

Guidelines for Voter Registration in Cuyahoga County

A) Does the person need a new registration or an update?

No, they don't need to do anything if they have voted in the County in the last 4 years, have not moved and have not changed their name since last registering.

Yes, if they have voted in the County within the last 4 years but have changed their address or name since they last registered

Yes, if they have not voted in the County in the last 4 years (or are not sure about this).

Yes, if the person was incarcerated for a felony since last voting and is no longer incarcerated. (Persons convicted of misdemeanors never lose their right to vote and do not need to re-register.)

Ask: "Have you moved or changed your name?" "Have you voted in Cuyahoga County in the last four years?"

B) Fill out the card

1) Be sure to ask the voter to print carefully, and to fill in all yellow-highlighted items. Then immediately check the card for legibility, errors, and completeness.

2) Voter should use blue or black ink only.

3) Explain that many voters mix up numbers on their address, especially if they have moved. Ask the person to double check what they have put down for address against some document they may have with them.

4) Voter should not skip Items 1 (citizenship) and 2 (age) in the black box at the top of the card. (These are often missed.) If the no box is checked for either, the person cannot register to vote. Note that a 17 year old can register if he or she will be 18 by Election Day.

5) Check item 10 carefully. If the person doesn't have a license or state I.D., they should write in the last 4 digits of their Social Security number. Note that the correct driver's license or state ID number contains **2 letters and 6 numerals**. (Do not use the number above the photo.)

6) For Item 11: Encourage the voter to provide a phone number, although it is not required.
Ask: "May I have your phone number, so that the Board of Elections can reach you if there's a problem with your registration?"

7) For items 12 and 13, Previous Address, Change of Name: Voter should fill in their previous address or name if either has changed since they last registered.

8) For item 14: Voter must supply the date the card is filled out, and get the voter's signature. The signature should be contained within the box and should not touch any lines.

C) Check for accuracy:

After voter has filled out the registration card, check it is complete, accurate, and legible. Be sure that birth date and not current date is entered for Item 9 (a common error).

D) Tell voter how to check if they get registered:

Tell the voter they should receive a notification card in the mail from the Board of Elections. If this is not received within 4 weeks, the voter should call the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections at 216-443-3298. If they are not registered, they should register again.

E) Give voter advance election information:

- **ID for voting:** remind the person to take a photo I.D. or other acceptable I.D. (Check: law on “other acceptable” ID may change) to the polls
- **Early in-person voting at the Board of Elections and Vote by mail:** Inform voter that they can do either of these, but must get instructions least 6 weeks in advance of an election from the Board of Elections (216-443-3298)

F) Submitting registrations:

Be sure registration cards are sent to the Board of Elections within 5 days after they are filled out.

Most common errors made by those registering voters:

1. Failed to ask if voter needs a change of address or change of name (most people will forget they need to do this, unless they are asked);
2. Didn't check that all required boxes are filled (Over 5,000 were received in 2008 with at least one required box unfilled)
3. Didn't check to see if everything is clearly written so there can be no doubt (3,000 registrations were subject to wrong entry);
4. Failed to ask voters to double check address against any document they may have with them (about 5,000 registrations were rejected because of “nonexistent address”, probably due to voter mix-up)