

## Summary

# Preregistration for Young Voters

Updated September 25, 2023

Related Topic: [Elections](#)

## Key Takeaways:

**Sixteen states and Washington, D.C., permit preregistration beginning at age 16.**

**Four states permit preregistration beginning at age 17.**

**Five states set another age at which an individual may preregister.**

**Twenty-five states do not specifically address an age for registration and instead allow an individual to register if they will turn 18 by the next election.**

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## How Preregistration Works

Preregistration is an election procedure that allows individuals younger than 18 years of age to register to vote, so they are eligible to cast a ballot when they reach 18, the voting age for all state and federal elections. Typically, a pre-registrant will fill out an application and be added to the voter registration list with a “pending” or “preregistration” status. Upon turning 18, the individual is added to the voter registration list and able to cast a ballot.

Preregistration states vary in terms of their registration age limits. Some allow 16-year-olds to preregister, and others allow 17-year-olds to preregister. The remaining preregistration states do not establish a specific preregistration age limit. Instead, these states allow youth to register to vote before the age of 18, provided that they will be of voting age by the time of the next general election. See the section on Voter Registration Ages below for more information.

Some states also permit 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections, provided that they will turn 18 before the general election.

## State Voter Registration Ages

Sixteen states and Washington, D.C., permit preregistration beginning at 16 years old:

- California, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Virginia and Washington.

Four states permit preregistration beginning at 17 years old:

- Maine, Nevada, New Jersey and West Virginia.

Five states set another age at which an individual may preregister:

- Alaska permits those under 18 to register anytime within 90 days before they turn 18.
- Georgia, Iowa and Missouri permit registration of those who are 17 1/2 (if they turn 18 before the next election).
- Texas permits a person who is 17 years and 10 months of age to register.

Twenty-five states do not specifically address an age for registration and instead allow an individual to register if they will turn 18 by the next election (note that this usually refers to the next general election, with some exceptions). In some states this may mean that youth could register as soon as the previous general election is over, so that could be as early as 16 years of age. Reach out to your state election officials for details.

- Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Wisconsin and Wyoming.
- North Dakota does not require individuals to register prior to the election, but to qualify as an elector an individual must be eighteen years or older on Election Day.

More details in the table below.

## State Statutes on Preregistration

| <b>State</b>  | <b>Who Can Preregister</b>    | <b>Statutory Language</b>   |
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| Alabama<br><br>Const. of Ala. Article VIII<br><br><a href="#">Voter Registration FAQs</a> | 18 by the election.           | Every citizen of the United States who has attained the age of eighteen years and has resided in this state and in a county thereof for the time provided by law, if registered as provided by law, shall have the right to vote in the county of his or her residence. |
| Alaska  | Within 90 days preceding 18th | A person who is qualified under AS 15.05.010(1)--(3) is entitled to register at any time throughout the year  |

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| AS §15.07.040   | birthday.                     | except that a person under 18 years of age may register at any time within 90 days immediately preceding the person's 18th birthday.  |
| Arizona<br>A.R.S. § 16-101  | 18 by the election.           | A. Every resident of the state is qualified to register to vote if he:<br><br>2. Will be eighteen years of age or more on or before the date of the regular general election next following his registration.   |
| Arkansas<br>AR Const. Art. 3, § 1<br><br><a href="#">Voter Registration Information</a> | 18 by the election.           | Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution, any person may vote in an election in this state who is:<br><br>(1) A citizen of the United States;<br><br>(2) A resident of the State of Arkansas;<br><br>(3) At least eighteen (18) years of age; and<br><br>(4) Lawfully registered to vote in the election.  |
| California<br>CA Elec. Code §2102(2)(d)<br><br>(Enacted by SB 113 in 2014)              | 16-year-olds may preregister. | A person who is at least 16 years of age and otherwise meets all eligibility requirements to vote may submit his or her affidavit of registration as prescribed by this section. A properly executed affidavit of registration made pursuant to this subdivision shall be deemed effective as of the date the affiant will be 18 years of age, if the information in the affidavit of registration is still current at that time. If the information provided by the affiant in the affidavit of registration is not current at the time that the affidavit of registration would otherwise become effective, for his or her registration to become effective, the affiant shall provide the current information to the proper county elections official as prescribed by this chapter. |
| Colorado<br>Colo. Rev. Stat. §1-2-101(2)(a)(I)  | 16-year-olds may preregister. | Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, upon satisfactory proof of age, 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   |

