

Summary

Voter Verification Without ID Documents

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Related Topic: [Elections](#)

In recent years, legislation requiring voters to show identification documents at the polls has become a hot topic. In all, 36 states have enacted laws requiring voters to show photo ID at the polls or a non-photo-bearing identification document, such as a utility bill, bank statement or paycheck (for details, see NCSL's [Voter ID Laws](#) page).

In the remaining 14 states and D.C., voters can cast a ballot in person on Election Day without showing an ID document. These states have "non-documentary" ID requirements, meaning voters must verify their identity in other ways, such as by signing an affidavit or poll book, or by providing personal information. All states have procedures for challenging voter eligibility.

Below are details on the statutory requirements for voter verification in states with non-documentary ID requirements.

Voters' Responsibilities

The three main types of non-documentary ID requirements that voters may be asked to satisfy are:

- **Affidavit:** Voters sign an affidavit asserting their eligibility to vote and/or awareness that falsely claiming eligibility is a criminal offense. Illinois includes the full text of its affidavit in statute. Other states provide partial texts or general guidelines.
- **Signature:** Voters must provide elections officials with a signature before casting a ballot. In most cases, this involves signing a poll book or voter registration list at the polls but there are some exceptions. For example, Oregon voters must sign the return envelope included with their mail-in ballots.
- **Biographical information:** Voters may also be asked to provide personal information, either verbally or in writing, at the polls. In most cases, voters are asked to give their names and/or addresses. Under certain circumstances, Maryland, New Mexico and Minnesota, ask voters to provide full or partial birth dates.

These requirements are not mutually exclusive. Some states require voters to satisfy more than one. In New Mexico, voters must sign a signature roster and give their names and addresses both verbally and in writing.

Election Officials' Responsibilities

In some states with non-documentary ID requirements, the evidence voters provide is verified by elections officials as a matter of course. Many states that require signatures or signed affidavits

mandate that elections officials compare these signatures to the signatures on voters' registration forms. Elections officials typically check voter-provided biographical information against voter records, registration lists or electronic poll books.

Voter Challenges

Like other states, states with non-documentary ID requirements permit citizen [poll watchers and others](#) to challenge voters' identity and/or eligibility to vote. States that require voters to provide their names at the polls often require elections officials verbally to repeat the names. This can help challengers identify individuals who are attempting to vote in another person's name or who are ineligible to vote.

Who can challenge a voter at the polls—and how—varies from state to state. Some states allow only elections officials or officially-appointed poll watchers to file challenges, while others permit all voters to do so. Commonly accepted grounds for challenge include failure to satisfy age, residency or registration requirements.

Statutory Requirements for States With Non-Documentary ID Requirements

State	Voters must:	Elections officials must:
California (<i>Cal. Election Code §14216</i>)	State name and address. Sign name in poll book.	Confirm the voter is on the registration list.
District of Columbia (<i>D.C. Code Ann. §1-1001.07</i>)	Sign the poll book.	None.
Hawaii (<i>Hawaii Rev. Stat. § 11-109</i>)	Provide name, address and date of birth.	Check voter information against the poll book.
Illinois (<i>Ill. Rev. Stat. Ch. 10, § 5/4-22, 5/5-29, 5/6-66, 5/17-9</i>)	Sign an affidavit of eligibility. Provide name, and if requested, address.	Announce name, and if requested, address. Confirm the voter is on the registration list.
Maine (<i>Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 21A, § 671</i>)	State name and address.	Announce name.

State	Voters must:	Elections officials must:
Maryland <i>(Md. Election Code Ann. §10-310)</i>	State month and date of birth (and address under certain circumstances).	Check voter information against the registration list.
Massachusetts <i>(Mass. Gen. Laws Ann., Title VIII, Chapter 54, §76)</i>	Provide name, and if requested, address.	Announce name. Confirm the voter is on the registration list.
Minnesota <i>(Minn. Stat. §204C.10 (a))</i>	Sign an affidavit of eligibility. If requested, provide name, address and date of birth.	Optional: check voter information.
Nevada <i>(Nev. Rev. Stat. §293.277)</i>	Sign the poll book.	Compare the signature to signature on file, or on a form of identification.
New Jersey <i>(N.J. Rev. Stat. §19:15-17(a))</i>	Provide signature.	Compare the signature to signature on file.
New Mexico <i>(N.M. Stat. Ann. §1-1-24, 1-12-7.1, 1-12-10, and 1-12-4.1)</i>	State name and address. After providing identification (which can be a written or verbal confirmation of name, address and date of birth), sign the poll book. Note: the request for identification is suspended if lines are longer than 45 minutes.	Announce name. Confirm the voter is on the registration list.
New York <i>(N.Y. Election Law §8-304)</i>	Sign the poll book.	Compare the signature to signature on file. Compare the voter's physical appearance with information on record.
Oregon* <i>(Or. Rev. Stat. §254.470 (6))</i>	Sign the envelope in which the ballot is returned.	Compare signature to signature on file.

State	Voters must:	Elections officials must:
Pennsylvania (<i>Pa. Stat. Tit. 25 § 3050</i>)	Sign an affidavit of eligibility. Provide address (except under certain circumstances).	Announce name. Compare signature against signature on file.
Vermont (<i>Vt. Stat. Ann. Tit. 17, §2563, 2571</i>)	State name, and if requested, address. Alternatively, provide documentation.	Confirm the voter is on the registration list.
*Oregon conducts its elections almost exclusively by mail but offers voters the option of voting in person at county election offices. Ballots in Oregon, including ballots cast in person, must be accompanied by a return envelope signed by the voter.		

Note: This page should be used for general informational purposes only.

Our organization does not run elections and cannot provide legal advice. If you are a voter looking for assistance, please contact your local election official. You can find your local election official's website and contact information by using this database from the [US Vote Foundation](#).

Related Resources

Updated March 11, 2025

NCSL Election Resources

The NCSL elections team provides a variety of resources on election issues, including but not limited to 50-state surveys on state laws, legislation databases, a monthly elections newsletter, enactment summaries and other publications.

Elections

Updated September 02, 2025

Election Conversations: Rep. Mindy McAlindon, Arkansas

Mindy McAlindon spent much of her career helping others get elected. It was her passion for economic development and education that eventually convinced her to run.

Elections, Legislators

State Legislatures News

Updated September 01, 2025

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