



DISABILITY RIGHTS OREGON

REGISTER AND VOTE!
A Guide to Your Rights

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Disability Rights Oregon (DRO) is the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) service for Oregon. We help people who have a legal issue directly related to having a disability.

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We have provided a Voter Registration form at the end of this guide.

You can use the form to register to vote. You can also use it to find out how to contact your County Elections Office.

Your County Elections Office can answer questions about registering or voting, or provide you accommodations to register or vote.

CAN I VOTE?

In Oregon, you can vote if you are:

- A United States **citizen** and Oregon **resident**
- **Age 18** or older
- **Not currently in jail or prison** with a felony conviction
- **Registered** to vote

This means you have the **right to vote**, even when:

- You have a guardian
- You have a previous felony conviction or were in jail in the past
- You are committed
- You live in a group home or residential treatment facility
- You are homeless
- You need accommodations or alternate formats to vote
- You do not have an ID issued by Oregon or a Social Security number

WHY SHOULD I VOTE?

Voting is a civil right granted by the U.S. and Oregon Constitutions.

Your vote helps decide what will become law. These laws could affect you and other people with disabilities.

Your vote helps choose elected officials and judges who represent you. They may pass laws and make decisions that affect you and other people with disabilities.

REGISTERING TO VOTE

When do I need to register?

- You have never registered and you are age 17 or older, or
- You have **moved** or legally changed your name, or
- You want to change your political party membership

You can register at any time.

If you want to vote in an election, you must register **21 days before Election Day**. If you are mailing your registration form, it must arrive by that date.

What do I need to register?

The **first** time you register, you need **one form of identification**. That includes:

- Oregon State ID or Driver's License
- Social Security number
- Government document
- Paycheck stub
- Utility bill
- Bank statement

Where do I register?

- Online at **oregonvotes.org** (with Oregon ID or Social Security Number)
- With a paper form (provided with this handbook)
- At your County Elections Office
- At any state office that is a Voter Registration Agency:
 - Seniors and People with Disabilities
 - Children, Adult and Family Services, and WIC offices
 - Vocational Rehabilitation and Oregon Commission for the Blind
 - Addictions and Mental Health
 - Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

This means you can register at most county offices where you get case management, SNAP, Oregon Health Plan, or other state services and benefits.

Do I have to choose a political party?

No. You have the right to choose whether you register as a member of a political party.

How do I find out if I am currently registered?

- You can call the State Elections Division at **866-673-8683** (866-ORE-VOTE).
- You can check the “Oregon - My Vote” website at **www.tiny.cc/oregonmyvote**

REGISTRATION CHECKLIST

- Are you registered with your **current address, name, and political party affiliation**?
- If you are registering for the **first** time, do you have some form of **ID** from the list above?
- If you need help registering, have you contacted your **County Elections Office**?

VOTING

All elections in Oregon are conducted by mail.

When can I vote?

Ballots are mailed 2-3 weeks before Election Day. After you receive your paper ballot, you can vote and return your ballot.

The Elections Office must receive your ballot by 8pm on Election Day.

- You have a right to vote if you are in line by 8pm on Election Day.
- You can **drop it off** at official ballot drop-off sites until 8pm on Election Days. You can find out where designed drop-off sites are at oregonvotes.org or call your County Elections Office.
- If you are **mailing a ballot**, make sure it will arrive on time.

Do I have to vote on everything on the ballot?

No. You can leave any choice blank. You also have the right to write in candidates even if they are not listed on the ballot.

What if I make a mistake or damage my ballot?

If you use a #2 pencil to vote, you can erase and correct any mistakes. If you make a mistake that you cannot correct (such as marking the wrong choice with a pen), or damage your ballot, you can contact your County Elections Office for a replacement ballot.

How do I vote if I need accommodations?

You can ask your County Elections Office for an accommodation. **You should do this as soon as possible before the election.** You can contact them after you receive your ballot in the mail.

Many accommodations for different disabilities are available, including:

- Mark your ballot on any computer with the assistive technology you usually use, then print and return it, at **oregonvotes.org** or by **email**.
- Vote on a large print ballot.
- Vote on a computer at the County Elections Office.
- Vote using an electronic tablet and portable printer at the County Elections Office, or at your home if you are not able to go to the Elections Office. The tablets have accessibility features, including:
 - Text to voice
 - Text enlargers
 - Touch screens
 - Keyboards
 - Allow you to plug in your own assistive device, such as sip-and-puff systems
- You have the right to ask anyone you want to help you read or fill out your ballot, **except your employer or union**.

What if I cannot sign my ballot?

