

# Alabama Election Access vs. Election Security



ELECTIONS DIVISION

OFFICE OF THE ALABAMA SECRETARY OF STATE

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# Overview of Alabama Election Access vs. Election Security :

## Access:

- Registration, Online Registration, Mail-in Registration
- Voter Registration Drives & Voter ID Drives
- Absentee Request/Application
- Mail-In Absentee Ballot or In-Person Absentee Voting
- Election Day

## Security:


- Registration Deadlines, List Maintenance
- Photo ID Requirement
- Absentee with Reason
- Witness/Notarization Requirement
- Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) – deceased, duplicate, and cross-state voters removed
- Voter Fraud – 24/7 voter fraud reporting at [stopvoterfraudnow.com](http://stopvoterfraudnow.com)
- Voter Fraud convictions

# Voter Registration


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## Voter Roll Rumor Mill


 **Rumor: Non-citizens are allowed to register to vote and participate in elections.**

 **Reality:** Non-citizens are not allowed to register to vote, and state law only allows qualified Alabama citizens to vote.

 **Rumor: You are able to register to vote and vote in multiple places in Alabama.**

 **Reality:** No. Alabama has a centralized voter registration database, where all voter records are maintained. If a voter registers or updates their registration, their voter record is updated. Regular maintenance is performed to ensure duplicate voter records do not exist.

 **Rumor: Dead voters remain on the voter rolls.**

 **Reality:** Alabama utilizes records from Alabama Department of Public Health, the Social Security Death Index and reports from other states and jurisdictions to remove voters that have been deceased in a timely manner. Deceased voters are not left on the voter rolls.

## Voter Roll Rumor Mill

**✗ Rumor: Alabama removes voters that do not deserve to be removed from the voter rolls.**

**✓ Reality:** Alabama follows the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and other applicable federal and state laws to only remove voters from the voting rolls who are no longer qualified to vote in Alabama or under specific, legal circumstances, and at specific times afforded by state and federal law.

**✗ Rumor: Someone may register to vote in my name.**

**✓ Reality:** When a person registers to vote, they must provide identifying information like date of birth, address, driver's license number and/or the last 4 digits of their social security number. These identifiers are utilized in confirming the registrant's identity. The person signs the voter registration application under penalty of perjury.

# Alabama Offers More Ways to Register or Update Voter Registration

- Online Registration
- Agency-Based Registration
- Mail-In Registration
- Voter Registration Drives
- Offices located in Each County
- Armed Forces Recruitment Centers Registration
- Colleges & Universities
- ERIC Mailers
- ALEA Office & Probate Office Registration
- Libraries
- Voter View available online 24/7

The screenshot displays the Alabama voter registration website. It is divided into two main sections: 'Registration Information' and 'Polling Place Search'.  
**Registration Information:** This section includes a heading, a sub-heading 'Confirm your registration status, ballot status, polling location, and address.', and a link 'Not yet registered?'. It features input fields for 'First Name' and 'Last Name', and a 'Date of Birth' section with dropdown menus for 'Month', 'Day', and 'Year'. Below these is a reCAPTCHA 'I'm not a robot' checkbox and a blue 'Look Up' button.  
**Polling Place Search:** This section has a heading, a sub-heading 'Find your polling station for upcoming elections using your address. (ex. 123 MAIN STREET SOUTH, ALEXANDER CITY, 35010)', a text input field for 'Enter your residential location', and a blue 'View Locations' button. A map is visible in the background of this section.  
At the bottom of the page, there is a copyright notice: '© Copyright 2021 - ESSVR, LLC. All rights reserved.'

