

COLORADO VOTER REGISTRATION GUIDE

These resources are current as of 5/2/19. We do our best to periodically update these resources and welcome any comments or questions regarding new developments in the law. Please email us at advocacy@afj.org.

WHAT'S NEW IN THIS GUIDE?

The following changes/additions have been made since the previous version of this guide:

- Information on automatic voter registration

This guide summarizes key aspects of laws governing voter registration on the state level. It is not intended to provide legal advice or to serve as a substitute for legal advice.

In some jurisdictions, city and/or county regulations may also apply to certain political activities. Check with the appropriate local jurisdiction before undertaking any activity.

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DEADLINES FOR REGISTRATION

Deadline for registering

A person may register to vote in Colorado up to and including on Election Day in person at a Voter Service and Polling Center ("VSPC") at any time the VSPC is open, or by mail at a driver's license facility or voter registration agency, through a Voter Registration Drive, or on-line at govotecolorado.com.

How a person registers to vote will impact how they receive their ballot.

To receive a ballot by mail:

- Register to vote or update your voter registration online at www.GoVoteColorado.com through the 8th day before Election Day; or
- Submit an application through the mail, at a voter registration agency, or at a local driver's license examination facility through the 8th day before Election Day; or
- Submit an application through a voter registration drive no later than 22 days before Election Day.

If a voter misses the above deadlines, the person may register and vote in-person at any VSPC in their county through Election Day. C.R.S. § 1-2-201.

Does state offer Election Day registration?

Yes.

Does state allow by-mail registration?

Colorado permits registration by mail and registration applications are available at govotecolorado.com. C.R.S. § 1-2-501. Voters registering by mail who have not previously voted in the state must supply either a Colorado driver's license or state identification card number, or the last four digits of their social security number. CRS §1-2-201.

First time voters who register by mail and do not provide a verifiable driver's license or state identification number will be marked ID Deficient any when they return their first mail ballot, they must provide a copy of one of the following forms of identification along with their ballot. CRS §1-2-201(5)

- A valid Colorado driver's license
- A valid identification card issued by the Colorado Department of Revenue
- A valid student identification card with a photograph from an institute of higher education in Colorado

- A valid U.S. Passport
- A valid employee identification card with a photograph issued by any branch, department, or agency of a federal, state, or local government
- A valid pilot's license issued by the FAA or other authorized federal agency
- A valid U.S. military identification card with a photograph
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, or other government document that shows the name and address of the elector (current means the date of the document is within 60 days of the date submitted for identification purposes)
- A valid Medicare or Medicaid card
- A certified copy of a U.S. birth certificate
- A valid veteran identification card with a photograph
- Certified documentation of naturalization
- A valid identification card issued by a federally recognized tribal government
- Verification that a voter is a person committed to the department of human services and confined and eligible to register and vote shall be considered sufficient identification of such person

Colorado also has an online voter registration system, available at <https://www.govotecolorado.com>. Individuals may also verify and update their voter registration information at the same site. In order to use the on-line registration system, a voter must have either a Colorado Driver's License or Colorado Identification Card.

Does state have Automatic Voter registration?

YES. When an individual interacts with the Department of Motor Vehicles, the information they provide (name, address, date of birth, citizenship etc.) will be forwarded to the Secretary of State and used to register that individual to vote in Colorado.

May voter register before turning 18?

Yes, any person who is 18 years of age or older on the date of the next election can register to vote. C.R.S. §1-2-101(1).

Any person who is 16 years of age or older but will not have reached 18 years of age by the date of the next election may preregister to vote. Upon reaching 18 years of age, the person is automatically registered to vote. C.R.S. § 1-2-101(2).

VOTING IN COLORADO

What elections are conducted by mail ballot?

All general, primary, odd-year, coordinated, recall and congressional vacancy elections shall be by mail ballot, and all registered voters will receive a ballot in the mail. C.R.S. §1-7.5-104

Mail ballots will be mailed by county clerks between 18 and 22 days before Election Day. C.R.S. §1-7.5-107(3)(a)(1).

Do voters have to vote by mail?

Voters who do not receive a mail ballot, who spoil their mail ballot, or who choose to vote in person must go to a Voter Service and Polling Center. C.R.S. §1-7.5-107(4).

VSPC's are open starting 15 days before a General election and 8 days before a Primary or coordinated election but are not open on Sundays. C.R.S. §1-5-102.9(2).

Voters who opt to vote in person at a VSPC need not surrender their mail ballot to the VSPC, but their mail ballot will be canceled in the statewide voter database system.

ID REQUIREMENTS

Required for registration? If so, what kinds of ID?

