

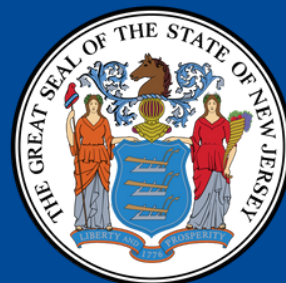


Get Out The Vote 2023

A voting and election guide for
citizens with intellectual and
developmental disabilities and
their families.



www.GOTVNJ.org



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GOTV 2023

This year, New Jersey residents will head to the polls to decide who will represent them in both the Senate and the Assembly. New Jersey has 40 legislative districts and each district is represented by one State Senator and two members of the General Assembly. Senators serve four year terms and members of the Assembly serve two year terms. These representatives will vote on state laws and the annual New Jersey budget. This is important as those laws and the State Budget will greatly impact you as a person with a disability or as a family member caring for and/or supporting a person with a disability. Bills that make their way through the legislative process can touch on everything from transportation, and special education services, to access to health care and employment.



Also of note, there will be a large volume of turnover happening in the state legislature. A combination of retirements and lawmakers who are seeking a different office than the one they currently hold, will mean the Legislature that convenes in January 2024 will look very different than it does today. (See more on this further along in our Guide.) With this in mind, we hope you will take advantage of your right to vote, as it is a critical way of making your voice heard in government. We have created this GOTV booklet to help guide you through the relevant dates, as well as the policies and procedures you need to know as we approach Election Day 2023. Take time to learn more about the candidates who will appear on your ballot and be sure to use our Get Out the Vote website, www.gotvnj.org, for additional information and resources.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is voting?

Voting is your right. Voting is your choice. Voting is your voice.

Why should you vote?

Voting allows you to elect people that will represent you and fight for the issues you believe in.

When is voting?

Election Day is Tuesday, November 7, 2023, but there are other ways of casting a ballot before the big day!

How can I vote?

You can vote in person, by mail or by using a secure ballot drop box. Here is some important information about each of these options:

1. Drop Box: A ballot drop box is a secure, locked structure operated by election officials where voters may deliver their ballots from the time they receive them in the mail up to the time polls close at 8 pm on Election Day, November 7, 2023. There will be at least 10 drop boxes located throughout each county, which will be available 24 hours a day. Drop boxes will be under surveillance by security cameras and ballots will be collected daily by county election officials. To find the location of the ballot drop boxes in your county visit: <https://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-secure-drop-boxes.shtml>. Ballots must be placed in drop boxes in your county by 8 pm on Election Day.
2. Mail: Your vote-by-mail ballot MUST be postmarked on or before 8:00 p.m. on Election Day and be received by your county's Board of Elections on or before the sixth day after the close of the polls. You can also deliver your vote-by-mail ballot in person to your county's Board of Elections Office by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day
3. In-Person voting: You can vote in person at your polling place, from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day or you can choose to vote during the 9-day Early Voting period detailed more below. Find your polling location here: <https://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-polling-location.shtml>

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the timeline for voting?

Early Voting will start on Saturday, October 28, and will run through Sunday, November 5. This fairly new option allows registered voters to cast their ballot in person, using a voting machine, during a nine-day period prior to Election Day. Every county will provide registered voters with this option. Hours for Early Voting will be Monday-Saturday, 10 am to 8 pm and Sunday, 10 am to 6 pm. No appointment is necessary. Here are some other important dates to keep in mind as we approach Election Day:

- **October 17** - Voter Registration Deadline for General Election (21 days before election)
- **October 31** - Deadline to apply for a Mail-in Ballot by Mail for the General Election
- **November 6, by 3 pm** - Deadline for In-Person Mail in Ballot Applications for General Election
- **November 7** - Deadline for Post Office Receipt of Mail-In Ballots from the General Election
- **November 13** - Deadline for Receipt of Timely Mailed Postmarked Mail-In Ballots to County Boards of Election

What is voting by mail?

