

The Official Massachusetts

Information for Voters



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Published by

William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

**To receive additional Mail-in Voter Registration
Forms, call the Elections Division at
(617) 727-2828 or 1-800-462-VOTE.**

**To vote in the state election, your
Mail-in Voter Registration Form must
be postmarked by Wednesday,
October 13, 2004!**

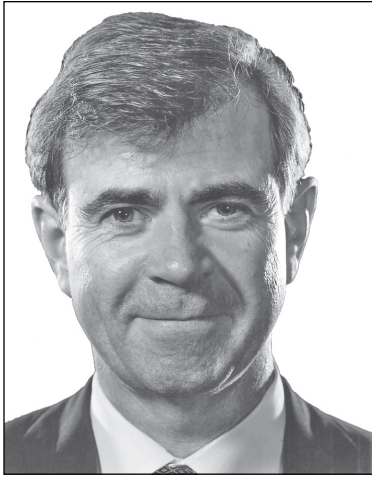
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VOTE
State Election
Tuesday,
November 2, 2004

¡Atención, ciudadanos que habla español!

El Secretario del Estado ha publicado este folleto en español. Para solicitar ejemplares gratuitos de la versión en español, llámé a al teléfono 617-727-7030 o 1-800-392-6090 (esta llamada es gratuita).

A Message from Secretary Galvin...



Dear Voter:

Four years ago in the last presidential election, our country learned in a dramatic way the value and power of each individual voter. This year our country has **BIG CHOICES** and **BIG DECISIONS** to make not only relating to national security but also about such critical issues as health care, the cost of which is causing many employers to limit the creation of new jobs. Many families are being squeezed, maybe yours. This election is about you and your family. Please take the time to make a choice and vote. If you are not yet registered, we have enclosed a form to mail back but you must register by October 13, 2004. Because of the passage of a new federal law – the Help America Vote Act – there are some new provisions that are outlined in this booklet.

Many communities will also have binding questions relating to various issues including property tax rates. We have included a list for your information.

I have also included information about the other services provided by my office.

I urge you to vote on November 2, 2004. Polling places will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. statewide.

Very truly yours,



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

The Help America Vote Act of 2002

The Help America Vote Act was enacted in October 2002 in an effort to improve voting across the country. Implementation of the Help America Vote Act requires certain additional procedures both for registering to vote and voting in Massachusetts.

New Federal Requirements for Identification:

If you register to vote for the first time in Massachusetts by mail on or after January 1, 2003, you will be required to show identification when you vote for the first time in a federal election since registering by mail in 2003, or you can send in a copy of your identification with your voter registration form.

Acceptable identification must include your name and the address at which you are registered to vote, for example: a current and valid driver's license, photo identification, current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document showing your name and address. If you send in a copy of your identification with your mail-in voter registration form, it may not be returned to you.

If you do not provide such identification, the Help America Vote Act of 2002 requires that you may only cast a provisional ballot which will be counted later, but only after your eligibility to vote has been determined.

Provisional Ballots:

The Help America Vote Act requires "fail-safe voting" using provisional ballots. If your name does not appear on the voting list, you can either go to city or town hall to try to resolve the issue or you may cast a provisional ballot.

To cast a provisional ballot, you must complete an affirmation with your name, address, date of birth, and a statement that you are a registered voter in the jurisdiction and you are eligible to vote. You must also show suitable identification. You will then receive a ballot and an envelope to put your ballot in after you make your choices.

After the election, the local election official will search for records to confirm your voter registration. If your eligibility is confirmed, your ballot will be removed from the sealed envelope and grouped with other ballots and counted in a manner that provides the greatest secrecy. If your eligibility cannot be confirmed, your ballot will remain sealed in the envelope until such time as it is required to be kept and then will be destroyed without being viewed.

To find out if your provisional ballot is counted, you may contact the Elections Division, Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth at 1-800-462-8683 or 617-727-2828, or your municipal election official. The information will be available twenty (20) days after an election. When calling, you must provide your name, address, date of birth and provisional ballot number to receive the information.

How to Register to Vote...

Who may register?

Only a person who is:

- ◆ a **U.S. citizen**, and
- ◆ a resident of Massachusetts, and
- ◆ 18 years old on or before election day, and
- ◆ not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction.

How can I register to vote?

In Person: Go to any registration location, such as your city or town hall, and complete an affidavit of registration. Upon completion of the form, you will be provided with a receipt which is proof of your registration. You should keep that receipt until you receive an acknowledgement notice in the mail, which should arrive within 2 to 3 weeks.

