

Don't Be Fooled. You Can Vote!

All kinds of myths and rumors circulate during elections. Don't be discouraged by a story that seems a little scary. It may be aimed at making you think voting is too difficult to do. Here are 20 tips to equip you with the truth and make your voting experience easier:

1. You don't lose your right to vote if you have an **outstanding warrant, traffic ticket, bankruptcy or civil fine**. No official will ask you about these.
2. You may **wear a button**, hat or shirt with a candidate's name when you quietly vote, but you may not actively draw attention to your choices.
3. You may **take a list of your choices** inside the polling place to help you remember, but do not show the list to others or leave it. Using a **cell phone and camera** is prohibited inside the poll.
4. In the General Election, you may vote for any **candidate of your choice**, regardless of the political party you listed when you registered.
5. Candidates may be **listed in a different order** by party in different years. Look closely at each candidate and party affiliation. **"Straight-ticket voting" is no longer an option** on the ballot.
6. Vote in the **non-partisan races**, for example, for judges. They are often toward the end of the ballot. Look on both sides of the ballot.
7. You don't need an excuse to request an **absentee ballot**. Any voter can use one. When you send the ballot back, be sure to sign the form. Follow the instructions carefully so your ballot is valid!
8. **Beginning in 2016**, voters inside the polls must show a **photo ID**. In 2014 and 2015, officials will ask if you have a photo ID, but you don't need to show one or even answer the question to vote.
9. In 2014 and 2015, only **new voters** may need to show an ID **IF** the driver's license or Social Security number listed on their registration form could not be verified. In that case, they would need to show a photo ID or one of these with their name & *current* address: a utility bill (gas, phone, etc.), bank or bank-card statement, payroll stub, or any government document (license, bill, letter, etc.).
10. **Register at least 25 days before the election** in which you want to vote. You don't need to show your registration card when you go to vote.
11. People **convicted of a felony** in NC or any state may register and vote after serving their full sentence, including probation. No document certifying the restoration of their citizenship rights is needed. Just register like anyone else.
12. If you've **moved within your county recently**, the easiest way to update a registration (and vote) is during Early Voting. If you wait until Election Day, you may be sent to a different precinct.
13. You can **change your name** when you vote, especially at an Early Voting site.
14. Members of the military and students can register at the address where they live now, even if their mailing address (or **address for tax purposes**) is in another county or state.
15. **Ballots cast during Early Voting** count just like those cast on Election Day. It's a myth that they are not counted unless the election is close.
16. **Voting lines are typically shortest** during the mid-morning or early afternoon of a weekday.
17. **On Election Day, you must vote in your own precinct**. Out-of-precinct voting is not allowed.
18. A voter with a disability may **get assistance** from anyone of their choice, except their employer or union agent. Family members may help any voter.
19. If you mark the **wrong choice by mistake**, ask the official for a new ballot to replace a 'spoiled' one.
20. If your name does not appear on the registration rolls or you have any problem when you vote, you should be **offered a provisional ballot**; you should be given a toll-free number or website to learn if the ballot gets counted or if not, why not.

*It is illegal to intentionally distribute false information about the voting process. If you **have problems or see suspicious activity**, call the Board of Elections at 1-866-522-4723 or the hotline at 1-888-OUR-VOTE. To check your registration, see a sample ballot, find your polling place or learn your voting rights, go to www.ncsbe.gov or www.NCElectionConnection.com.*