



## **Information for First Time Voters in New Jersey**

### **Voter Registration**

- You may register to vote if you are at least 17 years old. You may begin voting as soon as you turn 18.
- The voter registration form asks for one of the following forms of identification:
  - NJ Driver's License
  - NJ Non-Driver's ID
  - Last four digits of your Social Security Number
- If you do not have one of those forms of ID, or if they cannot be verified, you will be asked to provide a copy of a current valid photo ID or a document with your name and current address on it.
- Validating your identification at registration will avoid the inconvenience of having to provide identification at the polling place.
- You will receive a card in the mail confirming your registration.
- You must register to vote at least 21 days before an election.
- Once you have registered, you do not need to register again unless one of the following occurs:
  - Change of address
  - Change of name
  - Conviction of a felony

### **Sample Ballots**

- A few weeks before every election, you will receive a sample ballot in the mail. Sample ballots contain the following information:
  - Location of your polling place
  - District and municipality
  - Hours polls are open
  - Candidates' names, offices and public questions to be voted on
  - Operating instructions for voting machines
  - Instructions for how to "write-in" candidates if you do not want to choose one of the names on the ballot.

### **Voting by Mail**

- If you prefer to vote by mail rather than going to the polling place on election day, you can submit an application to vote by mail.
- Once your application is received, you will be sent a Mail-In Ballot.
- You can submit your mail-in ballot up to 45 days prior to an election.

- If you haven't mailed your ballot in time to reach the Board of Elections of your county before election day, you may bring the ballot to the Board of Elections in person up until 3:00 PM on election day.

#### Declaring Political Party Affiliation

- You do not have to declare a party affiliation, but you can only vote in a primary election if you are registered as a member of that party.
- You can declare party affiliation either when you register to vote or at the polling place on the day of the primary election if you are unaffiliated.
- If you are a registered voter and want to change your party affiliation, you must fill out a change of registration form at least 55 days before the primary election.

#### Primary Elections

- Primary elections are used to select the candidates who will represent each political party in the General Election.
- In a primary election, you can only vote for the candidates of your party.

#### General Elections

- You may vote for your choice for an elective office from all political parties at a General Election.
- General Elections are held in November. The upcoming General Election is scheduled for November 6, 2018.
- Presidential elections are held every four years.
- Congressional elections (Senate and House of Representatives) are held every two years.
- All members of the House of Representatives have two-year terms and are up for re-election in every Congressional election.
- Members of the Senate have six-year terms. So one-third of the Senators are up for re-election in a given Congressional Election.
- **Voting for members of Congress is at least as important as voting for President.**

For more detailed information on voting in New Jersey, go to: [www.lwvnj.org](http://www.lwvnj.org)