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| (Enacted by HB 1135 in 2013)  |                               | and update his or her preregistered information by any means authorized in this article for persons eighteen years of age or older. Upon reaching eighteen years of age, the person is automatically registered.   |
| Connecticut<br>Conn. Gen. Stat. Ann.<br>§ 9-12                          | 18 by the election.           | (b) Any citizen who will have attained the age of eighteen years on or before the day of a regular election may apply for admission as an elector. If such citizen is found to be qualified the citizen shall become an elector on the day of the citizen's eighteenth birthday. The registrars shall add the name of any person applying under this subsection, if found qualified, to the registry list and, if applicable, to the enrollment list, together with the effective date of his registration. The registrars may place the name of each such person at the end of the registry and enrollment lists for the voting district. |
| Delaware<br>15 Del. Code § 1701(b)<br>(Enacted by HB 381 in 2010)       | 16-year-olds may preregister. | (b) The Department shall permit registration of any citizen and bona fide resident of this State 16 years of age or older through the Division of Motor Vehicles as set forth in § 2050(a) of this title, provided that such applicant shall not be a qualified voter unless the person will be 18 years of age or older on or before the day of the general election next succeeding the applicant's registration.  |
| District of Columbia<br>D.C. Code § 1-1001.07(a-2)<br>(Enacted in 2009) | 16-year-olds may preregister. | A person who is otherwise qualified may pre-register on or after that person's 16th birthday and may vote in any election occurring on or after that person's 17th birthday; provided, that the person is at least 18 years of age on or before the next general election.   |
| Florida<br>Fla. Stat. § 97.041(b)<br>(Enacted by SB 866 in 2008)        | 16-year-olds may preregister. | A person who is otherwise qualified may preregister on or after that person's 16th birthday and may vote in any election occurring on or after that person's 18th birthday.  |

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| Georgia<br><br>Ga. Code Ann. § 21-2-216(c)                  | 17.5-year-olds may preregister.  | (c) Any person who possesses the qualifications of an elector except that concerning age shall be permitted to register to vote if such person will acquire such qualification within six months after the day of registration; provided, however, that such person shall not be permitted to vote in a primary or election until the acquisition of all specified qualifications.   |
| Hawaii<br><br>HRS §11-12<br><br>(Enacted by SB 280 in 1993) | 16-year-olds may preregister, and 17-year-olds may register but not vote . | <p>(a) Every person who has reached the age of eighteen years or who is seventeen years of age and will be eighteen years of age by the date of the next election, and is otherwise qualified to register may do so for that election. The person shall then be listed upon the appropriate county general register and precinct list. No person shall register or vote in any other precinct than that in which the person resides except as provided in section 11-21.</p> <p>(b) A person who is otherwise qualified to register and is at least sixteen years of age but will not be eighteen years of age by the date of the next election may preregister upon satisfactory proof of age and shall be automatically registered upon reaching age eighteen.</p> |
| Idaho<br><br>Idaho Code § 34-402                            | 18 by the election.  | Every male or female citizen of the United States, eighteen (18) years old, who has resided in this state and in the county for thirty (30) days where he or she offers to vote prior to the day of election, if registered within the time period provided by law, is a qualified elector.  |
| Illinois<br><br>10 ILCS 5/3-6                               | 18 by the election.  | For the purposes of this Code, an individual who is 17 years of age and who will be 18 years of age on the date of the general or consolidated election shall be deemed competent to execute and attest to any voter registration forms.   |

