

Voter's Guide for Vermonters with Disabilities

**Published by
Disability Rights Vermont, Inc.**

Federally mandated as the Protection & Advocacy system for the State of Vermont. DRVT is the Mental Health Care Ombudsman for Vermont. Our mission is to promote the equality, dignity, and self-determination of people with disabilities.

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Voter's Guide for Vermonters with Disabilities

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 says that people with disabilities have a right to vote and to have certain accommodations made if a person requires them, in order to be able to exercise their right to vote. Disability Rights Vermont, Inc. (DRVT) is an agency that receives money from the U. S. Congress under HAVA to help make sure people with disabilities have equal access to the voting process. This guide is one project DRVT is doing to provide that help. In this guide, you will find information about your voting rights, how to register to vote, the different ways you can vote, and the general voting process.

Your Vote is your Voice!

Voting is important.

It is a way for you to help choose the people who will run our government.

Our government makes laws, decides how money gets spent, and much more.

Who gets chosen to run the government makes a big difference for people with disabilities and their families.

Contact Us

Disability Rights Vermont

Toll-Free: 1-800-834-7890

Phone: 1-802-229-1355

Website: www.disabilityrightsvt.org

Email: info@disabilityrightsvt.org

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05602

Vermont Election Timeline

The Presidential Primary is held every four years on Town Meeting Day (first Tuesday of March). Absentee ballots **must** be requested if you plan to vote by mail. The last day to request an early or absentee ballot is the day before the primary by 5 pm.

The Statewide Primary is held on the second Tuesday of August in each even-numbered year. This primary will decide which candidate each party will send to the General Election in November. Absentee Ballots must be requested if you plan to vote by mail. The last day to request an early or absentee ballot is the day before the primary by 5 pm.

Absentee ballots for the General Election will automatically be mailed to all active registered voters. Clerks begin this process no later than 45 days before the General Election date.

Mail back your signed Absentee Ballot at least 7 days before the General Election date so it arrives to your town clerk in time to be counted.

The General Election is held on the first Tuesday of November. All early or absentee ballots must be returned to the town clerk's office before closing of business (check office hours). General Election Ballots can be completed at your polling location and are due by the close of polls at 7 pm.

Who can vote?

You can vote in Vermont elections if you:

- Are a U.S. Citizen
- Are a Vermont resident
- Will be 18 years or older by the day of the election
- Are registered to vote
- Take the “Voter’s Oath” (you will do this when you register to vote for the first time in Vermont)

If you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years old or older, and are registered to vote, you can vote in U.S. elections. It is important to vote so that you have a say in important issues like programs that can help people with disabilities!

If you have a legal resident status but are not a U.S. Citizen, contact your Town Clerk to see if you have the right to vote in the local (but not statewide) elections.

Voter's Oath

“You solemnly swear or affirm that whenever you give your vote or suffrage, touching any matter that concerns the State of Vermont, you will do it so as in your conscience you shall judge will most conduce to the best good of the same, as established by the Constitution, without fear or favor of any person.”

What the Voter's Oath means, in plain English:

- You promise that when you vote, you will make your own choice without influence from another person - you won't let anyone tell you who to vote for.
- You promise that you will choose what you believe is best for the state whenever you vote on anything to do with Vermont.

What are my rights?

In Vermont, you have the right to vote if:

- You have a guardian
- You need help reading or filling out a ballot
- You are homeless
- You have been convicted of a crime or are incarcerated
- You are not able to vote in person on Election Day

You also have the right to:

- Vote privately and independently
- Contact your Town/City Clerk to request accommodations, including translation or interpretation services.
- Bring a reminder sheet of who you want to vote for
- Bring a magnifying glass to help you read the ballot
- If you have a disability or need help with the ballot, you may bring someone to assist you as long as it is not your employer or a union representative
- Get a new ballot if you make a mistake (maximum of three ballots)
- Leave some choices blank on the ballot
- Vote using Vermont's accessible ballot marking system (see page 15)
- Ask questions – elections officials are there to help you understand how to vote
- Request a sample ballot (to see what you will be voting on before the election)
- Use the accessible vote at home option (see page 16)
- Ask an election official to bring a ballot to your car at your polling place (this is called “curbside voting”)

Under Title 17 of the Vermont Statutes it is illegal to:

- Knowingly vote more than once either in the same town or in different towns.
- Try to tell another person how to vote once you're inside the building where voting is taking place.
- Mislead the Board of Civil Authority about your own or another person's eligibility to vote.
- Show your marked ballot to others in order to let them know how you voted.
- Make a mark on your ballot that would identify it as yours.

If you experience problems voting:

- Ask an election official to help you
- Call the **Secretary of State's** office toll-free at **1-800-439-VOTE (8683)**
- Call **Disability Rights Vermont** toll-free at **1-800-834-7890**.
- Call **Vermont Center for Independent Living** toll-free at **1-800-639-1522**
- Call **Green Mountain Self Advocates** toll-free at **1-800-564-9990**

How do I register?