If your disability prevents you from signing, you can use a signature stamp or other mark. **First you must fill out a form**, called the “Signature Stamp Attestation Form.” Contact your County Elections Office to get this form.

What are my privacy rights?

You have the right to private, independent voting. You do not have to tell anyone how you voted. You do not have to ask for help from someone you know. You can contact your County Elections Office for accommodations to vote privately. If anyone helps you read or fill out a ballot, you still have a right to choose how you vote.

How can my friends, family or care providers help me vote?

Your friends and family can read you information from your ballot and fill it out the way you want. They cannot sign it for you.

They should:

- Respect your privacy and keep your vote confidential.
- Give you the information on the ballot without changing it.
- Fill out your ballot properly, following the instructions.
- Fill out your ballot how you want, including writing in candidates or leaving choices blank.
- Fix mistakes, including requesting a replacement ballot if necessary.
- Make sure they checked both sides of the ballot for voting.

They cannot:

- Sign for you.
- Summarize information with a bias.
- Try to influence you with comments about candidates or measures.
- Try to encourage you or force you to vote a certain way.
- Wear anything that suggests you should vote a certain way.

Where can I get information about candidates and ballot measures?

- You can **talk** to friends, family, and anyone else you want. You still have the right to vote any way you want.
- You can **research** at your local library, online, in the news, or anywhere else you want.
- You can read the statewide **Easy Voters' Guide** published by the League of Women Voters and Disability Rights Oregon (DRO). You can get it from DRO or online at voteoregon.org. **It has easy to read, accessible language. It uses large print.** It has:
 - Information written by the candidates themselves.
 - Nonpartisan (unbiased) information about ballot measures.
- You can read the **Voters Pamphlet** published by the state. You can get it from the Secretary of State, your County Elections office, or online at oregonvotes.org. It has:

- Information written by the candidates themselves.
 - Nonpartisan information about ballot measures.
 - “Arguments” about ballot measures. Supporters and opponents pay to include their viewpoint.
- You can read the statewide **Voters’ Guide** published by the League of Women Voters. You can get it at your Elections office, or online at voteoregon.org. It has:
 - Information written by the candidates themselves.
 - Nonpartisan (unbiased) information about ballot measures.
 - It is similar to the Easy Voters Guide, but may not be accessible.

VOTING CHECKLIST

- Have you contacted your County Elections Office about any accommodations you need?
- Have you decided how you will vote?
- Have you voted and returned your ballot on time?

WHAT IF I HAVE A PROBLEM OR QUESTION?

You can contact the Oregon Secretary of State Elections Division about voting questions. They can transfer you to your County Elections Office if necessary. If you believe your rights have been violated, you can file a formal complaint.

Telephone: **866-673-8683** (866-ORE-VOTE)

Online: **oregonvotes.org**

You can also contact DRO with problems or questions about your rights.

Telephone: **800-452-1694**

Online: **disabilityrightsoregon.org**

Email: welcome@droregon.org

OREGON VOTER BILL OF RIGHTS

- You have the right to vote if you are a US citizen, live in Oregon, are 18 years old, and have registered.
- You have the right to vote if you are homeless.
- You have the right to vote if you have been convicted of a felony but have been released from custody, even if you are on probation or parole.
- You have the right to vote even if you have a guardian and even if you need help reading or filling out your ballot.
- You have the right to vote or cast your ballot if you are in line by 8 PM on Election Day.
- You have the right to know if you are registered to vote.
- You have the right to choose whether or not you want to register as a member of a political party.
- You have the right to use a signature stamp or other mark but first you have to fill out a form. No one can sign for you.
- You have the right to ask for help from elections staff or from a friend or family member.
- There are some people who cannot help you vote, for example, your boss or a union officer from your job.

- You have the right to a secret vote. You do not have to tell anyone how you voted.
- You have the right to get a “provisional ballot”, even if you are told you are not registered to vote.
- You have the right to get a new ballot if you make a mistake.
- You have the right to vote for the person you want. You can write in someone else’s name if you don’t like the choices on your ballot.
- You have the right to vote “yes” or “no” on any issue on your ballot.
- You have the right to leave some choices blank on your ballot. The choices you do mark will still count.
- You have the right to use a voting system for all Federal Elections that makes it equally possible for people with disabilities to vote privately and independently.
- You have the right to know if your ballot, including a “provisional ballot”, was accepted for counting.
- You have the right to file a complaint if you think your voting rights have been denied.

(Oregon Constitution, Sections 2 and 3; ORS Chapters 137, 246, 247, and 254; Vote by Mail Manual; Help America Vote Act of 2002; OAR 165-001-0090 and 165-007-0030)