ELECTION INFORMATION

Indicate below your preferences to provide facility staff, family members or other caregivers with the information needed to assist you with voting.

I WISH TO VOTE IN THE UPCOMING ELECTION: ☐ Yes ☐ No

STAY INFORMED

Campaign/Election News	This election cycle, I would like to receive news about the following: ☐ Events in the community ☐ Activities at the facility ☐ Nearby candidate forums ☐ Televised debates
Media Preferences	This election cycle, I prefer to receive news via the following: ☐ Newspaper ☐ Television ☐ Magazines/Newsletters ☐ Radio ☐ Internet ☐ Social Media

VOTER REGISTRATION

Is your voter registration current with this address?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know
Would you like assistance in verifying or updating your voter registration?	☐ Yes ☐ No

VOTING METHODS & SUPPORTS

EARLY VOTING IN IOWA BEGINS: ☐	Early Voting (by Absentee Ballot)	☐ **This election cycle, I prefer to vote early, using an absentee ballot.** If you select this option, you must submit an absentee ballot request form to your county auditor's office by 5 p.m. on the Friday before Election Day. (If you were admitted to a health care facility or hospital on or after that Friday, contact your county auditor directly to request an absentee ballot.) The county auditor will then inform you when a bipartisan team of election officials will be delivering your ballot, and you may request a time that is most convenient for you. I would like assistance requesting an absentee ballot. ☐ Yes ☐ No I prefer to receive my ballot in the: ☐ Morning ☐ Afternoon ☐ Evening
	Early Voting (in Person)	☐ **This election cycle, I prefer to vote early, in person at a satellite station.** Voting times, dates and locations vary by county. Call your county auditor for details. I would like assistance finding a satellite station. ☐ Yes ☐ No I would like assistance arranging a ride to vote. ☐ Yes ☐ No
GENERAL ELECTION: ☐	Election Day Voting (at Your Precinct)	☐ **This election cycle, I prefer to vote on Election Day, in person at the polls.** Vote at your designated county precinct during scheduled hours. I would like assistance arranging a ride to vote. ☐ Yes ☐ No I would like to request curb-side voting. ☐ Yes ☐ No I would like to request adaptive technology. ☐ Yes ☐ No

ELECTION INFORMATION & HELPFUL RESOURCES

BE AN INFORMED VOTER

One of our most influential powers as citizens is exercising our right to vote, but with this power comes a civic responsibility to consider our options and make informed decisions.

In today's fast-paced society, it can be difficult to keep up with issues and current events without spending hours sifting through articles, news reports and websites to find the most accurate information. For residents and tenants in long-term care, there are often additional obstacles related to the process of voting, including finding documents for voter registration, understanding the voting process and voting options and accessing reliable, unbiased information about the issues and candidates on the ballot.

DEVELOP A VOTING ASSISTANCE PLAN

A voting assistance plan is a great tool to assist residents and tenants in long-term care facilities keep track of and remember deadlines associated with voting. The plan can also help facility staff and caregivers note an individual's preferences for receiving information; the types of media he/she wishes to consume or avoid; and whether the person is interested in participating in social activities related to the political process and voting (e.g., going to live forums or debates, attending debate or election results viewing parties, etc.). The goal is to simply ensure that the rights and wishes of residents and tenants are promoted and protected.

By developing a voting assistance plan, you can work with your facility's staff and your loved ones to arrange for any assistance you may need in order to participate in the political process and vote. For instance, if you prefer to vote by absentee ballot, you may need help determining the timing of elections, understanding procedures for requesting a ballot and obtaining access to a phone, the Internet or the mail in order to request and return the ballot on time. On the other hand, if you prefer to vote at the polls on Election Day, you may simply require reliable transportation to get there. A voting assistance plan can help you identify areas where you may need help and ensure those supports are in place so you can exercise your right to vote in a manner that honors and supports your rights and wishes.

Office of the State Long-Term Care OMBUDSMAN
Established within the Iowa Department on Aging
510 E. 12th Street, Ste. 2 | Des Moines, IA 50319 | www.iowaaging.gov

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VOTER'S CHECKLIST

THINGS TO DO BEFORE ELECTION DAY:

- ☐ Confirm you are registered to vote at your current address.
- ☐ Locate the documents to prove your identity or address if you need to update your registration.
- ☐ Update your registration, if needed.
- ☐ Know your options and the dates/deadlines for early voting.
- ☐ Know where your polling precinct or early voting satellite station is located and how to get there.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the voting devices used in your county.
- ☐ Check into tools or assistance available to aid you if you have declining vision or a disability.
- ☐ Know what time the polls open and close.

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IOWA VOTER GUIDE

FOR RESIDENTS/TENANTS OF LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

VOTING: A POINT OF PRIDE

Election season is always an exciting time. During Presidential election years, particularly in Iowa, all voters understand this means heightened media coverage, frequent visits from candidates, increased voter turnout and information coming from every direction. For advocates of older adults and adults with disabilities though, election season also offers renewed opportunities to shape public policy.