By Mail: Mail-in registration forms are widely available. A mail-in registration form is enclosed with this booklet. To obtain additional mail-in registration forms please call 617-727-2828 or 1-800-462-VOTE and a form will be sent to you. Mail the completed form to your local city or town hall. You should receive an acknowledgment notice in 2 to 3 weeks. If you do not, please contact your local election office to verify your voting status.

At the Registry of Motor Vehicles: While receiving or renewing a driver's license, you can complete a voter registration application. Check your motor voter receipt before you leave—it will indicate whether you registered to vote or not. Keep your motor voter receipt until you receive confirmation from your local election official. If you do not receive any confirmation, please contact your local election office to verify your voting status.

When and where may I register?

There is no waiting period to be eligible to register to vote. As soon as you consider your address your domicile, you may register to vote from that address. Please note that anytime you move, you must re-register. If you move, you may register to vote as soon as you move into your new home.

You may register to vote:

- ◆ in person or by mail, by completing a mail-in registration form and delivering it to your city or town election office, or
- ◆ at any local election office in any city or town in the state and at any registration event you encounter anywhere in Massachusetts, or
- ◆ when applying for or renewing your driver's license at the Registry of Motor Vehicles or when applying for service at a designated voter registration agency.

What must I do if I've changed my address since I registered?

If you have moved, you must register again.

Are there deadlines for registration?

Yes. In order to vote you must be registered:

- ◆ 20 days before all primaries and elections, and/or
- ◆ 10 days before a special town meeting.

Do I need to attach identification to my voter registration form?

Yes, if you are registering to vote for the first time in Massachusetts. Because of a new federal law, the Help America Vote Act of 2002 passed by Congress, if you registered to vote by mail on or after January 1, 2003, you will be required to show identification when you vote for the first time in a federal election since registering by mail in 2003, or you can send in a copy of your identification with your voter registration form.

Acceptable identification must include your name and the address at which you are registered to vote, for example: a current and valid driver's license, photo identification, current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document showing your name and address. If you send in a copy of your identification with your mail-in voter registration form, it may not be returned to you.

If you do not provide such identification, the Help America Vote Act of 2002 requires that you may only cast a provisional ballot which will be counted later, but only after your eligibility to vote has been determined.

What should I do if I registered to vote and I have not heard from my local election official?

If you have NOT received confirmation of your voter status from your city or town election official within 2 or 3 weeks from the date you registered, please contact your local election office to verify your voting status.

Voting...

Where will I vote?

Polling places are located in each precinct in your city or town. Call your local election official or my office at 1-800-462-8683 or 617-727-2828 to find out where your polling place is located. You can also visit my website at www.wheredoivotema.com/bal/myelectioninfo.php to look up your polling place and view a sample ballot.

All polling places are required by federal and state law to be accessible to elderly and disabled voters.

How long are the polls open?

The polls must be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. for state elections.

How do I find out what offices and candidates are on my ballot?

Sample ballots as well as instruction cards are posted at the polls on election day. Also, you can view a sample ballot at my website: www.wheredoivotema.com/bal/myelectioninfo.php

Will I need to show identification to vote?

Maybe. If you registered to vote by mail on or after January 1, 2003, you will be required to show identification when you vote for the first time in a federal election since registering by mail in 2003 if you have not sent in a copy of your identification with your mail-in voter registration form.

Acceptable identification must include your name and the address at which you are registered to vote, for example: a current and valid driver's license, photo identification, current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document showing your name and address.

What if I need assistance?

If you need assistance because of blindness, physical disability, inability to read or to read English, you may seek help from either a person of your choice or from election officials.

What if I make a mistake on my ballot?

If you make a mistake on your ballot, you may request a new one. You may request up to two new ballots.

What should I do if my name is not on the voter's list?

Ask the election officer in charge of the polling place to check your registration by looking at the inactive voter's list and by checking to see if you are registered in another precinct in that municipality.

If they still cannot find your name, you may go to city or town hall to attempt to establish your identity as a registered voter or you may cast a provisional ballot.

Voting by Absentee Ballot...

You may vote by absentee ballot if you:

- ◆ will be absent from your city or town on election day; or
- ◆ have a disability that prevents your voting at the polling place; or
- ◆ cannot vote at the polls due to religious beliefs.

Applying for an absentee ballot...

All applications for absentee ballots must be made in writing.

You must apply for an absentee ballot from your city or town clerk or election commission no later than noon of the day before the election. Applications may be mailed or hand delivered and you may use any form of written communication (letter or postcard) or the official application form. A family member may apply in the same manner for you. Include on the application:

- ◆ your name and address as registered,
- ◆ ward and precinct, if you know them,
- ◆ the precise address where the ballot should be sent,
- ◆ your own signature.

