

Summary of Recent Election Law Changes

Same Day Registration

Persons who are not registered to vote in a county can no longer register to vote in person during the one-stop early voting period. Same day registration is no longer an option. Qualified persons wanting to vote in an election must register to vote no later than 25 days before the date of the election. State law does not permit voter registration between a first primary and a second primary.

One-stop Voting

One-stop early voting will now begin on the second Thursday prior to the date of an election instead of the third Thursday prior to the date of the election. Unless a county board of elections requested an exception, the number of total cumulative hours for one-stop voting in the 2014 primary or general election will be comparable to the total cumulative hours for one-stop voting offered during the 2010 primary or general election, respectively.

No Out of Precinct Voting

Voters who vote on Election Day must vote at the polling place for their correct precinct, based on their residential address as of 30 days prior to the date of the election. County boards of elections will not be able to count any provisional ballot for a voter that does not vote at his or her correctly assigned precinct on Election Day.

No Straight-Party Voting

On the ballots for the General Election, there will no longer be a place that allows a voter with one mark to vote for the candidates of a party for more than one office. Straight-party voting was eliminated in North Carolina with the recent election law changes. Voters may only vote for each partisan contest item on the General Election ballot separately.

Photo ID

Voters will not be required to show a photo in order to vote during the 2014 Statewide Primary and General Election period. When presenting to vote, a voter simply needs to state his or her current name and current address. As long as his or her name is on the list of registered voters in the precinct, he or she will be given a regular ballot and permitted to vote. Voters who present to vote in person (during one-stop early voting or on Election Day) this year will be given instructions that starting in 2016, voters will be *required* to show a photo ID when voting in person. Voters will be provided with a list of photo ID that is acceptable for purposes of voting in this state and will be asked if they have one or more of these forms of ID. If a voter indicates that he or she does not have a photo ID that will be acceptable for purposes of voting, then the voter will be asked to sign an *Acknowledgment of No Photo ID*. These voters will be given instructions on how they can obtain a no-fee photo ID from the North Carolina DMV.

Voter ID Education

At any primary and election between May 1, 2014, and January 1, 2016, any registered voter *may* present photo identification to the elections officials at the voting place but *may not be required* to do so. Each voter presenting in person will be notified that photo identification will be needed to vote beginning in 2016 and will be asked if he or she has one of the forms of photo identification appropriate for voting. If the voter indicates he or she does not have one of the types of photo identification appropriate for voting, the voter will be asked to sign an acknowledgment of the photo identification requirement and be given a list of types of photo identification appropriate for voting and information on how to obtain those types of photo identification. The list of names of those voters who signed an acknowledgment is a public record.

Under long-standing federal and state law, certain first-time voters may be asked to show identification if they did not provide identification information when they initially registered to vote in the county. These first-time voters may show either a current and valid photo identification or a copy of one of the following documents that shows the name and address of the voter: a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document.

Provisional Voting

Whenever a voter is offered a provisional ballot, the election official issuing the ballot will now mark in writing or other means on the ballot that it is a provisional ballot. If a provisional ballot is incorrectly placed into the voting equipment at the voting site, any ballot that is marked as a provisional ballot will be retrieved.

Any provisional ballot that is cast outside of a voter's correctly assigned precinct on Election Day will not be counted.

Absentee Voting

Significant changes were made to the method of requesting and returning an absentee ballot by mail. All requests for a civilian absentee ballot must be made on the *State Absentee Ballot Request Form*. Hand-written requests will no longer be accepted. The voter or requestor must provide the voter's date of birth and identification information that can be matched to the voter's record in the list of registered voters. A voter must now vote his or her ballot in the presence of two witnesses. A voter may vote his or her ballot in the presence of one witness only if the witness is a Notary Public.