In order to vote you must first become a registered voter in the town or city where you live. Vermont has “same day” voter registration so you may even register to vote at your polling place on Election Day.

To register, you need to complete the “Application for Addition to the Checklist” (voter registration form) and make sure it is returned to the Town/City Clerk’s office in the town or city where you live. In Vermont, you do not need to register under a specific political party when registering to vote.

There are several places you can register:

- At your Town / City Clerk’s office
- Online at “My Voter Page” <https://mvp.vermont.gov>
- At the Department of Motor Vehicles (when you register your car or when you get or renew your driver’s license or non-driver’s identification card)
- At voter registration drives
- At a state agency that provides public assistance when applying for benefits such as at DCF’s Economic Services office.

If you are registering to vote in Vermont for the first time by mail or online, they ask for one acceptable form of ID. Acceptable forms are either a valid photo ID (driver’s license or passport), current utility bill, current bank statement, or another government document.

Call your Town/City Clerk or the Vermont Secretary of State’s office if you have any questions about registering to vote. If you are a person with a disability, Disability Rights Vermont can help you register to vote.

My Voter Page

The Vermont Secretary of State's Office has created an online resource for voting, the "My Voter Page." This can be found online at <https://mvp.vermont.gov> or by scanning the QR code below on your phone. You may use this system to:

- Register to vote
- Check your voter registration status
- Request an absentee ballot
- Check your absentee ballot status
- Find out where your polling place is
- See a sample ballot for the upcoming election
- Electronic ballot for the accessible vote at-home option

When do I vote?

For the General Election, you must vote on or before the first Tuesday in November.

- Ballots will be mailed out to all registered voters and any voter may pick up a ballot at the Town Clerk's office at any time beginning 45 days before the general or primary election.
- You may vote early, in person, at your Town/City Clerk's office before the General Election day.
- If voting by mail, complete your absentee ballot and mail it back to your Town/City Clerk's office in time for it to be received no later than the day before the Election. Or you can drop it off at your polling place on Election Day.
- You may vote on Election Day at the polling place, either from your car or inside the polling place. To vote from your car, someone will need to go into the polling place and tell the polling official that you want to vote from your car.
- On Election Day, the polls may open between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m. - each town/city makes its own decision. All polls close at the same time - 7 p.m.

Where do I vote?

- Call your Town/City Clerk (see Pages 40 - 44)
- Visit the Secretary of State's website <https://sos.vermont.gov>
- Log into My Voter Page at <https://mvp.vermont.gov>
- Call **1-800-439-VOTE (8683)**.
- Check online at <https://sos.vermont.gov/elections/voters/polling-places/>

What if I can't access my polling place?

Polling sites must be accessible on the day of the Election. It must have accessible parking, curbside voting, and accessible voting equipment.

If you have difficulties accessing your polling place, contact the SOS Elections Division at **1-800-439-8683** or Disability Rights Vermont at **1-800-834-7890**. DRVT is available until 7 p.m. on election days.

Polling place accessibility includes:

- A polling place being on the ground floor of a building
- Providing ramps, elevators, or other facilities for access to the polling place
- Providing a stencil overlay for ballots
- Providing a separate polling place with direct communication to the main polling place
- Election officials who can carry a ballot to an elder or to a person with a disability to allow that person to mark the ballot while in a car next to the polling place

How do I vote?

Voting in person at the polls using a standard ballot

1. Go into the polling place and at the check-in table give your name, and if asked, give your residence.
2. You will be given a ballot that you will take to a voting booth.
3. Mark your ballot according to the instructions. For most ballots, you will need to completely fill in the oval of your choice. If you have questions, a poll worker can explain more. If you make a mistake, ask for another ballot (limit of three).
4. After you have finished marking your ballot, you will leave the voting booth with your ballot and proceed to the place you “cast” (put) it. Look for signs or ask a worker if it is not obvious where to go.
5. At the place you cast it, place the ballot as instructed by the worker. You may be told to put it in a ballot box or an optical scanner/tabulator machine.
6. Go to the check-out table if your voting place has one and give your name. You are finished voting and can now leave the voting area.

Voting in person at the polls using the Accessible Voting System

The “OmniBallot Tablet” accessible voting system is a tablet-based ballot marking device for use by voters at their polling place and is available at all Vermont polling places for Federal Elections, like the General Election. It is a voting machine that provides assistive technology such as headphones and a screen reader, an 8-key navigation pad, toggle switches, and a touch screen for you to choose from for accessibility.

1. Go into the polling place.
2. At the check-in table, give your name, and if asked, your residence.
3. Ask to use the accessible voting system and the polling place official will guide you through the process.

