

## **Voting Information**

To vote in New Jersey, you must be registered.

### **Register to vote if you are or will be:**

- a U.S. citizen residing, at the time you apply, in the district in which you expect to vote
- a resident of your county for 30 days by the date of the next election
- 18 years old or more by the date of the next election
- neither an idiot nor insane nor disqualified for certain crimes

### **When to re-register:**

- if you fail to vote in any election for four consecutive years
- if you change your name (if within 28 days before an election, you may vote in that election by signing both old and new names).
- if you change your residence
- if you become disqualified (see above)

### **How, when, and where to register:**

- register by mail. You may obtain a registration card and instructions from your county clerk, municipal clerk, the committeeman or committeewoman in your voting district, county committee members, or the N.J. League of Women Voters. These forms are to be mailed to the County Clerk in Elizabeth.
- register in person at your County Commissioner of Registration or Municipal Clerk's office any time during office hours. Call either office for information about special places and hours for registration.
- if chronically or incurably ill or totally incapacitated, you may be registered at home. Send a written application plus a physician's affidavit to the County Board of Elections. If unable to sign your name, you may make your mark.
- to vote in a specific election, you must be registered at least 29 days before that election.

All registered voters receive in the mail a sample ballot containing the following information:

- where to vote
- hours when the polls are open
- offices to be voted on
- candidates
- public questions
- how to use a voting machine

The sample ballot is the verification of your bona fide residence. Contact your county clerk if you have not received it one week prior to the election.

### **How to vote:**

- you must vote in person, unless you qualify for an absentee ballot.
- you must sign the signature book, except under certain conditions.
- Primary Elections. In a primary, you may vote only one party's ballot. If you have never voted in a primary, you may declare your party choice the first time at the polls. Thereafter, you are considered a member of that party, unless you register a change of party with the county or municipal clerk at least 50 days before the primary.
- General Elections. You need not vote a straight party ticket, but may indicate your choices for a particular office from any party's candidates (a split ticket). You need not vote for every office nor for every issue.
- Write Ins. In any election you may "write in" your own choice for a particular office in the slot or space provided. Do not open this slot unless you intend to write in a name, as this will register as a vote, and cannot be changed.
- Voting machines are used in Scotch Plains. Operating instructions are printed on the sample ballot, and voters may receive instructions at the polling places. Paper ballots may sometimes be used in school elections.
- You have two minutes in which to vote. If you need help, call out--DO NOT OPEN CURTAIN--you might void your vote.
- If you change your mind, you may change the levers. When you re-open the curtain, your choices are recorded and the voting process is over.

### **Absentee Ballots:**

Apply for an absentee ballot if you:

- expect to be absent from the state on the election date.
- are ill or have a physical disability, including blindness and pregnancy.
- must observe a religious holiday.