballots are valid and should be counted.

Your rights when casting a Provisional Ballot:

Even if your name does not appear on the precinct voter registration list and the poll worker cannot verify that you are a registered voter in that precinct, you have the right to cast a Provisional Ballot.

If you cast a Provisional Ballot, you have the right to be informed in writing of whether or not your ballot was counted and, if not, the reason it was not counted.

Poll watchers may ***not***:

- Speak with you,
- Challenge your ballot in bad faith,
- Be within six feet of the actual voting area,
- Disrupt the election,
- Electioneer within 100 feet of the main entrance of the polling site.

Fail Safe Voting

- If you move to a new address within your current precinct, you have the right to vote in that precinct after filling out a change-of-address form.
- If you move to a new address in your county but outside the precinct where you're registered, you have the right to vote at your new precinct and fill out a change-of-address form there.
- If your name does not appear on the voter list at the precinct you will still be able to vote a provisional ballot after you affirm that you are a registered voter and qualified to vote at that election.

FAQs on Voting at the Polls

Q: If the election officials know me, must they ask me to present a photo I.D.?

A: Yes

Q: What if I'm at the polls and my current address differs from the one on the Precinct Voter List?

A: For you to vote a regular ballot:

- The poll worker must contact the county clerk, **and**
- The county clerk must verify that your address is within that precinct.

If your new address is within the current precinct:

- You must complete a voter registration form to update county voter registration records.

If your new address is NOT within the current precinct:

- The election official must contact the county clerk to determine the proper voting precinct, then you must go to the new polling site to vote.

Q: What if my name is NOT on the Precinct Voter List at my polling site?

A: The poll worker will contact the county clerk to confirm

your current registration status using your name, date of birth and current address.

- The election officials will verify that you are a qualified registered voter in that precinct.
- If you are registered but have moved outside the precinct, you may be re-directed to the correct polling site or you may vote a Provisional Ballot *(see page 22)*.
- If your name or address differs from the Precinct Voter List, you must complete a Voter Registration Application form to update your voter record.

Q: What if my name is NOT on the Precinct Voter Registration List AND the county clerk cannot confirm my registration?

A: You may vote a Provisional Ballot after signing a written affirmation that you are a registered voter in the precinct in which you wish to vote and that you are eligible to vote in that election *(see page 22)*.

Q: I made a mistake on my ballot — what do I do?

A: If you have not yet put your ballot into the ballot box, you may ask an election official for another ballot. You will be asked to sign a Spoiled Ballot Affidavit. Do not hesitate to ask to start over. You may "spoil" up to two ballots and receive another (three ballots total). Once you drop your ballot in the ballot box, no changes can be made.

Q: What if I need assistance to vote my ballot?

A: Simply inform an election official that you need help. Two election officials may assist you in marking your ballot, or another person of your choice may assist you. If you are physically unable to stand in line, you may request to advance to the front of the line.

An election official may not bring a ballot to your car. Plan ahead to vote absentee if you are physically unable to enter your polling site. Under no circumstances may a ballot leave the polling site.

Q: Who can challenge my ballot?

A: Registered poll watchers (candidates or representatives of candidates, parties or ballot issues) are allowed inside the polls as observers. They may challenge ballots because a voter is not eligible to vote or has previously voted in the election. In other words, a poll watcher may question whether a voter is who he says he is, lives at the stated address or is old enough to vote. The poll watcher may not speak directly to you or come within 6 feet of voting booths or voting machines.

Q: What if my polling site is not accessible?

A: The Help America Vote Act requires all polling sites to be accessible. Please call the State Board of Election Commissioners (1-800-411-6996) if you are uncertain about the accessibility of your polling site.

Q: Are candidates allowed to solicit my vote outside my polling site?

A: Yes, "electioneering" is allowed outside the polls. However, it may not occur within 100 feet of the primary entrances of the building. If a campaign worker or candidate approaches you within 100 feet of a poll, immediately report the violation to the election officials at that poll or contact your county board of election commissioners.

Q: How can I find out what will be on my ballot?

A: It's always a good idea to know the races and issues you'll be voting on before you arrive at your polling site. There are several ways you can find out:

- *Online* — Many counties make their ballots available online, either through the county clerk's website or the state's voter site **www.VoterView.org**.
- *County Clerk's Office* — Your county clerk can provide a sample of your ballot upon request.
- *Local newspaper* — Many local newspapers and other media outlets will list races and ballot issues.
- *Polling site* — On Election Day, samples of the ballot styles that will be used at each polling site are available for review. *(A.C.A. § 7-5-202(c)(1–8))*

Q: If I have a problem or question about voting — where do I go for help?

A: If you have a problem or question involving your registration information or registration status, contact your county clerk, who can help in cases such as:

- The time is nearing 30 days prior to an election, and you haven't received confirmation that your voter registration application has been received.
- Your name is not on the Precinct Voter Registration List at your poll, and the election officials cannot verify your registration with the county clerk.
- You have moved or changed your name, and you need to update your voter information.