The accessible voting system gives Vermonters with disabilities the ability to mark and print their ballots independently and privately. Once you are done marking your ballot using the system, it will print your voted ballot for you to place where all other ballots go to be counted. If you have questions, ask an Elections Official.

Accessible voting at home

For the General Election, using the “Omniballot Online” system, you can receive your ballot electronically if you are overseas, in the military, ill, injured, or have a disability.

1. Sign onto My Voter Page at <https://mvp.vermont.gov> and choose “Click here for online absentee ballot request” and follow the instructions.
2. Use the on-screen ballot marking program to make your selections using your keyboard, mouse, or other assistive technology, and then review your selections on the review screen.
3. Print your completed ballot and certificate. Insert the ballot in an envelope and seal it. Print, sign, and attach the certificate to the outside of that envelope using tape or glue.
4. Next, place that envelope in a new envelope and address it to your Town/City Clerk. You can mail the envelope or drop it off at your Clerk’s office before Election Day or hand-deliver it to your polling place on Election Day.

The Omniballot Online system is compatible with MacOS and Windows screen readers.

Absentee Voting / Vote by Mail

Absentee Voting happens when you vote without being at your polling place on Election Day. This is also called **Vote by Mail**. You do not need to request an absentee ballot in Vermont if you are a registered voter for the General Election. To vote with an absentee ballot during a primary election, you must request that an absentee ballot be mailed to you.

The Vermont Secretary of State's Office will automatically mail ballots to actively registered voters at their registered address for the General Election. If you need to have your ballot sent to a different mailing address than the one you are registered at, contact your Town/City Clerk or use the online **My Voter Page** to request that an absentee ballot be sent to the address of your choice.

People who want to vote by absentee ballot should complete their ballot **before Election Day** and then send it back in the mail no later than **a week** before the election for it to be counted.

Absentee ballots can also be hand-delivered or dropped off at your Town/City Clerk's office up to the day before the election or at your polling place on Election Day.

Remember to sign the outside of your **Voted Ballot** envelope. Otherwise, it will be marked "defective" and returned to you to fix.

Vote by Mail Step-by-Step

1. Your ballot will come in an envelope.
2. Mark your ballot carefully following the directions at the top of the ballot.
3. Place your ballot in the Voted Ballot envelope and seal the envelope.
4. Fill out the back of the Voted Ballot envelope.
5. Place the sealed Voted Ballot envelope in the pre-paid and pre-addressed envelope. Mail a week before Election Day or return to your Town/City Clerk on or before Election Day.

Early voting

You can also “vote early” in person at your Town/City Clerk’s office up to 45 days before a Primary or General Election or up to 20 days before a local town/city election.

Voting from a facility

In Vermont, you can vote in the last town you lived in before entering a facility, even if the facility is out of state, or you can register to vote at the address of the location you are in if it is one of the following:

- A nursing home
- A veterans home
- Boarding at a school
- A retirement community
- A healthcare facility

Voting while incarcerated

Vermont and Maine are the only two states (along with the District of Columbia) that allow currently incarcerated people with felonies to vote. To vote while in prison (incarcerated), you will need to request that an absentee ballot be sent to you at the mailing address of the prison you are in. Be sure you request your absentee ballot and send your completed ballot back to your Town/City Clerk two weeks before General Election Day.

If you need help finding out whether you are a registered voter, to become a registered voter while you are in prison, or to get an absentee ballot, you can put in a request to the Volunteer Coordinator at your facility, or if you have a disability you can contact Disability Rights Vermont at 141 Main St. Ste 7, Montpelier, VT 05602.

Voting for the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard-of-Hearing

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires governments and businesses to provide effective communication for Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing people. That simply means information must be provided in a manner that is easily understood.

Accommodations can include:

- ASL interpreting services
- Auxiliary aids
- Captioning services
- Large format or screen-reader-friendly formats
- Wide rooms or spaces for voters who are blind, DeafBlind, and partially sighted.
- Provide audio description or explanation of graphics and visuals.
- Provide information in plain language.

For more information contact: Laura Siegel, Director of Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, and DeafBlind Services at **802-560-5170** or by text at **802-904-3241**.

Voting while experiencing homelessness

In Vermont, you are **not** required to give a street address to register to vote. Vermont allows you to register in the town where you currently stay. If you are living in a homeless shelter you can use the shelter's address as your place of residence. A Social Security number or photo ID is required to **register** to vote in Vermont.

Your vote has power!

Every vote matters!

Your vote is your voice as an American citizen. It's your opportunity to be heard, to hold elected officials accountable for their decisions and to have a say in important issues that affect your community. On Election Day, every vote matters!

Every vote counts. The following is a list of close election races in Vermont in recent history:

- In 1981, Bernie Sanders won Mayor of Burlington by 10 votes.
- In 2010, Sara Buxton won by 1 vote against David Ainsworth for a Windsor-Orange district House of Representatives seat.
- In 2016, the exact opposite happened! David Ainsworth won by 1 vote against Sarah Buxton for the same House of Representatives seat.

