

A NOTE FROM THE SUPERVISOR:

Election Day is quickly approaching and it is an exciting time here in the Elections' Office. I take the trust you have placed in me very seriously and try diligently to operate this office in a nonpartisan manner. The Election team strives to treat each voter with respect and provide a friendly and helpful atmosphere.

Elections are vitally important in the success of America, therefore it is equally important that voters take the time to research candidates and issues, then fill out their ballot and be a part of this great right we have as Americans, the right to vote.

Our office is available if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call or stop by the Elections' Office.

Highlands County Elections Office Staff



2022 Election Cycle

UPCOMING ELECTIONS

- **August 23**, Florida Primary Election. Deadline to register in order to vote in this election is July 25, 2022.
- **November 8**, Florida General Election. Deadline to register in order to vote in this election is October 11, 2022.

VOTER'S BILL OF RIGHTS:

Each registered voter in this state has the right to:

1. Vote and have his or her vote accurately counted.
2. Cast a vote if he or she is in line at the official closing of the polls in that county.
3. Ask for and receive assistance in voting.
4. Receive up to two replacement ballots if he or she makes a mistake prior to the ballot being cast.
5. An explanation if his or her registration is in question.
6. If his or her registration is in question, cast a provisional ballot.
7. Written instructions to use when voting, and, upon request, oral instructions in voting from election officers.
8. Vote free from coercion or intimidation by election officers or any other person.
9. Vote on a voting system that is in working condition and that will allow votes to be accurately cast.

VOTER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each registered voter in this state should:

1. Familiarize himself or herself with the candidates and issues.
2. Maintain with the office of the Supervisor of Elections a current address.
3. Know the location of his or her polling place and its hours of operation.
4. Bring proper identification to the polling station.
5. Familiarize himself or herself with the operation of the voting equipment in his or her precinct.
6. Treat precinct workers with courtesy.
7. Respect the privacy of other voters.
8. Report any problems or violations of election laws to the Supervisor of Elections.
9. Ask questions, if needed.
10. Make sure that his or her completed ballot is correct before leaving the polling station.

ASSISTANCE IN VOTING:

If you need assistance in voting you may bring someone with you to the polling place, however, the voter must first complete an affidavit to secure assistance. If you need assistance and have no one, you may request the assistance of the poll workers. If this happens, two poll workers from opposite parties will assist you.

WANT TO BE A POLL WORKER:

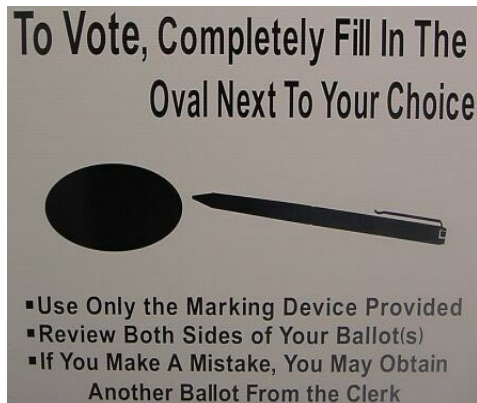
We are always looking for unbiased competent poll workers. If you are interested in becoming a poll worker and doing your part in the election process, please contact us by calling 863-402-6655.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY VOTING SYSTEMS

Highlands County uses an optical scan voting system. This means that, upon verification of your eligibility, you will be presented with a paper ballot printed with the candidates/issues that you are eligible to vote on. You will retire to a secrecy booth and mark your ballot with the pen provided by filling in the oval next to your choice. Once you are finished marking your ballot, you will place it into a machine that reads and records your votes.

Optical Scan:

The “Golden Rule” when voting an Optical Scan ballot: “DARKEN IN THE OVAL”



Auto Mark Voting Method (for disabled voters only): Each precinct and early voting site in Highlands County will have an AutoMark Voting unit for use by the disabled voters only. With the AutoMark method, the disabled voter will be issued a paper ballot and the voter will insert the ballot into the AutoMark unit. The voter will then touch the screen indicating their choices in each contest. The AutoMark unit will mark the oval for the voter and will return the marked ballot to the voter when finished. The voter will then insert the ballot into the optical scanner to be counted.

A visually impaired voter may be given a set of headphones and will vote using an audio ballot. The audio ballot will instruct the voter on using the AutoMark unit. When the voter is finished they will be able to review the ballot using the AutoMark audio system.

INFORMATION

YOU MAY REGISTER TO VOTE IF:

- You are a U.S. citizen,
- You are 18 years of age (you may pre-register at 16, but you must be 18 to vote), and
- You are a legal resident of the Florida county in which you wish to register.