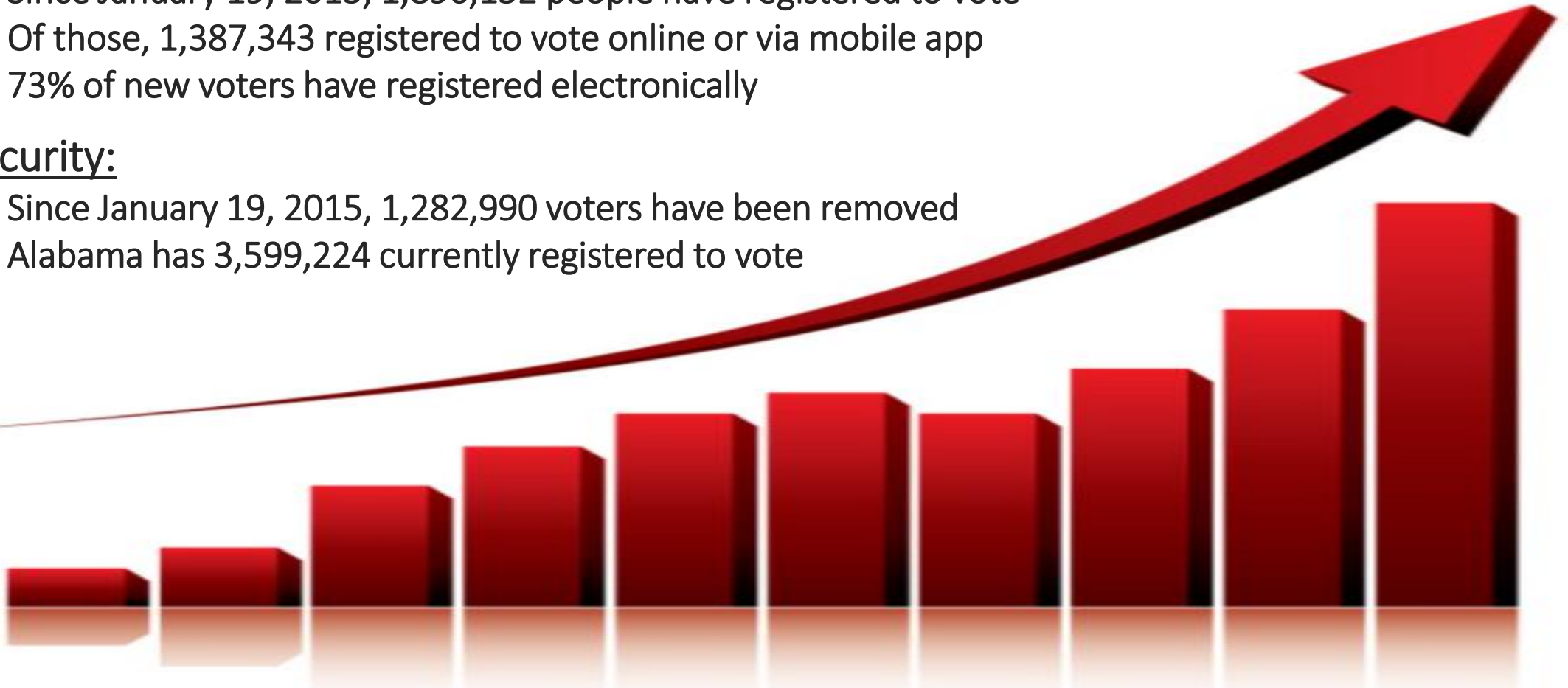
# Record high voter registration and maintenance in Alabama . . .

## Access:

- Since January 19, 2015, 1,890,152 people have registered to vote
- Of those, 1,387,343 registered to vote online or via mobile app
- 73% of new voters have registered electronically

## Security:

- Since January 19, 2015, 1,282,990 voters have been removed
- Alabama has 3,599,224 currently registered to vote



# VR Systems and Procedures Have Increased Security for Protecting Voter Information and Ensuring Only Eligible Voters Are Registered And Allowed To Cast A Ballot On Election Day:



- Registration Deadlines
- Address Verification
- Database linked to Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) and SSN Records for verification
- Signature Requirement
- Photo Voter ID Requirements
- Year-round Voter List Maintenance Procedures:  
Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) Deaths,  
Administrative Office of Courts (AOC) Convictions,  
NVRA Mailers
- Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC):  
Deceased voters, duplicate voters and out of state  
voter Crosschecks



## 2020 Election

**3,708,804 Registered Voters on Election Day**

**2,329,114 Registered Voters Cast a Ballot on  
Election Day**

**62.8% Turnout of Registered Voters**

# Absentee Voting

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## Absentee & Election Day Rumor Mill



**Rumor: Persons can vote on behalf of someone else on Election Day or by voting absentee in the mail for the other person.**



**Reality:** Voters must show valid photo identification in order to vote, no matter the manner in which they vote. If you vote absentee by mail, you must submit a copy of your valid photo ID with the absentee ballot application.