Major Political Parties

Vermont has three major political parties: Democrats, Progressives, and Republicans.

Many candidates run for office as a members of a political party. They do that because it gives voters a chance to get a quick idea about what types of issues are important to a candidate, and because political parties offer an existing organization of volunteers and in some parties, paid staff, to help candidates.

Political parties are organized by having members meet at town gatherings to choose representatives. These representatives go to county committees, which then send representatives to a state committee meeting.

In Vermont, you may also see candidates who are members of minor parties on the ballot. These parties are big enough to meet the guidelines of a political party but often don't have the membership to be considered an official major political party. Minor parties in Vermont include the Libertarian party and the Green Mountain Peace and Justice party.

We asked all the political parties in Vermont recognized by legal definition as major political parties to provide a description of what they stand for. The following descriptions are what they submitted. In Vermont, you do not need to register for a political party in order to vote.

Major Political Parties

Democratic Party

Vermont Democrats believe the rights to health care, food, shelter, clean air and water, education, privacy, justice, peace and equality, the right to organize, and of free speech are essential to a robust democracy. These rights are not negotiable.

Based on these principles, we stand against torture, bigotry and discrimination, forced childbirth, corruption, and the establishment of state-sponsored religion or religious doctrine.

We believe that all citizens have a responsibility to be informed, engaged participants in our democracy. We demand that all elected officials fully adhere to their oaths of office and defend the Constitution of the United States and Vermont at all times, using all lawful means available to them through their office.

We expect elected leaders at all levels to adhere to national and international laws and treaties, as required by the Constitution, and to govern compassionately and with fiscal integrity and transparency. As a society, we must work toward economically and environmentally sustainable communities to protect the future of our planet.

Everything we do – every policy, law, and regulation – must consider the effects of our actions on the lives and futures of the world’s children, and their children.

(802) 229-1783

info@vtdemocrats.org

P.O. Box 1220, Montpelier, VT 05601

<https://www.vtdemocrats.org/>

Major Political Parties

Progressive Party

The Progressive Party champions sensible policies and the traditional Vermont values that put people first. Livable wages and small business development will guarantee that young Vermonters can find good jobs in the state. Universal health care will mean families won't fear bankruptcy from catastrophic illnesses. Safe, clean energy and thriving family farms will mean food and energy security for future generations.

Unfortunately, the government is increasingly becoming unresponsive and irresponsible. The two brand-name parties frequently act in concert, because they serve the same corporate interests. They take issues "off the table", preventing discussion of issues important to most Vermonters: health care for all, property tax reform, and energy independence.

The Progressive Party does not take campaign donations from corporations. We put the interests of the farmers, laborers, students, small business owners, and seniors ahead of the interests of the large corporations that influence the other major parties.

We give the voters leverage to force the other major parties and candidates to take stands on those issues. We can fight for these issues on a level playing field when politicians are no longer influenced by corporate money, voting is more accessible to all Vermonters, and elections are more representative of our hopes for government.

(802) 229-0800

info@progressiveparty.org

<https://www.progressiveparty.org>

Major Political Parties

Republican Party

As such Vermont Republicans believe in government strong enough to protect the rights of our citizens, but limited and restrained enough to respect each individual's freedom.

We believe in maintaining Vermont's quality of life by encouraging economic growth and affordability, adhering to responsible environmental practices, and providing choices in education and health care.

We believe in efficient limited government, quality jobs, sensible economic development, and affordable health care.

We believe in equality of opportunity, preservation of our freedoms, and honoring the wisdom of our citizens. We believe in public safety and environmental stewardship.

We believe in empowering all Vermonters to succeed and to secure a future for themselves and their communities.

To learn more about the Vermont Republican Party please contact us at vtgop@vtgop.org or 802-223-3411 .

You can learn more by visiting <https://www.vtgop.org/>

Elected Offices

U.S. Senate

Every state has two U.S. Senators. Both Senators represent citizens in their entire state. Each one serves for six years, and they are elected in different years so there is only one Senator up for election at a time. One-third of all U.S. Senators will be elected this year, one-third in two years, and one-third in four years. This means that occasionally a particular state will not have any Senators to elect.

Senators serve on committees that discuss problems in smaller groups than the entire Senate. Many of these committees look at topics similar to those covered by the departments in the President's cabinet. Committee members gather information about a problem by studying it and asking people to testify (give information and answer questions) to their committees. Solutions from the committee then may be considered by the full Senate.

Because there are many opinions about how to solve problems, one of the main jobs of Senators is to figure out how to work with many people with different opinions to come up with a solution upon which a majority can agree.

Another job of Senators is to help the people in their state when they ask for assistance with or information about the government. This work is called constituent services.

