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Yalla **يالا** VOTE

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VIRGINIA

Yalla Vote 2010 State Guide

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Virginia Yalla Vote 2010 Guide

ELECTIONS

General Election on Tuesday, November 2, 2010

Polls OPEN at 6 AM and CLOSE at 7 PM

DEADLINES

Voter Registration

General Election

Must be registered to vote by **October 4, 2010**

Other Deadlines:

Special Elections

General: Must have registered to vote at least 29 days before the election

Primary: Must have registered to vote at least 29 days before election

Absentee Ballot Registration

General Election

By Mail: October 26, 2010

In Person: October 29, 2010

To register to vote a person must meet all the following criteria:

- Be a resident of Virginia (A person who has come to Virginia for temporary purposes and intends to return to another state is not considered a resident for voting purposes)
- Be a U. S. Citizen
- Be 18 years old (Any person who is 17 years old and will be eighteen years of age at the next general election shall be permitted to register in advance and also vote in any intervening primary or special election)
- Does not claim the right to vote in any other State
- Not currently declared mentally incompetent by a court of law
- If convicted of a felony, your right to vote must have been restored

Persons eligible to register can obtain a registration application at any of the following locations:

- Local voter registration office
- Online
- State or local government offices when applying or recertifying for Aid to Dependent Children, Food Stamps, WIC, Medicaid, or Rehabilitation Services

- Government offices in the State that provide State-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to person with disabilities
- Armed forces recruitment offices
- Public libraries
- State Board of Elections office
- Department of Motor Vehicles offices
- Voter Registration Drives

The completed application can be filed with the local registration office or mailed to the address printed on the form. Application for registration can be submitted using a Virginia Voter Registration Application form or a National Voter Registration Application form. Military and other persons residing outside of the United States should contact the Federal Voting Assistance Program for registration information.

- Once you have submitted your registration form, you should receive a voter registration card in the mail. If you do not receive one, contact your local Registrar's Office to make sure that your application has been processed.

Working at the Polls: Poll Watchers and Poll Workers

Poll Watchers

Any citizen may go to a polling place and observe. The poll watcher watches to see if any violations of the election laws occur. If such a violation occurs, the poll watcher is to inform the election board of the violation. The election board consists of the poll workers. Uniformed law enforcement officers are not allowed to be poll watchers. Poll watchers are responsible for supplying any necessities or materials needed while at the polls, i.e. chairs, tables, writing materials, etc. They cannot use the poll workers' supplies.

The poll watcher may not interfere with or impede the conduct of any election. He/she should come no closer to the official table or the voting booths than is reasonably necessary. Unless there is an observation of questionable nature, the poll watcher is not permitted to speak to the election board or voter.

Poll watchers should know:

1. The first poll watcher of the Election Day has the right to see that the ballot box is empty before the first ballot is cast.
2. A poll watcher may observe the distribution of the ballot to the voter and after the voter has voted the depositing of ballot into the ballot box.
3. If the poll watcher observes what he thinks might be a violation, he/she may question a voter's privilege by stating his/her case to the election board. Remember, the election board consists of the poll workers at that precinct.

4. The poll watcher may observe the closing procedures when the polls close. A poll watcher is not allowed to talk to any person in the polling place except when questioning a procedure.

No poll watcher may wear anything advertising a candidacy or promoting for or against an issue. Poll watchers are official observers only. They may observe the conduct of the election before, during and after the polls close. The election board is the sole authority in the polling place on Election Day. No person, except the board, may handle or touch election supplies and materials. If the poll watcher feels that a violation has taken place during an election, the poll watcher must notify the election board. Electioneering, campaigning or solicitation **within 100 feet** of the entrance to the polling room is prohibited.

Campaigning and the Polls

On the day of any primary, referendum or election, no person shall solicit in behalf of or in opposition to the candidacy of another or himself or in behalf of or in opposition to any question being submitted at the election or referendum within **a radius of 75 feet** of any outside entrance in use as an entry to any polling place or in any corridor, passageway or other approach leading from any such outside entrance to such polling place or in any room opening upon any such corridor, passageway or approach, except as provided in section. The selectmen shall provide suitable markers to indicate the 75 foot distance from such entrance.

Registration for Groups with Special Needs

If an elector requires assistance to vote, by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to write or to read the ballot, assistance may be given by a person of the elector's choice except the elector's employer, an agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the elector's union. The person assisting the elector may accompany the elector into the voting booth.