A ballot will be sent to any address you specify –including your own home. Be sure to apply early.

Requesting to vote in person...

If you meet the qualifications to vote absentee, but do not want to have a ballot mailed to you, you may request to vote in person before election day. You may vote at your city or town hall before election day at a time arranged with the clerk, but the application for your ballot must be made no later than noon of the day before the election. Call the clerk's office to make certain that the absentee ballots are available. Absentee ballots should be available three weeks before an election.

Voting by absentee ballot...

The ballot will come with instructions and a set of return envelopes. After making your choices on the ballot, you must enclose it in the inner (smaller) brown envelope and complete the information on the front of that envelope and sign it. Then you put the smaller envelope in the bigger envelope and mail it back to your city or town hall. To be counted, a completed ballot must be received by the time the polls close on election day.

If you are not able to write, the person assisting you must sign your name as well as their name, address and telephone number.

What if I am permanently disabled?

If you are permanently disabled and cannot cast your vote at the polling place, you may file a letter from your physician with your city or town clerk, stating that you are permanently unable to cast your vote at the polling place because of disability. A completed application for an absentee ballot for you to sign and return will be mailed to you by the city or town clerk at least 28 days before every primary and election.

Local Binding Ballot Questions

State law allows certain local binding questions to appear on the state election ballot. Below please find a listing of local ballot questions that will be printed on the ballot in the municipality listed. For more information on these binding questions, please contact your local officials at the telephone number listed or visit the municipal website.

Community	Binding Question	Phone Number	Website (if any)
Athol	Proposition 2 ½ Debt Exclusion	978-249-4551	
Barnstable	Community Preservation Act	508-862-4044	www.town.barnstable.ma.us
Carlisle	Alcoholic Beverage Petition	978-369-6155	www.carlisle.org
Concord	Community Preservation Act	978-318-3080	www.concordnet.org
Dudley	Local Charter Acceptance	508-949-8004	www.dudleyma.gov
Easthampton	Proposition 2 ½ Override	413-240-5900 x226	www.easthamptonweb.com
Franklin	Proposition 2 ½ Override	508-520-4900	www.franklin.ma.us
Grafton	Proposition 2 ½ Debt Exclusion	508-839-5335 x195	www.town.grafton.ma.us
Groton	Community Preservation Act	978-448-1100	www.ci.groton.ma.us
Hadley	Community Preservation Act	413-584-1590	www.hadleyma.org
Hanover	Community Preservation Act	781-826-2691	www.hanovermass.com
Harvard	Alcoholic Beverage Petition	978-456-4100 x16	www.harvard.ma.us
Holden	Proposition 2 ½ Debt Exclusion	508-829-0265	www.townofholden.net
Lancaster	Acceptance of Special Legislation	978-365-2542	www.ci.lancaster.ma.us
Mashpee	Proposition 2 ½ Debt Exclusion	508-539-1400 x534	www.ci.mashpee.ma.us
Mendon	Proposition 2 ½ Debt Exclusion	508-473-8013	www.mendonma.org
Middleton	Community Preservation Act	978-774-6927	www.townofmiddleton.org
Needham	Local Charter Revision Community Preservation Act	781-455-7510	www.town.needham.ma.us
Northborough	Community Preservation Act	508-393-5002	www.town.northborough.ma.us
Orleans	Proposition 2 ½ Debt Exclusion	508-240-2700 x405	www.town.orleans.ma.us
Sharon	Community Preservation Act	781-784-1505	www.townofsharon.net
Stoughton	Recall of Local Official (2 questions)	781-341-1300 x215	www.stoughton-ma.gov
Wellesley	Proposition 2 ½ Override	781-431-1019 x252	www.ci.wellesley.ma.us
Wilbraham	Community Preservation Act	413-596-2810	www.ci.wilbraham.ma.us

Offices on the Ballot—November 2, 2004

This year the following offices will appear on the ballot:

- ◆ President/Vice President
- ◆ Representative in Congress
- ◆ Councillor
- ◆ Senator in General Court
- ◆ Representative in General Court
- ◆ County Commissioner (Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes, Norfolk and Plymouth counties only), or Franklin Council of Government (Franklin county only)
- ◆ Sheriff
- ◆ District Attorney (Berkshire county only – to fill a vacancy)
- ◆ Register of Deeds (Berkshire Northern, Bristol and Norfolk districts only – to fill vacancies).

