

Register to Vote

Registering to vote allows you to participate in the electoral process and gives you the power to make a difference in deciding who will serve elected office.

With more venues offering different ways to sign up, registering to vote has never been easier or more convenient.

A new law called "[grace-period registration and voting](#)" extends the regular registration deadline by 14 days, allowing voters to register to vote up to two weeks before an election. As a result, there are new guidelines that determine when and where you can vote if you sign up during that time.

Voter qualifications

To register to vote, you must be:

1. A U.S. citizen
2. At least 18 years old by [Election Day](#)
3. A resident of your precinct at least 30 days prior to an [election](#)

Illinois voters do not need to register by political party or declare a political party membership or preference. However, voters may select a specific political party's ballot at their polling place when voting in a primary election.

Where and how to register

For the Tuesday, November 04, 2008 Presidential General Election:

Regular voter registration ends Tuesday, October 07, 2008

There are several convenient methods of registering

1. **Mail-in application form**

You can complete a mail-in voter application form and return it to the Cook County Clerk's office. Voter registration applications are available in English, Spanish and Chinese (select from the list on the right). Also, instructions are available in Korean and Polish.

The Clerk's office can also mail you an application form. Call (312) 603-0906 to request one.

First-time voters who register by mail no longer have to vote in person the first time they vote. They can either vote in person or vote absentee by mail.

When submitting a voter registration application:

- Fill out the entire application
- Sign the application
- Mail the completed, signed application to:

David Orr, Cook County Clerk
69 W. Washington St., Room 500
Chicago, IL 60602

2. Visit

Eligible voters can also register to vote in person by going to:

- [One of the Cook County Clerk's six locations](#)
- [A village, city or township clerk](#)
- [An Illinois Secretary of State's drivers license facility](#). You can register to vote when you obtain or renew your drivers license or state identification card at any of the license facilities. Registration is also available at other state government offices, including public assistance offices and military recruitment offices.

3. Deputy registrars

Trained volunteer [deputy registrars](#) may register you to vote.

If you register before the regular registration deadline, you can [vote early](#).

Any registered voter may cast a ballot at one of the Clerk's early voting sites from Monday, October 13, 2008, through Thursday, October 30, 2008. Otherwise, you can vote at your polling place on Election Day.

Grace-period registration and voting

Wednesday, October 08, 2008 - Tuesday, October 21, 2008

At the Cook County Clerk's main office:

There is only one way and one place to register during the 14-day grace period. Unregistered voters must sign up to vote in person at the Clerk's downtown Chicago office: 69 W. Washington St., Room 500. You must show two pieces of identification to register.

Grace-period voters must vote absentee. You can: 1) vote in person at the Clerk's downtown office immediately after signing up to vote; or 2) receive an absentee ballot by mail that you can complete at home and return to the Clerk's office before Election Day.

Grace-period registrants are not allowed to vote at the polls on Election Day or vote at any early voting site.

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