



YOUTH VOTING RIGHTS

WHEN ARE ELECTIONS?

Colorado holds state elections every two years. The primary election occurs in June and the General election occurs in November. In presidential election years, which is every four years, the state holds a presidential primary election in March.

Those who are nominated from a primary election, which occurs in June and/or March, are placed on the November ballot. The winner in the General election in November is the overall winner and they will be nominated to office.

For a running list of key election dates in Colorado, click [here](#).

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|--|---------------|----------|
| Colorado & Congressional Primary Election | every 2 years | June |
| Colorado & Congressional General Election | every 2 years | November |
| Presidential Primary Election | every 4 years | March |
| Presidential General Election | every 4 years | November |

PRIMARY & GENERAL ELECTIONS

Primary Elections

Primary elections are the “first round” of elections. You can think of it as a way to narrow the playing field. At the primary stage, there are often many contenders running for office. The winners of the primary elections are nominated to continue their race in the general elections.

- The primary election for Colorado and the United States Congress is held in **June**
- The primary election for the President is held every four years in **March**

In a primary election, **you must vote with the same party**, which means that:

1. If you are registered with a certain party, you will only be able to vote on that ballot.
2. If you vote for candidates of two different parties, your ballot will not be valid
3. Even if you are not registered for a certain party, you must vote for candidates all within the same party
4. You can skip voting on some candidates, this will not make your ballot invalid

If you want more general information about primary elections, watch the video [here](#).

General Elections

General elections occur once the playing field has been narrowed. Here, the names of each candidate are listed on the general election ballot.

In a general election you can vote even if you did not vote in the primary elections.

In a general election **you can vote for any candidate** regardless of your party or who you voted for in a previous election.

- General elections are held in **November** for state, Congressional, and Presidential elections

HOW DO I REGISTER?

How old do I have to be to register?

- You can register to vote once you are **18 years old**.
- You can preregister to vote once you are **16 years old**.

Where can I register to vote?

- You can register to vote **online** by clicking this [link](#).
- You can register to vote **in person** at the county clerk and recorder's office, federal post offices, the Colorado DMV, recruitment offices of the armed forces, any federal/state/local office that provides registration, polling centers, offices that provide public assistance, and voter registration drives.
- The **registration form** for in person voting can be provided at these in-person locations, but you can also print it [here](#).

Can I choose which address to use?

- Yes! In Colorado, students living on a college campus can choose to register either: (1) at the student's **current home address** or (2) the place where the student currently **attends school**
- If you are not a student living away from home, you should register to your **current address in which you live**.

What if I have to change my address?

- No worries! You can update your address [here](#).

What if I don't know if I have registered or not?

- No worries! You can just [check here](#) by providing your name and the last four digits of your social security number.

What do I need to be able to vote?

To be able to vote, you must present a valid form of identification. This can be **either**:

- (1) a valid Colorado **drivers license**
- (2) a **state ID**
- (3) the last four digits of your **social security number**

Do I have to be affiliated with a party?

- **You do not have to be affiliated with a party**, however, in a primary election (the election in March/June) you must vote for one particular party. You cannot vote for candidates from different parties.
- If you affiliate with a **major party (Democrat or Republican)**, then you may cast a ballot for the candidates in your affiliated party.
- If you are affiliated with a **minor party**, you may cast a ballot for the candidates affiliated with that party.
- If you choose to remain **unaffiliated** then you can cast a ballot for either party. However, **you must stick to one party**.
 - If you vote for candidates from multiple parties, your ballot will not be counted.
 - If you are unaffiliated, you do not have to choose which party's ballot you receive in the mail.

HOW DO I VOTE?

When can I vote?

- If you choose to vote by mail, the ballot must be **received** by the county clerk and recorded **no later than 7:00pm on Election Day**. Postmarks do not count, so if you cannot mail it in enough time, you can drop off your ballot at a [drop-box](#).
- You can vote early up to **15 days before** Election Day

What if I work?

- In Colorado, you might be able to get time off to vote if you do not have enough time outside of working hours to do so.

Where do I vote?

