

Make Sure You Are Registered to Vote and That Your Vote Counts

Will your vote count in 2008? North Carolina is in pretty good shape in most counties regarding the voting machines, but in the touch screen counties, if there are problems with the voting machines, your vote could be affected. In many cases, the voter should ask for a different machine and have the malfunctioning one removed from service. Now that we are so close to the elections, we must focus on voter registration.

1. Check to make sure that you are registered, and or that you haven't fallen off the voting rolls. <http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/votersearch/seimsvot.htm>
2. Register to vote either by mail, at govt agencies, or at the DMV - do this 25 days prior to the election. For the May 6, 2008 – Primary Election Day the Deadline to register: April 11, 2008 http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/NCSBE/VR/vr_general.html
3. Register to Vote during the One Stop Absentee Voting time period (if you missed the 25 day deadline) http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/NCSBE/VR/vr_SDR.html
One Stop Absentee Voting for the May 6th primary is: Apr. 17 - May 3
Find out more here: http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/NCSBE/Voting/voting_absentee.html
4. Voters who have moved need to have their registration corrected:
 - a. When you move within a county, you should complete an in-county change of address. This can be completed on your voter identification card, a signed letter to your local board of elections or on the form specified above. (<http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/NCSBE/VR/VR%20Forms/form06.pdf>)
Contact your county BOE for help. <http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/NCSBE/about/directors.asp>
 - b. If you have moved from one county to another, you need to re-register to vote. See this link for more detail on what you need to do: http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/NCSBE/VR/vr_update.html
5. If you plan to vote on election day, then you must go to your assigned polling place, which is listed on your voter registration card. You can look up your polling place here: <http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/votersearch/seimsvot.htm>
6. If you vote early, then you can vote at any one stop site in your county. http://www.sboe.state.nc.us/NCSBE/Voting/voting_absentee.html
7. First time voters must bring identification. First-time voters who registered by mail or at a voter registration drive after January 1, 2003, may be asked to show identification. Take along any valid photo I.D., a utility bill, or government document addressed to you when you vote. Even if you aren't a first time voter, it helps to bring ID.
8. Unaffiliated voters may vote in either the Democratic or Republican Primary according to the NC State Board of Elections. State law leaves this up to the political parties to decide for each election.
9. Voters can help protect elections by volunteering to work at the polling places. There is no better way to ensure that votes count than by being part of the process. Contact your county Board of Elections to volunteer. <http://www.app2.sboe.state.nc.us/about/directors.asp>

For more information, see <http://www.ncvoter.net/voting.html>

Do Your Best to Get a Regular Ballot and Not a Provisional Ballot

Background:

The big concern at this time of the year should be to make sure that voters get to vote and vote a regular valid ballot. You want to avoid getting a provisional ballot if possible because it has less chance of being counted. In the 2006 general election in North Carolina, about 35% of provisional ballots were rejected.

Provisional ballots are "conditional" ballots issued to voters and might not count. Provisional ballots are issued to voters who have some sort of voter registration problem or who have shown up at the wrong polling place. Another problem is where voters' registration applications are rejected because of failure to match government databases. Often the failure to match is due to clerical errors, name changes due to marriage or problems with the database itself. Sadly, many provisional ballots are not counted on election day

<http://www.ncvoter.net/provisional.html>

We expect the number of provisional ballots to decrease thanks to amendments made to state election law. In August 2007, the General Assembly scrapped an existing policy rejecting new voter registrations from citizens if even a single letter of their personal information on their registration card did not match their personal information in state motor vehicle and Social Security databases.

http://www.brennancenter.org/content/resource/north_carolina_overturns_voter_registration_restriction/

The North Carolina Coalition for Verified Voting is a grassroots non-partisan organization fighting for clean and verified elections. Contact Joyce McCloy, Coordinator, N.C. Coalition for Verifiable Voting - phone 336-794-1240 or email at joyce@ncvoter.net