



## Frequently Asked Questions General Election 2021

### Voting Options for the General Election

#### **Q. How can I vote in this General Election 2021?**

##### **A.** You may:

- Apply for a vote-by-mail ballot and return it one of the following ways:
  - 1... Mail: It must be postmarked on or before 8:00 p.m. November 2 and be received by your county's Board of Elections on or before November 8.
  - 2... Secure Ballot Drop Box: Place it in one of your county's secure ballot drop boxes by 8:00 p.m. on November 2. Drop box locations can be found at [Vote.NJ.Gov](http://Vote.NJ.Gov).
  - 3... Board of Elections Office: Deliver it in person to your county's Board of Elections Office by 8:00 p.m. on November 2. County Election Officials' contact information can be found at [Vote.NJ.Gov](http://Vote.NJ.Gov).
  
- In-Person Early Voting for the General Election begins on Saturday, October 23 through Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Each NJ county will hold nine (9) days of early, in-person machine voting. Each county, depending on its size, will designate a minimum of 3 to 10 voting locations for early in-person voting purposes. Early voting locations will be open from at least 10 am to 8 pm on Mondays through Saturdays, and from at least 10 am to 6 pm on Sundays. Go to [Vote.NJ.Gov](http://Vote.NJ.Gov) for your early voting sites.
  
- In-Person Voting on Election Day, November 2, at your polling place, from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Accommodations will be made for voters with disabilities. Go to [Vote.NJ.Gov](http://Vote.NJ.Gov) for your polling place, listed on the Polling Locations page. NOTE: Vote-by-mail ballots CANNOT be returned to your polling place for this election.



**Q. Is there an early voting period in New Jersey?**

**A.** Yes, there is an in-person (polling place/vote center) early voting period for the General Election that begins on October 23, 2021. Each NJ county will hold nine (9) days of early, in-person machine voting ending on Sunday, October 31, 2021. Each county, depending on its size will designate a minimum of 3 to 10 voting locations for early in-person voting purposes. Early voting polling locations will be open from at least 10 am to 8 pm on Mondays through Saturdays, and from at least 10 am to 6 pm on Sundays.

Voters will also be able to return their vote-by-mail ballots early at a secure ballot drop box, via mail, or in person to their Board of Elections office. Dropbox locations can be found [here](#) on the 2021 New Jersey Voter Information Portal.

**Q. Can I vote in-person at my polling location on Election Day November 2?**

**A.** Yes, you can vote in person at your polling location. To find your polling location please visit [Vote.NJ.Gov](#). If you have received your vote-by-mail ballot but have not voted you may only vote by paper provisional ballot at your polling place.

**Q. What is a provisional ballot?**

**A.** A provisional ballot is cast by a voter whose eligibility to vote cannot be confirmed at the polls on Election Day or if they have applied for a vote-by-mail ballot. If, after the election, it is determined that the voter who cast the provisional ballot was eligible to vote, the ballot will be counted.

**Q. Will in-person voters at polling locations be required to wear a mask?**

**A.** Circumstances may change. As of now, all voters are asked to wear a face covering and observe appropriate social distancing.



**Q. Will my other votes be counted if I choose not to vote for a candidate or question?**

**A.** Yes, if you choose to leave a race or question blank, your other votes will still be counted.

**Q. Do I have to vote for the Party I am registered with?**

**A.** No, this is a General Election. In a General Election you do not have to vote for the candidate(s) of the same party. Please remember to check the back and any additional pages of your ballot to ensure that you have reviewed all offices up for election and any ballot questions.

## **Voter Registration**

**Q. What is the Voter Registration Deadline?**

**A.** October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**Q. How can I register to vote?**

**A.** Voters can register to vote online [here](#) or by filling out a paper registration form, which can be found [here](#).

**Q. How can I check my voter registration status?**

**A.** Voters can check their voter registration status in the "Am I Registered?" box on the [New Jersey Voter Information Portal](#).

**Q. What is considered an "Inactive" voter?**

**A.** An Inactive voter is a voter whose address has come into question. The main way the counties receive this information is via the sample ballots that are sent prior to each election. If a sample ballot is returned as undeliverable or indicates the voter has moved out of county/state, that voter is put into an "Inactive" status and is sent a confirmation notice informing them that they have until the second federal general election after



the date of the notice to update their voting record or appear to vote and complete the necessary form or they will be removed from the voting rolls.

