

# Voter Registration Guide

Midterm Election: November 4, 2014

## What is a Midterm Election?

General elections are held every four years. Midterm elections occur two years after each general election, at the midpoint of the presidential term. Although a President will not be elected in 2014, 34 members of the Senate, 36 governors, and all 435 seats in the House of Representatives are voted into position. Local offices and citizen initiatives are also voted on during midterm elections.

## Eligibility

To vote, you must be a legal U.S. citizen over the age of 18 and a resident of the county where you vote. You can register to vote at 17.5 years of age.

## Register

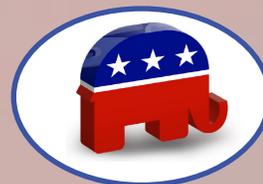
With the exception of North Dakota, you cannot vote without registering! Once you are registered, you can vote in local, state, and national elections as well as on ballot measures. The most important reason to vote is that voting tells leaders what you care about!

## When to Register

Registration depends on the state in which you live. In North Dakota, you can vote without registering. In Connecticut, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, you can register the same day as you vote. Everywhere else, you must register 30 days before an election. You should also re-register any time you change your address, name, or political party.

## Choosing a Political Party

When registering to vote, you may choose a political party, but it is not required. This choice does not force you to vote for that party's candidates, but does allow you to vote in that party's primary elections. Members of a party share basic political goals, but they may disagree on certain issues. There are two major parties: the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. In addition, there are many third parties, such as the Constitution Party, Libertarian Party, and Green Party. If you do not choose a political party, you are called an Independent.



Republican Party



Constitution Party



Libertarian Party



Democratic Party



Green Party

## How to Register

You can register by mail, in person, or online.



### By Mail:

Call your local elections office and ask them to mail you a voter registration form. Fill it out and mail it back!



### In Person:

You can register at any motor vehicle, post office, local elections, or public aid office, as well as any public library or other government office.



### Online:

Go to [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org) and click Register to Vote. Fill out the form and mail it in.\*

\*Some states will then send you additional forms to fill out.

## If English Is Not Your Main Language

U.S. law requires voting help in areas of at least 10,000 people or 5 percent of voting people who do not speak English well. This means that the government must hire poll workers who speak other languages and provide ballots, forms, and other materials in those languages. Check with your local elections office to see if your area is one of them.



## Now What?

Congratulations! You will receive a notice in the mail confirming that you are a registered voter. This notice also tells you where to go to vote. Now, get informed. You should listen to speeches, interviews, and debates on the radio and TV, and read newspapers and magazines. Listen to organizations you trust, and talk with people you know. Be careful of campaign ads. They do not always present balanced facts or information. You can also visit [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org) or [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org) for information.