How do I apply for a ballot in another county in Nebraska ?

If you are temporarily living in Lancaster County, you may register and vote in your "home town." Write your county clerk or election commissioner to request a ballot. *(Refer to "How do I apply by mail ?" for information required in Nebraska.)*

Election Day

Where do I vote ?

Each voter must cast his/her ballot at his/her assigned polling place *(place of voting)*. If you are in doubt as to the location of your polling place, check with the Election Office, 402-441-7311.

When you register or re-register an polling place information card will be mailed to you.

Your voting card informs you not only of your polling place, but also your voting districts. You may also indentify your precinct, your polling location and in which districts you reside by logging onto the Election Commissioner's website at lancaster.ne.gov/election

Which offices are elected by District in Lancaster County ?

The following offices are elected by district: University of Nebraska Regent, State Board of Education, Legislature, Southeast Community College, Lower Platte South and Nemaha Natural Resources Districts, Lancaster County Commissioners, Boards of Education (Lincoln, Raymond Central, and Waverly), Lincoln City Council, Norris Public Power District and Educational Service Units.

Candidates for the Norris Board of Education are nominated by district/ward in the Primary Election but are elected at-large in the General Election.

Do I need a voting card in order to vote ?

No, the card is for information only and does not need to be presented to election officials in order to vote.

When are the polls open ?

The polls are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Am I able to vote if I did not re-register ?

Yes, if you have a current voter registration on file, in Lancaster County, you may go to your new polling place on election day and vote a provisional ballot. You will be asked to complete a registration form and your ballot will be sealed in an envelope.

What is the voting procedure ?

The first step in casting a ballot involves stating your name and address to the clerk serving as an election official. The clerk will verify that you are eligible to vote. Then you will be asked to sign your name in a voter book and a judge will give you the proper ballot.

Instructions for marking ballots

You will be voting a paper ballot. You must blacken ovals with the special pencil provided. Do not erase any marks on a ballot or use a pen. If you make a mistake in voting, ask the judge who issued you the ballot for another one. The reason for this procedure is that the ballots in Lancaster County are electronically scanned and counted, and a pencil mark, even if it is erased, might be detected.

Why should an election official place my ballot in the ballot box rather than doing it myself ?

Nebraska state law requires this procedure to help ensure that only the properly issued ballots are deposited in the ballot box (32-916).

Can voters receive assistance in voting ?

Voters who cannot read, are blind or have a physical disability may request assistance in marking their ballots. The voter may have a friend or relative assist them or he/she may request the assistance of two election board workers, one each of a different party (32-918).

In addition, an Automark voting machine will be available at each polling location. A visually or physically disabled voter will be able to use this machine and will be able to mark his/her ballot in private and unassisted.

Are the polling places accessible ?

Yes. All polling places are handicap accessible. You can ask for your ballot to be brought to your car if it is difficult for you to get into the polling place.

Restricted activities on election day

No one may campaign or hand out political literature within 200 feet of a polling place. No one should wear political badges or insignia into the polling place election day.

2012 Election Dates

May 15, 2012 State Primary Election
Mail-in registration postmarked by April 27
In person registration: deadline May 4

Nov. 6, 2012 State General Election
Mail-in registration postmarked by Oct. 19
In person registration: deadline Oct. 26

2013 Election Dates

April 9, 2013 City Primary Election
Mail-in registration postmarked by March 22
In person registration: deadline March 29

May 7, 2013 City General Election
Mail-in registration postmarked by April 19
In person registration: deadline April 26

2014 Election Dates

May 13, 2014 State Primary Election
Mail-in registration postmarked by April 25
In person registration: deadline May 2

Nov. 4, 2014 State General Election
Mail-in registration postmarked by Oct. 17
In person registration: deadline Oct. 24

2015 Election Dates

April 7, 2015 City Primary Election
Mail-in registration postmarked by March 20
In person registration: deadline March 27

May 5, 2015 City General Election
Mail-in registration postmarked by April 17
In person registration: deadline April 24

Additional Information ?

If you would like a program for your group, contact the Election Office and someone would be very happy to make a presentation.

If you have further questions or need additional information please contact the Election Commissioner's office at 402-441-7311 or by e-mail at dshively@lancaster.ne.gov. You may find answers to many of your questions by visiting the Election Commissioner's website at *lancaster.ne.gov/election*

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★ A VOTER ★ INFORMATION ★ GUIDE ★

FOR LANCASTER COUNTY VOTERS

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Voter Registration

Does everyone have to be registered to vote ?

Yes. Registration is required in Nebraska to be eligible to vote. The only exception is during Presidential elections. If you have recently moved to Nebraska or moved to another state after the registration deadline, then you may only vote a Presidential ballot.

Who may register to vote ?

Anyone who...

- ☑ Will be 18 years of age or older on General Election Day *(first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.)*
- ☑ Is a United States Citizen.
- ☑ Is a resident of Nebraska.
- ☑ Has not been convicted of a felony, or if convicted, it has been at least two years since the completion of the sentence for the felony including any parole term.
- ☑ Has not been found mentally incompetent.

Who needs to re-register ?