Inactive voters do not get sample ballots and are not eligible to receive a vote by mail ballot until they are put back into an Active status. You can update your record to active status through the [online voter registration](#) or using a [paper registration form](#).

## **Poll Worker**

### **Q. How can I be a poll worker on Election Day?**

**A.** Submit an [application](#) to be a poll worker. Citizens, including college and high school students, are encouraged to apply. Training is required and will be provided. For the 2021 General Election, poll workers will also be compensated for training. This is a great opportunity to earn additional money and participate in our democracy.

## **Vote by Mail**

### **Q. How do I receive my vote-by-mail ballot?**

**A.** Every Active registered voter is eligible to request a vote-by-mail ballot. Please contact your county clerk to submit a request. If you would like to receive your ballot by mail you must request your ballot by Tuesday, October 26, 2021. Otherwise, you must get your vote-by-mail ballot in-person from your county clerk, by November 1st at 3 p.m. You have until 8 p.m. on Election Day to return your ballot to the Board of Elections in person or deposit it in one of your county's secure authorized ballot drop boxes. You can also mail your ballot, it must be postmarked on or before 8:00 p.m.

You can find your County Clerk contact information [here](#).



**Q. What if I always vote-by-mail, but now want to vote early, in-person, instead?**

**A.** Check whether or not you are an active vote-by-mail voter at [Vote.NJ.Gov](http://Vote.NJ.Gov), under "Track My Ballot." If you are registered to vote by mail in the 2021 General Election, you must opt out, in order to cast a ballot in person on a machine at an early voting location. To opt out, contact your County Clerk by August 31.

**Q. When will ballots be mailed?**

**A.** Counties will begin mailing ballots to voters no later than September 18, 2021, but some counties will begin before then.

**Q. How do I know if my vote-by-mail ballot has been received?**

**A.** You can check on the status of your vote-by-mail ballot using the Track My Ballot Portal online [here](#) or you can contact your County Clerk. That contact information is [here](#).

First time users have to create an account and will need either a Voter ID, a Driver's License Number, or the last 4 digits of their SSN Number to validate voter registration status. (If you don't know your Voter ID number, you can obtain it by going to ["Voter Search"](#) or contact your [Superintendent of Elections or Commissioner of Registration](#))

**Q. Can I track my vote-by-mail ballot?**

**A.** Yes, voters can track their vote-by-mail ballot through the [Track My Ballot Portal](#). First time users have to create an account and will need either a Voter ID Number, a Driver's License Number, or the last 4 digits of SSN to validate voter registration status. (If you don't know your Voter ID number, you can obtain it by going to ["Voter Search?"](#) or contact your [Superintendent of Elections or Commissioner of Registration](#))



**Q. If I am voting by mail, when must the county Board of Elections receive my ballot?**

**A.** Vote-by-mail ballots that are sent through the mail must be postmarked by Election Day, November 2, 2021, and received by the county Board of Elections on or before November 8, 2021. Vote-by-mail ballots that are placed in the county’s secure ballot drop box or delivered in-person to the County Board of Elections must be delivered by 8 pm on Election Day, November 2nd.

**Q. How can I return my ballot?**

**A.** Either return your ballot by mail, bring your completed and sealed ballot in-person to your county’s Board of Elections office, or place it in a secure “ballot drop box” located throughout your county.

**Q. What is the deadline by which election officials must receive a mailed ballot?**

**A.** Every vote-by-mail ballot that is postmarked on or before November 2, 2021, and that is received by November 8, 2021, at 8:00 p.m. shall be considered valid and shall be canvassed, assuming the ballot meets all other statutory requirements. Additionally, every mail-in ballot that does not bear a postmark date but is received by the county board of elections by delivery of the United States Postal Service before or within forty-eight (48) hours (2 days) of the closing of polls on November 2, 2021, shall be considered valid and shall be canvassed, assuming the ballot meets all other statutory requirements.

**Q. How do I stop receiving a vote-by-mail ballot for future elections?**

**A.** It depends on your county. Please call your county clerk to inquire about their procedure. You can find your County Clerk contact information [here](#).



**Q. Do I have to include a stamp on my ballot return envelope?**

**A.** It depends on your county. Please call your County Clerk. You can find your County Clerk contact information [here](#).

