

VOTER INFORMATION

VOTE
SARASOTA
COUNTY

Ron Turner
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

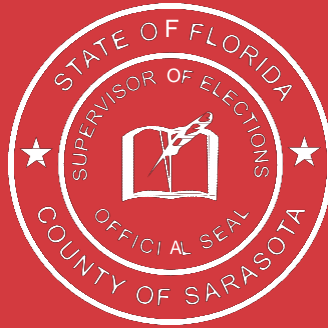


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A MESSAGE

FROM THE SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

Dear Sarasota County Voter,

I am pleased to present this voter information guide, which is designed to demystify the voting process and make your voting experience as smooth and trouble-free as possible. It contains answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about voter registration and voting procedures in Florida.

This guide is current as of the date of publication. You may also access the most up-to-date voting information from our website (www.sarasotavotes.com) or by calling or visiting any of our three offices in Sarasota, North Port and Venice.

It is our privilege to have a choice and the right to voice our opinions. Whether you choose to vote in person on election day or during the early voting period, or cast your vote by mail, I urge you to take the time to become familiar with the voting process in Sarasota County – and then please vote!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.



Ron Turner
Supervisor of Elections
Sarasota County

SARASOTA COUNTY 2017 ELECTION SCHEDULE

Election Date	Election Title	Early Voting	Registration Deadline
March 14, 2017	City of North Port Special Primary* City of Sarasota First Election Town of Longboat Key General Holiday Park Park & Recreation District Tri-Par Estates Park & Recreation District	Mar 6-11	Feb 13, 2017
May 9, 2017	North Port Special Election City of Sarasota Second Election*	May 1-6	April 10, 2017
November 7, 2017	City of Venice General Election	TBA	Oct 9, 2017

*If necessary

VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION

WHO MAY REGISTER AND VOTE?

To register and vote, you must be 18 years of age, a U.S. citizen, and a legal resident of the State of Florida and of the county in which you seek to be registered. A minor who is otherwise qualified may pre-register upon reaching his/her 16th birthday, and may vote in any election conducted on or after his/her 18th birthday. (See § 97.041, Florida Statutes)

PERSONS NOT ENTITLED TO REGISTER OR VOTE

- A person who has been found by a court in any state to be mentally incapacitated with respect to voting and who has not had his or her right to vote restored
- A person who has been convicted of any felony in any court of record and who has not had his or her right to vote restored
- A person who is not a citizen of the United States of America
- A person who is not registered may not vote.

(See § 97.041, Florida Statutes)

HOW DO I REGISTER?

To register to vote, you must fill out a [Florida Voter Registration Application](#). Applications are available at supervisor of elections' (SOE) offices in the Sarasota County Terrace Bldg., 101 S. Washington Blvd., Sarasota; the R.L. Anderson Bldg., 4000 Tamiami Trail S. Venice, and Biscayne Plaza, 13640 Tamiami Trail, North Port. Applications are also available at driver license offices, state agencies that provide public assistance, public libraries, post offices and many other public locations. You may also print a registration application from our website at www.sarasotavotes.com or from the Division of Elections website at <http://election.dos.state.fl.us>.

You will be offered the opportunity to apply to register to vote or update your voter registration when you obtain your driver license or when you apply for

public assistance at state agencies.

Applications may be submitted in person at any supervisor of elections' office or by mail to PO Box 4194, Sarasota, Florida, 34230-4194.

A voter registration application is complete if it contains:

- Your name
- Your legal residence address
- Your date of birth
- Affirmation that you are a citizen of the United States
- Florida driver license number, ID number from a Florida identification card issued under §322.051 F.S., or the last four digits of your Social Security number
- Affirmation that you have not been convicted of a felony or that, if convicted, you have had your civil rights restored
- Affirmation that you have not been adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting or that, if so adjudicated, you have had your right to vote restored
- Your original signature or a digital signature transmitted by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (You must sign the oath printed on the form swearing or affirming, under the penalty for false swearing, that the information contained in the registration application is true.)

