

TSTA voting tips and updates on new election laws

Voting was a big topic of debate during the 87th regular and subsequent special sessions. While TSTA fought against restricting the right to vote, several bills centered around the voting process passed and are now law. TSTA has put together some tips about these new Texas election laws and reminders about voting to help locals vote.



New! Required Procedure

- A new law requires that voters who VBM include with both their application and mail ballot either their:

Texas Driver's License number

Texas State ID number

Election ID Certificate number

Last four digits of their social security number (if others not available)

Voter Registration

If nothing on your voter registration has changed since the last election, you can double [check your voter registration status here](#).

New! If you have moved or changed your name, you can [update your voter registration online here](#).

Early Voting

- If you are in line before the poll closing time, you must be allowed to cast your ballot. Stay in line!
- Smaller counties are now required to provide longer hours for early voting.

Vote by Mail (VBM) [previously called Absentee Voting]

Who Qualifies?

- New! Absent from county of residence on Election Day and during the early voting period
- Sick or have a disability that prevents you from voting in person without assistance
- 65 or older
- New! Voters expecting to give birth within three weeks before or after election day now qualify for VBM

Registering to VBM

- Counties may no longer distribute unsolicited VBM applications, but locals can print blank VBM applications to share with members/voters.
- Voters can print an [Application for a Ballot by Mail](#) directly from the Secretary of State's website or request a Vote by Mail application from your [county election office](#).

- The same Voter ID number is required for voter registration application, Vote by Mail Application and the Vote by Mail carrier envelope.
- Mail or hand deliver your application to the [address listed for your county here](#).

New! VBM Online Tracker at votetexas.gov with tracking of application & ballot throughout voting process and opportunity to "cure" certain errors.

Poll Watchers

Poll watchers are required to take an online training program and sign an oath, but new laws lessen restrictions on movement and observation.

Persons who Assist Voters

- Persons who assist voters with a Vote by Mail application, Vote by Mail ballot, or in-person ballot must provide their relationship to the voter and address, and for the Vote by Mail ballot and in-person ballot, the assistor must sign an oath and mark that they didn't receive compensation.
- Persons who drive seven or more voters who qualify for curbside voting must sign a form.

More Information and Assistance

- Contact your [local elections office](#) for more information.
- LWVTexas.org or VOTE411.org
- [Voter Registration](#)
- [Election Protection](#) 866-687-8683
- [Texas Secretary of State](#) (800) 252-VOTE