Protecting Your Financial Future:

Can the Massachusetts Securities Division Help You?

Many Massachusetts families have at least part of their assets in uninsured investments like stocks, corporate bonds, or mutual funds. The Securities Division is the state agency with the responsibility to protect investors in securities. The Division has recovered over \$20 million for investors.

Before You Do Business with a Stockbroker, Check Their Background

You can check the background of a stockbroker and/or brokerage firm, or make a complaint about misconduct connected to investments, by calling the Securities Division at (617) 727-3548 or toll free at (800) 269-5428. If the firm is doing business in Massachusetts, it must be registered. The Securities Division can tell you if the firm and/or individual are properly licensed and if their record includes any disciplinary history, even if the firm is located outside Massachusetts.

Enforcement and Restitution

The Securities Division cannot eliminate the risks of investing. However, the Enforcement Section staff is available each day to

speaking with investors about their concerns. Anonymous inquiries are accepted. Depending on the circumstances, the Division may begin an investigation. If there are proven violations of the Massachusetts Securities laws, fines may be imposed, and, sometimes, the violations lead to full or partial restitution to investors. The Securities Division has recovered over \$20 million for defrauded investors. Investors' private rights to sue for damages are not waived by seeking an investigation or inquiry.

Protecting Your Rights

Consumer and investor education is often your best protection. Look with doubt on promises of fantastic returns on your money in a short period of time, even if they come from a friend or acquaintance. Also, many financial frauds prey on the elderly. Always demand written information about the company or the corporation behind the investment plan and its past track record. But bear in mind that even printed documents can easily be created, forged, or falsified. If you are still in doubt, do not send any money, sign any documents, or make any promise to invest.

Home Heating Assistance

Winter Is Coming!

Home heating oil and gas prices have been continuously on the rise this year.

Fuel assistance is once again available for homeowners and renters needing help in paying high winter heating costs in Massachusetts. The federal government annually determines allocation of fuel subsidies to states.

In Massachusetts, the Bureau of Energy Programs within the Department of Housing and Community Development oversees and distributes this fuel assistance to over 25 local non-profit administering agencies, contracted with the state to determine actual eligibility and disburse the financial assistance (whose amounts change yearly). The local agency will then

make payments toward the heating bills to the primary heat source vendor (oil, propane, wood or coal dealer, gas or electric utility). Eligibility is based on annualized household income and the number of members in the household. Call the Bureau of Energy Programs at 1-800-632-8175 or Citizen Information Service at 1-800-392-6090 to find out where to apply.

Consumer complaints about home heating problems can be reported to the Attorney General's office, Consumer Protection Division at 617-727-8400.

For limited income households not eligible, contact the Good Neighbor Fund through your local Salvation Army at 1-800-334-3047.

Services of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

◆ **Citizen Information Service** functions as the primary information and referral agency for the state, offering data on state programs and agencies. CIS attempts to answer all requests, by providing either direct assistance or an immediate referral to the appropriate agency. The division is also an affiliate of the Massachusetts State Data Center and provides assistance in locating and understanding data of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. As part of its goal to make state government more accessible to the public, CIS has established a publication series on specific topics of interest, including:

- The Citizens' Guide to State Services: A Selective Listing of Government Agencies and Programs, with addresses, phone numbers and agency descriptions, \$15 plus \$3.50 shipping cost. Available from the State House Bookstore, see below.
- Your State Legislators, with addresses, phone numbers, committee assignments, of state senators and representatives as well as an alphabetized listing of the cities and towns with corresponding legislators, \$4 plus \$2.20 shipping cost. Available from the State House Bookstore, see below.
- Welcome to Massachusetts: A Practical Guide to Living in the State, free.
- Automobile Insurance Discounts, up-to-date information available for Massachusetts drivers, free.
- Your Automobile Excise Tax, free.
- Property Tax Exemptions for Elders, Surviving Spouses and Minors, free.
- How to Obtain a Marriage License, free.
- Safe and Sanitary Housing for Massachusetts Residents, free.
- Veterans Laws and Benefits Guide, free.
- Massachusetts Facts: A Review of the History, Government and Symbols of the State, for junior high to high school age students, free.

Citizen Information Service can be contacted at (617)727-7030 or 1-800-392-6090 (toll-free in Massachusetts only), website: www.sec.state.ma.us/cis, where many of the above documents are available for viewing.