Any voter may apply for vote-by-mail by completing the [Application for Vote-By-Mail Ballot](#) and returning the application to their [County Clerk](#). After completing the Vote-By-Mail Ballot, you can mail it back, place it at one of your county's Ballot Drop Box locations, or return it to your County Board of Elections Office. Counties will begin mailing ballots to voters 45 days before an election, but some counties may begin prior to that. Please remember: Your Vote-By-Mail ballot CANNOT be returned to your In-Person Early Voting Poll Location or your Election Day Poll Location.

How will I know if my ballot was received?

You can check on the status of your vote-by-mail ballot using the Track My Ballot Portal online here: <https://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-track-my-ballot.shtml>

You can contact your County Clerk. That contact information is here:

<https://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-county-election-officials.shtml>

First-time users have to create an account and will need either a Voter ID, a Driver's License Number, or the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number to validate voter registration status.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who are the candidates?

This year, the ballot will include all of the candidates for the State Senate and Assembly. New Jersey has 40 legislative districts. Each district is made up of one State Senator and two Assembly members. State Senators have a four-year term and members of the Assembly have a two-year term. These elected officials vote on state laws and New Jersey's annual Budget. To view a list of candidates, click here:

[State Senate Candidates](#)

[Assembly Candidates](#)

How will the 221st New Jersey Legislature look different than it does now?

At the date of publishing this Guide, 30 lawmakers will either leave the NJ Legislature or are seeking a different position in government. This represents 25% of the governing body. Here are the elected officials who will not hold their current position when the new legislative session begins in January 2024 (Blue represents a Democrat and red represents a Republican):

Senate

Fred Madden (D, LD-4)
Jean Stanfield (R, LD-8)
Christopher Connors (R, LD-9)
Sam Thompson (R/D, LD-12)
Steve Oroho (R, LD-24)
Sandra Cunningham (D, LD-31)
Nicholas Sacco (D-32)
Nia Gill (D, LD-34) Lost Senate Primary
Richard Codey (D, LD-27)

Assembly

Beth Sawyer (R, LD-3) Lost Senate Primary
Paul Moriarty (D, LD-4) Running for Senate
Gabriela Mosquera (D, LD-4)
DiAnne Gove (R, LD-9)
John Catalano (R, LD-10)
Dan Benson (D, LD-14)
Sadaf Jaffer (D, LD-16)
Joe Egan (D, LD-17) Retiring
Parker Space (R, LD-24) Running for Senate
Hal Wirths (R, LD-24)
Mila Jasey (D, LD-27)
Ralph Caputo (D, LD-28)
Angela McKnight (D, LD-31) Running for Senate
Pedro Mejia (D, LD-32)
Angelica Jimenez (D, LD-32)
Raj Mukherji (D, LD-33) Running for Senate
Annette Chaparro (D, LD-33)
Britnee Timberlake (D, LD-34) Running for Senate
Thomas Giblin (D, LD-34)
DeAnne DeFuccio (R, LD-39)
Kevin Rooney (R, LD-40)

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can vote?

To vote you must be a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years old and registered to vote.

You cannot vote if you are in jail, on parole or on probation. It is not legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she has an intellectual or other disability. Only a judge can declare that an individual lacks capacity to vote. It is not legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she has a legal guardian. It is not legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she lives in an institution, developmental center, group home, supported apartment or other residential facility assisting individuals with disabilities. It is not legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she receives services or supports related to a disability. A voter with a disability cannot be required to answer questions or fill out a form to “prove” his or her mental capacity.

How do I know if I'm registered to vote?

Visit this site to determine if you are registered:

<https://voter.svrs.nj.gov/registration-check>

How can I register to vote?

To register, you must complete a Voter Registration Application and/or Party Affiliation Form. Mail or deliver the Voter Registration Application and/or Party Affiliation Form to the County Commissioner of Registration or Superintendent of Elections for your county. To find your county, click here:

<https://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-county-election-officials.shtml>.

