

Massachusetts Voters' Bill of Responsibilities

Prepared by the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, October 2006.

1. It is your responsibility to register to vote at least 20 days before an election. You can register in one of the following locations: at a voter registration drive, your city or town hall, by mail, at the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office (Boston, Fall River or Springfield), at the Registry of Motor Vehicles or another agency when applying for services.
2. It is your responsibility to fill out the voter registration form truthfully, accurately and completely.
3. It is your responsibility to return the annual local census form to keep your voter status active. If you are an inactive voter, you will be required to show ID at the polls.
4. It is your responsibility to re-register to vote if you move to another community.
5. It is your responsibility to notify your city or town hall if there are any changes in your address within your community or in your name or if you wish to change your political party enrollment.
6. It is your responsibility to re-register to vote if you were convicted of a felony and have completed your jail sentence.
7. It is your responsibility to bring acceptable identification to the polls if you are a firsttime voter and failed to provide your driver's license number or the last four digits of your social security number with your voter registration form, or if you did provide these numbers, but they could not be verified. Your voter acknowledgement will state if you have to bring ID to the polls. If you are unsure, bring identification when you vote. Identification must include your name and current address, for example: a current and valid driver's license, current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document.
8. It is your responsibility to know the hours and location of your polling place. Contact your city or town clerk, the Secretary of the Commonwealth, or the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts.
9. It is your responsibility to request an absentee ballot if you are unable to vote in person on Election Day and are eligible to do so. You are eligible to vote by absentee ballot in Massachusetts if you will be absent from your city or town on Election Day, have a physical disability that prevents your voting at the polling place or cannot vote at the polls due to religious beliefs. You must request an absentee ballot by noon the day before Election Day and return it by the time the polls close on Election Day (a different deadline applies to those overseas).
10. It is your responsibility to check your ballot for accuracy before casting it. If you make a mistake on your ballot, ask a poll worker for a replacement. If you spoil the second ballot, you can ask for a third, which is your final ballot and will be counted.
11. It is your responsibility to ask for assistance at the polling place if you need it. You can seek help from any person of your choice, including poll workers.
12. It is your responsibility to respect the privacy of other voters.
13. It is your responsibility to refrain from campaigning or influencing other voters within 150 feet of the polling place.
14. It is your responsibility to report problems to a poll worker or to report election law violations to your city or town hall and/or the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

The League of Women Voters encourages all voters to be informed about the candidates and issues in all elections. If you have any questions, please call your local city or town clerk or the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Elections Division at 1-800-462-VOTE (8683). This call is free within Massachusetts. To fulfill your civic duties, exercise your right to vote in all elections responsibly and know your rights as a voter.