**Rumor: Persons can receive and return ballots on behalf of one or more voters.**



**Reality:** By law, no person can receive or return a ballot on behalf of someone else. The only exception to this law is medical emergency absentee voting within the 5 days before the election.



**Rumor: Absentee ballots are not counted unless a race is close.**



**Reality:** All absentee ballots are processed for counting if the proper documentation is provided by the voter, regardless of the outcome of the election. Voters may visit [alabamavotes.gov](http://alabamavotes.gov) to check the status of their absentee application and ballot.

## 2016 General Election

**87,553 Absentee Ballots Cast**

**4.1% of Ballots Cast were Absentee**

## 2020 General Election

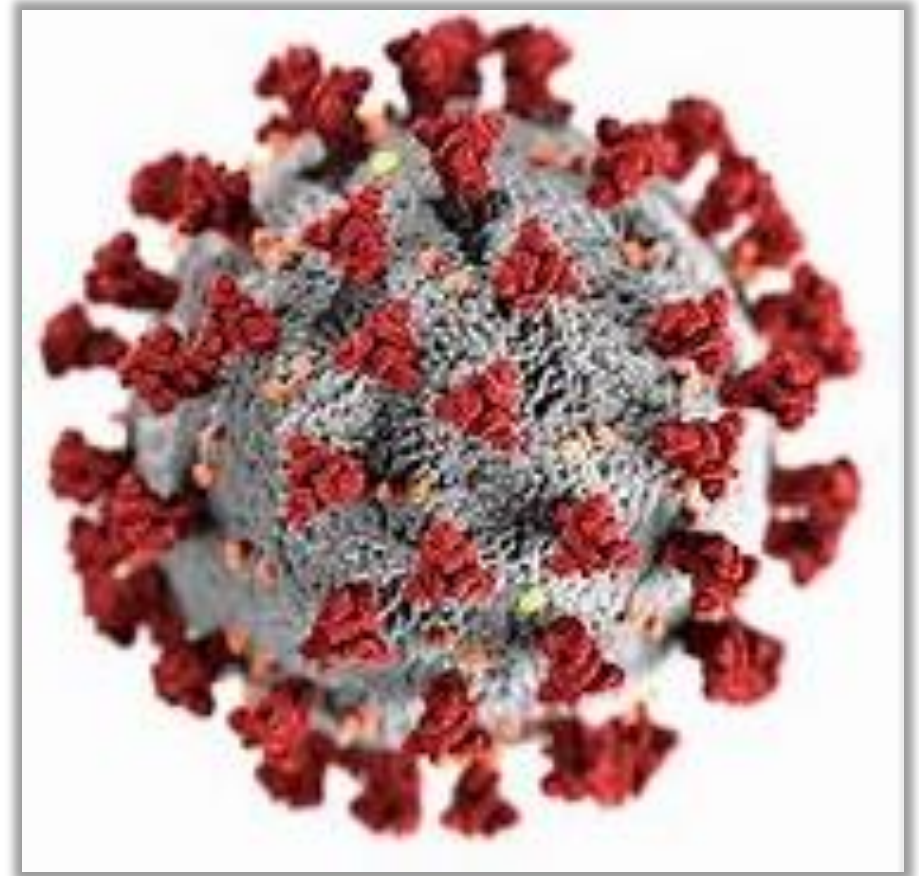
**305,663 Absentee Ballots Cast**

**13.1% of Ballots Cast were Absentee**

# 2020 Absentee Voting Access increased due to Covid-19 Restrictions

*Emergency Measures had to be taken:*

- Governor Proclamation of State of Emergency
- Secretary of State Emergency Administrative Rule allowing for voters to use Covid-19 as excuse for voting absentee
- Saturday In-Person Absentee voting in some locations
- Primary Runoff Rescheduled from March 30, 2020 to July 14, 2020



