

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is a nationwide, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with more than 500,000 members dedicated to defending the principles of liberty and equality embodied in the Constitution and our nation's civil rights laws. The ACLU doesn't endorse or oppose any candidate or party, but we believe that no civil right is more important in our democracy than the right to vote.

This card is designed to help you protect your own right to vote. Keep it handy, and take it with you to the polls on Election Day.



## WHO CAN VOTE

### Can I vote in Minnesota?

■ You can vote in the November 4 election if you're registered to vote by Tuesday, October 14, 2008. You can also register and vote on Election Day.

■ You can register if you meet **all** of the following qualifications:

- (1) you're a U.S. citizen;
- (2) you'll be at least 18 years old on Election Day;
- (3) you will have lived in Minnesota for 20 days immediately preceding the election; and
- (4) you're not in prison or on probation or parole for a felony conviction, found by a court to be legally incompetent, or under certain types of guardianship.

### What if I'm a student?

■ You can register to vote at whatever address you regard as your primary legal residence. This can be your school address or your home address.

### What if I've been convicted of a crime?

■ If you were convicted of a misdemeanor in Minnesota you can still vote, but you have to vote by absentee ballot if you're still in jail.

■ If you were convicted of a felony in Minnesota, you can vote if you're not currently incarcerated or on supervised release, conditional release, probation or parole. Your right to vote is automatically restored when your sentence has expired.

### What if I'm homeless?

■ You don't need a home to register. You're a "resident" and can register and vote in the precinct where you live and usually sleep (which can be a street corner, a park, a shelter, or any other place where you usually stay).

## REGISTRATION

### How do I register?

- You can register to vote:
- (1) **in person**, by filling out a voter registration application at your county auditor's office, the Secretary of State's Office, or at colleges and universities;
  - (2) **by mail**, by filling out a mail-in voter registration form and mailing it to your county auditor's office, the Secretary of State's Office, or your city or town clerk's office;
  - (3) **when you apply** for a driver's license or an identification card;
  - (4) **on Election Day** at your polling place; or
  - (5) **when you cast an absentee ballot** by enclosing a completed registration card when submitting an absentee ballot.

■ You can get a voter registration application from your county courthouse or by calling (651) 215-1440 or (877) 600-8683. College and universities can also give you a voter registration application. You can also download an application online at <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/>.

### What's the registration deadline?

■ You can register at your polling place on Election Day, but if you use any other registration method, you have to register by Tuesday, October 14.

### What if I miss the deadline?

■ You can register and vote on Election Day.

### What if I've moved or changed my name?

■ You have to re-register every time you move or change your name.

■ If you moved before October 14 and didn't re-register, you can register to vote on Election Day.

■ If you moved after October 14, you should register on Election Day.

### How do I know if I'm registered?

■ You can check your registration by calling your county courthouse. You can find the number by calling (651) 215-1440 or (877) 600-8683, or by checking online at <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/>.

## VOTING EARLY

### Can I vote before Election Day?

■ Maybe. You can cast an absentee ballot before Election Day if you can't go to the polls because of absence, illness, disability, service as an election judge, or religious discipline.

### How do I get an absentee ballot?

■ You have to submit an application to your county auditor no later than Monday, November 3.

■ You can get an application for an absentee ballot from your county auditor or online at <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/>.

### How do I vote by absentee ballot?

- You can cast your absentee ballot:
- (1) **in person**, at your county auditor's office, or at other places designated by your county auditor, beginning on Monday, October 6; or
  - (2) **by mail**, by sending the ballot to the address on the return envelope that comes with the ballot.
- Ballots sent by mail must be witnessed and signed by a notary public or a registered voter.

### What's the deadline for returning my absentee ballot?

■ To be counted, your absentee ballot must be received in your precinct by Election Day when the polls close.

## VOTING ON ELECTION DAY

### When is Election Day?

■ Tuesday, November 4

### When are the polls open?

■ Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. You have the right to vote if you're in line or inside your polling place when the polls close. Minn. Stat. § 204C.05(2)

### Can I get time off from work to vote?

■ Yes. Every worker who's eligible to vote in an election has the right to be absent from work in order to vote on the morning of Election Day and can't be penalized for it. Minn. Stat. § 204C.04(1)

### Where do I vote?

■ On Election Day, you have to vote at the polling place to which you are assigned.

■ Your county may send you information listing your assigned polling place. If not, or if you don't receive it, call your county auditor or look up your polling place online at <http://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>.

### Can I take election materials with me into my polling place?

■ Yes. You can take written or printed election materials with you as long as they're for your own use in casting your ballot. Examples include a sample ballot, a voter guide, or this card. Minn. Stat. § 204C.13

### What if my polling place is not accessible?

■ If you find this out before Election Day, contact your county auditor right away and ask for an accommodation. You have the right to an accessible polling place and an accessible voting machine. Or, if you prefer, you can request an absentee ballot.

■ On Election Day, you can send someone into the polling place to request curbside voting on your behalf. Election judges will assist you in registering to vote and will provide the necessary ballots.

■ You can also get assistance from two election judges, two people selected by the election judges,

or one person of your choosing, as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, an officer or agent of your labor union, or a candidate for election. Minn. Stat. § 204C.15(1)

### Can I get a ballot in my native language?

■ The federal Voting Rights Act doesn't require election materials to be printed in any language other than English. However, some counties and cities may provide materials in some other languages. For example, Ramsey County provides materials in other languages, and the Secretary of State's website has voter registration applications in Spanish, Somali, Russian, and Vietnamese. Contact your county auditor to find out what's available in your area.

