

Voting Rights and Responsibilities

The opportunity to vote is a fundamental right of American citizenship and an important responsibility for students to learn about and understand. Students with a disability need to be aware of their rights to equal access and assistance to become registered and cast their vote. The Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) are the expectations of what students need to know and be able to do at the end of each grade. The fourth standard of social studies is **Civics**. Civics teaches the complexity of the origins, structure, and functions of governments; the rights, roles, and responsibilities of ethical citizenship; the importance of law; and the skills necessary to participate in all levels of government. The prepared graduate competencies are preschool through twelfth-grade concepts and skills that all students who complete the Colorado education system must master to ensure their success in a postsecondary and workforce setting.

- Prepared Graduates in **Civics**: 1. Analyze and practice rights, roles, and responsibilities of citizens

Help America Vote Act 2002

The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) provides clarification of election procedures and promotes the right to vote. The Secretary of Health and Human Services authorizes state and local governments to make polling places, including the path of travel, entrances, exits, and voting areas of each polling facility, accessible to individuals with disabilities, including the blind and visually impaired, in a manner that provides the same opportunity for access and participation (including privacy and independence) as for other voters; and providing individuals with disabilities and others with information about the accessibility of polling places. HAVA requires each polling location to have at least one voting system accessible to individuals with disabilities, including nonvisual accessibility for the blind and visually impaired.

Colorado Election Law

Colorado has its own voting rights law that provides its citizens with protections with the following key components:

Who Can Vote in Colorado?

- US Citizen
- 18 years old by Election Day
- Live in Colorado for at least 22 days before Election Day
- Not in a correctional facility, jail, or prison or on parole for a felony

Who Can Register to Vote in Colorado?

- Same as above. **Additionally, 16-17 year olds can “pre-register” to vote. For students preparing to transition from high school, registering to vote can be an important step in the transition process.**

Legislation passed in Colorado in 2013 makes it easier for youth to register to vote by allowing pre-registration: Under C.R.S. 1-2-101 (2)(a)(I) – Every person who is otherwise qualified to register and is sixteen years of age or older but will not have reached eighteen years of age by the date of the next election may PREREGISTER and update his or her preregistration information through the [Colorado Secretary of State's office](#) or at the Department of Motor Vehicles when taking driving tests. Upon reaching eighteen years of age, the person is automatically registered.

Where Can You Register to Vote?

- At school
- Department of Revenue (CODOR) Driver's License Offices
- Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- County Clerk and Recorders Offices (any time)
- Online with a CODOR photo ID or CO driver's license number

What Identification Do You Need to Register to Vote?

- Colorado Driver's License number, if you have one
- Colorado photo ID from CODOR, if you have one
- Last 4 numbers of your Social Security Number

What Identification Do You Need to Vote in Person?

Every Colorado voter must provide acceptable identification when voting at a polling place. If your form of identification shows your address, that address must be in the state of Colorado. Acceptable forms of identification are:

- a valid Colorado driver's license
- a valid identification card issued by the Department of Revenue
- a valid U.S. passport
- a valid employee identification card with your photo issued by any department or agency of the United States government or of this state, or by any county, municipality, board, etc. in Colorado
- a valid U.S. military identification card with your photo
- a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows your name and address
- a cable bill or telephone bill
- a paycheck from a government institution or private company
- a Certificate of Degree of Indian or Alaskan Native blood
- a valid Medicare or Medicaid card issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
- a certified copy of your U.S. birth certificate
- certified documentation of naturalization
- a valid student identification card with your photo issued by a community college, college or university in Colorado
- a valid veteran photo identification card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs
- a valid identification card issued by a federally recognized tribal government certifying tribal membership

Voters who live in some group residential facilities may not be required to provide identification at the polling place since proof of such residence may be acceptable as identification.

Where can I learn more?

- See [Resources \(Secondary Transition\)](#)
- [Colorado Secretary of State. Voter Registration FAQs](#)

This CDE guidance document is meant for clarification, is not legally binding, and is not to be confused with legal advice. This guidance reflects CDE's recommendations, but Administrative Units (AUs) may have developed their own policies or procedures that differ from those described herein. Be sure to refer to your local AU's policies and procedures through the Director of Special Education. If you are seeking legal advice, please contact your legal counsel.

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