

# Voter Registration

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## Voter Registration

### How do I register to vote in New Mexico?

- If you have a current or expired New Mexico state I.D. or driver's license, you can register or update your registration online with our Online Voter Registration System: <https://portal.sos.state.nm.us/OVR/WebPages/InstructionsStep1.aspx>
- You may register with either the New Mexico Voter Registration Application form ("New Mexico Form") or the National Voter Registration Form. If possible, we recommend using the New Mexico Form, as the national form does not include some information required by state law.
- The New Mexico Form is available at any county clerk's office, the Office of the Secretary of State, or many state agencies such as motor vehicle offices and offices offering public assistance.
- A voter may request the New Mexico Form by mail, telephone, or in person. The New Mexico Form is on card stock, is a permanent record and is not available online. It may not be duplicated.
- You may also register with a Third-Party Registration Agent (see below).
- First-Time Registrants: If you are registering for the first time in New Mexico, and you submit the registration form by mail, then you must submit with the form a copy of (1) a current and valid photo identification; or (2) a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, student identification card or other government document, including identification issued by an Indian nation, tribe or pueblo that shows your name and current address. If you do not submit one of these forms of identification with your mailed-in, first time registration, then you will be required to present one of the forms of identification when voting in person or absentee.
- Once the county clerk has accepted the form for filing, individuals or groups may make a public records request. However, the day and month of birth and the Social Security number on the form is always privacy protected.
- Individuals or groups conducting voter registration drives may use the New Mexico Form or the National Form. Once a form is filled out, individuals or groups cannot copy, convey or use the date of birth or Social Security number information on the form (Section 1-4-5 (E), NMSA 1978).
- Organizations employing registration agents or using volunteer registration agents shall deliver a certificate of registration to the Secretary of State or the county clerk within 48 hours. A person who willfully violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a petty misdemeanor and shall have his third-party registration agent status revoked (Section 1 -4-49 (D), NMSA 1978). The Secretary of State will send completed forms to the appropriate county clerk.

### How do I check whether I am registered in New Mexico?

- You can check your registration status using the Secretary of State's online Voter Services, available [here](#).

### Where can I get a Voter Registration Application Form?

- In New Mexico, we have distributed registration forms throughout county clerks offices. The forms are also available at the Secretary of State's office in Santa Fe, Motor Vehicle Division offices, and many other public assistance offices. You can also call our office at 1.800.477.3632 and ask for a registration form to be mailed to you or download a copy from our website.

### How long do I need to be a resident of New Mexico before I can register to vote?

- You can register immediately upon becoming a resident.

### When does voter registration close?

- Voter registration closes 28 days prior to an election. (Section 1-4-8, NMSA 1978). For the 2016 General Election, the deadline is October 11, 2016.
- Registration applications may be submitted by hand or mail to the appropriate county clerks through the Friday following the registration deadline, provided the date and/or postmark is before the deadline (28 days prior to the election). (Section 1-4-8 (F), NMSA 1978).

### Do I need to register for every election?

- No, registration is permanent in New Mexico. If you have moved and not voted in several years, it is possible your name may be removed from the voter rolls in accordance with the National Voter Registration Act (see National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) Questions, below). Check your voter registration status to make sure you are registered and all your information is correct at <https://voterview.state.nm.us/VoterView/RegistrantSearch.do>

### Do I need to change my registration if I move? Even if I move to a different address in the same city?

- Yes, the content of your ballot including districted offices, bond questions, and other types of ballot contests is directly associated with the precinct of your physical address of registration.

#### **Am I required to select a political party in order to complete the registration form?**

- No. You can choose to select a political party affiliation if you wish, or you can decide to not be affiliated with any political party. The choice is yours to make and does not impact the validity of your registration form.
- Any applicant may choose to check the "No Party" box on the application; however, New Mexico has a closed primary, so only those registered in a major political party may participate in the primary election. The major political parties in New Mexico are:
  - Democratic Party
  - Republican Party
- Voters who are affiliated with all other political parties or voters who have no political party affiliation may not vote in primary elections in New Mexico. However, all voters regardless of political affiliation are invited to participate in all other elections.

#### **How do I change my party?**

- You need to fill out a new voter registration form and submit it to the county clerk or Secretary of State's office or submit a new registration online in order to change your party affiliation.

#### **I am 17 years old now but will be 18 before the next state general election. Can I complete a voter registration form now and will I then be able to sign petitions?**

- You may complete the voter registration form now, but you may not sign any petition. 17 year olds who will be 18 by the general election may participate in the primary election. Voters must be 18 to participate in all other elections.
- By completing the voter registration form now, you are in essence pre-registering but you do not become an eligible voter until you have reached your 18th birthday. Only eligible voters may sign petitions or vote in an election.

#### **A person on the street offered to help me register to vote. Is that valid?**

State law allows for Third-Party Registration Agents to assist persons to register to vote (Section 1-4-49, NMSA 1978). These agents must attend a training and register with the Secretary of State's Office. They can proof the validity of their third party registration agent status by showing you their notarized 'Voter Registration Agent Identification Form.'

#### **I have an unlisted phone number. Do I have to provide that information on the voter registration form?**

- No, however, it does come in handy if the Secretary of State or County Clerk need to contact you in the event there is an issue concerning the processing of your registration. If you have an unlisted phone number and you are willing to provide that number, simply check "No" next to the phone number and we will not disclose that number to anyone else.

#### **How do I know that my voter registration application form was received and processed?**

- You can check your registration status at any time using our Voter View tool: <https://voterview.state.nm.us/VoterView/RegistrantSearch.do>
- Once the county clerk has processed your registration form, they will send confirmation of your registration by mail in the form of a voter information card. Once you receive the card, please review it to make certain there are no errors in the spelling of your name, your address or your political party affiliation. The time it takes to process your voter registration application varies from county to county and depends on whether the registration books are closed due to an upcoming election. Please contact your [county clerk](#) if you have any questions about your registration being processed.

#### **Will I be notified if there is a problem with my registration form?**

- Yes. If the form you submit is missing information that prevents your registration, you will be notified by a letter sent to the address on the registration form. That letter is sent within ten days or less from receipt of your form. The letter will specify what the problem with your registration form is and will include a new registration form or other instructions on how to correct the situation.

#### **What happens if I register to vote after registration closes (within 28 days of an election)?**

- If you register to vote after registration has closed, the county clerk will still accept your voter registration application but it will not be processed until the Monday following the election.

#### **Can I register to vote if I have been convicted of a crime?**

- If you have been convicted of a felony, you can register to vote once you have completed the court-ordered sentence of imprisonment, including any term of parole or probation for the conviction. This provision includes federal, state and out-of-state convictions. You may be asked to provide a certification or affidavit of completion from probation and parole or the court system in order for the County Clerk to determine that all sentencing requirements have been satisfied prior to processing the voter registration.

#### **How can I determine if I qualify to have my voting rights restored following a felony conviction?**

You should contact the Department of Corrections, Division of Parole and Probation (505.827.8830) or a comparable agency in the state in which you were convicted.

#### **What are the currently qualified political parties in New Mexico?**

##### Major Parties

- New Mexico Democratic Party
- New Mexico Republican Party

Minor Parties

- Constitution Party of New Mexico
- Independent American Party of New Mexico
- Libertarian Party of New Mexico
- Green Party of New Mexico

**Note: New Mexico conducts closed primary elections. This means you must be registered for one of the major parties in order to participate.**

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