

Voting Procedures for Eligible Inmates

Even though you are incarcerated, you may be eligible to vote. In accordance with Connecticut General Statute § 9-14a, eligible inmates may be allowed to vote by absentee ballot, due to "absence from town during all hours of voting."

Who is Eligible to Vote?

- Must be at least 18 years of age by the next election and a U.S. citizen in addition to the criteria listed below.
- No current felony conviction and no prior felony conviction (unless voting rights have been restored following the felony conviction).
- Inmates serving time for misdemeanors only, with no prior felony conviction unless voting rights have been restored following the felony conviction.
- Inmates on unsentenced status with no prior felony conviction unless voting rights have been restored following the felony conviction.

NOTE: Persons providing false information concerning voting eligibility are subject to penalties including fines and conviction of a Class D felony offense. Summaries of parts of Connecticut General Statute *CHAPTER 143 ELECTORS: QUALIFICATIONS AND ADMISSION* are provided below. The full statutes are available for review in the inmate libraries.

Penalties for False Statements: You are guilty of false statements in absentee balloting if you intentionally make a false statement on, or sign the name of another person to, the application for absentee voting forms. This is a class D felony (Sec. 9-359a), with a sentence of one to five years in prison (Sec. 53a-35a) and up to a five thousand dollar fine (Sec. 53a-41).

Sec. 9-45. Removal from registry list of convicted felons who are committed to custody of Commissioner of Correction. DOC provides the names of inmates to the town registrars, who erase those names from the registry lists. Anyone who votes after having forfeited such privileges by reason of confinement, shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars and imprisoned not more than one year.

Sec. 9-357. Fraudulent registration. Any person who fraudulently claims to be eligible to register to vote shall be subject to a five hundred dollar fine and/or imprisoned not more than one year.

Sec. 9-360. Fraudulent voting. Any person not legally qualified who fraudulently votes shall be fined not less than three hundred dollars nor more than five hundred dollars and shall be imprisoned not less than one year nor more than two years. Any person who votes or attempts to vote at any election, primary or town meeting by assuming the name of another person shall be Guilty of a Class D felony and shall be disenfranchised.

Sec. 9-361. Primary or enrollment violations: Any person voting or attempting to vote in any primary in which he is not eligible is guilty of a Class D felony and shall be disenfranchised. Anyone who registers or votes in a district other than which he/she is legally entitled to vote; anyone who signs the name of another to an application to register without their knowledge and consent; anyone who falsely represents the contents of any written or printed form of application for enrollment shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than sixty days or both.

How to Vote

Step 1: Complete a Voter Registration Card

1. If you are not a registered voter, ask the assigned staff person for a mail-in voter registration card (English or Spanish). You may receive assistance in filling out this card.
2. Please fill out ***all*** the appropriate boxes. Pay extra attention to
 - a) Box #3 (Date of Birth)
 - b) Box #4 (Complete Driver's License number or last four digits of Social Security Number).
 - c) In box number #5 write your home address where you live (hometown) and in box #6 write the **Correctional Facility's** address.
 - d) In box #9 you must indicate if you wish to enroll in a political party or remain a nonaffiliated voter.
3. Do not allow anyone to determine your political affiliation.
4. You must sign the card yourself.
5. DOC will forward the card to the Town Clerk's Office as privileged correspondence.

Step 2: Submit Request for Absentee Ballot Application

Along with your Voter Registration Card, submit in writing notification to the Town Clerk's office of the town where you live (hometown) that you would like an absentee ballot application. You may retrieve addresses of any Town Clerks Office through the assigned staff persons.

Upon receiving your request, the Town Clerk will forward an Absentee Ballot Application to you. Make sure you read the application carefully and complete all the appropriate boxes before ***returning it back*** to the Town Clerk's Office. Anyone can assist you in filling out the absentee ballot application only. The absentee ballot application must be returned in order to receive the actual absentee ballot.

Step 3: How to Complete an Actual Absentee Ballot

Upon receiving your absentee ballot application, the Town Clerk's office will mail you the actual absentee ballot you will use to vote. Follow the detail instructions included with the absentee ballot and return envelopes.

Note: No one can mark the ballot on your behalf, unless you are blind, disabled or unable to read or write (CGS§ 9-264). No one else can possess your ballot or mail it for you, except an immediate family member, your doctor or nurse or other health care provider (CGS§ 9-140b (d))

Deadlines to Vote

Primary Election: Mail-in Voter Registration cards for a primary must be postmarked by five calendar days before the day of the primary. (CGS§ 9-23).

General Election: Mail-in Voter Registration cards for a general election must be postmarked fourteen calendar days before the day of the election.

Absentee Ballot Applications: Absentee ballot applications can be requested thirty-one (31) days prior to the day of an election.

Actual Absentee Ballot: Absentee ballot has to be in the Town Clerk's Office by 8pm on the day of an election.