

# MISSOURI

## VOTER REGISTRATION

These documents are current as of **7/21/14**. We do our best to periodically update these resources and welcome any comments or questions regarding new developments in the law. Please email us at [advocacy@afj.org](mailto:advocacy@afj.org).

This guide summarizes key aspects of laws governing voter registration on the state level. It is not intended to provide legal advice or to serve as a substitute for legal advice

In some jurisdictions, city and/or county regulations may also apply to certain political activities. Check with the appropriate local jurisdiction before undertaking any activity.

## DEADLINES FOR REGISTRATION

- **Deadline for registering**
  - In order to vote in an election, a voter must be registered by 10 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday prior to the election. Although the latest time the state will accept applications is 10 p.m., if the local registration office closes before 10 p.m., the application must be submitted before the close of business for the public building where registration is allowed. This could be as early as 5 p.m. for many offices. RSMo. § 115.135(1).
  
- **Does state offer Election Day registration?**
  - No. Missouri does not allow Election Day voter registration. RSMo. § 115.139
  
- **Does state allow by-mail registration?**
  - Yes. A voter can register by returning a voter registration application. Printed post card applications are available from the Secretary of State and local election authorities. RSMo. § 115.159 Additionally, Missouri makes registration forms available online for [computers](#) as well as [smart phones and tablets](#) (discussed below).
  - Registration applications must be postmarked by the fourth

Wednesday before the election.

- **May a voter register online?**
  - Yes, the state allows [online registration](#) for individuals using a mobile device, tablet computer or touchscreen computer, but not a standard desktop computer. The state reviews the information and prints out the registration form, which it sends to the person's local elections office for verification.
  - Voter registration forms completed using a mobile device, tablet, or touch screen screen computers must complete the application by 5 p.m. on the on the fourth Wednesday prior to the election.
  
- **May voter register before turning 18?**
  - Yes. A Missourian who is seventeen years and six months of age or older is entitled to register and to vote in any election which is held on or after their eighteenth birthday. RSMo. § 115.133(1)

## VOTER ID REQUIREMENTS

- **Required for registration? If so, what kinds of ID?**
  - Personal identification is required for voters registering in-person with an elections official or their official deputies. The following forms of ID are permitted for in-person registration: a copy of a birth certificate, a Native American tribal document, other proof of United States citizenship, a valid Missouri driver's license, or other form of personal identification. RSMo § 115.135(2)
  - What constitutes appropriate "personal identification" has not been developed either by rule or policy. Additionally, the voter can provide either a driver's license number, or at least the last four digits of the individual's Social Security number, provided the Secretary of State matches the information submitted with an existing state identification record bearing the same number, name, and date of birth as provided in such registration.
  - Voters who register by mail are not required to provide identification in order to register. However, as noted below, if the voter does not provide identification at the time of registration, the voter may not be allowed to vote an absentee ballot until this information is provided.
  
- **Required for voting? If so, what kinds of ID?**
  - A photo-ID is not required to vote, but a voter must produce some form of identification. [Any of the following](#) are acceptable forms of polling place ID:
    - Identification issued by the state of Missouri, an agency of the state, or a local election authority of the state;
    - Identification issued by the United States government or agency thereof;
    - Identification issued by an institution of higher education, including a university, college, vocational and technical school, located within the state of Missouri;
    - A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check or other government document that contains the name and address of the voter;
    - Driver's license or state identification card issued by another state.
  - If a voter does not possess any of these forms of identification, they may still cast a ballot if two supervising election judges, one from each major political party, attest to knowing them. RSMo. § 115.427,

## VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES

- **Does state accept National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) registration forms? Any restrictions?**
  - Yes. Missouri accepts the National Mail Voter Registration Form published by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.
- **May groups “cage” completed registration forms (i.e. asks voters to mail them back to the group, which will then send them to the appropriate elections registrar(s))? If so, may they copy the forms or any of the data included on them? If so, any deadlines for sending the completed forms to the state or to local officials?**
  - In Missouri, groups organizing a voter registration drive may ask voters to mail completed registration cards back to the group. The group is free to copy the card, although careful groups will make unreadable the last four digits of the voter’s Social Security number on the copy.
  - Once completed voter registration forms are received by the organizing group or its agents, the forms must be delivered to the appropriate election authority within seven days. RSMo. § 115.203(4).
  - The Secretary of State has not adopted any rules impacting how groups can use the smart phones and tablets for conducting voter registration drives.
- **May a group “pre-fill” some or all of the form before sending/giving it to a would-be registrant?**
  - There is no prohibition under Missouri law on pre-filling registration forms.
- **May voter registration drive workers assist a voter in completing their registration form?**
  - There is no prohibition under Missouri law on assisting a voter in completing a registration form.
- **Does state require training of voter registration workers?**
  - There is no requirement under Missouri law for voter registration drive organizers or participants to receive any particular training. However, training materials are available from the Elections Division of the Secretary of State’s Office.
- **Does state require registration of voter registration drives? If so, for by-mail drives, too?**
  - While there is no requirement that a voter registration drive be registered with the state, there is a requirement that any person who is paid or otherwise compensated for soliciting more than ten voter registration applications be registered with the Secretary of

State using the [Registration Form for Voter Registration Solicitors](#).