You can find more information about the U.S. Senate online at <http://www.senate.gov>

Elected Offices

U.S. Representative

Each state is given a certain number of U.S. Representatives, based on the number of people living in the state. On average, for every 700,000 people, there is a specific congressional district created and the people within that district elect their representative. In states with more than one district, a U.S. Representative represents only his or her district, not the entire state. States that do not have that many people get fewer Representatives in Congress.

Some states with very few people get only one U.S. Representative. Vermont is such a small state that we have only one U.S. Representative. Representatives serve on committees and provide constituent services, just as senators do.

There is an election for U.S. Representative every two years. You can find more information about the U.S. House of Representatives on the web at <http://www.house.gov>

Elected Offices

Vermont Governor

The Governor serves as the head of the state government, provides overall direction for the state government, and is responsible for the administration of all the state agencies. The Governor appoints the heads of the agencies, who serve in the Governor's cabinet. The Governor sets a general tone about what is important in the government and proposes major legislation, including the overall budget.

Legislation (bills) which passes both the Vermont House of Representatives and the Senate must be signed by the Governor to take effect, unless the Governor vetoes, or says "no" to the proposed law and the House and Senate override the veto. In some cases, if the Governor takes no action a bill can become law also. Elections for Governor are held every two years.

You can find more information about Vermont State Government on the web at <http://www.vermont.gov>

Elected Offices

Vermont Lieutenant Governor

The Lieutenant Governor remains ready to take over for the Governor if the Governor cannot continue in office (for example, if the Governor dies or resigns). The Lieutenant Governor stands in for the Governor at the Governor's request. Just as the Vice President is the President of the U. S. Senate, the Lieutenant Governor is the President of the Vermont Senate. In Vermont, the Lieutenant Governor is elected independently of the Governor. Elections for Lieutenant Governor are held every two years.

You can find more information about the Vermont Lieutenant Governor on the web at <http://www.ltgov.vermont.gov>

Vermont State Treasurer

The State Treasurer is responsible for handling the state's money. The State Treasurer fulfills this responsibility through five divisions: financial operations, retirement operations, investment services, audit compliance, and technology services. State law says that the Treasurer's office is responsible for four areas: managing the state's checking accounts, investing state money and borrowing money for the state, keeping an unclaimed property for return to its rightful owner, and taking care of the retirement money for several groups of government workers.

Elections for State Treasurer are held every two years.

You can find more information about the Treasurer's office on the web at <http://www.vermonttreasurer.gov>

Elected Offices

Vermont Secretary of State

The Secretary of State is responsible for four main areas:

- **Archives**, or the historical files of the state.
- **Corporations**, or making sure all the companies doing business in the state are registered so they can be held responsible for what they do here.
- **Elections**, or making sure that all the voting in the state is done correctly.
- **Professional regulation**, or the licensing/certification/registration and disciplinary action of 40 professions, including psychologists, clinical social workers, nurses, and nursing home administrators.

Elections for Vermont Secretary of State are held every two years. You can find more information about the Secretary of State's office on the web at <https://sos.vermont.gov>

Elected Offices

Vermont Auditor of Accounts

The Auditor of Accounts is responsible for protecting against governmental waste and preventing inappropriate use of the state government's money. The people who work in the Auditor's office do audits (looking at the record-keeping for money matters) and reviews to accomplish their goals. They review the State's financial statements and check all the federal money that goes through the state government.

The Auditor of Accounts may also audit or review special areas of concern about how our money is spent. In the past, the Auditor has done special reviews of the Vermont Veteran's Home, the Department of Corrections, and other agencies that receive federal and state funding. The public may suggest areas to investigate and have access to the reports issued by the Auditor. Elections for Vermont Auditor of Accounts are held every two years.

You can find more information about the Auditor of Account's office on the web at <http://auditor.vermont.gov>

Elected Offices

Vermont Attorney General

The Attorney General is the chief law enforcement officer of the state. The Attorney General represents the state in all civil and criminal cases where the state is involved or has an interest. There are six divisions within the office of the Attorney General:

- Criminal
- Public protection
- Civil law
- Human services
- General counsel
- Administrative laws

The Attorney General's office represents the state's view in many matters of importance to the disability community, including mental health care and the use of involuntary psychiatric treatment in designated hospitals and mental health centers. Elections for the Attorney General are held every two years.

You can find more information about the Attorney General's office online at <https://ago.vermont.gov>

Locally Elected Offices

State Senator

State Senators are one of the two parts of the legislative branch of state government. Senators review the needs of our state, have meetings in committees, and propose bills that will respond to the concerns they have reviewed.

Just as the federal government has Senators for each state, the state government has Senators for each county. There is one Senator for approximately every 20,750 citizens. Senators are elected by county, so counties that have more than 20,750 people get more than one Senator. There are 30 Senators in the Vermont Senate. State Senators are elected every two years.