Note: An applicant who fails to designate political party affiliation will be registered without party affiliation. (See § 97.053, Florida Statutes)

WHEN CAN I REGISTER?

You can apply to register to vote at any time either by mail or in person. However, you must be registered at least 29 days before you can vote in an election. The date your voter registration application is post marked or hand delivered to the supervisor of elections will be your registration date. If your application is complete and you are qualified as a voter, a voter information card will be mailed to you. **If you have not received your voter information card 20 days prior to an election, please contact our office at 861-8619.**

Changes to your name, address, signature and political party are accepted after the deadline for an election except that a political party change will not become effective until after the primary election. (See § 97.053 & 97.055, Florida Statutes)

HOW CAN I UPDATE MY SIGNATURE?

It is very important that a voter's registration record contain his or her updated signature. The signature on file is the one that will be used to verify the signature on absentee and provisional ballot certificates and petitions. If your signature has changed since the last time you voted, you may update it by submitting a new voter registration application. You may call or visit your supervisor of elections' office to obtain a Florida Voter Registration Application, or download one from our website. (See § 98.077, Florida Statutes)

VOTER REGISTRATION IS A PUBLIC RECORD

In Florida, voter registration records are open to the public and may be examined or copied by any person. However, the following information is confidential and exempt from public records disclosure: location of voter's place of registration, location of place of registration update, Social Security number, driver license number, and Florida identification number. A voter's signature may be viewed but not copied. *(See § 97.0585, Florida Statutes)*

REMOVAL AND REINSTATEMENT OF NAMES

If the supervisor of elections receives change-of-address information from the post office or another source indicating the voter's residence may have changed to another address in Florida, the voter's registration record will be changed to reflect the new address and the voter will be mailed an address change notice with a request to verify the new address. If the information indicates the voter has moved outside the state, an address confirmation final notice will be sent to the voter.

All voters who have been mailed an address confirmation final notice and who do not return the form within 30 days will be placed on the inactive voter registration list. A voter on the inactive list may be reclassified as active by updating his/her voter registration, appearing to vote, or requesting an absentee ballot, providing eligibility has not changed. A voter who has been placed on the inactive list and who has shown no activity by the second general election following the date of the address confirmation final notice will be removed from the registration records. A voter who has been removed from the registration records must register again in order to vote. *(See § 98.065, Florida Statutes)*

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, NAME OR PARTY

WHEN VOTERS MOVE

If you move from one address to another within Sarasota County, you must notify the supervisor of elections in writing or by phone of your new address and include your date of birth. If you move from one Florida county to another, you must notify the supervisor in your new county of residence by phone or by submitting a signed Florida Voter Registration Application or other written notice and include your date of birth.

Generally, you cannot vote in a precinct other than the one in which you live and are registered. However, if you are residing temporarily outside your home county and have no permanent address in the county, you can apply to be registered and vote in the precinct that contains the main office of the supervisor of elections. These voters are not allowed to vote in municipal elections. *(See §97.1031, and §101.045, Florida Statutes)*

WHAT IF I CHANGE MY NAME?

If you change your name by marriage or other legal process, you must notify the supervisor of elections by completing a Florida Voter Registration

Application or other signed written notice and include your date of birth or Florida Voter Registration System (FVRS) number. *(See §97.1031, Florida Statutes)*

HOW CAN I CHANGE PARTY AFFILIATION?