If you have a problem or question involving a poll worker, a poll watcher, or any Election Day procedure at a poll, contact your county board of election commissioners.

Q: If I didn't vote in the primary election, can I vote in the runoff election?

A: Yes. Any voter who did not vote in a party primary election or who only voted in the nonpartisan election may vote in

a runoff election. If you did vote in the primary, you would only be eligible to vote in the same party's runoff.

Q: I live alone and don't have my own car. Someone with a local campaign has offered a ride to my polling site. Is that allowed?

A: Yes. However, they are not allowed to offer you any money, goods, wares or merchandise for the purpose of influencing your vote. *(A.C.A. § 7-1-104)*

Q: After I voted, I handed my ballot to the election official, but I never saw her put it in the ballot box or scanner. What is the procedure for that?

A: The voter should personally insert his or her ballot into the ballot box or ballot scanner *(A.C.A. § 7-5-309)*. If you suspect that your ballot was mishandled, you should contact your county board of election commissioners, county clerk or prosecuting attorney as soon as possible.

Q: Are poll workers permitted to take a ballot to a disabled voter waiting in a car outside the polling site? It seems like a kind thing to do, but is it legal?

A: No. Ballots cannot be removed from the polling place during an election *(A.C.A. § 7-1-103)*.

Any person who registered to vote but is unable to go to the polls may obtain an absentee ballot. (*A.C.A. § 7-5-402*).If a voter can get to the polls but cannot stand in line, the law allows that person to request to be moved to the front of the line. (*A.C.A. § 7-5-310*)

Q: When I went into the voting booth, I found a pencil with a candidate's name printed on it urging voters to vote for him. Is that allowed?

A: No. Sometimes a previous voter leaves such campaign

material in the voting booth inadvertently. But it is illegal for campaign materials to be in the polling place. No "electioneering" is allowed within 100 feet of the primary exterior entrance used by voters to the building containing the polling place on Election Day. *(A.C.A. § 7-1-103)*

Q: Can someone trace my ballot and see how I voted?

A: It is a matter of public record that you voted and that you voted in a particular party's primary. However, your ballot and your preferences on it cannot be traced back to you.

Q: My neighbor is blind, but she would like to vote in the next election. She is a friend of one of the candidates on the ballot and he has offered to go into the voting booth with her to help her cast her ballot. Can he do that?

A: Your neighbor or any other disabled person wishing to vote may select anyone, including a candidate, to assist in marking the ballot according to the voter's wishes. The person selected must not attempt to influence the vote.

A disabled voter may instead choose to be assisted by two election officials *(A.C.A. §§ 7-5-310 and 311)*. Additionally, at each polling site, voting equipment is now available that allows disabled voters to vote independently.

Q: There are several people living at a local homeless shelter who have registered to vote. This can't be their permanent residence, so how are they allowed to register with only a temporary address?

A: Arkansas law supports the right of homeless people and allows them to register to vote.

Q: My grandmother was recently declared mentally incompetent by a judge. The administrator at the nursing home where she lives requested an absentee

ballot for her to vote in the next election. Is that allowed?

A: Unless the court's competency order specifically states that your grandmother is prohibited from voting, she is still allowed to vote *(A.C.A. § 28-65-302)*. Your grandmother must sign the absentee ballot application.

You may seek a change in the incompetency order to specifically address the issue of voting. If you feel that someone is coercing your grandmother's vote, contact your prosecuting attorney.

Q: Does one vote really make much difference?

A: It's not uncommon for elections to be decided by extremely narrow margins, especially in local races or elections. A few examples from elections in Arkansas:

- In 2010, two candidates for sheriff in Stone County tied *twice*, both in the primary and the resulting runoff election. It took a special election called by the governor and subsequent court challenges to determine the party nominee.
- In a six-person race for mayor of Pine Bluff in 2008, the incumbent was just one vote shy of the majority required to win, forcing a runoff election.
- A 2005 local initiative in Hot Springs passed by only 89 of the 9,401 votes cast.
- In 1998, *three* municipal elections in Arkansas were decided by a single vote.

As you can see, just a handful of voters — even just one vote — can make a huge impact, right where you live. Make sure your vote isn't the deciding factor that's missing in the next election!

Absentee Voting

For voters who cannot be present at their polling sites — such as those who are traveling, will be living away from home for a time or are ill — an Absentee Ballot is one more option to ensure their voices are heard. However, there are important steps that must be followed to request, obtain and return an absentee ballot

Steps for Absentee Voting

1. You may vote absentee if you are properly registered to vote and one of the following statements is true for you:
   a) You will be unavoidably absent from your polling site on Election Day, **or**
   b) You will be unable to attend your polling site due to illness or physical disability.
2. Contact your county clerk's office to request an Absentee Ballot Application that can be mailed, faxed or emailed to you, or you may pick one up in person. *(See page 32 for more information and deadlines.)*
3. Complete the Application for Absentee Ballot and return it to your county clerk.
4. The clerk will then issue an absentee ballot to you through the method you selected on the application.
5. Complete your ballot and return it to the county clerk as instructed.