In order to keep the populations of senate districts within the number of people they are supposed to represent, a town from one county may be taken out of one county and included in the district of another county. For example, the Windham County senatorial district does not include Wilmington, which is part of the county, and Wilmington is included in the Bennington County district; and Colchester, which is part of Chittenden County, is in the Grand Isle County senatorial district. Also, a very small county is combined with a larger one to make one district, as is the case in Essex and Orleans counties.

Locally Elected Offices

State Representative

State Representatives are one of the two parts of the legislative branch of state government. Representatives act like the federal Representatives in that they review the needs of our state, have meetings in committees, and propose bills that will respond to the concerns they have reviewed. State Representatives provide constituent services for state government concerns.

Just as the federal government has Representatives for each national district, the state government has Representatives for each state district. Each state district Representative represents approximately 4,150 citizens. There are 150 Representatives in the Vermont House of Representatives. State Representatives are elected every two years.

Probate Court Judge

Probate Court judges have several areas of responsibility. They handle the probate of wills (proving the will is real), the settlement of estates, adoptions, guardianships, name changes, and uniform gifts to minors.

There is no requirement that the judges of probate be attorneys. Probate Court judges are elected every four years in non-presidential election years.

Locally Elected Offices

Assistant Judge

Assistant judges, often called side judges, administer the county budget. The county budget includes part of the costs of the probate court and the sheriff's department.

Assistant judges also serve in the Superior Court. Their job there is to give their opinion on factual matters to the presiding judge on cases. In some counties, they may hear certain cases on their own. With additional training, they also may "sit" (preside) in traffic court. Assistant judges are elected every four years in non-presidential election years.

County State's Attorney

The County State's Attorney is the chief law enforcement officer for each county in the state. The State's Attorney's Office is responsible for prosecuting all criminal, child protection, and fish and game charges within their county. The State's Attorney does not have to be an attorney, although they will have to hire attorneys to do the work of the State's Attorney's office in the courts. The State's Attorney is elected every four years in non-presidential election years.

Locally Elected Offices

County Sheriff

The Sheriff has several law enforcement responsibilities. These include an officer of the courts, delivering writs and summons (official papers telling people certain legal things), keeping order in the court, and carrying out the court's orders including transporting prisoners to and from court appearances.

Vermont County Sheriff's departments also perform other duties they are allowed, but not required, to do. These include contracting with various towns or villages, special events, and road construction projects to provide traffic control and policing services. The Sheriff is elected every four years in non-presidential election years.

High Bailiff

The High Bailiff's duty is to arrest the sheriff if it should ever become necessary, and to serve as sheriff while the sheriff is incarcerated. The High Bailiff does not have to be a law enforcement officer to be elected. High Bailiffs are elected every two years.

Locally Elected Offices

Justice of the Peace

Justices of the Peace have some mandatory and some voluntary duties. The Justices must serve on the Board of Civil Authority (BCA) and the town board for abatement of taxes.

Members of the BCA serve as election officials and deliver absentee ballots to voters at election time. BCA members also hear and decide appeals of the decisions of listers. The town board for the abatement of taxes decides whether a taxpayer's tax obligation should be forgiven in certain circumstances.

Justices of the Peace may join people in marriage, notarize documents, administer oaths, and, when commissioned by the state Supreme Court, serve as magistrates. Justices of the Peace are elected every two years.

Justices of the Peace can hand deliver ballots to people who are ill or have a disability and cannot vote in person on Election Day. They will bring you a ballot, allow you time to complete it, and then deliver it back to your Town/City Clerk to be counted. This service must be requested by contacting your Town/City Clerk's office before Election Day.

Common Election Terms

Here are just a few terms and phrases you may hear or read when deciding who to vote for or where and how to vote.

- **Absentee Ballot:** Used to vote early instead of at the polling place on Election Day.
- **Amendment:** A change to a law, piece of legislation, or article added to the U.S. Constitution.
- **Ballot:** A paper, card, or electronic program used to cast your vote.
- **Bias:** Prejudice in favor or against one thing, person, or group.
- **Bipartisan:** Supported by both political parties.
- **Cabinet:** A group of important people in a government, who normally represent the head of government.
- **Constituent:** A person represented by an elected official.
- **Delegate:** One sent to act as a representative of a group.
- **Democracy:** A government in which the people decide who is in power.
- **Electoral College:** Electors established by the constitution for the sole purpose of electing the president.
- **Lame duck:** An elected official still in office who has not been elected for another term.
- **Incumbent:** Someone currently in office.
- **Independent:** Any candidate who claims not to be a part of a specific political party.
- **Nonpartisan:** Not biased or showing preference for one political party over another.
- **Platform:** Plans and principles of a political party.
- **Poll:** The place where votes are cast or a survey of the public.
- **Primary:** An election for choosing who will be on the ballot in the final election.
- **Universal Vote by Mail:** All active registered voters get a ballot mailed to them automatically.