To change party affiliation, you must notify the supervisor of elections by completing a Florida Voter Registration Application or other signed written notice and include your date of birth or FVRS number. Party change requests received after the books close for a primary election will be accepted, but only for the purpose of subsequent elections. *(See §97.1031, and 97.055, Florida Statutes)*

MILITARY AND OVERSEAS CITIZENS

LATE REGISTRATION

An individual or accompanying family member who has been discharged or separated from the uniformed services, Merchant Marine, or from employment outside the territorial limits of the United States, after the book closing for an election, who is otherwise qualified, may register to vote in such election until 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before that election. Such persons must produce sufficient documentation showing evidence of qualifying for the late registration pursuant to this section. *(See §97.0555, Florida Statutes)*

FEDERAL POSTCARD APPLICATION

Members of the U.S. Uniformed Services on active duty and the Merchant Marine, their spouses and dependents, and U.S. citizens residing outside of the United States may apply for voter registration or request an absentee ballot with a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). A request for an absentee ballot shall be effective for all elections through the end of the calendar year of the 2nd ensuing regularly scheduled election unless otherwise indicated by the requester.

For more information about federal postcard applications, please contact any SOE office or your federal voting assistance officer, or go to www.fvap.gov. If an FPCA is not available, phone or send a written request to your supervisor of elections. A voter registration application or absentee ballot will be mailed to you.

STATE WRITE-IN ABSENTEE BALLOT

An overseas voter may request, not earlier than 180 days prior to a general election, a state write-in absentee ballot from the supervisor of elections in the county of registration. In order to receive a state write-in ballot, the voter shall state that due to military or other contingencies that preclude normal mail delivery, he/she cannot vote an absentee ballot during the normal absentee period. The state write-in ballot shall contain all offices, federal, state, and local, for which the voter would otherwise be entitled to vote.

In completing the ballot, the overseas voter may designate his or her choice by

writing in the name of the candidate or political party, in which case the ballot must be counted for the candidate of that political party, if there is such a party candidate on the ballot. (See § 101.6951, Florida Statutes)

VOTE-BY-MAIL BALLOTS FOR OVERSEAS VOTERS

To each absent uniformed services voter or overseas voter who requests a vote-by-mail ballot, the supervisor of elections will send a ballot by forwardable mail, email, or facsimile machine transmission no later than 45 days before the primary or general election. The absent uniformed services voter or overseas voter may designate in the request the preferred method of transmission. If the voter does not designate the method of transmission, the ballot will be mailed. (See §101.62, Florida Statutes)

If an overseas voter's request for a vote-by-mail ballot includes an email address, the supervisor of elections will confirm via email that the request was received, inform the voter of the estimated date on which the ballot will be sent, and notify the voter via email when the voted ballot is received by the SOE. (See §101.6952, Florida Statutes)

Additional information for military and overseas voters is available from:

Director
Federal Voting Assistance Program
Department of Defense
1155 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1155
E-mail vote@fvap.gov
Toll-free 800.438.8683

VOTE-BY-MAIL (ABSENTEE) VOTING

All qualified electors are permitted to vote by mail under Florida law (See §97.021, Florida Statutes)

HOW TO VOTE BY MAIL (ABSENTEE)

A voter, or if directly instructed by the voter, a member of the voter's immediate family or the voter's legal guardian, may request a vote-by-mail ballot from the supervisor of elections in person, by mail, by telephone, or online through the supervisor of elections' website. One request is sufficient to receive an absentee ballot for all elections through December 31, 2020.

The person requesting a vote-by-mail ballot must disclose:

- The name of the voter for whom the ballot is requested
- The voter's address
- The voter's date of birth
- The requester's name
- The requester's address
- The requester's driver license number, if available
- The requester's relationship to the voter
- The requester's signature (written request only)

The supervisor of elections may not deliver a vote-by-mail ballot to an elector or an elector's immediate family member on the day of an election unless there is an emergency that precludes the voter from going to his or her assigned polling place. *(See §101.62, Florida Statutes)*

A request for a ballot to be mailed must be received by the supervisor of elections no later than 5 p.m. on the 6th day before the election. Marked ballots must be received in the supervisor of elections office no later than 7 p.m. on the day of the election. If you have obtained a vote-by-mail ballot but decide to vote in your precinct on election day, you must return the ballot, whether or not it has been marked, to the election board at your precinct or early voting site. If you are unable to return the vote-by-mail ballot, you may be required to vote a provisional ballot. *(See §101.62, 101.67 and 101.69, Florida Statutes)*