- Voter Registration Solicitors must provide the following information on forms available from the Secretary of State:
  - (1) The name of the voter registration solicitor;
  - (2) The residential address, including street number, city, state, and zip code;
  - (3) The mailing address, if different from the residential address;
  - (4) Whether the voter registration solicitor expects to be paid for soliciting voter registrations;
  - (5) If the voter registration solicitor expects to be paid, the identity of the payor; and
  - (6) The signature of the voter registration solicitor.
 RSMo. § 115.205(2).
- Missouri construes this requirement to apply to by-mail registration drives as well as in-person registration drives.
- **Any requirement that a group must provide information to voters about how they may contact the group to determine the status of their registration?**
  - There is no requirement in Missouri that groups organizing a voter registration drive provide their contact information to voters so they can inquire about the status of their registration.
  - However, as discussed above, there is a requirement that groups organizing a voter registration drive or their agents transmit completed registration forms to the appropriate election authority within seven days of receipt. RSMo. § 115.203(4).
- **May a group pay voter registration drive workers? If so, is it permissible to pay on a per-voter-registered basis?**
  - In Missouri, a group organizing a voter registration drive may pay its registration solicitors. RSMo. § 115.205(2). However, it may not pay them on a per registration basis. RSMo. § 115.203

## ABSENTEE VOTING

- **Who may vote by absentee ballot?**
  - Missouri law allows a registered voter to request an absentee ballot when:
    - The voter expects to be absent on election day during the time the polls are open from the precinct in which the voter is a registered voter;
    - Through illness or physical disability, including the person who is primary responsible for the physical care of a person who is incapacitated the voter expects to be

prevented from going to the polls and voting on election day;

- Religious belief or practice,
  - Employment as an election authority or as a member of an election authority, or
  - Incarceration, provided all qualifications for voting are retained.
- The voter must specify the reason for absence of the [request for an absentee ballot](#). The request for absentee ballot should be made to the local elections official, not to the Secretary of State.
- **Can a third party request an absentee ballot?**
    - Only relatives within the second degree (spouse, parents and children) may complete an absentee ballot application, in person, on behalf of the voter who wishes to vote absentee.
  - **Is ID required for absentee voters?**
    - If the voter registered by mail and this is the voter's first time voting, he or she must include with the request for an absentee ballot a copy of the voter's current valid photo identification or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or government document that shows the voter's name and address. RSMo. § 115.159. 1(3).
    - The voter is **not** required to provide this ID if the voter:
      - Provided ID at the time of registration, or
      - Provided either a driver's license number, or at least the last four digits of the individual's Social Security number on the voter registration form that can be verified by the Secretary of State – i.e., the Secretary of State can match the information submitted with an existing state identification record bearing the same number, name, and date of birth as provided in such registration.
  - **When can a person request an absentee ballot?**
    - Missouri law requires that requests for absentee ballots must be received by 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to Election Day if the ballot is to be mailed. The deadline for absentee voting in person in the office of the election authority is 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election.
  - **Does Missouri allow early voting?**
    - Voters who are eligible for an absentee ballot can vote by absentee in the office of the local election authority from six

weeks before the election until 5:00 p.m. the night before the election. RSMo. § 115.279. 1

## VOTER ACCESSIBILITY

- **Does Missouri allow for curbside voting for disabled voters?**
  - Yes. If a voter is unable to enter the building where the polling place is located because of a disability, curbside voting is available at each precinct.



## CONTACT INFORMATION FOR STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES

### State agencies:

Missouri Secretary of State  
Elections Division  
P.O. Box 1767  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
Phone: (573) 751-2301

**LOBBYING RESTRICTIONS** Contact information for local  
election authorities can be found at  
<http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/countyclerks.asp>.

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## **FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE**

**For assistance regarding these resources or for more information about federal law, please contact our attorney one-on-one counseling service:**

**Email: [Advocacy@afj.org](mailto:Advocacy@afj.org)  
Telephone: 1-866-NPLOBBY  
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