# Absentee Ballot Applications

## Access:

### A. Absentee Application Request

- By Phone
- Mail
- In-Person
- Available to Print Online and Return by Mail or In-Person

### B. More Application Options to Suit all Voters

- Regular Application – good for all elections within 42 days
- Fixed Application – good for 1 calendar year for military and overseas voters
- Permanent Disability Application – good for 1 calendar year
- FVAP, FWIB

### C. Timeframe

- Absentee begins at least 55 days prior to election day.\* (or as soon as AEM receives materials)
- Electronic ballot delivery and return for UOCAVA voters
- Instant runoff voting for UOCAVA voters

# Absentee Ballot Applications

## Security:

### A. Absentee Ballot Request Application Process:

#### 1. Must Have a Reason to Vote Absentee:

- Expect to be out of county or state on election day
- Physically incapacitated and unable to vote in person on election day
- Working a 10+ hour shift during polling hours
- Student at an educational institution located outside of the county of residence
- Member or spouse of member of the Armed Forces of U.S. or U.S. citizen residing overseas
- Appointed as an election officer at a polling place other than the voter's assigned polling place
- Permanent Disability – requires doctors verification
- Caregiver of family member to the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree of kinship that is confined to home
- Incarcerated in prison or jail and have not been convicted of disqualifying felony
- Emergency within 5 Days of Election (Medical or Work-Related) – requires verification

*Note: Verification required for medical, permanent disability and absentee. AEMs can request more information regarding absentee reason.*

#### 2. Valid Photo ID is required

#### 3. Address is verified

# Absentee Balloting

## Access:

- Absentee Ballots can be returned 3 ways:
  1. In-Person
  2. By-mail, or
  3. Commercial carrier
- In elections where one or more federal offices are on the ballot, UOCAVA Voters can return their absentee ballots 2 ways:
  1. By-mail
  2. Electronically
- UOCAVA Voters have an extended deadline to return ballots, 7 days after election day with postmark of election day
- No remote notarization allowed
- Some counties offered Absentee Voting on Saturdays during prescribed hours to meet the demand for voting during the 2020 General Election



# Absentee Balloting

## Security:

- Poll Watchers, Legal Observers allowed to witness process for entire absentee balloting period
- In-person returned ballots must be hand-delivered by voter and require the voter's signature
- In-person voted ballots are witnessed on-site
- Mail-returned ballots require the voter's signature along with the signatures of two witnesses or notarization
- Voters who did not supply a photo ID with their application within eight days before the election were sent Provisional Ballots, and were required to submit their ID to the registrars office by Friday after the election for their ballot to be counted.
- Electronic UOCAVA Ballots are returned on a secured server
- All ballots are counted on Election Day, using the same strict guidelines as for the polling process
- No curbside voting allowed
- No ballot harvesting allowed
- No drop boxes allowed

# Absentee Voter Fraud Penalties

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*The penalty for changing or falsifying an absentee ballot is a Class C felony. § 17-17-24. Any person who knowingly and willfully prepares or assists in preparing an absentee ballot for people who are comatose or who cannot communicate their voting preference is guilty of a Class C felony. § 17-17-26. The failure by an election official to count a legal vote is a Class C felony. § 17-17-27.*

*Act 2021-448 prohibits any voter in this state from voting more than once, or attempting to vote more than once, in any election held in this state, or who votes in both this state and another state or territory in the same or equivalent election. The Act also prohibits any voter from attempting to vote when they have knowledge that they are not entitled to vote, or to commit any kind of unlawful or fraudulent voting.*

# Election Day & Post-Election Day

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## Election Day & Post-Election Day Rumor Mill



**Rumor: Voting machines are connected to the internet and can communicate/be communicated with via modem and/or cellular technology.**



**Reality:** Alabama's elections are secure and transparent. Our voting machines are not connected to any network, including cellular networks. Our voting machines do not have wireless chips, or any other piece of hardware to communicate or be communicated with. Our voting machines do not possess modem technology and cannot communicate or be communicated with by other devices.



