



GET OUT THE VOTE 2020

A VOTING AND ELECTION GUIDE FOR NEW JERSEY CITIZENS WITH
INTELLECTUAL & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES



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of New Jersey

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GOTV 2020

The voting process will look entirely different than in years past, but don't be discouraged or overwhelmed! We urge all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to use this Get Out the Vote Guide as you navigate the changes in order to make your voice heard. Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2020, but because of COVID-19, the state is altering the steps needed to cast a ballot in order to maintain social distancing protocols and limit potential spread of the virus. Primarily, the election will take place via mail, but there are ways you can still cast your vote in person. The Arc of New Jersey is here for you as you approach this new way of voting and we hope this Guide answers some of your questions and points you in the right direction as we head toward Election Day.

In November, the country will determine who will lead our nation as President for the next four years. The candidates are current President Donald Trump (R) and former Vice President Joe Biden (D). Additionally, residents of New Jersey will determine who will represent the state in the US Senate. Candidates for that race include current US Senator Cory Booker (D) and Republican Rik Mehta. Lastly, all 12 of New Jersey's congressional districts will be on the ballot. As you read through this Guide, you will find web sites that can help you determine what congressional district you live in and who is running to represent you.



The winners on Election Day will enter office and make many critical decisions that impact your life. Whether it's special education rules and funding, how individuals qualify for and maintain Medicaid, where and how to invest in transportation or what the country prioritizes in the annual budget.

With COVID still a threat, our representatives will also tackle issues like access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), access to Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) and paid leave policies.

We must take COVID-19 seriously, but we cannot allow the health crisis to scare us away or deter us from voting. We encourage you to share this Guide widely and visit our website: www.gotvnj.org for additional resources and information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is voting?

Voting is your right. Voting is your choice. Voting is your voice.

When is voting?

Voting takes place on Tuesday, November 3, 2020.

Why should you vote?

Voting allows you to elect people that will represent you and fight for the issues you believe in.

Who are the candidates?

Voters in November will elect the President, one US Senator, and a member of the House of Representatives. Visit this web site to determine who will appear on your ballot: <https://bit.ly/3boo2zc>

There is also one state legislative race for citizens who live in the state's 25th district. This district contains parts of Morris and Somerset Counties. Click here to see which towns are included in District 25. <https://bit.ly/3bhrCek>

Current Senator Anthony M. Bucco who is finishing the term of his late father will face Rupande Mehta. Assemblywoman Aura K Dunn, who was appointed to the seat when Assemblyman Bucco moved up to the Senate, will face challenger Darcy Draeger.

Who can vote?

To vote you must be a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years old and registered to vote.

In December 2019, Governor Murphy signed a law that restored voting rights to New Jersey residents on probation or parole. The measure went into effect in March 2020.. It is not legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she has an intellectual or other disability. Only a judge can declare that an individual lacks capacity to vote. It is not legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she has a legal guardian. It is not legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she lives in an institution, developmental center or group home. It is not legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she receives services or supports related to a disability.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I know if I'm registered to vote?

Visit this site to determine if you are registered: <https://bit.ly/2YYghea>

How can I register to vote?

To register, you must complete a Voter Registration Application and/or Party Affiliation Form. Mail or deliver the Voter Registration Application and/or Party Affiliation Form to the County Commissioner of Registration or Superintendent of Elections for your county. To find your county, click here: <https://bit.ly/3hS3yRR>

How will this year's voting process look different than years past?

According Governor Murphy's Executive Order No. 177 (<https://bit.ly/31P4wbU>), all active registered voters will automatically receive mail-in ballots for voting in the 2020 General Election without the need to submit a vote by mail application. Per the Executive Order, the County Clerk's Office will send the mail-in ballots to voters on or before October 5, 2020 and will provide a postage-paid envelope for the return of the completed ballot. There will be no sample ballots this year.

Voters will have the option to return their completed General Election mail-in ballots to the County Board of Elections via mail, drop box, in-person to the Board of Elections Office, or in-person at their assigned 2020 General Election polling place. All ballots must be sent through the U.S. Postal Service, postmarked by Nov. 3, and received by county election boards by 8 p.m., Nov. 10 — a week after Election Day.

Can I still vote in person?

Yes, there will be at least one physical polling location in each of New Jersey's 565 municipalities, but most people won't vote via the machines we're all accustomed to using. Instead, voters will cast paper provisional ballots at those locations, though there will be Americans with Disabilities Act-conforming voting machines for people with disabilities. Provisional ballots are counted later, after election officials can verify if you haven't already voted by mail.

You may be asked to show identification at the polling place when you go to vote. Proof of identification can include a driver's license, a student ID, a government issued ID or a document with your name and address on it such as a bank statement or government issued check like a Social Security check. Find your polling place here: <https://bit.ly/31PzslQ>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are polling places accessible for people with disabilities?

One accessible polling machine adapted for audio must be available at every polling place to allow voters with a visual impairment to verify and cast their votes in private and without assistance. Polling places should be integrated settings, meaning that all people (with and without disabilities) should vote together in the same space. People with disabilities have the right (1) to reasonable accommodations that make it possible for them to vote, and (b) to use auxiliary aids (such as Assisted Listening equipment, registration forms in Braille and large print, ramps to access the polling area) to ensure that communication is effective. You can also either (a) ask a friend, family member or staff member to enter the booth with you, or (b) ask for help from poll workers at your polling place on Election Day.

How else can I vote?

The state will also set up secure boxes where you can drop your ballot. There will be at least 10 in each county.

How will I know if my ballot was received?

You can track your ballot by clicking here: <https://bit.ly/3lMHcnc>

You will need to set up an account before you can access the information.

What should I do if I go to vote and am told I can't vote because I have a disability?