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| Indiana<br><br>Ind. Code §3-7-13-1  | 18 by the election.             | <p>A person who:</p> <p>(1) will be at least eighteen (18) years of age at the next general, municipal, or special election;</p> <p>(2) is a United States citizen; and</p> <p>(3) resides in a precinct continuously before a general, municipal, or special election for at least thirty (30) days;</p> <p>may, upon making a proper application under this article, register to vote in that precinct.</p>   |
| Iowa<br><br>Iowa Code Election Laws §48A.5(2)<br><br>(Originally enacted by SF 2194 in 2010, amended by HF 516 in 2017) | 17.5-year-olds may preregister. | <p>2. To be qualified to register to vote an eligible elector shall:</p> <p>c. (1) Be at least eighteen years of age. However, for purposes of voting in the primary election, an eligible elector shall be at least eighteen years of age on the date of the respective general election or city election. Completed registration forms shall be accepted from registrants who are at least seventeen years of age. For an election other than a primary election, the registration shall not be effective until the registrant reaches the age of eighteen. The commissioner of registration shall ensure that the birth date shown on the registration form is at least seventeen years earlier than the date the registration is processed.</p> <p>(2) A registrant who is at least seventeen years of age and who will be eighteen by the date of a pending election is a registered voter for the pending election for purposes of chapter 53. For purposes of voting in a primary election under chapter 43, a registrant who will be at least eighteen years of age by the date of the respective general election or city election is a registered voter for the pending primary election.</p> |
| Kansas  | 18 by the election.             | The application for registration shall include a statement by the applicant that he will have reached the age of eighteen (18) years before the next  |

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| Kan. Rev. Stat. §25-2306   |                               | statewide general election. No person may vote at any election until he has reached the age of eighteen (18) years.  |
| Kentucky<br><br>Ky. Rev. Stat.<br><br>§116.045, §116.055                                 | 18 by the election.           | <p>Ky. Rev. Stat. §116.045(1) Any person may register as a voter during the period registration is open if he or she possesses, or will possess on the day of the next regular election, the qualifications set forth in KRS 116.025.</p> <p>Ky. Rev. Stat. § 116.055... The qualifications shall be determined as of the date of the primary, without regard to the qualifications or disqualifications as they may exist at the succeeding regular election, except that minors seventeen (17) years of age who will become eighteen (18) years of age on or before the day of the regular election shall be entitled to vote in the primary if otherwise qualified.</p> |
| Louisiana<br><br>Louis. Rev. Stat.<br><br>18:101 A(3)<br><br>(Enacted by HB 501 in 2014) | 16-year-olds may preregister. | (3) A person who is sixteen years of age may register to vote in the manner provided in R.S. 18:114(B)(1) or by making application in person at the office of the registrar of voters. However, no one under the age of eighteen years shall be permitted to vote in any election  |
| Maine<br><br>21- M.R.S.A. §155   | 17-year-olds may preregister. | The registrar shall conditionally accept the registration and enrollment of any person who is 17 years of age and who is otherwise qualified to be a voter. The conditional registration automatically becomes effective on the person's 18th birthday and the registrant then is eligible to vote. A person who has registered under this section and who has not attained 18 years of age may vote by absentee ballot at any election if that person attains 18 years of age on or before the date of the election and is otherwise eligible to vote by absentee ballot.   |

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| Maryland<br>MD Elec. Law §3-102<br>(Enacted by HB 217 in 2010) | 16-year-olds may preregister. | <p>(a)(1) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, an individual may become registered to vote if the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) is a citizen of the United States;</li> <li>(ii) is at least 16 years old;</li> <li>(iii) is a resident of the State as of the day the individual seeks to register; and</li> <li>(iv) registers pursuant to this title.</li> </ul> <p>(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(ii) of this subsection, an individual under the age of 18 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) may vote in a primary election in which candidates are nominated for a general or special election that will occur when the individual is at least 18 years old; and</li> <li>(ii) may not vote in any other election.</li> </ul>  |
| Massachusetts<br>M.G.L.A. 51 § 42<br>M.G.L.A. 51 § 47A         | 16-year-olds may preregister. | <p>M.G.L.A. 51 § 42. Registration as a voter shall be by affidavit of registration made in conformity with the requirements of this chapter by any person at least 16 years of age or older.</p> <p>M.G.L.A. 51 § 47A. If, after examination of an affidavit of registration, it appears to the registrars that the person has all the qualifications to be registered as a voter except that of age and the person has obtained the age of 16, then they shall enter the person's name in the current annual register of voters with the designation "pre-registrant" or other term or code as specified by the state secretary. The designation shall be removed when the person, on or before the day of the next preliminary, primary, special or general election or town meeting, attains full age. No pre-registrant shall be allowed to vote until the pre-registrant obtains full age unless otherwise permitted by law.</p> |