You can either vote by **mailing in a ballot or by voting in-person** at a polling center.

If you choose to mail in a ballot, the ballot will be provided to you through mail at the address

you used to register. If your address has changed, be sure to update the information.

If you do not receive a mail ballot, you can request a replacement ballot from the county clerk or vote in person at a polling center.

As elections approach you can find polling centers or places to drop off your ballots by inserting your address [here](#).

What if I opt out of voting on a candidate or question?

- No worries! Your ballot will still be valid and the rest of your votes will be counted. Just make sure you are voting with a particular party.

Who can I talk to if I have questions?

- **Each public high school in Colorado is mandated to have a staff member who helps citizens register to vote.** (Title 1, Article 2, Part 4, 1-2-402 and 1-2-403). They can help answer any additional questions and help you register by providing the registration paper or the voter registration link. They will also make sure your information is accurate and complete. If you don't know who this is, ask a teacher, counselor, principal, or other trusted staff member at your school.

ACCESSIBLE REGISTRATION

The National Voter Registration Act (NVRA): requires that all offices that provide state-funded programs that serve people with disabilities **provide an opportunity to register**

1. **the offices that provide this opportunity include:** offices providing vocational rehabilitation, transportation, job training, education counselling, rehabilitation, or independent-living services for people with disabilities
 - a. if an office provides **at-home services** they must also provide registration and voting services at home
 - b. To learn more, visit Colorado's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation [here](#).
 - c. For a list of Centers for Independent Living, visit the resource [here](#).

ACCESSIBLE VOTING

Help America Vote Act (HAVA): requires that all polling places have at least one **accessible voting system** for people with disabilities in federal elections

- the accessible voting system must provide the same opportunity for access and participation such as privacy and independence

Polling place accessibility is required by the ADA.

Required accessible elements of a polling place includes:

1. **Parking:** there must be designated van spaces, there must be accessible parking spaces with open access aisles
2. **Passenger Drop-Off:** must include a curb ramp and an accessible route between the aisle and curb ramp to the accessible entrances
3. **Exterior Route:** there must be an exterior route to an accessible entrance with a smooth surface
4. **Entrances:** must have a wide enough door opening, must be a level entrance, there must be low door thresholds, and those entrances that are not accessible must direct voters to the accessible entrance
5. There must be an **accessible route** from the entrance into the votings area
6. **Within the voting area**, there must be: (1) adequate tables (2) a route free from wall mounted objects (3) a route with enough room to provide a turning spaces (4) an accessible voting machine
7. If there is a **ramp, lift, or elevator**, there are specific requirements that must be met at the polling place
8. If an accessible service cannot be provided at that polling center, or if voters with disabilities cannot fully participate it is **required to provide an auxiliary aid and service**
9. **Service animals** can accompany you into the polling place
10. You have a right to **vote privately** and independently OR to **utilize assistance** from a person of your choice
11. You may be allowed **extra time** to cast your vote

For locations, visit this [link](#).

For more specific information regarding accessible polling places, click [here](#).

State and federal laws require that polling places be accessible. If it is not accessible, you can contact your local election office [here](#).

For an overview on the accessibility laws that govern voting, click [here](#).

What if I have a reading disability?

- The Voting Rights Act of 1965 requires that a voter who is blind or has another disability be able to receive assistance from a person of the voter's choice
- The ability to read or write is not a condition for voting

Electronic Ballots

You have the right to **return a ballot electronically** beginning 22 days before and on election day. If you submit electronically, your return ballot, application, and copy of identification **cannot be received later than 7:00pm on election day**.

You can get the electronic ballot [HERE](#).

Once you have voted on the electronic ballot you **must**...

- (1) **Print** the completed ballot and
- (2) **Print** the accessible ballot application that is provided and

(3) **Either** sign the accessible ballot application **OR** return a copy an acceptable form of identification

These materials can be **dropped off** at a county drop-box or polling center or in the **mail**.

