

MISSING VOTER PROJECT

Guide to helping voters register under South Carolina law

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE?

In South Carolina, an individual may become a registered voter if he/she:

- Is a citizen of the United States.
- Is at least 18 years of age on the day of the election.
- Is a SC resident, living in the county and precinct where they want to vote.
- Is not serving a sentence, including probation or parole, for a felony or offenses against the election laws.
- Submits a voter registration application 30 days before the election.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A COMPLETE VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION?

Without the following information an application will be rejected:

- Name
- Sex
- Race
- Social security number (this is not public information)
- Date of birth
- Residence address
- Telephone number (if they don't have one, put "none")
- Location of prior voter registration is required for all previously registered voters. The applicant should fill in whatever information he/she knows about the location of previous registration, even if he/she cannot recall the precinct or county (put "?" if unknown, as everyone should know what state they were previously registered in.)
- The applicant must affirm that he/she is not under a court order declaring him/her mentally incompetent. If ever convicted of a felony or offense against the election laws that he/she has served his/her entire sentence, including probation and parole, or has received a pardon for the conviction.
- Additionally, the applicant must take the following oath: "I, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a citizen of the United States and that on the date of the next ensuing election, I will have attained the age of 18 years and am a resident of South Carolina, this county, and of my precinct. The home address listed herein is my sole legal place of residence and that I claim no other place as my legal residence."
- Signature of applicant

The following information is optional:

- Mailing address, if the same as "address where you live."
- Diagram of home location and whether or not it is inside city limits
- "Would you like to be a poll worker?" check-off box.

The law requires any application to be rejected if:

- Any portion of the application is not complete (answering "none" for telephone, or indicating they don't know location of previous registration with a "?" is acceptable).
- Any portion of the application is illegible in the opinion of a member and the clerk of the board
- The board is unable to determine, from the address stated on the application, the precinct in which the voter should be assigned or the election districts in which he/she is entitled to vote. If a new voter provides a bad address their application will be rejected.

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MVP GUIDELINES FOR VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES

A. Do not fold and seal forms. Turn the completed forms in to your MVP coordinator. Do not leave them with the new voter. Your coordinator will copy the forms and turn them into the county registration office. Teams will follow up to make sure the new voter got their card and gets out to vote.

B. MVP coordinators will turn in completed forms, after copying, to their county voter registration office once a week. Forms MUST be turned in by the registration deadline of Oct. 4.

C. If your MVP team is awarding prizes for the most registrations, put your name on the bottom of the form, so you can receive credit for each new voter. We have a letter to businesses that you can use to solicit donations of goods and money to reward the organizers. Let us know if you want to do this for your team(s).

D. New applicants do not have to present ID to register. You must tell them they will have to bring their a valid photo ID when they vote. If they don't have photo ID, a current utility bill, bank statement, or other government document showing their name and address will do. The State Election Commission has advised the counties that the ID requirement at the polls is for identification, not proof of residency.

E. VOTER CONTACT INFORMATION. Ask each new voter - and registered citizens you encounter during the registration drive — what their most important issues are and if they would like to be contacted if citizens in their area meet to work on these issues. If yes, ask for their email (or “may we call you if you don't use email”). Enter the information on the VOTER CONTACT SHEET. Turn the Voter contact sheet into your MVP coordinator with the completed forms. Make sure you get blank Voter Contact sheets from your MVP coordinator. This “issue identification” will allow us to integrate people into a movement that goes beyond elections. Sign up only willing and interested citizens.

F. The state does not require any training, or place restrictions on people registering voters using the mail in form. (Ie. you don't have to be 18 and registered in order to do voter registration).

G. Absentee Ballot Application request cards. If you are registering someone who thinks they may not be able to get to the polls Nov. 4, and they would like to vote by mail, have them sign a Absentee Ballot Application request card (get these from your MVP coordinator). We will turn the card in and they will be mailed an application NOT A BALLOT. They must complete and return the application they are mailed by the county in order to have the Absentee Ballot mailed to their voting address.

H. If a voter registration application is incomplete or illegible, the MVP organizer can call the applicant and, with their permission, write the missing information on the application. County offices may reject incomplete or illegible applications, but they must contact the applicant in writing to offer an opportunity to complete their registration.

I. THE MISSING VOTER PROJECT IS NONPARTISAN. This means you can NOT support or oppose any candidate when you are doing voter registration with the MVP. You can NOT wear campaign buttons. You CAN talk about issues of social justice and equality. You CAN encourage people to register and vote to support issues they believe in. You CAN urge them to sign up on the Voter Contact sheet and be notified of meetings on issues that concern them.

The information contained here is for general guidance only. The South Carolina Progressive Network is not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from the use of this information. Contact the Network if you have questions.