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# FORUM NOTES

A Louisiana Family Forum Fact Sheet

Volume 4, Number 12

**VOTER REGISTRATION INFO**

Periodical Publication

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## IN LOUISIANA

<b>Election Date</b>	SEP 18*	NOV 2	DEC 4
<b>Type of Election</b>	Open Primary	General/Presidential /Congressional	Congressional Run- Off/Tie
<b>Deadline to Register</b>	8/18/04	10/4/04	11/3/04
<b>Absentee Voting Begins</b>	9/7/04	10/21/04	11/22/04
<b>Absentee Voting Ends</b>	9/11/04 4:30 PM	10/26/04 4:30 PM	11/27/04 4:30 PM

### ***How do I register to vote? (R.S. 18:103)***

You may apply for voter registration by completing a **Louisiana Voter Registration Application form** at any **Registrar of Voters office** or by mailing a voter registration application. In addition, if you are seeking services at designated mandated sites, voter registration may be offered to you. Below is a list of mandated sites.

- Louisiana Department of Motor Vehicle offices
- Louisiana Department of Social Services offices and WIC offices, Food Stamp Offices, and Medicaid offices
- Offices serving persons with disabilities, such as the Deaf Action Centers and Independent Living offices
- Armed Forces Recruitment offices

To register by mail, download the **Louisiana Voter Registration Application form** and then return a completed form to your local **Registrar of Voters office**. Louisiana statutes require you to be registered 30 days prior to an election to be eligible to vote in that particular election.

**Mail or hand deliver your application to the appropriate Registrar of Voters office. The Registrar of Voters can accept faxed voter registration applications ONLY from a member of the United States military service or a person residing outside of the United States. Please do not send applications to this office - deadlines requiring receipt in the Registrar of Voters office may be missed.**

### **To qualify to register you must: (R.S. 18:101)**

(1) be a United States citizen, (2) be at least 17 years old but must be 18 years old prior to next election to vote, (3) not be under an order of imprisonment for conviction of a felony, (4) not be under a judgment of interdiction for mental incompetence, (5) reside in the state and parish in which you seek to register

### **How much does it cost to register?**

Nothing. Registering to vote is a privilege afforded to you as a United States citizen by the Constitution of the United States.

### **Do I have to be a resident of the state to register? (R.S. 18:101(B))**

Yes. For voter registration purposes, you must qualify to register by living in the parish with a street or rural route address. Post Office Box addresses and Mail Center Boxes do not qualify. We must know where you live so you are assigned to the proper precinct for election day. ***When must I register to vote before an election? (R.S. 18:135)***

Louisiana statutes require you to be registered 30 days prior to an election to be eligible to vote in that particular election.

### **What do I need to bring with me to register to vote? (R.S. 18:105)**

In registering in person at a parish **Registrar of Voters** office, you are required to prove age, residency, and identity. You may submit your current Louisiana driver's license, birth certificate or other documentation which reasonably and sufficiently establishes your identity, age and residency. If registering at a mandated site, no further proof of identification is required other than whatever proof is required for received services that you have applied for. Louisiana mails a verification mailing card to verify the address you have provided when registering by mail.

**Can I choose which address to use for registering? (R.S. 18:101(B))**

No. You must register to vote using your Homestead Exemption address. However, if you do not claim Homestead Exemption and reside at more than one place in the state with an intention to reside there indefinitely, you may register only at one of the places at which you reside.

**Why is the residence address so important?**

Because your elected representatives are determined by your residence address. In order for you to vote on the correct ballot for an election, your registration must have your residence address.

**What do I do if my residence address, mailing address, or name has changed after I have registered to vote? (R.S. 18:110 & 111)**

You must notify the Registrar of Voters office in your parish of any changes to your registration. If you have moved outside your parish, you are no longer eligible to remain registered in that parish.

**If I move from another parish in Louisiana, do I have to register again? (R.S. 18:108)**

Yes. Voter registration is not transferable. You must register every time you move to a new parish in Louisiana.

**How do I become a Louisiana resident? (R.S. 18:101(B))**

While this question sounds complicated, it is really very simple. If you live in Louisiana and intend for this to be your legal residence, you are a Louisiana resident.

**My children are going off to college. Where should they be registered to vote? (R.S. 18:101(C))**

Students may use their home residence address within the state or their school address for voter registration purposes. Out of state students are allowed to use their school address in Louisiana if they want to be a voter in this state.

**What are the recognized political parties in the State of Louisiana? (R.S. 18:441)**

The Democratic and Republican parties are the recognized political parties in Louisiana.

**How can I change my party affiliation? (R.S. 18:107(B))**

Your party affiliation can be changed by simply sending your Registrar of Voters a written note requesting your party change (including signature), or by completing another application. Please note: if you are changing your party right before an election, it must be done 30 days prior to an election. Party changes received after book closing for an election cannot be in effect until the next election.

**Where do I go to vote? (R.S. 18:109)**

Always check your voter identification card. Your card will list your polling place. Please pay special attention to make sure you go to the correct polling place. If you are unsure, please call your parish Registrar of Voters office.

**How do I get another ID card?**

You should contact your parish Registrar of Voters office to request a new one.

**What do I need to bring with me when I go to the polls to vote? (R.S. 18:562(A))**

Louisiana law requires a picture identification card to vote at the polling place. This can include a Louisiana driver's license, a Louisiana Special ID card, or other generally recognized picture identification card. If you do not have a picture ID card, you may sign an affidavit which will be attached to the precinct register, and you will be required to provide further identification as requested by the Commissioner at the polling place.

**Source:** Louisiana Secretary of State's Office