■ Even if assistance in your language isn't available where you vote, you have the right to bring an interpreter with you to the polls or to get assistance in your language from anyone you choose, including a poll worker, as long as the person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, or an officer or agent of your labor union. Minn. Stat. § 204C.15(1)

*[continued on reverse]*

■ **ELECTION PROTECTION HOTLINE:**  
(866) OUR-VOTE

■ **MINNESOTA SECRETARY OF STATE:**  
(651) 215-1440 or (877) 600-8683  
<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/>

■ **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE:**  
(800) 253-3931

■ **ACLU VOTING RIGHTS PROJECT:**  
(877) 523-2792  
<http://www.votingrights.org>

■ **ACLU OF MINNESOTA:**  
(651) 645-4097



125 BROAD STREET 18TH FLOOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10004-2400

### What if I need help in the voting booth?

■ If you need help because of a physical disability or because you can't read the ballot, tell a poll worker when you get to your polling place. You have the right to be assisted by two election judges, two people selected by the election judges, or a person of your choosing, as long as that person is not your employer, an agent of your employer, an officer or agent of your labor union, or a candidate for office. Minn. Stat. § 204C.15(1), (3)

■ If you need instructions on how to use the voting equipment, ask a poll worker for help. Poll workers are required to help you at any time you ask—even after you've entered the voting booth. Minn. Stat. § 204C.15(3)

### VOTER ID

#### Do I have to show ID?

■ Probably not. Most voters won't need to show ID at all.

■ You only need ID if you're registering to vote at the polls on Election Day, and you may be asked to show ID if you registered to vote by mail and haven't previously voted in a federal election in Minnesota.

#### What are the accepted forms of ID?

■ Accepted forms of ID include:

(1) a valid Minnesota driver's license, learner's permit or ID card with your current name and address on it, or receipt for one;

(2) a valid student ID card, registration card, or fee statement with your current name and address on it;

(3) a tribal ID card with your current name and address, and photo on it; and

(4) a notice of late registration mailed to you by your county auditor or city clerk. Minn. Stat. § 201.061(3)

■ Accepted forms of ID also include an expired photo ID card **plus** a recent utility bill with your name and address on it.

■ You can also satisfy the identification requirement by having someone who's registered to vote in your precinct vouch for your identity. Minn. Stat. § 201.061

■ Visit the Division of Election's website for a complete list of the accepted forms of ID: <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/home/index.asp?page=204>

#### What if I didn't bring any ID?

■ You can't register to vote on Election Day without ID, but you can satisfy the identification requirement by having someone who's registered to vote in your precinct vouch for your identity.

### PROBLEMS AT THE POLLS

#### What if I'm not on the voter list?

■ First, ask an election judge to check the list again and to confirm that you're at the right polling place for your address.

■ If you're at the right polling place but your name isn't on the voter list, ask for a voter registration application. You have the right to register at the polls on Election Day and to vote immediately after you register. Minn. Stat. § 201.061(3)

#### What if I go to the wrong polling place?

■ Go to the right polling place. You can ask an election judge to help you find the polling place where you're registered. You can also call your county clerk's office or look up your polling place online at [www.sos.state.mn.us/](http://www.sos.state.mn.us/).

■ If you can't figure out where you're registered, go the polling place that you think is most likely to be the right one and ask for a registration application. You have the right to register at the polls on Election Day and to vote immediately after you register. Minn. Stat. § 201.061(3)

#### What if someone challenges my right to vote?

■ An election judge will ask you to give an oath, and ask you questions to test your residency and your right to vote. If your answers to the questions show that you're eligible to vote, you'll be allowed to vote; if not, you won't be allowed to vote.

■ If you refuse to answer the questions or sign the polling place roster, you won't be allowed to vote even if you leave and return later willing to do so.

#### What if someone tries to intimidate or harass me?

■ Tell an election judge right away. If the election judge is the problem, call your county auditor or one of the election hotline numbers listed at the end of this card, or make a complaint online at <http://www.votingrights.org>.

■ It's a crime to knowingly deceive another person about the time, place, or manner of conducting an election or the qualifications for or restrictions on voter eligibility. Notify your county auditor if you suspect that someone has tried to deceive you, and you'll be provided with the correct information.

■ You can also file a petition with any judge of the Supreme Court in Minnesota describing the error,

omission, or wrongful act and the correction you want as a result of your complaint. Minn. Stat. § 204B.44(d)

#### What if I make a mistake on my ballot?

■ If you spoil a ballot, tell an election judge. You can return it to the election judges and receive another. Minn. Stat. § 204C.13(d)

#### How do I make a complaint?

■ First, ask for an election judge at your polling place. He or she can handle most routine complaints that arise on Election Day. Candidates, political parties, and nonprofit groups may also have poll watchers outside of your polling place who might be able to assist you. If any of those people ask you who you voted for, or if they can't resolve your complaint, call your county auditor or town clerk's office or the Secretary of State.

■ You can also file a petition with any judge of the Supreme Court in Minnesota describing the wrongful act and the correction you want as a result of your complaint. Minn. Stat. § 204B.44

■ You can also call one of the election hotline numbers listed at the end of this card or make a complaint online at <http://www.votingrights.org>.

### TIPS FOR AVOIDING PROBLEMS

■ Check your voter registration status at least 30 days before the election.

■ Vote before Election Day, using absentee voting if you qualify (see above for qualifications).

■ If you plan to vote at the polls, locate your polling place at least 30 days before the election.

■ Vote early in the day to avoid the last-minute rush.

■ Bring some form of identification, even if it's not required.

■ Read all instructions carefully.

■ Ask for help if you need it.

■ Take your time.

# 2008 MINNESOTA VOTER EMPOWERMENT CARD

MINNESOTA

