

You can still VOTE!

When a person enters a long term care facility, nursing home, or assisted living facility, they give up a lot of things. One of the things they can still do is VOTE.

Even though you may not be able to hold a pen, you can still cast a ballot
Even though you may not be able to speak, your choice can still be heard
Even though you may not be able to walk, you can still go to the polls

Your opinion counts.

Voter registration:

Before you can vote, you must be registered!

When you enter a facility, you need to decide if you want to use the facility address, or a family member's address, as your residence for voter registration. The address you use must be in Harris County. This is the address that will be used to determine in which precinct you will vote and which ballot you will vote.

If you choose to use the facility address as your residence address, the facility may be asked to hold your voter registration card in your file.

To be eligible to register to vote in Texas, you must:

- be a U.S. citizen;
- be a resident of the county in which you will vote;
- be 18 years old or older
- not a convicted felon (unless a person's sentence is completed, including any probation or parole)

If you are under guardianship, you may still be able to vote. The guardianship order must specifically take away the right to vote.

You must be registered to vote in Harris County at least 30 days prior to an election. If you are not sure if you are registered, you can call Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector's office at 713-368-8683 to verify your status.

Early Voting

In the mid-1990s, the State of Texas adopted Early Voting in which all registered voters are eligible to visit any one of a series of locations within your county of residence two weeks prior to an election and cast a ballot.

Early Voting in person.

Early voting in person is much easier than voting in person on Election Day. There are several convenient early polling locations around the county. You can vote early at any of these locations, regardless of your precinct registration. Early voting begins 14 to 17 days before the election and ends the 4th day prior to the election. The early polling locations are open extended hours and on weekends.

When you vote in person, you will be asked for your voter registration card or identification. If you do not have your voter registration card, you may use the following:

- Driver's license (even if it is expired)
- State ID
- Picture identification
- A government document showing your current address

Voting by Mail in Ballot.

If you are at least 65 years of age or disabled, you can request a ballot by mail. The ballot must be requested after the 60th day before Election Day and before the close of business on the 7th day before Election Day. The completed ballot must be returned by mail before 7:00 pm election day.

Dates to remember:

First day to apply for Mail in Ballot	Sept 7, 2007
Last day to register to vote	October 9, 2007
First day of Early Voting	October 22, 2007
Last day to apply for Mail in Ballot	October 30, 2007
Last day of Early Voting	November 2, 2007
General Election	November 6, 2007

What you can and cannot do

Resident

What you **can** do

- Ask for assistance from your relative or the facility to verify your voter registration status
- Request a voter registration form and assistance in completing and mailing the form
- Request an application for ballot by mail and assistance in completing and mailing the request form
- Ask for assistance from your relative or the facility to complete the ballot by mail.
- Ask for transportation to and from the nearest early voting polling location
- Ask for assistance from the workers at the polling place to help you with your ballot. The person helping you must read the entire ballot, unless you ask to have only parts of the ballot read.

What you **cannot** do

- Wait until the last minute to make your wishes known
- Vote outside your registered precinct on election day
- Register using an address outside the county or state in which you will vote
- Register using an address where you are unable to receive mail.

Family Member or Responsible Party

What you **can** do

- Make certain your loved one is registered to vote in the appropriate county
- Provide a mail in ballot application if requested and assistance in filling it out.
- Provide transportation to and from the polls during early voting
- Inform the facility that you will be assisting your loved one in voting
- Know where your loved one's voter registration card and photo id are located.

What you **cannot** do

- Request a mail in ballot without your loved one's knowledge
- Vote a proxy. i.e., "My mother has always voted a straight party ticket. She does not respond to anything around her. I will vote her ballot as a straight party ticket, because that is what she would have wanted."

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- Try to influence a vote, mark a ballot in a way other than the way instructed, or to tell anyone how the person voted

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Facility

What you **can** do

- Provide voter registration forms to new residents at time of admission
- Check renewal dates on driver's license at time of admission and flag for future renewal
- Assist in acquisition of state id card
- Provide mail in ballot applications if requested and assistance in filling them out.
- Provide transportation to and from the polls during early voting
- Provide information on upcoming elections
- Encourage activities that educate the residents about the candidates and issues
- Assist residents in maintaining their voter registration cards and identity cards to present at the polls

What you **cannot** do

- A non-family member cannot witness more than one mail in ballot per election
- Try to influence a vote, mark a ballot in a way other than the way instructed, or to tell anyone how the person voted

Resources

Resources for Residents:

Am I registered? Where is my registration card?
Call 713-368-VOTE (8683)

How do I get an application for mail-in ballot?
Call 713-755-6965

How do I get transportation to the poll?
Ask your family members, church, or facility.

Resources for Families

Where are the early voting locations?*

Call 713-755-6965

*All Early Voting locations can provide curbside voting. You will need to provide a poll worker with your loved one's voter registration card and/or identification. They can bring an eSlate out to the car and assist with casting the ballot.

Resources for Facilities

Harris County will bring an eSlate voting machine to a facility to explain to residents how to cast their ballot for early voting at a polling location. This is for training only. Voting using the eSlate can only be done at a polling location, inside the building, or curbside from a vehicle.

Call 713-755-5018

The League of Women Voters offers education programs that will explain the ballots, candidates and referenda. It is a non-partisan presentation.

Call 713-784-2923

On line resources

- (1) <http://www.tax.co.harris.tx.us/>
- (2) <http://www.lwvhouston.org/>
- (3) <http://www.tax.co.harris.tx.us/voter/voterintro.asp>

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- (4) <http://www.votexas.org/>
- (5) <http://harrisvotes.org>

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