

NORTH DAKOTA
SECRETARY OF STATE

ELECTIONS 101

DEMOCRACY STARTS HERE

North Dakota Election Facts

Secretary of State = Chief Election Official

The Secretary of State, as the chief election official, directs what election equipment and processes are used across all North Dakota counties. This uniformity creates consistency and security for North Dakota elections.

Other states can differ from North Dakota and may allow each local government to choose equipment and procedures for the election.

50 States = 50 Different Election Laws

What you see and hear about election equipment, laws, and processes in other states often DOES NOT apply to North Dakota.

Each state's election laws are different. It is important to remember that what happens in another state may already be prevented from occurring in North Dakota due to the robust election laws the state has wisely put in place in past legislative sessions.



VOTE.ND.GOV

Your trusted source for
election information.

Election Integrity Safeguards

Robust Voter ID Laws

- You **MUST** have a valid form of North Dakota ID to vote in North Dakota elections.
 - ND Driver's License
 - ND Non-Driver ID
 - Tribal ID or Tribal Letter
 - Long Term Care Certificate

Paper Ballots

- North Dakota **ONLY** uses paper ballots.
- Paper ballots are required by North Dakota law and are an important security measure as they create an auditable paper trail. **NOT** all states use paper ballots.
- The ExpressVote assistive ballot marking device also uses a paper ballot card.

Only U.S. Citizens Are Allowed to Vote

- North Dakota elections are **ONLY** for U.S. citizens. The North Dakota Constitution states "Only a citizen of the United States, who has attained the age of eighteen years and who is a North Dakota resident, shall be a qualified elector." In 2023, the Legislature passed HB 1431 to strengthen requirements to ensure non-citizens are not voting in North Dakota elections.

ND Does Not Mass Mail Ballots

- A voter must complete and submit an absentee ballot application to their county election official before a ballot is mailed. The application includes verification of their identification and a check to ensure the voter hasn't already voted.

Ballot Handling Equipment Does Not Connect to the Internet - **EVER**

- Election equipment used in North Dakota – Election Systems & Software (ES&S) DS200, DS450, and the ExpressVote – are **NOT CONNECTED TO THE INTERNET** and contain no components for such a connection.

Banning of Private Money to Fund Election Administration (Zuckerbucks)

- Legislation was passed in 2021 banning money from private citizens or organizations for use in the administration of a public election in North Dakota.

Voting Options

Every county must have at least one polling location available on Election Day.

North Dakota allows voters to choose:

- Vote by Mail
- Absentee
- Early Voting (in person)
- Election Day (in person)

Each County Commission decides whether their county is a vote by mail or absentee county, and whether or not early voting is offered.

VOTE BY MAIL COUNTY

All qualified voters in the county are mailed an absentee ballot application.

ABSENTEE COUNTY

Voters must request an absentee ballot application.

In either case, a voter must always complete and return the absentee ballot application with their voter ID information and signature. County Auditors verify the voter's identity and mail them a ballot, if qualified. Voters must complete and return their ballot (in person or postmarked) by the day before Election Day.

Voter ID Laws

North Dakota's robust voter ID laws make us the **ONLY** state without voter registration, and ensure only U.S. citizens are allowed to vote.

A VALID ID IN NORTH DAKOTA IS:

- ND Driver's License
- ND Non-Driver ID
- Tribal ID or Tribal Letter
- Long Term Care Certificate

QUALIFICATIONS:

- 18 years old
- United States Citizen
- Resident of ND and have lived in the precinct for 30 days prior to Election Day

Election Equipment

Secretary of State Michael Howe approves all voting systems used by North Dakota's 53 counties. The equipment is extensively tested and certified at the federal level. North Dakota's election officials also test all equipment before and after each election to ensure accuracy.

Ballot Handling Equipment

All ballot handling equipment is **NOT CONNECTED TO THE INTERNET** and has **NO** components for such a connection.

> DS200

Ballot tabulator used at all polling sites

> DS450

Large capacity ballot tabulator used for absentee ballots at courthouse

> ExpressVote

Touchscreen assistive ballot marking device used at polling sites

- Creates accessibility for all voters
- Only uses paper ballot card
- Paper ballot card is tabulated in the same DS200 as traditional paper ballots

Voter Check-In

PollPads are used to check in voters at all polling locations. PollPads are connected to the Internet to be able to make immediate updates to the Central Voter File. This ensures that one person = one vote as it updates all other polling locations when a voter checks in to vote or has voted by absentee ballot.

- Connected to other polling locations through an encrypted secure portal
- Prints ballot receipt to ensure voters receive correct ballot
- Does not handle ballot information – only used for voter check-in

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