HOW TO VOTE BY MAIL USING THE OPTICAL SCAN BALLOT

Read the ballot carefully before marking for any candidate or issue. Use black ink. Completely fill in (●) the oval by the candidate or issue of your choice. To write in a name, blacken the oval and write the name on the line provided. (If you make a mistake or change your mind, contact the elections office for instructions.) Fold ballot and place in secrecy sleeve. Place secrecy sleeve in certificate (return mailing) envelope. Sign and date the certificate envelope and mail or return in person to the elections office.

A voter who returns a vote-by-mail ballot without signing the voter's certificate or whose signature on the voter's certificate does not match the signature on file in the voter's registration record may cure the missing/mismatched signature by completing an affidavit and returning it to the supervisor of elections along with an ID prior to 5 p.m. on the day before the election. *(See §101.68 Florida Statutes)* A copy of the affidavit and instructions may be found on the SOE website at www.SarasotaVotes.com.

A vote-by-mail ballot will not be counted if the voter's certificate or ballot affidavit is not signed or the signature does not match the one on file. The signature on file at the start of the canvass of vote-by-mail ballots will be used to verify a voter's signature. (The start of the canvass occurs no earlier than the 15th day before the election.) *(See §101.68, Florida Statutes)*

EARLY VOTING

As a convenience to the voter, the supervisor of elections may provide early voting at designated early voting sites beginning 10 days prior to an election and ending three days before the election. In addition, early voting prior to an election that contains state or federal races may be extended at the discretion of the supervisor of elections. *(See §101.57 Florida Statutes)*

EARLY VOTING TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Early voting sites may be open between eight and 12 hours each day. Early voting locations will be designated 30 days prior to an election and locations and times will be publicized on the SOE website, on sample ballots and in local media.

ELECTION DAY INFORMATION

The polls will be open on election day from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

To determine your polling location, check your voter information card, visit our website or call the SOE office.

On election day, voters check in to determine their eligibility to vote and make sure they are in the right precinct. **For your vote to count, you must vote in the precinct in which you reside.**

CHANGE OF PRECINCT OR POLLING LOCATION

When a polling place becomes unavailable, is inadequate for the efficient handling of voters, or is not accessible to people with disabilities, the supervisor of elections will move the polling place to another site that is accessible to the public on election day.

When a polling place is moved, the SOE will mail a notice of the change of polling place to each registered voter or to each household in which there is a registered voter affected by the change of polling place at least 14 days prior to an election. A notice will also be posted on the SOE website and in a newspaper of general circulation in the county. *(See §101.001, and 101.71, Florida Statutes)*

IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED

Both a current and valid photo and signature ID are required when you go to the polls to vote. A voter who fails to show photo and signature ID will be required to vote a provisional ballot. *(See §101.043, Florida Statutes)*

Acceptable forms of identification include:

- Florida driver license
- Florida ID card
- U.S. passport
- Debit/credit card
- Military ID
- Student ID
- Retirement center ID
- Neighborhood association ID
- Public assistance ID
- Veteran health ID issued by U.S. Dept of Veterans Affairs
- Concealed weapon or firearm license issued pursuant to s. 790.06
- Employee ID issued by any entity of federal, state, county or municipal government

PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

If your eligibility to vote cannot be determined for any reason, you are entitled to vote a provisional ballot. If you vote a provisional ballot, you must be given a written notice of rights that includes:

- A statement that you have the right to bring further evidence of your eligibility to the supervisor of elections no later than 5 p.m. on the second day after the election.
- A statement that if you voted a provisional ballot solely because you did not bring ID, you do not have to bring in further evidence of eligibility. The canvassing board will count your ballot if you voted in the right precinct and your signature on the ballot certificate matches the signature in your voter registration record.
- A statement that if you voted a provisional ballot because your personal identifying number (Florida driver license, Florida ID card, or last four of your Social Security number) could not be verified, you may provide in person or by fax, email, or mail a copy of the card with the identifying number to the supervisor of elections by 5 p.m. on the second day after the election.
- Instructions on how you can find out after the election if your provisional ballot was counted, and if not, the reason(s) why.
- A statement that if this is a primary election, you should contact the supervisor of elections office immediately to confirm that you are registered and will be able to vote in the General Election.