Anyone convicted of a felony or declared mentally incompetent with respect to voting, may not register or vote until their civil rights or competency has been restored.

Use a mail-in **Florida Voter Registration Application** completing all required blocks per instructions. The forms are available online, at some governmental offices, public assistance offices, libraries, and drivers license offices or upon request by calling the Highlands County Supervisor of Elections Office at **863-402-6655**. You may also register in person at the Supervisor of Elections Office.

CHANGES IN YOUR REGISTRATION:

It is the *responsibility of the voter* to keep his or her address current with the Election Office. Be sure you notify us if you have a name change, party affiliation change, or an address change. A new voter Information card will then be mailed to you. **If you move to another county or state, you must contact the Voter Registration Office in your new location.**

POLLING PLACES:

On Election day polling places are open at 7:00 a.m. and remain open until all voters who are in line to vote at 7:00 p.m. have voted. Your precinct number and polling location are listed on your voter information card. **You will not be permitted to vote at a precinct where you are not assigned.**

PHOTO & SIGNATURE IDENTIFICATION:

You are required to present picture and signature identification at the polls when voting. It can be one form of identification or two separate forms of identification. If you do not have proper identification you will be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. **The following forms of ID are allowed by law.**

Valid Florida driver's license
Florida ID card
United States passport
Debit or Credit card
Military ID
U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs Health ID card
Concealed Weapon License
Government employee ID
Retirement center ID
Student ID
Neighborhood association ID
Public assistance ID

INFORMATION

EARLY VOTING:

Early Voting will be conducted at various locations throughout Highlands County prior to election day. You may call our office at 863-402-6655 to find the location nearest to you. Locations and times will be published and available on our website.

UPDATE OF VOTER SIGNATURE:

Has your signature changed? When you return an absentee ballot or sign a petition, your signature is verified against the signature we have on file. If the signatures do not match, your absentee ballot may not be counted or your petition may not be accepted. Voters may update their signature by completing a voter registration application. If you need an application, please call 863-402-6655 and we will send one to you.

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Per Florida Statutes, you must vote at the precinct where you are assigned on Election Day. If you vote in a precinct which does not include your permanent home residence address, you commit a crime. If your address changes before Election Day (even if it is across the street), be certain to notify your Supervisor of Elections. The Elections Office will inform you if you have a new precinct number and polling location.

FLORIDA IS A CLOSED PRIMARY STATE:

In a Florida Primary (unlike in municipal, general and special elections), you may only vote for candidates of the political party in which you are registered. (For example, only persons registered as Republican may vote for Republican candidates and only persons registered as Democratic may vote for Democratic candidates.) There is only one exception - if all candidates running for an office have the same party affiliation, and the winner will have no opposition in the general election, then all registered voters may vote on that race in the primary. It is important to know that in a primary, if there are nonpartisan candidates (such as judicial, or school board candidates) or issues (such as local referendums) on the ballot, all voters may vote on these regardless of party. In general elections, all registered voters may vote on all races and issues.

VOTING ABSENTEE

HOW TO OBTAIN A VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT:

Any registered and qualified voter may vote a vote by mail ballot. A ballot may be requested for a specific election or for all elections in the current calendar year. The request can be made in person, by mail, on-line, or by telephone. Only the voter or a designated member of the voter's immediate family or legal guardian can request a vote by mail ballot for the voter. Immediate family means the voter's spouse or the parent, child, grandparent, or sibling of the voter or of the voter's spouse. A ballot request must be done in writing when the ballot will be mailed to an address not already on file with the Elections' Office.

A request for a vote by mail ballot must include the name of the voter, the voter's address, the voter's date of birth, the voter's signature (if written request) and voter's drivers license number or last four digits of their social security number. If the voter has designated an immediate family member to request the ballot for him or her, the designee must also provide his or her own name, address, driver license number or last four digits of their social security number, relationship to the voter and signature (written request only).

Vote by mail ballots must be received in the Supervisor of Elections office no later than 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.

MILITARY:

Military personnel may apply for voter registration or request vote by mail ballots with a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) which may be obtained from the Unit Voting Officer.

NOTE: Spouses and dependents are considered to be of the same category of absentee voter as military members and generally should follow the same rules.

U.S. Embassies and Consulates can assist in completing and mailing FPCA forms, absentee ballots and other election materials. Federal portions of general election and presidential preference primary ballots voted by persons outside the U.S. are counted if postmarked no later than election day and received within 10 days of the election. Additional military election information is available from:

THE FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Department of Defense
4800 Mark Center Drive
Suite 03J25-02
Alexandria, VA 22350-5000