

vote early, vote often

Election Day is Nov. 6. With busy schedules and memories of last year's complicated presidential election still lingering, voting can seem more like a burden than a privilege. Here's some essential information that should help you cast your vote with ease and confidence.

AM I ELIGIBLE TO VOTE?

To vote here, you must be 18 years old by election day and have been a United States citizen for at least one month. In addition, you must have resided in your Allegheny County election district for at least 30 days. You may not vote if you have been confined to a penal institution for a felony conviction within the last five years.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

Pick up a form at Mt. Lebanon's municipal building or library, a Giant Eagle, or the driver's license center in Bridgeville. Fill it out and send it in immediately; since registration closes 30 days before an election, your form must be postmarked no later than Oct. 9. Remember, if you have moved from another part of Allegheny County you must reregister. Also, be aware that if you decide to register as an independent, you will not be able to vote for candidates in the primaries. Independents are, however, entitled to vote for the referendum questions that appear on the ballot, such as amendments to the state constitution. If you cannot remember when you last voted and want to know if you are still on the state registration list, call the department of elections at 412-350-4500.

WHERE DO I VOTE?

If you're a Mt. Lebanon resident, you can find out where you vote by visiting Mt. Lebanon Municipality's Web site, www.mtlebanon.org. Click on "voting information," then "voting poll locations." As soon as you know these, go back a page and find your specific voting location. Or call the Community Information Center, 412-261-4284.

WHERE CAN I GO TO GET INFORMATION ON THE CANDIDATES?

The League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh compiles a voter's guide that lists all candidates and summarizes their views. The guide is also on line at www.pgh.net/~lwvgrp.

WHAT IF I WILL BE AWAY ON ELECTION DAY?

To receive an absentee ballot, call the department of elections at 412-350-4500. Absentee ballots must be returned to the department of elections before 5 P.M. the Friday before Election Day. Residents serving in the military are also eligible to vote. Military ballots can be obtained from the department of elections. You can request one for your son or daughter.

WHAT IF I WANT TO CHANGE MY POLITICAL AFFILIATION OR I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME?

Just pick up another registration form and check off the box labeled change of party or change of name and send it in. You may still vote in the general election regardless of party or name change.

I HAVE A DISABILITY AND NEED HELP IN VOTING.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you will require assistance in voting, it should be stated on your registration card. Call the department of elections, 412-350-4500. If the fact that you have a disability is not noted on your card, you can still get help, if you complete a declaration at your polling place.

CAN I DO ANY OF THESE THINGS IN PERSON?

Yes, the Allegheny County Department of Elections is located in Downtown Pittsburgh at: City-County Building—6th floor, 542 Forbes Avenue at Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

—ANDREA BARILLA



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