◆ **The Elections Division** administers all state elections, provides information on voting, and supplies election materials to the public, candidates and government officials. (617) 727-2828 or 1-800-462-VOTE, website: www.sec.state.ma.us/ele

◆ **The Securities Division** endeavors to protect Massachusetts investors by licensing the sale of securities, requiring that high-risk securities be registered, investigating complaints, and taking appropriate enforcement and disciplinary actions. (617) 727-3548 or 1-800-269-5428, website: www.sec.state.ma.us/sct

◆ **The Public Records Division** maintains, preserves and makes accessible government records, enforces lobbyist and disclosure laws and records all gubernatorial appointments and commissions. (617) 727-2832, website: www.sec.state.ma.us/pre

◆ **The Massachusetts Archives** collects, catalogs, and preserves records of enduring value from nearly 375 years of state government. It serves as a vital resource to scholars, genealogists, and students and as an advisor to the historical records community in Massachusetts. (617) 727-2816, website: www.sec.state.ma.us/arc

◆ **The Commonwealth Museum** brings Massachusetts history alive through exhibits, outreach and student programs and publications. (617) 727-2816, website: www.sec.state.ma.us/mus

◆ **The Massachusetts Historical Commission** is the state agency responsible for historical preservation in the Commonwealth. It offers assistance to communities in listing properties with the National Register of Historic Places and establishing local historic districts. (617) 727-8470, website: www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

◆ **The State Bookstore** offers a wide range of books and pamphlets published by the Secretary of the Commonwealth and other state agencies, including the Code of Massachusetts Regulations. A free Bookstore Catalog is available. (617) 727-2834, website: www.sec.state.ma.us/spr

◆ **The Regional Offices** in Springfield and Fall River offer many of the services provided by the Boston office and brings state government closer to the citizens of Massachusetts. Springfield, (413) 784-1378, website: www.sec.state.ma.us/wes; Fall River (508) 646-1374.

◆ **The Corporations Division** is responsible for registering all Massachusetts profit and nonprofit corporations and providing immediate summary information about more than 250,000 corporations doing business in the state. (617) 727-2850 or (617) 727-9640, website: www.sec.state.ma.us/cor

◆ Other divisions include:

State Records Center

website: www.sec.state.ma.us/rec,

State Publications and Regulations

website: www.sec.state.ma.us/spr

State House Tours


website: www.sec.state.ma.us/trs.

Massachusetts Voters' Bill of Rights

Your voting rights are protected. These rights are guaranteed to qualified registered voters.

1. You have the right to vote if you are a qualified registered voter.
2. You have the right to cast your ballot in a manner that ensures privacy. You have the right to vote without any person trying to influence your vote and to vote in a booth that prevents others from watching you mark your ballot.
3. You have the right to remain in the voting booth for five (5) minutes if there are other voters waiting and for ten (10) minutes if there are no other voters waiting.
4. You have the right to receive up to two (2) replacement ballots if you make a mistake and spoil your ballot.
5. You have the right to request assistance when voting from a poll worker or anyone of your choice, except your employer or an officer of your union or their representatives.
6. You have the right to vote if you are disabled. The polling place must be accessible, and there must be an accessible voting booth.
7. You have the right to vote if you cannot read or write or cannot read or write English.
8. You have the right to vote but must show identification if: you are a first-time voter who registered to vote by mail and did not submit identification with the voter registration form; or your name is on the inactive voter list; or your vote is being challenged; or if requested by a poll worker. Acceptable forms of identification are: Massachusetts driver's license, other printed documentation containing your name and address such as a recent utility bill, rent receipt on landlord's letterhead, lease, or a copy of a voter registration acknowledgment or receipt.
9. You have the right to vote by absentee ballot if: you will be absent from your city or town on Election Day; or if you have a physical disability that prevents your voting at the polling place; or if you cannot vote at the polls due to religious belief.
10. You have the right to cast a provisional ballot if you believe you are a qualified registered voter but a poll worker tells you that you are ineligible to vote.
11. You have the right to follow up any challenge to your right to vote through the complaint process.
12. You have the right to vote if you are not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction and have registered as a voter after your release.
13. You have the right to take this Voters' Bill of Rights or any other papers, including a sample ballot, voter guide or campaign material into the voting booth with you. Please remember to remove all papers when you leave the booth.
14. You have the right to vote at your polling place any time between 7am and 8pm for state and federal elections—hours may vary for local elections. If you are in line at your polling place when the polls close at 8 pm, you have the right to vote.
15. You have the right to bring your children into the voting booth with you.

If you feel that your right to vote has been violated in any way, call the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Elections Division at 1-800-462-VOTE (8683). This call is free within Massachusetts.

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OFFICIAL DOCUMENT

Residential Customer
VOTERS