Note: Information about whether the voter's provisional ballot was counted in the final canvass of votes will be mailed no later than 30 days following the election, to the person who cast the ballot. *(See § 101.048, Florida Statutes)*

MAY I REQUEST ASSISTANCE TO VOTE?

Any eligible voter who is unable to read or write or who, because of a disability, needs assistance to vote is eligible to receive assistance at the polls. The need for assistance will be designated on the voter's registration record, upon request. The voter is entitled to receive the assistance of two election officials or someone of his or her own choice, other than the voter's employer or an officer or agent of the voter's union. It is illegal for any person to be in the voting booth with any voter except as authorized by an election official. A person at a polling place or early voting site, or within 100 feet of the entrance of a polling place or early voting site, may not solicit any voter in an effort to provide assistance to vote. Persons assisting a voter to cast his or her vote, except for elections officials, must subscribe to an oath. *(See § 97.061 and 101.051, Florida Statutes)*

PRIMARY ELECTIONS

Florida is a closed primary state. That means only voters who are registered members of political parties may vote for their respective party's candidates in a primary election. However, the Florida Constitution provides that if all candidates have the same party affiliation and the winner will have no opposition in the General Election, all qualified voters, regardless of party affiliation, may vote in the primary for that office. This is known as a Universal Primary Contest. All voters, including those without party affiliation, are entitled to vote on nonpartisan judicial and school board races, nonpartisan special district races, and local referenda, which are included in some primary elections. *(See § 101.021, Florida Statutes)*

The candidate receiving the highest number of votes in each contest in the primary shall be declared nominated for such office. If two or more persons

receive an equal and highest number of votes for the same office, they will draw lots to determine who shall receive the nomination. *(See § 1001.061, Florida Statutes)*

NONPARTISAN JUDICIAL ELECTIONS

Candidates for the Florida Supreme Court and District Courts of Appeal will appear on the ballot in the General Election only for a vote on their retention. Candidates for circuit and county court will appear on the Primary Election ballot and on the General Election ballot, if necessary. *(See § 105.041, Florida Statutes)*

POLL WATCHERS

Each political party, candidate, and political committee formed for the specific purpose of expressly advocating the passage or defeat of an issue on the ballot may have one poll watcher in each polling room or early voting area at any one time during an election. Poll watchers must be registered voters in the county and cannot be candidates or law enforcement officers. Poll watchers may not interact with voters and must pose any questions regarding polling place procedures to the clerk of the polling place. Each party candidate or political committee requesting to have poll watchers in a polling room must designate in writing to the supervisor of elections the names of poll watchers prior to noon on the second Tuesday preceding the election. Designations of poll watchers in early voting areas must be submitted to the supervisor of elections in writing at least 14 days prior to the start of early voting. *(See § 101.131, Florida Statutes)*

POLL WORKERS

Poll clerks and inspectors are appointed by the supervisor of elections at least 20 days prior to an election and make up the election board in the precinct. The election board shall arrive at the polling place by 6 a.m. on election day. If you are interested in being a poll worker, please visit our website at www.sarasotavotes.com for more information. *(See §102.012, Florida Statutes)*

MISCELLANEOUS

HOW TO REPORT ELECTION LAW VIOLATIONS

Violations relating to Chapters 104 and 106, Florida Statutes, should be reported by sworn written complaint to the Florida Elections Commission (FEC), 107 W. Gaines Street, Suite 224, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1050, telephone 850.922.4539.