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| Michigan<br>M.C.L.A. 168.492<br><a href="#">How to Register to Vote</a> | 18 by the election.           | <p>Each person who has the following qualifications of an elector, or who will have those qualifications at the next election or primary election, is entitled to register as an elector in the township, city, or village in which he or she resides. The person shall be a citizen of the United States; not less than 18 years of age; a resident of the state for not less than 30 days; and a resident of the township, city, or village on or before the thirtieth day before the next regular or special election or primary election.</p>  |
| Minnesota<br>Minn. Stat. Ann. §201.071                                  | 16-year-olds may preregister. | <p>The application must also contain the following certification of voter eligibility:</p> <p>I certify that I:</p> <p>(1) am at least 16 years old and understand that I must be at least 18 years old to be eligible to vote</p> <p>The certification must include boxes for the voter to respond to the following questions:</p> <p>(1) Are you a citizen of the United States? and</p> <p>(2) Are you at least 16 years old and will you be at least 18 years old on or before the day of the election in which you intend to vote?</p>  |
| Mississippi<br>Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-11                               | 18 by the election.           | <p>Every inhabitant of this state, except persons adjudicated to be non compos mentis, who is a citizen of the United States of America, eighteen (18) years old and upwards... Any person who will be eighteen (18) years of age or older on or before the date of the general election and who is duly registered to vote not less than thirty (30) days before the primary election associated with the general election, may vote in the primary election even though the person has not reached his or her eighteenth birthday at the time that the person seeks to vote at the primary election. No others than those specified in this section shall be entitled, or shall be allowed, to vote at any election.</p> |

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| Missouri<br>Mo. Rev. Stat §115.133(1)<br>(Enacted by HB 23 in 1993) | 17.5-year-olds may preregister | Except as provided in subsection 2 of this section, any citizen of the United States who is a resident of the State of Missouri and seventeen years and six months of age or older shall be entitled to register and to vote in any election which is held on or after his eighteenth birthday.  |
| Montana<br>MCA 13-2-205   | 18 by the election.            | An individual who is not eligible to register because of residence or age requirements but who will be eligible on or before election day may apply for voter registration pursuant to 13-2-110 and be registered subject to verification procedures established pursuant to 13-2-109.   |
| Nebraska<br>Neb. Rev. Stat §32-110                                  | 18 by the election.            | Elector shall mean a citizen of the United States whose residence is within the state and who is at least eighteen years of age or is seventeen years of age and will attain the age of eighteen years on or before the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of the then current calendar year.  |
| Nevada<br>Nev. Rev. Stat. 293.524 (Enacted by SB 144 in 2017)       | 17-year-olds may preregister.  | Every citizen of the United States who is 17 years of age or older but less than 18 years of age and has continuously resided in this State for 30 days or longer may preregister to vote by any of the means available for a person to register to vote pursuant to this title. A person eligible to preregister to vote is deemed to be preregistered to vote upon the submission of a completed application to preregister to vote. |
| New Hampshire<br>NH RSA 654:7                                       | 18 by the election.            | I. Any person registering to vote shall be:<br>(a) At least 18 years of age on the day of the next election; and   |
| New Jersey<br>NJ R.S. 19:31-5                                       | 17-year-olds may preregister.  | Each person, who is at least 17 years of age at the time he or she applies for registration, who resides in the district in which he or she expects to vote, who will be of the age of 18 years or more on or before the first   |