**Q. Do vote by mail ballots require a witness or notary?**

**A.** No, vote-by-mail ballots do not require a witness or notary. **They do require the voter's signature.**

**Q. Do voters casting a ballot by mail need to include a copy of their ID?**

**A.** Voters do not need to provide a copy of their ID in order to cast a vote-by-mail ballot except under certain circumstances for first time voters. These voters will receive a notice with their vote-by-mail ballot.

**Q. What should I do if I make a mistake, damage, or lose my vote-by-mail ballot?**

**A.** If you have not already returned your ballot, you may request a replacement vote-by-mail ballot from your County Clerk [here](#). If you go to your polling location on Election Day, you will have to vote using a paper provisional ballot.

**Q. What is the difference between absentee and vote-by-mail ballots in New Jersey?**

**A.** The term "absentee ballot" was changed in July 2009 and was replaced by the vote-by-mail ballot law that allows a voter to request a ballot by mail for any reason.



**Q. Will my vote-by-mail ballot be counted? I heard that vote-by-mail ballots might not be counted.**

**A.** Every valid vote-by-mail ballot is counted. Be sure to complete and sign the certificate attached to the inner envelope when you return your vote-by-mail ballot. Be sure to leave the certificate attached to the inner envelope. Do not put it inside the inner envelope. If you are going to mail your ballot, it must be postmarked ON or BEFORE Election Day, November 2, 2021 and received by your county Board of Elections by 8 pm November 8, 2021. If you are not sure if your ballot will arrive in time, you can drop it off in person at the county Board of Elections or one of the county's secure authorized ballot drop boxes. Contact your Board of Elections for drop-off locations. If you are dropping your ballot off in-person, you must do so by 8 pm on Election Day, November 2, 2021.

## **Ballot Drop Boxes**

**Q. What is a "Ballot Drop Box"?**

**A.** A ballot drop box is a secure, locked structure operated by election officials where voters may deliver their ballots from the time they receive them in the mail up to the time polls close at 8 pm on Election Day, November 2, 2021. There will be at least 10 drop boxes located throughout each county, which will be available 24 hours a day. Drop boxes will be under surveillance by security cameras and collected daily by county election officials.

**Q. Where can I find the locations of the ballot drop boxes?**

**A.** You can find that information [here](#) on the 2021 New Jersey Voter Information Portal.



## **“Bearers”**

**Q. Can I deliver more than 1 vote-by-mail ballot to the Board of Elections office or place it in the ballot drop box?**

**A.** A person who transports a voted (completed) vote by mail ballot for someone else is considered a "Bearer". **Bearers are limited to three (3) non-household ballots per election, except that an authorized bearer may transport up to five (5) ballots in an election if those voters are immediate family members residing in the same household as the bearer.**

- ✓ Not to exceed (5) ballots in total for any election
- ✓ The Bearer MUST SIGN the "Bearer Portion" of the outer envelope of the ballot in the presence of the voter when taking custody of the ballot.

Any Bearer Ballots that exceed the limit must be REJECTED. If the Bearer is hand-delivering the ballot to the county Board of Elections, then he/she MUST SHOW ID AND SIGN the Bearer Book. It is against the law for anyone except you, the voter, to mail or transport your ballot unless the outer envelope is sealed and the “Bearer Portion” is completed.

**Q. Can I deliver my vote-by-mail ballot to my polling location?**

**A.** No, you cannot bring your ballot to your polling place on Election Day. However, you can bring your completed and sealed ballot in-person to your county’s Board of Elections office, or place it in a secure “ballot drop box” located throughout your county.



## **Signature Verification/Matching**

**Q. Are ballots subject to signature matching? If a voter submits a ballot that lacks a signature or the signature is determined not to match the signature in the voter's voting record, will that voter be notified?**

**A.** Yes, if your vote-by-mail ballot or provisional ballot was missing your signature or the county Board of Elections has determined that your signature does not match the signature in your voting record, your county Board of Elections will provide you an opportunity to certify that you did, in fact, cast that ballot.

**Q. Why am I receiving a letter, call, and/or email saying that my vote by mail ballot or provisional ballot was missing a signature, or that the signature did not match, and asking for additional information?**

**A.** If your vote-by-mail ballot or provisional ballot was missing your signature or the county Board of Elections has determined that your signature does not match the signature in your voting record, your county Board of Elections will provide you an opportunity to certify that you did, in fact, cast that ballot.

**Q. What if I believe an election crime or voter fraud has been committed?**

**A.** If you would like to report a potential election crime or incident of voter fraud, please call **1-877-NJ-VOTER**.