

## **WHAT IS EARLY VOTING?**

Registered voters may cast a ballot prior to Election Day without having to provide a reason for wanting to vote early. This ballot is cast by personal appearance at the office of the election authority or at a location established by the election authority. An election authority is either a county clerk or a Board of Election Commissioners.

## **WHEN DOES EARLY VOTING OCCUR?**

The period for early voting begins the 15th day preceding a general primary, consolidated primary, consolidated, or general election and extends through the 3rd before Election Day.

## **WHERE CAN PEOPLE VOTE?**

An election authority may establish permanent polling places for early voting at locations throughout the election authority's jurisdiction, including but not limited to a municipal clerk's office, a township clerk's office, a road district clerk's office, or a county or local public agency office.

In addition to permanent polling places for early voting, the election authority may establish temporary branch polling places for early voting.

An election authority will publish the location of each permanent and temporary polling place for early voting and the dates and hours that early voting will be conducted at each location.

## **IF I VOTE EARLY, BUT CHANGE MY MIND, MAY I VOTE ON ELECTION DAY?**

No. The law prohibits a person who voted during the early voting period from voting again on Election Day.

## **ARE POLLWATCHERS ALLOWED AT EARLY VOTING SITES?**

Yes. Like at the regular polling place on Election Day, pollwatchers may be appointed to observe early voting by personal appearance at each permanent and temporary polling place where early voting is conducted.

## **WHAT ARE THE SAFEGUARDS AGAINST VOTER FRAUD?**

Voters casting an early ballot must display valid identification such as a current driver's license, a state-issued ID card or another government-issued ID with a photograph.

The votes cast during the early voting period will not be counted until after the polls close on Election Day.

## **WHO AUTHORIZED EARLY VOTING?**

The Illinois General Assembly approved House Bill 1968 in 2005, and it was signed into law as Public Act 94-0645.

## **WHAT IS THE REASON FOR EARLY VOTING?**

A major reason for early voting is to encourage greater participation in the election. People who travel for business, work long hours or are otherwise inconvenienced by the hours the polls are open may find it easier to vote early.

## **IS ELECTIONEERING ALLOWED AT EARLY VOTING SITES?**

No. Electioneering is prohibited at the early voting site and a campaign-free zone will be established like it is at the polling place on Election Day.

## **WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR REGISTERING TO VOTE?**

The traditional deadline for registering to vote is 28 days prior to an election.

However, Grace Period Registration is an extension of the deadline for registration. State law allows for the registration of voters and for a change of address at the office of an election authority, but it requires that a person participating in Grace Period Registration to vote at that same office or by mail at the discretion of the election authority.

People who register during the Grace Period are not eligible to vote at an Early Voting location or at a polling place on Election Day. Grace Period Registration runs 27 days to 3 days before an election.

## **HOW CAN I CHECK TO SEE IF I AM REGISTERED?**

Illinois residents can check to see if they are registered by going online at [www.elections.il.gov](http://www.elections.il.gov) and clicking "Voters" and then clicking "Am I Registered to Vote in Illinois." This new service is made available through the Illinois Voter Registration Service database, a requirement of the Help America Vote Act.

## THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

A primary goal of the State Board of Elections is to help bring about greater understanding and participation in the electoral process.

The State Board of Elections is an independent state agency charged with the responsibility of having general supervision over the administration of election laws of the State.

The State Board works closely with election authorities in all regions of the State.

Elections are administered locally by the State's 110 election authorities. These are the county clerks in 101 counties, one county election commission and eight municipal election commissions.

As part of their many responsibilities, election authorities conduct local voter registration programs, train election judges, find polling places, prepare ballots, oversee Election Day activities and supervise the vote count at the local level.

For more information on early voting or other election laws and procedures, contact your election authority or visit the Board's website: [www.elections.il.gov](http://www.elections.il.gov)

# EARLY VOTING



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Printed by Authority of the State of Illinois  
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Revised 7/11/12

**This pamphlet provides general information regarding State laws that affect all eligible voters in Illinois.**