You are eligible for electronic voting if:

- you are **blind**
- you have a **visual impairment or perceptual or reading disability** that cannot be improved to give equivalent visual function to someone who has no such disability (ex. glasses)
- you are otherwise unable, through **physical disability**, to hold, mark or manipulate a ballot or focus or move the eyes

FOSTER CARE

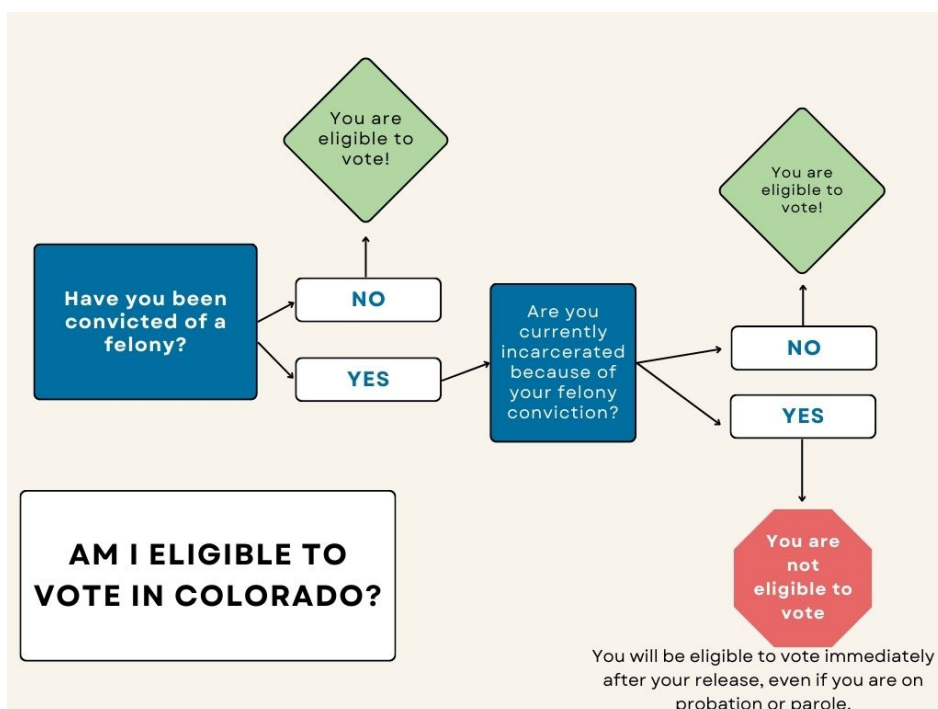
Youth in foster care have the same voting rights as those that are stated above!

Remember to register to vote and to make sure your address is updated.

INCARCERATED YOUTH

In Colorado, if you have been convicted of a **felony**, you do not have the right to vote while you are currently incarcerated because of the conviction. However, if you are **not currently incarcerated**, then you are eligible to vote.

If you have **not been convicted of a felony**, you maintain the right to vote.



If you have been convicted as a juvenile, you may still face other **collateral consequences** such as:

- No job eligibility for certain positions
- Possible expulsion from school
- Possible consequences regarding state higher education
- Denial of public housing
- Possibility of being denied the option to adopt or foster parent
- Possible license suspension
- Registration as a sex offender (if applicable)

PSYCHIATRIC HOLD

By Colorado statute, it is mandated that any person on involuntary psychiatric hold **maintains the right to vote.**

The agency or facility providing hold is **mandated** to assist the person, on the person's request, to obtain voter registration forms and mail ballots and comply with any other prerequisite for voting.

UNHOUSED YOUTH

Even if you do not have a current "home base" you have the right to vote.

To **register** you may use any address that you consider to be a "home base" which includes parks, campgrounds, vacant lots, etc. **A post office cannot be used as a "home base."**

You must also provide a **valid mailing address.** This cannot be anywhere you consider to be a "home base." This must be a place where you can receive a ballot or TABOR notice. **A post office can be used as a mailing address.**

RESOURCES

If you have issues voting, you can

1. [Contact Disability Law Colorado \(DLC\)](#)
2. Find additional information at [Just Vote Colorado](#)
3. [File a complaint](#) with the Department of Justice (DOJ).