**Rumor: The voting tabulator was down and it did not scan my ballot. The poll workers made me put into an emergency bin in the tabulator. My vote won't count.**



**Reality:** In the case that a voting tabulator is temporarily down, the polling official is provided strict protocols to follow. The voter will insert the ballot into a locked emergency ballot bin inside of the tabulator. Once the tabulator is fixed, the ballots in the emergency ballot bin are fed into the tabulator as any other ballot. All ballots are processed no matter what.

## Election Day & Post-Election Day Rumor Mill



**Rumor:** I was required to vote provisional because my voter information was outdated. Everyone knows provisional ballots are not counted unless the race is close.



**Reality:** All provisional ballots are reviewed to be counted if they meet the standard, regardless of the outcome of the election.



**Rumor:** Non-Alabamians are being bussed in to vote on Election Day.



**Reality:** A person must be an Alabama resident and must be registered to vote at least 15 days prior to an election in order to vote on Election Day. Voters must provide a valid photo ID in order to vote on Election Day.

## 1<sup>st</sup> line of defense: Registrars and Poll Workers

### Registrars

- Stringent voter registration maintenance procedures ensure accuracy of the voting list on Election Day
- Voter registration deadlines ensure all registrants are qualified electors and voter lists are accurate
- 3,708,804 of registered voters in the state on Election Day 2020

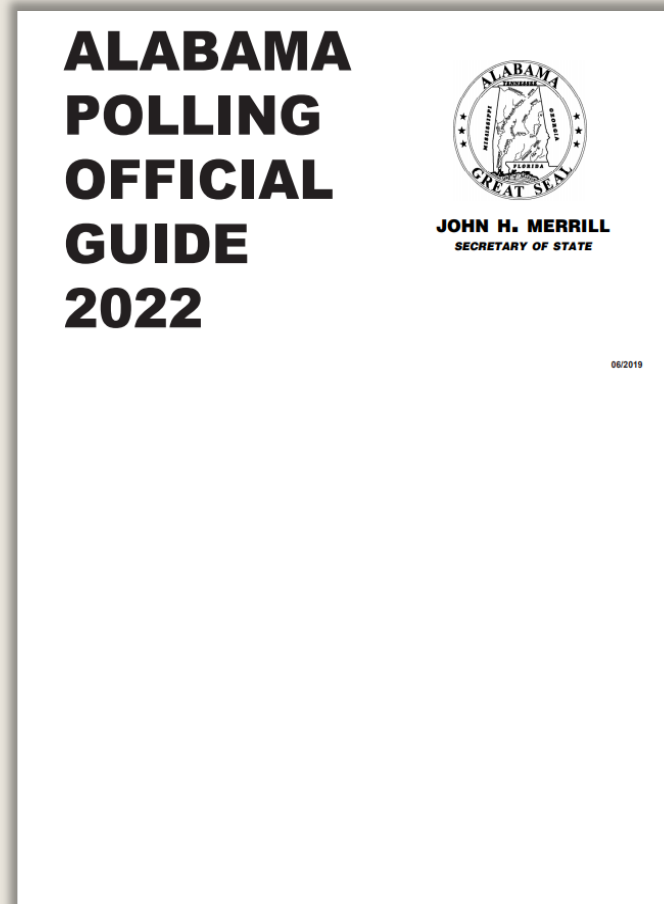
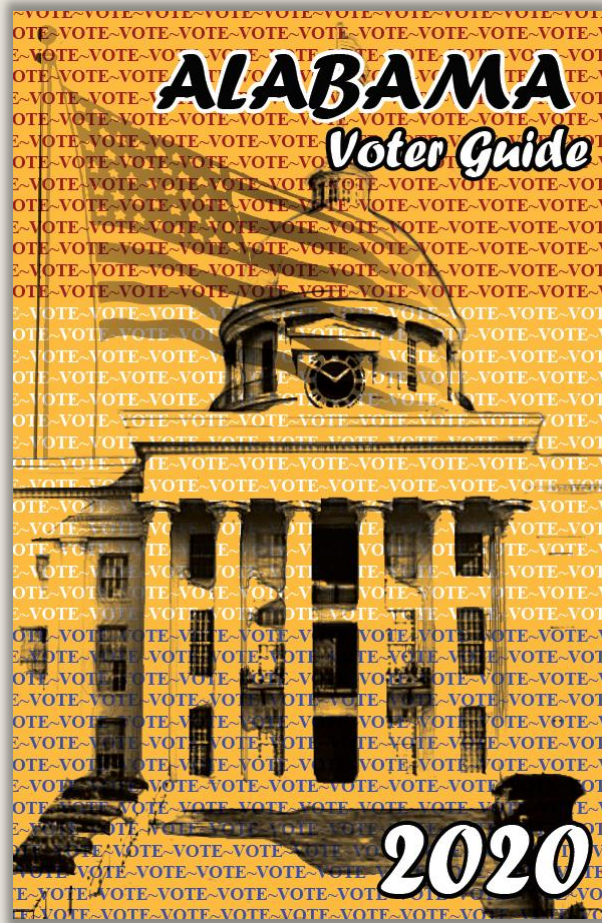
### Poll Workers