There are important requirements and deadlines for each of these steps based on whether you vote in person, by mail or with assistance. Continue reading this chapter to learn more.

Deadlines for Absentee Voting

Application for Absentee Voting

The deadline for submitting an Application for Absentee Voting depends on how you'll return it to the county clerk:

a) ***In person by you***
By close of business the day BEFORE the election

b) ***By designated bearer or administrator***
By close of business the day BEFORE the election

c) ***By mail, email or by fax***
By 7 days before the election

d) ***By authorized agent***
By 1:30 p.m. ON Election Day

Note: *The law does not prohibit county clerks from mailing absentee ballot applications during the 7 days prior to an election. However, if you receive the application during that window, you or your chosen bearer must deliver it personally to the county clerk.*

Obtaining your Absentee Ballot

The law only specifies a deadline on obtaining absentee ballots by designated bearer. They may pick up your ballot from the county clerk no earlier than 15 days before a preferential or general election and no earlier than 7 days before a runoff and all other elections. You should pick up your ballot based on your ability to deliver it back to the county clerk on time.

Returning your Absentee Ballot

The deadline for returning your Absentee Ballot to the county clerk depends on the delivery method you use:

a) ***In person by you***
By close of business the day BEFORE the election

b) ***By mail*, designated bearer, authorized agent or administrator:***

By 7:30 p.m. on Election Day

* *Absentee Ballots from UOCAVA voters (active-duty uniform service members, merchant marines, their spouses and dependents and overseas citizens) will be accepted up to 10 days after the election.*

You may NOT fax or email a ballot.

Absentee Voting with Assistance

Although you may request an absentee ballot application yourself, you may also have a ***designated bearer***, ***authorized agent***, or ***administrator*** act on your behalf to assist in getting and returning an absentee ballot application and/or ballot.

Designated bearers may obtain and return ballots for no more than 2 voters per election.

Authorized agents may obtain and return ballots for up to 2 voters who are patients in a hospital, long-term care facility or residential care facility licensed by the state.

An ***Administrator*** of a long-term care or residential care facility may receive and return ballots for any patient of the administrator's facility who authorizes them to receive and/or return a ballot on their behalf.

For additional information and requirements on voting with assistance, contact your county clerk's office.

FAQs on Absentee Voting

Q: On the application, what do the terms designated bearer, authorized agent and administrator mean?

A: A *designated bearer* is anyone chosen by you to pick up or deliver your ballot.

An *agent* or *authorized agent* serves voters who are medically unable to cast a ballot at a polling site due to unforeseen medical necessity as set forth in an affidavit from the administrative head of a hospital, long-term care or residential care facility.

An *administrator* is an administrative head of a long-term care or residential care facility licensed by the state and authorized in writing by a patient in that facility to deliver the application for an absentee ballot and to obtain or deliver the absentee ballot to the county clerk.

Q: How will I receive my ballot?

A: On the Application for Absentee Ballot, you declare how you wish to receive it: by picking it up in person, receiving it by mail, or allowing a bearer to pick it up (an administrator, authorized agent or designated bearer).

Members of the uniformed services or the merchant marines while on active duty, their spouses and dependents and U.S. citizens residing outside the U.S. may request electronic delivery of their absentee ballot. Contact your county clerk for more information.

Q: Am I required to request a separate Absentee Ballot application for every election?

A: *If you reside within your county of registration*, an Application for an Absentee Ballot serves one election and its corresponding runoff. You must submit a new application for each election cycle.

If you reside outside your county of registration (such as students, active military or overseas citizens), are disabled or reside in a long-term care facility, you will automatically receive a ballot for each election during the next year.

Q: My neighbor's son is in state prison on a felony conviction. He has applied for an absentee ballot from prison. Can he do that?

A: No. A person who is in prison or on parole for the conviction of a felony cannot register or vote. The Secretary of State and county clerks regularly receive criminal conviction records from the Department of Corrections. These are checked against the voter registration data so that the registrations of these voters can be promptly canceled. A convicted felon may regain the right to vote after obtaining a pardon from the governor or after discharging a sentence. Documentation must be provided to the county clerk. *(Ark. Const. Amend. 51, 11(d))*

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Voting 101

Your Voting Directory

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Elections Division 1-800-482-1127

State Board **(501) 682-1834 or**
of Election Commissioners 1-800-411-6996

My County Clerk _____

County Clerk's Phone # _____

My Precinct # _____

My Polling Place _____

For more information on elections and voting, visit the Arkansas Secretary of State's website:

www.sos.arkansas.gov

Information you can find on the website includes:

☑ *Voter Registration Application*
☑ *Election Results* ☑ *Election Dates*
☑ *Election Calendar* ☑ *Candidate Information*
☑ *Directory of Elected Officials*
☑ *Initiatives and Referenda*
☑ *State Agency Rules & Regulations*

Use your Smartphone to scan
this QR code and check your
Arkansas voter registration status

www.VoterView.org

For more information
on voting in the Natural State, visit

www.sos.arkansas.gov/elections

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