

LONG TERM CARE COMMUNITY COALITION

Advancing Quality, Dignity & Justice

Voting Rights in Nursing Homes: New York Rules, Deadlines, and Resources (2026)

An individual's right to vote does not change when they go to a nursing home or other residential care setting. However, they can face challenges that make voting difficult. LTCCC's [Voting Rights in Nursing Homes: A Quick Guide for Residents, Families, and Those Who Assist Them](#) explains residents' voting rights and provides practical information for residents, families, nursing homes, Long-Term Care Ombudsmen, and advocates. This companion guide provides New York-specific information on voter eligibility, voting options, election rules, deadlines, and helpful resources.

Registering to Vote

In New York, a person generally may register to vote if they are a United States citizen, will be at least 18 years old on Election Day, have resided in New York and the relevant county, city, or village for at least 30 days before the election, are not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction, have not been adjudged incompetent by a court order, and do not claim the right to vote in another jurisdiction.

A nursing home resident may use the nursing home address as their voting residence if it is the resident's fixed, permanent, and principal home and the resident intends to remain there or return there after temporary absences. A resident admitted temporarily for rehabilitation or short-term care may retain a prior voting residence.

Registration deadline: The board of elections must receive the registration application by October 24, 2026. A mailed paper application must be postmarked by October 19, 2026 and received by October 24, 2026.

How to register:

Residents can register online, by mail, in person at a county board of elections, through the Department of Motor Vehicles or another participating agency, or by calling 1-800-FOR-VOTE (1-800-367-8683) to request a form. The official New York State voter-registration page, <https://elections.ny.gov/register-vote>, includes English, Spanish, and accessible forms.

How to check registration status:

Residents, families, or those assisting them can use the Poll Site Search, Voter Registration, and Mail Ballot Tracker at <https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/> to review registration information, the assigned poll site, and mail-ballot tracking information.

Ways to Vote

Following are ways in which individual may vote. See the end of this brief for important deadlines and contacts to get help.

Voting on Election Day:

Polls are open from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on November 3, 2026. A voter may vote at their assigned polling place. Polling-place information is available through the <https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/>.

Early in-person voting:

New York offers no-excuse early in-person voting from October 24 through November 1, 2026. Sites and hours are established locally and are available through <https://elections.ny.gov/early-voting>.

Early mail voting:

Any registered voter may apply for an early mail ballot here <https://elections.ny.gov/request-ballot>.

Absentee voting for nursing home and other residential facility residents:

New York provides in-facility absentee voting for nursing homes and other qualifying facilities from which the local board of elections has received 25 or more applications for absentee ballots. [Note: A local board may, at its discretion, make this available in facilities with less than 25 applications.]

Nursing home staff or other individuals can contact their local board of elections to find out if it has received a sufficient number of absentee ballots. Contact information for local boards can be found at <https://publicreporting.elections.ny.gov/CountyBoardRoster/CountyBoardRoster>.

Traditional absentee voting:

Traditional absentee voting requires a qualifying excuse, including illness or physical disability, certain caregiving duties, qualifying hospitalization, absence from the county or New York City, certain Veterans Health Administration residency, or qualifying jail detention.

Permanent absentee, permanent mail-ballot, or recurring ballot options:

A voter who claims a permanent illness or physical disability may obtain permanent absentee status and receive absentee ballots for later elections until the registration is canceled. An early-mail applicant may request ballots for all remaining elections in the same calendar year, but that request does not continue into later calendar years.

Assistance and Accessible Voting

New York law allows voters who need help voting because of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write to receive assistance, subject to certain restrictions.

Who may assist:

A voter may choose a family member, friend, caregiver, facility employee, advocate, or another

“No-Excuse Voting”

Some states require individuals to have an excuse for voting early, absentee, or by mail.

New York does **NOT** require an excuse to vote in these ways. However, all voters should be sure to abide by applicable deadlines.

person, provided no statutory restrictions apply. A voter who does not select an assistant may receive help from two election inspectors who are not of the same political faith.

Restrictions on assistants:

A voter may not select the voter's employer, an agent of the employer, an officer of the voter's union, or an agent of the union. An assistant may not influence the voter, select candidates for the voter, change or disclose the voter's selections, or keep a record of the voter's selection.