How can I learn more?

There are many online resources available. The following resources are helpful for Vermont and Nationwide elections:

- For Statewide election information, you can visit the Secretary of State's website at <https://sos.vermont.gov/elections/>
- For National election information, you can visit <https://www.usa.gov/election>.
- Newspapers, TV news, and social media. Not everything you read or see is true! Some websites try to help voters decide whether a statement or story is true. Examples of these websites are: <https://factcheck.org>; <https://politifact.com>; <https://snopes.com>
- Reach out to organizations in your community and people that you trust. Ask questions about issues that are important to you. Sometimes people will have a different opinion than you do and that is okay. Nobody should tell you how to vote. Your vote is your voice and every vote matters!
- Get involved with community organizations that serve people with disabilities like The Arc, Green Mountain Self-Advocates, and the Vermont Center for Independent Living. You can ask to volunteer with these organizations and help people vote.

Town/City Clerk Offices

Are you registered to vote?

Call and verify with your town/city clerk!

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Addison | 759-2020 | Brattleboro | 251-8157 |
| Albany | 755-6100 | Bridgewater | 672-3334 |
| Alburgh | 796-3468 | Bridport | 758-2483 |
| Andover | 875-2765 | Brighton | 723-4405 |
| Arlington | 375-2332 | Bristol | 453-2410 |
| Athens | 869-3370 | Brookfield | 276-3352 |
| Bakersfield | 827-4495 | Brookline | 365-4648 |
| Baltimore | 263-5274 | Brownington | 754-8401 |
| Barnard | 234-9211 | Brunswick | 962-5514 |
| Barnet | 633-2256 | Burke | 467-3717 |
| Barre City | 476-0242 | Burlington | 865-7000 |
| Barre Town | 479-9391 | Cabot | 563-2279 |
| Barton | 525-6222 | Calais | 456-8720 |
| Belvidere | 644-6621 | Cambridge | 644-2251 |
| Bennington | 442-1043 | Canaan | 266-3370 |
| Benson | 537-2611 | Castleton | 468-5319 |
| Berkshire | 933-2335 | Cavendish | 226-7292 |
| Berlin | 229-9298 | Charleston | 895-2814 |
| Bethel | 234-9722 | Charlotte | 425-3071 |
| Bloomfield | 962-5191 | Chelsea | 685-4460 |
| Bolton | 434-5075 | Chester | 875-2173 |
| Bradford | 222-4727 | Chittenden | 483-6647 |
| Braintree | 728-9787 | Claredon | 775-4274 |
| Brandon | 247-3635 | Colchester | 264-5520 |

Town/City Clerk Offices

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|---------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| Concord | 695-2220 | Georgia | 524-3524 |
| Corinth | 439-5850 | Glover | 525-6227 |
| Cornwall | 462-2775 | Goshen | 247-6455 |
| Coventry | 754-2288 | Grafton | 843-2419 |
| Craftsbury | 586-2823 | Granby | 328-3611 |
| Danby | 293-5136 | Grand Isle | 372-8830 |
| Danville | 684-3352 | Granville | 767-4403 |
| Derby | 766-4906 | Greensboro | 533-2911 |
| Dorset | 362-1178 | Groton | 584-3276 |
| Dover | 464-5100 | Guildhall | 676-3797 |
| Dummerston | 257-1496 | Guilford | 254-6857 |
| Duxbury | 244-6660 | Halifax | 368-7390 |
| East Haven | 467-3772 | Hancock | 767-3660 |
| E. Montpelier | 223-3313 | Hardwick | 472-5971 |
| Eden | 635-2528 | Hartford | 295-2785 |
| Elmore | 888-2637 | Hartland | 436-2444 |
| Enosburgh | 933-4421 | Highgate | 868-5002 |
| Essex | 879-0413 | Hinesburg | 482-2281 |
| Fair Haven | 265-3610 | Holland | 895-4440 |
| Fairfax | 849-6111 | Hubbardton | 273-2951 |
| Fairfield | 827-3261 | Huntington | 434-2032 |
| Fairlee | 333-4363 | Hyde Park | 888-2300 |
| Fayston | 496-2454 | Ira | 235-2745 |
| Ferrisburgh | 877-3429 | Irasburg | 754-2242 |
| Fletcher | 849-6616 | Isle La Motte | 928-3434 |
| Franklin | 285-2101 | Jamacia | 874-4681 |