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| (Enacted by SB 832 in 2015)   |                               | election in which he or she expects to vote, who is a citizen of the United States, and who, if he or she continues to reside in the district until that election, will at the time have fulfilled all the requirements as to length of residence to qualify him or her as a legal voter, shall, unless otherwise disqualified, be entitled to be registered in such district. Each 17-year-old registrant shall be designated in the Statewide voter registration system as temporarily ineligible to vote until the registrant's 18th birthday   |
| New Mexico<br>N. M. Stat. Ann. § 1-4-2  | 18 by the election.           | <p>A. Any resident of New Mexico who will be a qualified elector at the date of the next ensuing general election shall be permitted within the provisions of the Election Code to register and become a voter.</p> <p>B. If a person who is seventeen years old will be a qualified elector on the day of the general election and registers to vote in accordance with the provisions of Subsection A of this section, for the purposes of the primary election, that person shall be considered to be a voter and may vote in the primary election immediately preceding that general election.</p> |
| New York<br>McKinney's Election Law § 5-210, § 5-507  | 16-year-olds may preregister. | Section 5-507. Voter pre-registration and education on voter pre-registration. 1. Pre-registration. A person who is at least sixteen years of age and who is otherwise qualified to register to vote may pre-register to vote, and shall be automatically registered upon reaching the age of eligibility as provided by this chapter.   |
| North Carolina<br>N.C.G.S.A. § 163-82.1<br><br>Note: Pre-registration was removed by HB 589 in 2013. That law was subsequently struck down by the | 16-year-olds may preregister. | (d) Preregistration. --A person who is at least 16 years of age but will not be 18 years of age by the date of the next election and who is otherwise qualified to register may preregister to vote and shall be automatically registered upon reaching the age of eligibility following verification of the person's qualifications and address in accordance with G.S. 163-82.7.   |

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| 4th U.S. Court of Appeals, leaving 16-year-olds able to preregister according to the <a href="#">North Carolina Board of Elections webpage</a> . |                            |  |
| North Dakota<br><br>N.D. Cent. Code § 16.1-01-04   | 18 at election.            | <p>North Dakota does not have voter registration, but:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To qualify as an elector of this state, an individual must be:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A citizen of the United States;</li> <li>b. Eighteen years or older; and</li> <li>c. A resident of this state who has resided in the precinct at least thirty days immediately preceding any election.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>                                    |
| Ohio<br><br>OH Rev. Code §3503.01  | 18 by the election.        | <p>(A) Every citizen of the United States who is of the age of eighteen years or over and who has been a resident of the state thirty days immediately preceding the election at which the citizen offers to vote, is a resident of the county and precinct in which the citizen offers to vote, and has been registered to vote for thirty days, has the qualifications of an elector and may vote at all elections in the precinct in which the citizen resides.</p>                     |
| Oklahoma<br><br>OK Const. Art. 3, § 1<br><br>26 Okl. Stat. Ann. § 4-103  | 18 by the election.        | <p>OK Const. Art. 3, § 1. Subject to such exceptions as the Legislature may prescribe, all citizens of the United States, over the age of eighteen (18) years, who are bona fide residents of this state, are qualified electors of this state.</p> <p>26 Okl. Stat. Ann. § 4-103. Any person who will become a qualified elector during the sixty (60) days before the next ensuing election at which he could vote shall be entitled to become a registered voter of the precinct of</p> |

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|  |   | his or her residence not more than sixty (60) and not less than twenty-four (24) days prior to said election.   |
| Oregon<br><br>ORS §247.016<br><br>(Originally enacted by HB 2910 in 2007. SB 802 in 2017 reduced preregistration age from 17 to 16). | 16-year-olds may preregister.   | <p>(1) Subject to this section, an otherwise qualified person who is at least 16 years of age may register to vote.</p> <p>(2) A person who registers to vote under subsection (1) of this section may not vote in an election until the person attains the age of 18 years.</p> <p>(3) If a person who registers to vote under subsection (1) of this section will be under 18 years of age on the date of the next election held on a date listed in ORS 171.185 or the next special election, the person's voter registration information, including but not limited to the person's name and any identifying information, may not be disclosed as a public record under ORS 192.410 to 192.505.</p> |
| Pennsylvania<br><br>25 Pa.C.S.A. § 1301  | 18 by the election.   | (a) Eligibility.--An individual who will be at least 18 years of age on the day of the next election, who has been a citizen of the United States for at least one month prior to the next election and who has resided in this Commonwealth and the election district where the individual offers to vote for at least 30 days prior to the next ensuing election and has not been confined in a penal institution for a conviction of a felony within the last five years shall be eligible to register as provided in this chapter.  |
| Rhode Island<br><br>RI Gen. Laws §17-9.1-33  | 16-year-olds may preregister, and 17-year-olds may register if they will be 18 by the election. | <p>(a) Every person who has reached the age of eighteen (18) years or who is seventeen (17) years of age and will be eighteen (18) years of age by the date of the next election, and is otherwise qualified to register may do so for that election.</p> <p>(b) A person who is otherwise qualified to register and is at least sixteen (16) years of age, but will not be eighteen (18) years of age by the date of the next election, may preregister upon satisfactory proof of</p>   |