You must re-register whenever you change your name, your address or your political party affiliation. Failure to vote in a previous election does not require re-registration. If you do not get re-registered, you may check with the Election Office and go to your new polling place on election day and vote a provisional ballot. Voting in a precinct where you do not reside is a Class III misdemeanor (32-1528).

What is the registration deadline ?

Mail-in registration must be postmarked on or before the third Friday before an election. Register in person at the Election Office or outside registration sites up to 10 days before an election.

Must you designate your party affiliation ?

You must designate your party affiliation if you wish to vote for partisan candidates in a state-wide partisan primary election. If you decide to change your party affiliation prior to a state-wide primary election, you must do so by meeting the voter registration deadlines outlined above. Political party designation has no bearing on the general election ballot or on races which are nominated on a nonpartisan basis.

Do I have to be a resident for a certain amount of time to register ?

You may register the same day you become a resident of Lancaster County.

How may I register ?

You may register at the Election Office from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.
Call 402-441-7311 for additional registration sites.

You may also register by mail. Forms are available at over 175 sites throughout Lancaster County and may be picked up at most banks, post offices and libraries. Forms are also available in the telephone book and online at: www.lancaster.ne.gov/cnty/election

Will I receive notice that my mail-in registration has been accepted and processed ?

Yes, if you completed the form correctly and mailed it by the deadline *(Third Friday prior to the election)*. If you don't receive notification within 10 days that your registration has been accepted, call the Election Office. You are not a registered voter until you receive confirmation.

How is residence determined ?

By law, your residence is that place at which you have established a home, where you are habitually present, and to which, when you depart, you intend to return. Leaving for temporary purposes, such as military service or school attendance, need not result in a change of residence for voting purposes. However, any permanent change in your residence or address will require you to re-register to vote.

May a student register and vote from a school address ?

Yes, you may decide to register and vote from either your school or home address. If you want to vote from your home address, write your county clerk and ask them to mail voter registration forms and an absentee ballot *(See "Early/Absentee Ballot" information).*

Can I be called for jury duty if I register to vote ?

Yes, the jury list is taken from the driver's license and the voter registration lists.

Primary Election Ballot

What is the difference between a partisan primary and a general election ?

In a partisan primary election, the members of each party nominate candidates for the general election. Some offices have nonpartisan primaries in which the two candidates receiving the most votes for an office are nominated.
In a general election, all voters receive the same ballot and elect the top candidates from the primary election.

What is a closed primary ?

Nebraska has a "closed primary", which means that you are only allowed to vote the ballot of the party with which you are registered.

How do I establish which ballot I am entitled to vote in a primary election ?

Affiliating with a political party is optional, but in order to vote for partisan candidates in a primary election, you must register to vote with a recognized political party. If you choose not to affiliate with a political party then you must indicate that you do not want to affiliate with a political party by choosing Non-partisan on your voter registration application.

If you register as Non-partisan *(sometimes referred to as independent)* you will only be able to vote for ballot issues and races which are not nominated by political parties in a primary election. Offices such as President, Governor, County and State Constitutional offices are partisan; thus, if you are registered Nonpartisan in a primary election, you will not be able to vote for those races in a primary election. However, offices such as State Legislature, State Board of Education, University of Nebraska Regent, Southeast Community College Board, Natural Resources District and all local (city and boards of education) offices are nominated on a nonpartisan basis and **all** voters (both partisan and non-partisan) will vote on these offices in a primary election.

In addition, Nebraska law allows non-partisan voters to select a political party at the polls on primary election day and help nominate that political party's candidate(s) for federal legislative races (U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives).

Early/Absentee Voting

Who may apply for an early/absentee ballot ?

A registered voter shall be permitted to vote early/absentee by requesting an early/absentee ballot.

How do I apply for and vote an early/absentee ballot ?

Write, or go to the Election Office. Ballots are available 35 days before a statewide election and 15 days before a city election. The building is handicapped accessible and there is plenty of parking available in the front of the building. The Election Office is open additional hours for voting. Call for details.

How do I apply by mail ?

Write to the Election Office, stating:

- ☑ Your name and voting address.
- ☑ Your party affiliation.
- ☑ Where you want the ballot sent.
- ☑ Your signature.

May I have someone get an Early/Absentee ballot for me ?

Anyone *(agent)* may apply for a ballot and/or pick a ballot up for another person.

The application must be signed by the agent or the voter. Maximum of two applications per agent.

No candidate or any person serving on a committee for a candidate shall act as an agent for any voter requesting a ballot except for members of their family.

When may I apply for an Early/Absentee ballot ?

The Election Office may accept applications 120 days before an election.

EARLY/ABSENTEE DEADLINES

- ☑ First day to **accept applications** for early/absentee ballot: 120 days before an election.
- ☑ First day that a **voter can vote** an early/absentee ballot: 35 days before statewide elections and 15 days before a city election.
- ☑ Last day to **request an early/absentee ballot** be mailed: 4 p.m. on the Wednesday before election day.
- ☑ **Last day to vote** an early/absentee ballot at the Election Office: day before the election *(Monday).*
- ☑ **Last day for an agent** to pick up an early/absentee ballot: 7 p.m. Election Day. An agent who picks up ballots must return them by 8 p.m. election night.
- ☑ All early/absentee ballots returned by mail must be received in the Election Office by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.