



# 2024 ELECTION GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS



Voting is a fundamental right, and living in a long-term care facility does not take it away from you. If you are a U.S. citizen aged 18 or older, you are most likely eligible to vote in the municipality where your long-term care home is located.

At the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO), we believe facility administrators and staff members should help you exercise your right to vote. Yet we understand the reality that no one else is likely to advocate for your rights with the same enthusiasm as you will.

Our advice to every resident: If you want to vote, make sure you have a plan, and then make it happen. If your plan is to vote in person, find out if your facility will offer transportation or if you need a reliable friend or family member to drive you to the polls.

## **The Fundamentals: How to Exercise Your Vote**

The state provides an online Voter Information Portal that lists key dates and links to valuable resources at **VOTE.NJ.GOV**. Through the portal, you can register to vote or confirm that your registration status is up-to-date.

Once you are registered, there are three ways to vote in New Jersey:

- 1) In person on Election Day (**June 4** for the primary or **Nov. 5** for the general election);
- 2) In person on days established for early voting; or
- 3) By mail.

To vote in the primary, you must be registered by **May 14**. For the general election, the deadline is **Oct. 15**. You may submit registration applications by mail, in person, or online. Visit **VOTE.NJ.GOV** and select *Register to Vote!* in the right column menu.

All registered voters may vote by mail. If you previously opted to receive mail-in ballots for all future elections, you should automatically receive one. If you need to request a mail-in ballot, the deadlines to apply by mail are **May 28** (for the primary) and **Oct. 29** (for the general election).

Visit **VOTE.NJ.GOV** and select *Vote-By-Mail* in the right column menu to look up your vote-by-mail status or to access instructions on completing a vote-by-mail application and then mailing or delivering it to your county clerk's office.



## Voting in the Primary

In the primary, voters affiliated with the Democrat and Republican parties will select their party's candidates for the general election. If you are unaffiliated, not registered as a Republican or a Democrat, you may vote in either party's primary by showing up at your polling location on June 4 or the early voting sites in the days before Election Day.

To vote by mail in the primary, unaffiliated voters may submit a Party Affiliation Declaration Form and an application for a mail-in ballot by mail before May 28 or in person (or by messenger) at their County Clerk's Office before 3 p.m. on Monday, June 3. Visit [VOTE.NJ.GOV](http://VOTE.NJ.GOV) and select County Election Officials to find your County Clerk's Office.

## What is Early Voting?

All New Jersey counties will establish at least three locations — or as many as 10, in larger counties — where registered voters can cast ballots in person before Election Day. The early voting periods for this year are:

- Primary, **May 29** through **June 2**.
- General, **Oct. 26** through **Nov. 3**.

**LEARN MORE:** Visit [VOTE.NJ.GOV](http://VOTE.NJ.GOV) and select *Early Voting* in the right column menu.

## Voting by Mail

The Voter Information Portal offers detailed instructions on how to complete a vote-by-mail ballot. Watch a video tutorial at:

<https://tinyurl.com/54pmruyw>.

Once completed, ballots can be returned by:

- **Regular mail** — Ballots must be postmarked by 8 p.m. on Election Day and received at most six days after Election Day to be counted.
- **Placing it in a secure ballot drop box** by 8 p.m. on Election Day.
- **Delivering it to your county's Board of Elections** by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Visit [VOTE.NJ.GOV](http://VOTE.NJ.GOV) and select *Vote-By-Mail* in the right column menu for additional details and lists of county election board and secure ballot drop box locations.



# Voter Identification

If you voted in New Jersey before, you likely will not need to show any ID. However, if this is your first time voting here and you did not submit ID with your registration application, you will be asked to show ID at your polling location.

Forms of acceptable identification include a:

- NJ driver's license (with or without photo).
- U.S. passport.
- Military or other government ID.
- Student ID.
- Employee ID.
- Store membership card.
- Bank statement, auto registration, government check or document, rent receipt, sample ballot, utility bill, or other official document.



## Tips for Long-Term Care Facilities

Residents have a right to vote, and your staff should make every effort to empower residents to exercise that right. A few ideas to consider:

- **Designate staff members who will help residents vote.** Activity directors, social workers, van drivers, managers, and administrators can all play a part.
- **Talk to residents about their voting options and how the facility can help.** Inform families about your plans as well.
- **Assess residents' needs and wants.** Try to identify residents who are not registered or who may need ID and help address those issues early. Some residents may need help completing vote-by-mail ballots. Others may need assistance to vote in person.
- **Keep residents informed about deadlines and key dates as they approach.** Put the dates on activity calendars during the months leading up to Election Day.