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|   |  | age and shall be automatically registered upon reaching eighteen (18) years of age.   |
| South Carolina<br>S.C § 7-5-180<br>S.C. Const. Art. II, § 4 | 18 by the election.                                  | <p>(A) Every citizen of this State and the United States who applies for registration must be registered if he meets the following qualifications:</p> <p>(1) meets the age qualification as provided in Section 4, Article II of the Constitution of this State;</p> <p>S.C. Const. Art. II, § 4. Every citizen of the United States and of this State of the age of eighteen and upwards who is properly registered is entitled to vote as provided by law.</p>   |
| South Dakota<br>SDCL § 12-3-1<br>SDCL § 12-4-1              | 18 by the election.                                  | <p>SDCL § 12-3-1. Every person resident of this state who shall be of the age of eighteen years and upwards, not otherwise disqualified, who shall have complied with the provisions of law relating to the registration of voters shall be entitled to vote at any election in this state.</p> <p>SDCL § 12-4-1. Every person residing within the state who has the qualifications of a voter prescribed by § 12-3-1 or 12-3-1.1, or who will have such qualifications at the next ensuing municipal, primary, general, or school district election, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter in the voting precinct in which he resides.</p> |
| Tennessee<br>Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-2-104                      | 18 by the election.                                  | The following persons may register permanently under this title: (3) A person who will be eighteen (18) years of age on or before the date of the next election after the person applies to register and who is otherwise eligible to register.   |
| Texas<br>Tex. El. Code Ann § 13.001                         | Individuals 17 years and 10 months old may register. | (b) To be eligible to apply for registration, a person must, on the date the registration application is submitted to the registrar, be at least 17 years and 10  |

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|                             |                               | months of age and satisfy the requirements of Subsection (a) except for age.   |
| Utah<br>UT Code 20A-2-101.1 | 16-year-olds may preregister. | <p>(1) An individual may preregister to vote if the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) is 16 or 17 years of age;</li> <li>(b) will not be 18 years of age before the next election;</li> <li>(c) is a citizen of the United States;</li> <li>(d) has been a resident of Utah for at least 30 days; and</li> <li>(e) currently resides within the voting district or precinct in which the individual preregisters to vote.</li> </ul> <p>(2) An individual described in Subsection (1) may not vote in an election and is not registered to vote until:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the individual is at least 18 years of age; and</li> <li>(b) the county clerk registers the individual to vote under Subsection (4).</li> </ul> |
| Vermont<br>17 V.S.A. § 2121 | 18 by the election.           | <p>(a) Any person may register to vote in the town of his or her residence in any election held in a political subdivision of this state in which he or she resides who, on election day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) is a citizen of the United States;</li> <li>(2) is a resident of the state of Vermont;</li> <li>(3) has taken the voter's oath; and</li> <li>(4) is 18 years of age or more.</li> </ul> <p>(b) Any person meeting the requirements of subdivisions (a)(1)-(3) of this section who will be 18 years of age on or before the date of a general election may register and vote in the primary election immediately preceding that general election.</p>  |