The FEC is not aligned or affiliated with the Division of Elections, Department of State. *(See § 106.25, Florida Statutes)*

Violations of either the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 or Help America Vote Act, or any irregularities or fraud involving voter registration, removal procedures or voting under the Florida Election Code should be reported in writing to the Division of Elections, Office of the General Counsel, R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 S. Bronough St., Tallahassee, Florida 32399, or call toll free 877.868.3737. *(See § 97.023 and 97.028, Florida Statutes)*

All other violations should be reported to the local state attorney.

VOTER'S RIGHTS

Each registered voter in Florida has the right to:

- Vote and have his or her vote accurately counted
- Cast a vote if he or she is in line at the official closing of the polls in that county
- Ask for and receive assistance in voting
- Receive up to two replacement ballots if he or she makes a mistake prior to the ballot being cast
- An explanation if his or her registration or identity is in question
- If his or her registration or identity is in question, cast a provisional ballot
- Written instructions to use when voting, and, upon request, oral instructions in voting from elections officers
- Vote free from coercion or intimidation by elections officers or any other person
- Vote on a voting system that is in working condition and that will allow votes to be accurately cast

(See § 101.031, Florida Statutes)

VOTER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

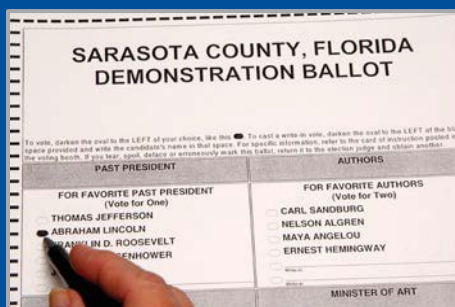
Each registered voter in Florida has the responsibility to:

- Familiarize himself or herself with the candidates and issues
- Maintain with the office of the supervisor of elections a current address
- Know the location of his or her polling place and its hours of operation
- Bring proper identification to the polling station
- Familiarize himself or herself with the operation of the voting equipment in his or her precinct
- Treat precinct workers with courtesy
- Respect the privacy of other voters
- Report problems or violations of election laws to the supervisor of elections
- Ask questions, if needed
- Make sure that his or her completed ballot is correct before leaving the polling station

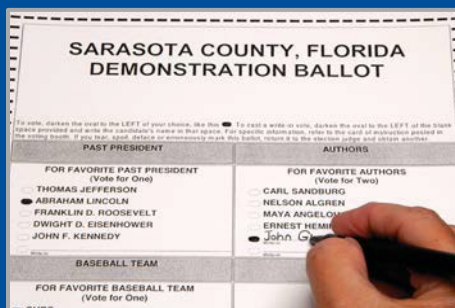
(See § 101.031, Florida Statutes)

THE ULTIMATE YOU VOTING MACHINE...

Follow these simple instructions to cast your ballot.



To mark your ballot, completely fill in the oval adjacent to each desired candidate or choice with the marking device provided at the polling place. No marks should be applied anywhere else on the ballot.



To vote for a write-in candidate (only in a General Election year), completely fill in the oval adjacent to the write-in space and clearly write the candidate's name on the write-in line.



When you have finished marking your ballot, take it in the secrecy sleeve to the precinct tabulator and feed the ballot into the optical scan reader.

Note: Make sure you check both sides of the ballot for contests. If you make a mistake or change your mind, contact a poll worker for assistance.



SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS CONTACT INFORMATION

Sarasota County Terrace Building
101 South Washington Boulevard
P. O. Box 4194
Sarasota, Florida 34230-4194
(941) 861-8600

R. L. Anderson Administration Building
4000 Tamiami Trail South, Room 114
Venice, Florida 34293-5029
(941) 861-3760

Biscayne Plaza
13640 Tamiami Trail
North Port, Florida 34287-2055
(941) 423-9540

www.sarasotavotes.com