Town/City Clerk Offices

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|-------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| Jay | 988-2996 | Moretown | 882-8218 |
| Jericho | 899-4936 | Morgan | 895-2927 |
| Johnson | 635-2611 | Morristown | 888-6370 |
| Killington | 422-3241 | Mt. Holly | 259-2391 |
| Kirby | 626-9386 | Mt. Tabor | 293-5282 |
| Landgrove | 824-3716 | New Haven | 453-3516 |
| Leicester | 247-5961 | Newark | 467-3336 |
| Lemington | 277-4814 | Newbury | 866-5521 |
| Lincoln | 453-2980 | Newfane | 365-7772 |
| Londonderry | 824-3356 | Newport City | 334-2112 |
| Lowell | 744-6559 | Newport Town | 334-6442 |
| Ludlow | 228-3232 | North Hero | 372-6926 |
| Lunenburg | 892-5959 | Northfield | 485-5421 |
| Lyndon | 626-5785 | Norton | 822-9935 |
| Maidstone | 676-3210 | Norwich | 649-1419 |
| Manchester | 362-1313 | Orange | 479-2673 |
| Marlboro | 254-2181 | Orwell | 948-2032 |
| Marshfield | 426-3305 | Panton | 475-2333 |
| Mendon | 775-1662 | Pawlet | 325-3309 |
| Middlebury | 388-8100 | Peacham | 592-3218 |
| Middlesex | 223-5915 | Peru | 824-3065 |
| Middletown | 235-2220 | Pittsfield | 746-8170 |
| Milton | 893-4111 | Pittsford | 483-6500 |
| Monkton | 453-3800 | Plainfield | 454-8461 |
| Montgomery | 326-4719 | Plymouth | 672-3655 |
| Montpelier | 223-9500 | Pomfret | 457-3861 |

Town/City Clerk Offices

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|-----------------|----------|----------------|----------|
| Poultney | 287-5761 | Sharon | 763-8268 |
| Pownal | 823-7757 | Sheffield | 626-8862 |
| Proctor | 459-3333 | Shelburne | 985-5116 |
| Putney | 387-5862 | Sheldon | 933-2524 |
| Randolph | 728-5433 | Shoreham | 897-5841 |
| Reading | 484-7250 | Shrewsbury | 492-3511 |
| Readsboro | 423-5405 | So. Burlington | 846-4105 |
| Richford | 848-7751 | South Hero | 372-5552 |
| Richmond | 434-2221 | Springfield | 885-2104 |
| Ripton | 388-2266 | Stamford | 694-1361 |
| Rochester | 767-3631 | Stannard | 533-2577 |
| Rockingham | 463-4336 | Starksboro | 453-2639 |
| Roxbury | 485-7840 | Stockbridge | 746-8400 |
| Royalton | 763-7207 | Stowe | 253-6133 |
| Rupert | 394-7728 | Strafford | 765-4411 |
| Rutland City | 774-7890 | Stratton | 896-6184 |
| Rutland Town | 773-2528 | Sudbury | 623-7296 |
| Ryegate | 584-3880 | Sunderland | 375-6106 |
| St. Albans City | 524-1500 | Sutton | 467-3377 |
| St. Albans Town | 524-2415 | Swanton | 868-4421 |
| St. George | 482-5272 | Thetford | 785-2922 |
| St. Johnsbury | 748-4331 | Tinmouth | 446-2498 |
| Salisbury | 352-4228 | Topsham | 439-5505 |
| Sandgate | 375-9075 | Townshend | 365-7300 |
| Searsburg | 464-8081 | Troy | 988-2663 |
| Shaftsbury | 442-4038 | Tunbridge | 889-5521 |

Town/City Clerk Offices

| | | | |
|---------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| Underhill | 899-4434 | Weston | 824-6645 |
| Vergennes | 877-2841 | Weybridge | 545-2450 |
| Vernon | 257-0292 | Wheelock | 626-9094 |
| Vershire | 685-2227 | Whiting | 623-7813 |
| Victory | 328-2400 | Whitingham | 368-7887 |
| Waitsfield | 496-2218 | Williamstown | 433-5455 |
| Walden | 563-2220 | Williston | 878-5121 |
| Wallingford | 446-2336 | Wilmington | 464-5836 |
| Waltham | 877-3641 | Windham | 874-4211 |
| Wardsboro | 896-6055 | Windsor | 674-5610 |
| Warren | 496-2709 | Winhall | 297-2122 |
| Washington | 883-2218 | Winooski | 655-6410 |
| Waterbury | 244-8447 | Wolcott | 888-2746 |
| Waterford | 748-2122 | Woodbury | 456-7051 |
| Waterville | 644-8865 | Woodford | 442-4895 |
| Weathersfield | 674-9500 | Woodstock | 457-3611 |
| Wells | 645-0486 | Worcester | 223-6942 |
| West Fairlee | 333-9696 | | |
| West Haven | 265-4880 | | |
| West Rutland | 438-2204 | | |
| West Windsor | 484-7212 | | |
| Westfield | 744-2484 | | |
| Westford | 878-4587 | | |
| Westminster | 722-4091 | | |
| Westmore | 525-3007 | | |

Notes

You can use this space to write down specific dates, notes, or voting information that you'd like to keep handy.