

Texas Voter Registration Fact Sheet

Introduction:

Voter Registration creates the opportunity for individuals to actively contribute to their society through the voting process. The Benefit Bank helps clients fill out the National Voter Registration Application, which will register them for the federal, state, and local elections. The application can also be used to update information such as changes in name, address, or party affiliation.

Federal Registration Overview:

I. There are several requirements that an applicant must meet to vote in federal elections:

1. Citizenship: Must be a U.S. citizen
2. Age: Must be at least 18 years old on the day of the election

II. If an applicant intentionally puts false information on the national application, he/she is committing perjury. Committing perjury could result in a fine and/or imprisonment, or deportation/denial of entry into the U.S. if a non-citizen.

State Registration Overview:

I. Apart from the federal requirements, applicants must also meet Texas's requirements:

1. Residency: Must live in the Texas county in which they are registering
2. Age: Must be at least 17 years and 10 months old
3. Felony charges: If previously convicted of a felony, the applicant must have either received a pardon from the conviction or completed all required punishment (including probation or parole)
4. Mental capacity: Cannot be mentally unable to vote (as ordered by a court)

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II. In Texas, applicants do not have to register with a party to take part in a party's primary, caucus, or convention.

III. An applicant must include a driver's license number, state ID number, or the last four digits of a Social Security Number on the voter registration application. If an applicant does not have one of these forms of identification when registering, then he/she must present identification when voting in his/her election district for the first time.

The following forms of identification are acceptable: a current driver's license, a non-driver state-issued ID, a birth certificate, a current and valid photo ID, a U.S. passport, or a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other document with the voter's name and address.

Submitting the Application:

I. The application must be hand-delivered to the applicant's county voter registration office or postmarked at least 30 days before the election.

II. A link to the website listing the county mailing addresses (destination addresses) will be available on the state follow-up instructions.

III. If the applicant is unable to sign, counselors should enter the date for the applicant then complete Box D at the bottom of the form. Counselors may use the address and phone number of The Benefit Bank site instead of their personal information. If the client is completing the form for someone at home who is unable to sign, he/she should complete Box D later with his/her own information.

Completing Voter Registration:

Applicants will know that their registration is complete when they receive a voter registration card. They should also receive instructions for how to locate their polling place. If the voter goes to the wrong polling place or does not have I.D., he/she must vote by provisional ballot.