Help marking a ballot:

An assistant may physically mark a ballot when the voter communicates the selections to be marked. The assistant must follow the voter's choices and must not pressure, influence, or substitute the assistant's own choices. For a mail ballot, the voter should personally sign the affirmation envelope or make a witnessed mark; a guardian, caregiver, family member, or agent should not sign the voter's name.

Help returning a ballot:

New York permits a completed ballot to be delivered to the county board of elections, an early-voting site in the voter's county during early voting, or an Election Day poll site in the voter's county by the applicable deadline. The voter's authorization and proof of delivery should be documented.

Accessible voting options:

New York poll sites provide ballot-marking devices for private and independent voting, including audio and tactile interfaces, enlarged text, adjustable contrast, sip-and-puff devices, and two-switch paddle devices. Voters with a print disability may use the Accessible Ballot Application portal at <https://elections.ny.gov/accessible-voting>. For assistance, contact the New York State Board of Elections Accessibility Services and Training Unit at 518-207-4050 or accessibility@elections.ny.gov.

Cognitive Impairment, Guardianship, and Voting Eligibility

Cognitive impairment, dementia, intellectual or developmental disability, inability to speak, communication difficulty, residence in a nursing home, or the need for assistance does not automatically make a person ineligible to vote.

In New York, guardianship does not automatically remove voting rights. A person for whom an Article 81 or Article 17-A guardian has been appointed remains eligible unless a separate order of a court of competent authority adjudges the person incompetent. A diagnosis, incapacity finding, guardianship order, power of attorney, or need for assistance is not itself sufficient to remove the right to vote.

Those assisting residents should not assume that a resident is ineligible because of a diagnosis, disability, communication difficulty, residence in long-term care, guardianship, or the need for help completing election materials.

Authoritative guidance is available from [New York Election Law § 5-106](#), the [New York OPWDD Voting FAQ](#), county boards of elections, and [Disability Rights New York](#).

Where to Get Help

New York State Board of Elections:

Website: [State Board contact page](https://elections.ny.gov/contact-us) <https://elections.ny.gov/contact-us>

Phone: 518-474-6220; TDD/TTY through NY Relay at 711; Public Information Office: 518-474-1953

Local election offices:

Directory: [County Board Roster](https://publicreporting.elections.ny.gov/CountyBoardRoster/CountyBoardRoster)

<https://publicreporting.elections.ny.gov/CountyBoardRoster/CountyBoardRoster>

Phone: Select the voter's county in the directory for the county board's number.

New York State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program:

Website: [Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program](https://aging.ny.gov/long-term-care-ombudsman-program)

<https://aging.ny.gov/long-term-care-ombudsman-program>

Phone: 1-855-582-6769

Protection and Advocacy Organization:

Website: [Disability Rights New York PAVA voting program](https://www.drny.org/page/pa-for-voting-access-pava-26.html)

<https://www.drny.org/page/pa-for-voting-access-pava-26.html>

Phone: 518-432-7861; toll-free 800-993-8982

Nonpartisan voter-protection resource:

Website: [Election Protection](https://866ourvote.org/) <https://866ourvote.org/>

Phone: English 866-687-8683; Spanish/English 888-839-8682; Asian languages/English 888-274-8683; Arabic/English 844-925-5287

LTCCC voting resources:

Website: [Voting Resources for LTC Residents](https://nursinghome411.org/learn/voting/) <https://nursinghome411.org/learn/voting/>

Key Deadlines for November 2026 Election

Item	Date / Deadline
Registration deadline	October 24, 2026, application received. A mailed paper application must be postmarked by October 19 and received by October 24.
Mail-ballot request deadline	Mail and online early-mail or absentee applications received by October 24, 2026. In-person applications received by November 2, 2026.
Early voting period	October 24 through November 1, 2026. Hours and sites vary by county.
Election Day	November 3, 2026. Polls open from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Ballot-return deadline	In person by 9:00 p.m. on November 3, 2026. By mail, postmarked by November 3 and received by the county board by November 10, 2026.