



NCRGEA *Government Relations* Update

NCRGEA Governmental Relations Update #20-25 - One Week to Go— Your Options

As of today, only one week remains before Election Day and a presidential election that is considered by many political scientists to be the most important this country has faced in 40 years.

It was announced on Monday that three million North Carolinians have already voted, which is already an early-voting record for our state -- and there are still a few days left.

Still need help deciding?

We can help. As you probably know from our newsletters and social media posts, NCRGEA has been continually active during the campaign. We put out guides on candidates for the Legislature and Council of State during the summer months and held candidate forums with the candidates for Governor and Treasurer on Oct. 1 and the candidates for Lt. Governor on Oct. 6.

We do not endorse specific candidates or political parties. However, we provide our members with objective information to enable them to decide for themselves who the best choices are.

Follow the links on the main page at www.ncrgea.com to see the candidate information for various offices in North Carolina. This will remain up through Election Day.

We recorded the candidate forums from earlier this month. They are available on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1ZO8Y7t1cf8ONmrusHoAWA>. Follow the link to “Meet the Candidates” at the bottom of the page.

Go Vote

We, at NCRGEA, do not want anyone who wishes to vote to be left behind and we encourage all members to vote. Even though just a few days remain you still have options. Even those who have not registered still have a chance to do so but must do it before the end of this week. Same-day (new) registrations will not be allowed on Election Day (November 3).

The State took measures earlier this year to make voting safer in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the recent spike in new cases it looks like this was a wise move. We recommend voting before the end of the week and avoiding Election Day crowds for those at high risk for COVID.

Here are your voting options:

One stop-early voting (Mandatory for unregistered voters who still need to register.)

Polling places throughout North Carolina will be open through Saturday. You can stop at any one-stop polling place in your county to vote.

The list of one-stop voting sites is located at <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/OSSite/>. Select your county from the drop-down menu and you will see the complete list. You must vote in the county where you are registered to vote. Most one-stop sites are open from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. each day.

If you are not yet registered to vote and wish to do so, you must go to one of the sites in your county and register before the end of the week. Poll workers are authorized to register new voters who may then vote immediately. The Board of Elections will confirm the new voter's eligibility and count the ballot once it is confirmed. You will need one of the following documents to register:

- North Carolina driver's license;
- Other photo identification issued by a government agency. Any government-issued photo ID is acceptable provided that the card includes the voter's current name and address;
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document showing the voter's name and address.
- A current college/university photo identification card paired with proof of campus habitation.

For those who are already registered, one-stop early voting tends to be a quick in-and-out affair, and is likely to be safer from a social distancing standpoint than waiting in lines on Election Day.

Voting by Mail

Today, Tuesday, October 27 is the final day to request a mail-in ballot in North Carolina. Your county's Board of Elections must receive the ballot by 5 p.m. on that date. You may email, fax, or go in person to your county Board of Elections to request a ballot. The State Board of Elections has a form available at <https://s3.amazonaws.com/dl.ncsbe.gov/Forms/NCAbsenteeBallotRequestForm.pdf> that you can fill out and file. We do not recommend this method at this late juncture due to issues with mail delivery at the U.S. Postal Service. You can still get a ballot by mail or in person at your county Board of Elections and it will count as long as it is postmarked by Election Day (Tuesday, November 3), but if you haven't mailed it back by now, you should probably take it to an early-voting site (see above) or drop it off at your county Board of Elections office by 5 p.m. on Election Day.

Make sure you have your witness sign any mail-in ballots. Without the witness signature, mail ballots cannot be counted and it will be too late to correct any problems with the ballot before the deadline.

We strongly recommend submitting any mail-in ballot in your possession as soon as possible. If you prefer not to vote on Election Day and have not requested a mail-in ballot, you can go to a one-stop polling place before the end of the week.

Voting in Person on Election Day

If all else fails, polling places in North Carolina will be open on Tuesday, November 3 from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Anyone who is in line at 7:30 p.m. will still be able to vote. The busiest times tend to be early in the morning and just before the polls close. Avoid longer lines by voting at off-peak times.

Election officials will do their best to protect voters from exposure to COVID-19 but with large crowds of people only so much can be done. Make sure you wear a face covering and try

to maintain social distancing.

If you're not sure where to vote, the State Board of Elections has a tool online to help: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/PPLkup/>. Just type in your address and it will tell you where to go.

As stated before, you cannot register on Election Day and vote. There is not enough time for county boards of election to confirm eligibility. If you have not yet registered, go to a one-stop polling place prior to Saturday with the correct documentation (see section on one-stop voting above) and vote there.

If you're not sure whether you are registered or not, use this tool at the State Board of Elections to check: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/RegLkup/>.

Persons with disabilities can ask for help. Both walk-up and curbside voting options are available at polling places on Election Day for those who are unable to enter the polling place, have a medical condition that puts them at high risk for COVID-19 or cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition.

Stay safe and well!

Richard Rogers
NCRGEA Executive Director