

Voting Q & A for College Students in New York State

The right to vote is fundamental in a democratic society. The following information will help make it easy for you to exercise this right. To be eligible to vote, you must be a U.S. citizen who will be at least 18 years old on Election Day, and you must also have registered to vote.

If you are in college, the following information will help you to decide whether to vote in your prior district/state or at your college address. There are many good reasons for registering and voting at either residence, but keep in mind, in most cases the final choice is really yours.

Should I register and vote in my College community?

You *do* have a vested interest in the local issues of your college community. Issues such as off-campus housing and zoning restrictions, the environment, taxes, transportation and personal safety all affect your quality of living. Voting in your college community also is more convenient and relieves you of the need to apply for and return an absentee ballot.

Every voter needs to have information about the issues and the candidates. Registering and voting at college can give you the opportunity to become involved with, and informed about, the local issues in your college town or city. Becoming involved in the issues, and learning about local politics, are some of the ways in which you can begin to build a relationship with other residents of the community. If you consider the college community your primary residence, you should vote in the community.

Am I really a resident of my College community?

Yes. Students live in their college towns anywhere from nine to 12 months of the year, for at least four years. This means that students are no more transient than the average American family, which typically moves once every four years. Moreover, the U.S. Census Bureau considers students to be residents of their college community. Federal funds are distributed to municipalities based on figures that include the student population.

Students contribute to the college community in many valuable ways. They work as volunteers in a host of civic organizations, help to create jobs in the community, bolster the local economy, and pay sales and gasoline taxes.

Why should I register at my prior address?

If you don't consider your college community your primary residence and/or you have a special interest in the local issues at your old address, you have a good reason for voting there. The people and issues you vote for will have more lasting impact on you if you intend to return to this location to live. It is also possible that you are still subject to taxes and student loan/scholarship regulations at your prior address. If this is the case, having a voice in the policy decisions about these issues might be important for you. Just remember, if you want to vote at your prior residence, you must be registered at that address and be aware of absentee ballot regulations and procedures.

How do I know how, when, and where to Register and vote?

You may register in person at your local board of elections or at any state agency participating in the National Voter Registration Act, on any business day throughout the year. You may register by mail. Forms are available from your county board of elections, town and city halls, post office, political parties, various state offices, and the League of Women Voters. Contact the League of Women Voters of New York State - 1-866-LWVNYS1, the New York State Board of Elections - 1-800-FOR-VOTE, or your county board of elections to have a voter registration form sent to you. You may download a voter registration form in New York State. Go to www.lwvny.org and click on Voter Resources.

The League of Women Voters of New York State is a unique, multi-issue, nonpartisan, political organization. It encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

I am currently registered at my prior address. Am I allowed to reregister in my college community instead of voting by absentee ballot?

Many states allow college students to register and vote where they attend college since the Census Bureau considers college students to be residents of their college communities. Check with the town or city clerk or the county Board of Elections in your college community to find out if you may vote from your college address.

For information on registration, obtaining absentee ballots and voting, contact the League of Women Voters, your county Board of Elections or your student government.

League of Women Voters of New York State

www.lwvny.org

New York State Board of Elections

www.elections.state.ny.us

How do I get an absentee Ballot?

You need an absentee ballot if you are a registered voter but will be away from your county on Election Day. You can request an absentee ballot from your county board of elections or download one from the New York State Board of Elections website www.elections.state.ny.us

Upon completion, applications must be mailed or delivered to your county board of elections. Once they have received your applications, your county board of elections will mail or give the ballot to you.

Deadlines for voting absentee

In New York State, your ballot must be post-marked on or before Election Day and must be received by the board of elections no later than seven days after Election Day.

To Vote In New York State You Must:

- Be a US citizen
- Be 18 years old by election day
- Live at your present address for at least 30 days before election day
- Be registered to vote

Looking for non-partisan information about candidates?

- www.lwvny.org
- www.elections.state.ny.us
- www.capwiz.com/lwv/home

Considering Joining the League-Membership

- Individual
- Household
- Carrie C. Catt Membership ____
- Susan B. Anthony Membership _
- Sojourner Truth_
- Student Membership_____

(Please make checks payable to the League of Women Voters)

Considering making a contribution

- Tax deductible for Educational Work ***(Make checks payable to LWV Education Foundation)***
- In Support of LWV activities Non-tax deductible ***(Make checks payable to LWV)***

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