- 1,980 of polling places in Alabama
- 16,128 of poll workers in state for 2020 Election
- All are required to complete training prior to serving as a poll worker

# Access: Election Day

- Approximately 1,980 Polling Locations in Alabama open from 7am to 7pm
- Boards of Registrars Open to Assist with Voter Registration Issues as they arise and to Create Photo Voter IDs if needed
- Voter Registration Update Forms available at all locations
- Provisional Balloting
- County Election Officials on call to provide support as needed to voters and Poll Workers
- Voter Guide and Poll Worker Guides always available online for public consumption
- Secretary of State Staff available from 7 am until all counties have finished counting ballots and have reported the same back to the state on election night
- *Increased Accessibility for Disabled and Senior Voters: A polling official may allow a voter who is physically disabled or over the age of 70 to move to the front of the line at a polling place upon request of the voter. [§ 17-9-13(e)]*

# Procedural Transparency: Voter and Poll Worker Guides Available Online





# Security on Election Day:

- Registration Deadline ensures accuracy of Voter List, No same day registration in AL
- Voting Equipment testing done pre-election
- Strict Poll Worker Guidelines & Poll Worker Training for both Absentee and Regular Voting locations, including rules regarding polling place security (loitering, campaigning, intimidation, etc.)
- Photo ID Requirement & Signature Requirement/Voter List
- Cross over Voting Rules (Primary Elections Only)
- Provisional Balloting
- Ballot Accounting & Security Procedures –Voted Ballots Secured until close of election, Emergency Ballots counted in public view at poll before tabulation
- Poll Watchers, Legal Observers allowed to witness process
- Secretary of State and County Election Officials are on call to support Voters and Poll Workers to resolve issues as they arise
- Secretary of State's office monitors highly contested areas during election day activities
- Strict Election Equipment Security Guidelines
- Election Night Reporting + Canvassing/Certification of Election Results

## 2020 Election

2,023,451 Ballots Cast at Polling Locations on Election Day.

86.9% of Ballots were Cast In-Person at a Polling Place on Election Day.

# Voter Fraud Complaints

*(April 7, 2015 – August 12, 2021)*

- 1,602 Processed Complaints
- 6 Convictions
- 2 Overturned Elections
- 1 Public Official Removed



## *“Making it hard to cheat . . .”*

Polling Place Security Measures protect Alabama Voters from:

- Double Voting
- Voting for Someone Else
- Cyber-Attack
- Double-counting of a ballot
- Ballots being cast at wrong precinct
- Prevents non-citizens, disqualified felons, underage, deceased or non-registered people from voting.

# Voter Fraud Penalties

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# Misinformation

*“During the age of misinformation and disinformation, voters everywhere should be reminded that election officials are the trusted sources for election information. Our Office works diligently each and every day to see that voters in Alabama are educated with the most accurate and up-to-date information related to elections,” stated Secretary of State John H. Merrill. “Misleading information is spread daily through social media and text messaging, and it is important that voters know [AlabamaVotes.gov](https://www.alabamavotes.gov) is their trusted source for election information.”*

For More Information Call the Alabama Secretary  
of State's Elections Division at:

(334) 242-7210

(800) 274-8683

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ALABAMAVOTES.GOV

STOPVOTERFRAUDNOW.COM