If you have a problem on Election Day with being allowed to vote or getting assistance with voting, call Disability Rights NJ at 1-800-922-7233. If you don't receive a ballot in the mail, call the state's Voter Protection hotline at 1-877-NJVOTER.

Want to know more about the candidates?

Don't forget to visit our website, www.GOTVNJ.org for additional content and resources!



BALLOT QUESTIONS



This year's ballot will include 3 public questions.

Public Question #1 - Do you approve amending the Constitution to legalize a controlled form of marijuana called "cannabis"? If approved, only persons at least 21 years of age could use cannabis products legally. The Cannabis Regulatory Commission would oversee the new adult cannabis market. All retail sales of cannabis products in the new adult cannabis market would be subject to the State's sales tax. If authorized by the Legislature, a municipality may pass a local ordinance to charge a local tax on cannabis products.

Public Question #2 - Do you approve amending the Constitution to expand the state's \$250 property tax deduction for wartime veterans to peacetime veterans? If approved, the ballot measure would also make surviving spouses of deceased peacetime veterans eligible for the tax deduction. As of 2020, the surviving spouses of deceased wartime veterans, but not peacetime veterans, are eligible for the tax deduction.

Public Question #3 - Do you approve amending the Constitution to change when new legislative districts are created if the federal census data is delayed? The United States Constitution requires that a census be taken every ten years to count the people living in the country. Census data is then used to create new legislative districts to ensure residents have equal representation from elected officials. However, the current COVID-19 pandemic has delayed census data collection. This may delay census data to the states and may affect the creation of new legislative districts.

IMPORTANT VOTING DATES

Election Day will be here before you know it. With that in mind, don't forget to mark the following dates on your calendars to ensure your vote counts!

October 13 - Voter Registration Deadline for General Election (21 days before election)

November 2 by 3:00 p.m. - Deadline for In-Person Mail-In Ballot Applications for General Election

November 3 - Deadline for Post Office Receipt of Mail-In Ballots from the General Election and Deadline for in Person Submission of General Election Mail-In Ballots to County Boards of Election (by 8:00 p.m. on the day of election)



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Andrew Sharick, Self-Advocate



"I vote to express my opinions about policies and politicians. Voting is a way for people to make their voices heard and understood by politicians in Washington and Trenton. I registered to vote when I turned 18 in 2007. My first voting experience was kind of exciting and I voted in person. I prepare to vote and get informed about candidates and issues by watching the local news. Voting is not something to take lightly since the wrong choices could have serious negative implications for policies regarding individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities."

Join the Self-Advocacy Movement!



New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project
A program of The Arc of New Jersey since 1983
Promoting Advocacy and Independence for People
with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

To learn more about self-advocacy, contact the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project at NJSAP@arcnj.org or visit their website at njselfadvocacyproject.org.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Ralph Mastrangelo Jr., Parent

"As an American citizen, I have always considered voting a right and a privilege earned by the actions of our country's founders and descendants centuries ago. Voting is our way of expressing our interest and support for issues that are important to our families, communities and country. When I turned 18, I was aware of the politics, the demonstrations and the ongoing Vietnam War which was shaping the political and social issues of the times. These events prompted me to find my voice, registering to vote and have voted ever since.



As a parent, my interests and concerns have continued to evolve over the years and when Maureen was born with I/DD, she took us into a world previously unknown to us. I realized that to provide her with the programs and services that she would require: medical, educational, recreational, a day program and residential services, we would have to research and understand the delivery system of these programs and services and communicate these needs to our legislators to support bills which allow for the constant funding of these programs and services.

We must know the issues, continuously educate our local, county, state and national legislators and vote for those who support legislation that allows our loved ones to receive all that they need. Not voting silences your vote and those voting count double so make the decision to vote for yourself and those around you. Would you let others choose your groceries? In all likelihood, the answer is no, so why would you let others choose who represents you in government?

George Jean Nathan, a drama critic once said: 'Bad officials are elected by good citizens who don't vote.' Which group will you be in?"

2020 CENSUS

What is the census?

Every 10 years, the government reports the number of people who live in the U.S. by conducting a count called the census. The count is required by the U.S. Constitution.

Why is the census count necessary?

The census determines how many seats each state receives in the U.S. House of Representatives. Each state is guaranteed at least one seat in the House. Additional seats are appointed based on state population, with the most populated states receiving the most seats.



How is the census taken?

The 2020 Census is the first in U.S. history to allow all households to respond online. The census can also be completed by mail, by phone, or by home visit from a U.S. census worker.

Who should be counted?

Everyone who lives in the household should be counted, regardless of nationality, citizenship status, race, age, and gender. All people should be counted at their primary residence. This includes individuals living in community-based residential programs such as group homes, supported living apartments, community care residences, and PerformCare out of home placements.

Why is the census important?

Billions in federal funding for New Jersey depends on census counts. This includes funding for Medicaid, disability services, Title I school funds, child care, infrastructure, senior services, and school meals programs.

Complete your 2020 Census by September 30th at

www.2020census.gov!

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

To learn more about where the candidates stand on disability issues, The Arc of New Jersey contacted the campaigns for current US Senator Cory Booker and opponent Rik Mehta. As one of these individuals will represent New Jersey in the United States Senate for the next six years, we encourage you to visit our GOTV website (www.gotvnj.org) to read their responses. Once received, candidate responses will be posted to the site in full and unedited.



Question #1

The impacts of COVID-19 on our country will likely stay with us for many more months to come. As an elected official, what steps will you take to protect Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) and to ensure Personal Protective Equipment is available for the Direct Support Professional workforce?

Question #2

If elected in November, what policy initiatives do you plan to pursue that would benefit people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families?

View the responses at [GOTVNJ.ORG!](http://GOTVNJ.ORG)

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