If a voter is unable to write, he or she may ask the person of their choice to fill it out in their presence as he or she directs and signs their name on the application and ballot envelope followed by the word "by" and the helper's own signature.

Persons with physical disabilities may request the local Registrars of Voters to come to the place where they live.

Any person, regardless of his or her disability status, has the right to register to vote at any office or agency that provides such a service. These offices include but are not limited to: Department of Health (VDH), Dept of Social Services (DSS), Dept of Mental Health (DMHRSAR), Dept for Rehab Services (DRS), Dept for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH), and the Dept for the Blind and

Vision Impaired (DBVI). The local Registrar's Office also has registration forms and should be able to accommodate any special need. Forms may be downloaded from the State Board of Elections website at www.sbe.virginia.gov.

For individuals with vision impairments the State Board of Elections works to provide large print copies of all voting related material. The local Registrar's Office should have large print versions of all materials in circulation at this time.

Curbside Voting and Assistance for the Elderly

Curbside voting is still available for people ages 65 and older, or any person with a disability. With the implementation of HAVA (Help America Vote Act), curbside voters may now be able to vote on an electronic voting device in lieu of a paper ballot.

To vote curbside the voter must ask his or her driver or other individual to inform the officers of election that there is a person wishing to vote curbside. The necessary equipment will be brought to you in your vehicle. The voter shall be afforded every opportunity to vote in a private and independent fashion, but voting equipment must remain in the view of the election officers.

In accordance with the Help America Vote Act every polling location in Virginia must be equipped with at least one accessible voting system that will allow all voters with a disability to vote the same private and independent manner as a voter without a disability.

Convicted Felons

A person who has been convicted of a felony prior to January 1st, 2002, or convicted and confined to a correctional facility after January 1st, 2002, cannot apply to become a voter until the Registrars of Voters of the town where they live have restored their voting rights. To restore their rights, the convicted felon must apply in person at their local Registrars of Voters office and provide documentation of their release from confinement/parole, or that they were never confined. The State Department will provide releases of confinement. If person were convicted before 2002 and never confined, the State Judicial Department will provide the appropriate form to be given to the Registrars of Voters for restoration of their voting rights.

ID Requirements

Virginia voters are reminded that under law passed by the 2000 General Assembly, they are now required to provide identification (ID) at the polls, or sign an Affirmation of Identification at the polls, in order to vote at the polls. The 2002 General Assembly extended the ID requirement to absentee voters who vote in person.

Acceptable forms of identification include the following:

- Virginia voter identification card
- Valid Virginia driver's license
- Any Federal, state or local government-issued ID
- Employer issued photo ID card
- Social Security card

Any voter who forgets to bring acceptable ID to the polls may still vote but, will be requested to sign, under oath, an Affirmation of Identity form affirming that he/she is the voter he/she claims to be. A voter who requires assistance to vote by reason of physical disability or an inability to read or write may, if he so requests, also be assisted in completing this statement.

New ID Requirements for Certain Voters

For persons who registered to vote in Virginia by mailing their registration applications on or after January 1, 2003, the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 requires those persons to show identification (ID) when voting for the first time in a federal election if they did not send a copy of one of these IDs with their voter registration applications. Any of the following types of ID are acceptable:

1. A current and valid photo ID (for example a driver's license);
2. A current utility bill, bank statement, government check or paycheck that shows name and address;
3. Another government document that shows name and address (for example a voter card).

This new federal ID requirement applies the first time a person votes in any federal election, either on the day of the election or by absentee ballot. If the voter does not present one of these forms of ID at the polls, that person can still vote, but must cast a conditional ballot. This is a paper ballot that the local electoral board counts the day after the election, after it verifies the person was qualified to vote in that precinct.

When the person votes in other elections after his or her first federal election, the regular Virginia ID requirement will apply, as it does to all other voters.

Absentee Voting

You can contact your local Voter Registration Office to request an absentee ballot application. You can either return the completed application to your local voter registration office either by mail or fax. The absentee ballot application must be received in your local voter registration office by the Tuesday before Election Day to receive a ballot by mail to this address: Suite 101, 200 North 9th Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219-3485. The VA state board of elections can be reached at 804 864-8901 or toll free: 800 552-9745 FAX: 804 371-0194.

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