To register to vote online, click here: <https://voter.svrs.nj.gov/register>. You will need your current and valid Driver's License or non-driver Identification Card, or your social security number.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are polling places accessible for people with disabilities?

A voter with a disability has the right to vote privately and independently, have an accessible polling place and accessible voting machines, seek assistance from workers at the polling place who have been trained to use the accessible voting machines and to bring someone to help you vote. Under federal and state law, voters with disabilities have the right to receive “reasonable accommodations” at polling places. If you are blind, if you have a disability or if you cannot read the ballot on the voting machine, you can have someone of your choice assist you with the voting machine. You are also entitled to assistance. Two board workers of opposite political parties may help you. You have the right to have both workers assist you, or one worker - it is your choice. If you encounter accessibility difficulties, you can report and communicate that experience to the NJ Division of Elections by using this website:

<https://nj.gov/state/elections/voting-access-feedback-form.shtml>

Voters should not be asked for “proof” of their disability in order to receive accommodations. Animals assisting people with disabilities must be allowed to accompany the person into the building and into the booth. Voter rights and accessibility information can be found here: <https://nj.gov/state/elections/voter-rights.shtml>

What should I do if I go to vote and am told I can’t vote because I have a disability?

If you are a voter with a disability and you have a question or you encounter an issue trying to vote on Election Day, call the Disability Rights NJ hotline at **(866) 493-0023** from 8 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday, or from 6 am to 8 pm on Election Day.

You can also email voterhotline@disabilityrightsnj.org.

Looking for more information?

Don’t forget to visit our website, www.GOTVNJ.org for additional content and resources!

In Their Own Words

Renee Pierce, Self-Advocate

"I think it is important to have your voice heard. It is all about speaking up. I'm not really into politics but I'm all about people. Voting is important because it puts people you want in office. If other people want to vote for someone you don't like then they could be put in office. If you vote then you can put people in office who deal with real and important issues. If you don't vote you are stuck with whoever wins the vote. It is your choice but what they do in office affects all of us." Renee lives in Maplewood, NJ and is a part of The Arc of Essex.



Barb Coppens, Self-Advocate

"People with disabilities should vote because it is very important to get your voice out there. This morning I had a problem involving transportation and I called my legislators and got my voice out there! It is important to educate the legislature so they can learn more about people with disabilities. It's also important to learn about what they do.

When it comes to action alerts you should take action on those important issues because they need to hear that. It doesn't matter if it's local, state, or federal, you should get to know who your legislatures are. That is the only way to get your voices heard out there, is to vote!"

In Their Own Words

Sarah White, Family Member

"I remember my very first election like it was yesterday. As life would have it, the first election I was eligible to vote in was the Presidential Election of 2000. I remember sitting in my dorm room, a new freshman with all my roommates, watching the entire event unfold on a tiny TV. It was intense! We had friendly debates and honestly, I learned a lot. I had grown up in a town where everyone voted the same way and no one talked about it, or why they did it. This was the first time I had been exposed to other viewpoints and rationales for voting this way or that. It was honestly exhilarating. From that election on, I really came to understand how important it was to vote, and even more so, how important it was to be an INFORMED voter. To know what issues mattered to me and why, and then go from there.



Over the years some of the issues important to me have stayed steady, while others have changed dramatically as I learn more and more about our country and the world at large. I consider voting to be a huge privilege and I make it a point to participate in all the elections, small, large, huge. They are all important.

Having a child with disabilities has, of course, given me another area to research and understand better. I will be completely transparent here, I never thought about disability rights until my son was born. It was a new world for me. So, in the [summed up] words of the great Maya Angelou "Know better, do better." And I have. And I've taken it further than just disability issues, I try to learn a little bit more each election.

I know there will never be a perfect choice for all of us because we all have different needs. BUT I do believe it's important to use your voice to vote for what is important to you."



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