For many long-term care residents and tenants in particular, voting is a point of pride—a heartfelt, patriotic duty that has been respected and exercised over the course of a lifetime. As a result, we all have a duty to promote and protect the right to vote.

ADVOCATING FOR YOUR RIGHTS

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman strongly supports the right of residents and tenants to vote. We advocate on behalf of those in long-term care and investigate their complaints to protect their health, safety, welfare and rights—including voting rights. Our work is never partisan and we do not directly assist individual voters with registering or casting ballots. Our role is to educate on the process and raise awareness of systemic issues among residents, facilities, advocates and others, with the goal of helping those in long-term care facilities exercise their right to vote.

USING THIS GUIDE

This guide is intended to educate on the basics of the voting process in Iowa. It should not be used as a substitute for legal advice if a voter has specific questions. Rules and deadlines apply to each option for registration and voting—consult the Iowa Secretary of State's office or county election officials for details.

YOUR VOTE, YOUR CHOICE

Under both the United States and Iowa Constitutions, every adult citizen may vote unless he/she has been either (1) declared "mentally incompetent" to vote, or (2) convicted of an infamous crime. The following frequently asked questions are designed to help you better understand your rights when it comes to voting.

Q: Who determines whether I am "mentally competent" to vote?

A judge. Not family, legal representatives or long-term care facility staff. A judge determines competency to vote separately from general competency by evaluating whether a person lacks sufficient capacity to comprehend the right to vote. This usually occurs during a commitment hearing or at the time of granting guardianship and must be specifically noted in guardianship papers. Just because an individual has a guardian does not mean he/she is unable to vote, however.

Q: May my power of attorney or guardian decide whether or how I vote?

No. A power of attorney (POA) is only designated to make financial or health care decisions; a POA has nothing to do with the right to vote. Unless you are specifically deemed by a judge to be mentally incompetent to vote and it's noted in the guardianship papers, you are in charge of the decisions related to voting.

Q: Is anyone allowed to assist me with the process of voting?

Yes, but only with your permission and in your presence. Voting is not a health care or financial decision, which means an individual serving as your power of attorney or guardian does not have any special authority to act or make decisions related to voting. That individual can assist just as anyone else would, though. Generally, if a voter is unable to fill out forms or sign, he/she can use a rubber stamp or mark to sign—or ask someone else to complete the information and/or sign the voter's name—as long as it is done in the voter's presence, with the voter's permission.

Q: Does Iowa require an ID to vote?

Unlike some states, Iowa does not have a law requiring registered voters to show ID specifically to vote. If you want to exercise the same-day registration option though, read up on the requirements before you go. If in doubt, don't give up—just call your county auditor for guidance.

REGISTERING TO VOTE IN IOWA

Before you can cast a ballot, you must be registered to vote in Iowa. Each election cycle, it's a good idea to verify that your registration is up-to-date to prevent delays when you're ready to vote. You don't have to register to vote in each election, but you do have to update your information if you've changed your name or moved since the last time you voted.

The Iowa Secretary of State's website has a tool to quickly look up your registration status and Election Day polling location. You can also call your county auditor for assistance verifying your registration.

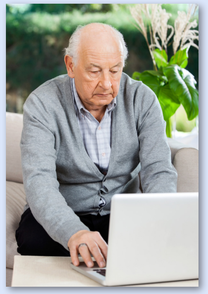
UPDATING YOUR ADDRESS

Your voter registration must reflect your current address. The process for updating your registration depends on where you moved.

- **If you moved within the same county in Iowa:**
  You may only need to report a simple change of address at the new polling place for the address where you now live, but you may be asked for identification which shows your name and current address.
- **If you moved to a different county in Iowa:**
  You will have to completely update your registration but can do so by pre-registering or through the same-day option at an early voting satellite station or on Election Day.

IOWA SECRETARY OF STATE'S WEBSITE:

HTTPS://SOS.IOWA.GOV



Learn more about:

- Voter Registration
- Absentee Voting
- Voting on Election Day
- Election Calendars
- Early Voting Dates and Process
- Voting Systems and Equipment
- County Auditors
- Election Results and Statistics

TWO WAYS TO REGISTER:

1)

Pre-Register to Vote

In order to pre-register to vote, a voter must complete a voter registration form. The form is available to download on the Iowa Secretary of State's website, or by calling (515) 281-5204. If a voter is not physically able to sign the form, he/she may use a mark or stamp or may ask someone to sign his/her name. Another person may only sign for the voter at the request of and in the presence of the voter.

If the completed voter registration form is sent at least 10 days before a general election, the auditor will send a voter registration card within two weeks. You don't need to wait for the card to vote, however. The registration card is useful because it shows your general election precinct location, but you do not need to present this card to actually vote.