| State  | Who Can Preregister           | Statutory Language   |
|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Virginia<br><br>VA Code Ann. § 24.2-403.1  | 16-year-olds may preregister. | Any person who is otherwise qualified and is 16 years of age or older, but who will not be 18 years of age on or before the day of the next general election, may preregister to vote.   |
| Washington<br><br>Rev. Code of Wash. 29A.08.230<br><br>*Effective July 1, 2019<br>Rev. Code of Wash. 29A.08.170 will allow 16 and 17-year-olds to preregister. | 18 before the election.       | <p>Rev. Code of Wash. 29A.08.230. For all voter registrations, the registrant shall sign the following oath:</p> <p>"I declare that the facts on this voter registration form are true. I am a citizen of the United States, I will have lived at this address in Washington for at least thirty days immediately before the next election at which I vote, I will be at least eighteen years old when I vote, I am not disqualified from voting due to a court order, and I am not under department of corrections supervision for a Washington felony conviction."</p>   |
| West Virginia<br><br>W. Va. Code §3-2-2  | 17-year-olds may preregister. | <p>(a) Any person who possesses the constitutional qualifications for voting may register to vote. To be qualified, a person must be a citizen of the United States and a legal resident of West Virginia and of the county where he or she is applying to register, shall be at least eighteen years of age, except that a person who is at least seventeen years of age and who will be eighteen years of age by the time of the next ensuing general election may also be permitted to register, and shall not be otherwise legally disqualified: Provided, That a registered voter who has not reached eighteen years of age may vote both partisan and nonpartisan ballots in a federal, state, county, municipal or special primary election if he or she will be eighteen years of age by the time of the corresponding general election.</p> |
| Wisconsin<br><br>Wis. Stat. Ann. §6.05   | 18 by the election.           | Any person who will be 18 years old on or before election day is entitled to vote if the person complies with this chapter.  |

| State                           | Who Can Preregister | Statutory Language   |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Wyoming<br>Wyo. Stat. §22-3-102 | 18 by the election. | <p>(a) A person may register to vote not less than fourteen (14) days before an election, at any election specified in W.S. 22-2-101(a)(i) through (viii) or as provided by W. S. 22-3-117, who satisfies the following qualifications:</p> <p>(i) He is a citizen of the United States;</p> <p>(ii) He will be at least eighteen (18) years of age on the day of the next general election provided he shall not be permitted to vote until he has attained the age of eighteen (18);</p> |

## Legislative Considerations

- **Turnout.** The argument for implementing preregistration policies has to do with increasing youth turnout. Turnout among 18 to 29-year-olds is consistently lower than other age brackets, so states looking to preregistration as one option to engage young voters in the electoral process. A series of studies have shown the preregistration has a positive effect on youth turnout.
- **Logistics.** Since preregistered youth may move between preregistration and their first chance to vote, these registrations may no longer be accurate and valid. States may need to send notifications to preregistered voters once they turn 18 to confirm the registration and address information. There may also need to be updates or additions to the statewide voter registration database in order to enter preregistrations and track this information.
- **Cost.** Costs may be a factor; implementation in Colorado was estimated at \$572,112 in 2013. Additionally, the cost of returned mailings to this mobile population can be significant.
- **Identification.** Younger voters may not have a driver's license, so what identification is required in order to preregister? Is an affidavit signed by a parent sufficient?
- **Location.** Where should preregistration take place? Does the state need to work with the department of motor vehicles or with high schools?
- **Protected information.** Consider whether information for preregistered voters should be protected and not provided on publicly available voter lists.

- **Education and outreach.** How do get the word out that this option is available and reach out to potential young voters?

### **Voting Age for Primary Elections**

Find information on states that allow for voters who are 17 years old to participate in primary elections if they will be 18 by the general election.

## Related Resources

Updated December 12, 2023

### **State Primary Election Types**

The manner in which party primary elections are conducted varies widely from state to state. Primaries can be categorized as either closed, partially closed, partially open, open to unaffiliated voters, open or top-two.

#### **Elections**

*Graphic*

*Table*

Updated December 11, 2023

### **Voter Registration Deadlines**

This page is intended as a reference to legislators who are looking at their state's voter registration deadlines in comparison to other states.

#### **Elections**

*Table*

Updated December 11, 2023

### **2024 State Primary Election Dates**

This page provides state primary and presidential election dates for 2024 when legislative, congressional, gubernatorial, statewide office and presidential primary contests will be on the ballots in 46 states.

#### **Elections**

*Table*