Anyone registering to vote in person who has not previously voted in the state must provide either a Colorado driver's license or state identification card number, or the last four digits of their social security number. CRS § 1-2-201

Required for voting in person? If so, what kinds of ID?

- A valid Colorado driver's license
- A valid identification card issued by the Colorado Department of Revenue
- A valid student identification card with a photograph from an institute of higher education in Colorado
- A valid U.S. Passport
- A valid employee identification card with a photograph issued by any branch, department, or agency of a federal, state, or local government
- A valid pilot's license issued by the FAA or other authorized federal agency
- A valid U.S. military identification card with a photograph
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, or other government document that shows the name and address of the elector

(current means the date of the document is within 60 days of the date submitted for identification purposes)

- A valid Medicare or Medicaid card
- A certified copy of a U.S. birth certificate
- A valid veteran identification card with a photograph
- Certified documentation of naturalization
- A valid identification card issued by a federally recognized tribal government
- Verification that a voter is a person committed to the department of human services and confined and eligible to register and vote shall be considered sufficient identification of such person

Required for voting by mail?

None, if the voter has previously voted in the state.

Required for first time voters voting by mail if the voter has been marked ID Deficient because the voter did not supply a Colorado driver's license or state identification card or last four of social security number? If so, what kinds of ID?

- A valid Colorado driver's license
- A valid identification card issued by the Colorado Department of Revenue
- A valid student identification card with a photograph from an institute of higher education in Colorado
- A valid U.S. Passport
- A valid employee identification card with a photograph issued by any branch, department, or agency of a federal, state, or local government
- A valid pilot's license issued by the FAA or other authorized federal agency
- A valid U.S. military identification card with a photograph
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, or other government document that shows the name and address of the elector (current means the date of the document is within 60 days of the date submitted for identification purposes)
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VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES

Does state accept National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) registration forms? Any restrictions?

Yes. The National Mail Voter Registration Form is accepted in Colorado. However, the Colorado Secretary of State encourages Voter Registration Drives to use Colorado Voter Registration Drive Application Forms issued by the secretary of state or a county clerk.

May groups “cage” completed registration forms (i.e. asks voters to mail them back to the group, which will then send them to the appropriate elections registrar(s))? If so, may they copy the forms or any of the data included on them? If so, any deadlines for sending the completed forms to the state or to local officials?

Colorado law does not explicitly allow the “caging” of completed voter registration forms. The group conducting the voter registration drive must collect the completed voter registration application forms and submit them to the applicant's county clerk within fifteen business days. C.R.S. § 1-2-702.

Colorado law is silent as to whether a group conducting a voter registration drive can copy the completed forms or the data included on them.

May a group “pre-fill” some or all of the form before sending/giving it to a would-be registrant?

Colorado prohibits a voter registration drive from marking the voter registration application other than to write the VRD number and circulator information on the form. 8 CCR 1505-1(14.4.7)

May voter registration drive workers assist a voter in completing their registration form?

Colorado law is silent on this issue.

Does state require training of voter registration workers?

The organizer of a voter registration drive must complete training provided by the Secretary of State prior to the distribution or circulation of voter registration applications. Rule 14.2. The voter registration drive organizer is responsible for providing training to all voter registration form circulators. Rule 14.2.2.

For a group that is conducting a voter registration drive entirely by mail, the “organizer” who should complete the training is the person most directly involved in leading the drive. The training can be completed by conference call. Whoever completes the training must then in turn train the “circulators”; in the case of a by-mail registration drive, this includes anyone else in the group who will handle completed registration forms if they are returned to the group by voters.

Does state require registration of voter registration drives? If so, for by-mail drives, too?

Before beginning a voter registration drive, a VRD organizer is required to file a statement of intent and a training acknowledgment form with the Secretary of State. C.R.S. § 1-2-701; Rule 14.1. The VRD is then assigned a unique number which the VRD is required to place on each application form it turns in to a county clerk.

Any requirement that a group must provide information to voters about how they may contact the group to determine the status of their registration?

No.

May a group pay voter registration drive workers? If so, is it permissible to pay on a per-voter-registered basis?

Yes. Voter registration drive workers can be compensated by the hour or day, but groups are prohibited from compensating workers on a per-voter-registered basis. C.R.S. § 1-2-702(3)

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES

Colorado Secretary of State

Colorado Department of State

1700 Broadway

Denver, CO 80290

(303) 894-2200 (phone)

(303) 869-4860 (fax)

<https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/main.html>

Listing of County Elections Officials:

<https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/Resources/files/CountyClerkRosterWebsite.pdf>

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FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE

For assistance regarding these resources or for more information about federal law, please contact our attorney one-on-one counseling service:

Email: Advocacy@afj.org

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