2)

Same-Day Voter Registration

If you miss the deadline for pre-registration, voters in Iowa may also choose the same-day registration option, meaning the voter registers on the spot, just before voting.

For same-day voter registration, you will need to show proof of residency (where you reside) and proof of identity (who you are). A current driver's license is the most common method, but not the only one.

IDENTITY:

Acceptable forms of identification include any of the following (as long as the ID is current, valid and has an expiration date):

- Driver's license or non-operator ID card from Iowa or another state;
- U.S. passport or military ID card; or
- Employer-issued ID card.

RESIDENCY:

If your identification doesn't have your address, you can use any one of the following as proof of residency (as long as it shows your name and current address):

- Utility or cell phone bill;
- Bank statement or paycheck;
- Government document or check;
- Tax statement; or
- Residential lease.

THREE WAYS TO VOTE:

1)

Early Voting (by Absentee Ballot)

Iowa has special provisions for voting by absentee ballot for individuals who live in a designated health care facility or who are currently residing in a hospital. If you choose to vote by absentee ballot, your absentee ballot request form must be received in the county auditor's office by 5 p.m. on the Friday before the election. (If you were admitted to a health care facility or hospital on the Saturday, Sunday or Monday before Election Day, contact your county auditor directly to request an absentee ballot.)

Under Iowa law, a bipartisan team of election officials must deliver the absentee ballot to voters in facilities. The county auditor will notify you when the team will be delivering the ballot. If you will not be available, you may request a more convenient time.

When the officials arrive with your absentee ballot, they must wait while you mark it so they can personally deliver it to the election office. Others may be present while you mark your ballot, if you choose. If you need help marking your ballot, you may also have someone assist you, including the election officials. (You may choose anyone other than your employer or an officer/agent of your union.) You will be asked to sign or mark a form showing you asked for help.

2)

Early Voting (in Person)

In addition to voting by mail or at designated precinct polling sites on Election Day, Iowans can also vote during a special "early vote" period at their county auditor's office or satellite stations set up around the county. When using this option, voters are actually just casting an absentee ballot at the voting site, but some prefer this method over using the mail because it feels more like traditional voting on Election Day and offers voters the convenience of going to the polls when it fits their schedule. (Some counties even offer evening and weekend hours, but because hours and satellite locations vary by county, it's wise to plan ahead by contacting your county auditor's office.)

3)

Election Day Voting (at Your Precinct)

Voting in person on Election Day is now the "last chance" to cast your ballot each election cycle. You need to go to the polling place for your precinct in the county in which you reside. To find your polling place, call your county auditor or use the Secretary of State's online tool. The location is also printed on your voter registration card, but it never hurts to double-check before arranging for transportation or leaving for your polling place.

VOTER ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORTS AVAILABLE

- Iowa law requires all polling places to be accessible to all voters. This includes the voting area, as well as the parking areas, walkways and building entrances.
- Each polling place has an AutoMARK or OVI ballot marking device. This device is available for voters who need assistance in marking a ballot. To mark their ballots, voters use features on the AutoMARK or OVI such as a touch screen, an audio component and/or a sip-and-puff element to select candidates. The device will then complete the ovals on the ballot. It also lets voters review and change their vote before the ballot is marked.
- Curbside voting is available at each precinct if a physical disability makes it difficult to enter the building. Two precinct election officials, one from each political party in partisan elections, will bring voting materials out to your vehicle, wait while you mark your ballot and take your completed ballot back inside to be submitted. This is a nice option if you missed the absentee ballot request deadline, but would have difficulty getting inside or waiting in line. If you want to utilize curbside voting and aren't going with someone who can notify officials inside, it helps to call your county auditor's office before you go so the precinct election officials can watch for you to arrive.

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VOTER ASSISTANCE PLAN

CONTACT INFORMATION

Resident/Tenant Name	
Current Address *(for registering to vote)*	
Email Address	
Phone	
Mailing Address *(for ballots/registration card, etc., if different than residence)*	

PLANNING TIPS

VOTER INSTRUCTIONS:

When planning to vote and participate in the political process, remember that you may ask someone to assist you in signing your voter registration form and ballot (or sign on your behalf) ***as long as it is in your presence and with your permission***. You are the voter—these rules are in place to protect and honor your rights and wishes. Remember, you can change your mind later if you want to vote in a different fashion. Making a plan just ensures you don't miss important deadlines for each option.

ELECTION DATES & DETAILS:

Election Day:

Polling Hours:

Early Voting in Iowa begins:

Debates: Many debates and candidate forums are also held throughout the fall. Keep an eye on non-partisan resources to find information on local candidates and ballot issues.

Debate Details:

HELPFUL RESOURCES

COUNTY AUDITOR PHONE NUMBER: _____

SECRETARY OF STATE WEBSITE: https://sos.iowa.gov/elections VOTER HOTLINE: 1-888-SOS-VOTE (707-8083)

Download additional copies of this form at www.iowaaging.gov.