Charleston County News Release

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Charleston County Voting Office Open Saturday, Oct. 4, for Voter Registration Deadline

In addition to regular business hours, Charleston County's Board of Elections and Voter Registration Office will be open from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 4, to give residents additional hours to register to vote in the November 4, 2008, general election.

Charleston County residents may also register to vote during normal office hours, which are 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday.

The deadline to register to vote in person is Saturday, Oct. 4. All mail-in registration forms must be postmarked no later than Saturday, Oct. 4.

Anyone registering to vote must present the following identification information in order to register:

- A copy of a current, valid photo ID (driver's license, student ID, Department of Motor Vehicle-issued ID card, etc.). OR
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck or other government document that shows the residents name and address in Charleston County.

Voters are encouraged to prepare to vote on Tuesday, Nov. 4, by making sure they are registered with the address of their current residence. Applicants can look up their voter registration information online by going to http://www.scvotes.org and selecting the "Voter" tab. Residents can get forms to register to vote or update their name and/or address on the Web site.

"If someone is already registered to vote in the county in which they reside, a change of address within that county can be processed even on election day by doing so in person at the person's previous precinct or at the Board of Elections and Voter Registration Office," said Marilyn Bowers, Charleston County's Executive Director of the Board of Elections and Voter Registration. "However, people can make the voting process easier by updating their information in advance so they will know the correct polling location to visit on Election Day."

Charleston County's Board of Elections and Voter Registration Office is located at 4367 Headquarters Road in North Charleston, and can be reached by phone at (843) 744-8683.

Visit the Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration Web site at http://vote.charlestoncounty.org for news, services and up-to-date information relating to upcoming elections.

SIDEBAR: Frequently Asked Questions about Voting and Registering to Vote
(Source: Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration Web site, http://vote.charlestoncounty.org)

How can I register to vote in Charleston County?

You may register in person by visiting one of our [Voter Registration Sites](#).

You may also register to vote by mail. Simply contact the Board of Elections and Voter Registration for a copy of the application, or download the application from http://www.scvotes.org/Charleston. The printed application must be signed and mailed to the Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration. Faxed or e-mailed copies are not accepted.

The application lists all eligibility requirements for voter registration (citizenship, etc).

Do I have to choose a political party when I register to vote?
No, South Carolina voters are not registered by party.

However, voters must choose which political party's primary they want to participate in for each primary election. If you participate in one party's primary, you cannot participate in the other party's primary runoff. If you do not vote in the primary election, you may vote in either party's primary runoff. Regardless of primary election participation, you will be able to vote for any desired candidates in the general election.

Is there a deadline for registration?
Voters must be registered 30 days prior to any election they wish to vote in. Mail-in registration applications must be postmarked no later than 30 days before the election.

Be sure to submit your registration application at least 30 days before the election in which you wish to vote.

I will be 18 years old by Election Day, but am currently only 17 years of age. When can I submit my voter registration application?
You may register 120 days prior to the primary or general election, even though you are only 17 years old, as long as you will be 18 on Election Day. You may also vote in the primary as a 17 year old, as long as you will be 18 years old by the related general election.

I completed a voter registration form, but have not received a voter registration card. What should I do?
You may search https://webprod.cio.sc.gov/SCSECVoterWeb/voterInformationSearch.do to see if you are a registered voter. You should contact the Board of Elections and Voter Registration to ensure that your application was received and processed.

Be sure to confirm your registration within 30 days of any election in which you wish to vote.

I have moved to Charleston County from another South Carolina county. What should I do?
You must register to vote in Charleston County, following the instructions above. You will receive a new registration card.

I am moving from one South Carolina county to another in the state within 30 days of a primary or general election. Will I be able to vote?
Yes! On the day of the election, you may do one of the following:

If you were registered in your former county of residence, you may go to your former county and vote a limited ballot (national/statewide/countywide offices only) at the precinct where you were registered.

Or, you may go to the Voter Registration Office in your new county of residence, register to vote, and cast a complete ballot at the Voter Registration Office.

My registration card is inaccurate because I have moved within the county, changed my name, or because of an error. How can I update this information?
All corrections must be submitted in writing, as your signature is required. You may simply fax or mail your corrections to the Board of Elections and Voter Registration, including your voter registration number or social security number. If you have moved outside of Charleston County, you must submit a voter registration application to your new county of residence.

You may also use the registration application to update your information by marking "Change in Registration Information." The application may be downloaded from http://www.scvotes.org/Charleston.

I have moved within the county, and have not updated my address. Will I be able to vote in an upcoming election?
Please submit your address change as soon as possible! If you change your address at least two weeks before the election date, you will be issued a new registration card and will be able to vote in your new precinct.

During the two weeks before the election, including Election Day, you may go to the Board of Elections and Voter Registration Office to change your address and vote for all offices.

On Election Day, you may go to the Board of Elections and Voter Registration Office to change your address and vote for all offices. OR, you may go to your OLD voting precinct indicated by your registration card, change your address information and then vote only for national, statewide and countywide offices on a fail-safe provisional ballot.

How can I find out where I am supposed to vote, or what districts I am registered in?
This information is printed on your voter registration card. It is also available online at https://webprod.cio.sc.gov/SCSECVoterWeb/voterInformationSearch.do.

Which Elected Officials am I represented by?
County officials can be found at: http://www.charlestoncounty.org/elected/index.htm.

State representatives can be found at: http://www.scstatehouse.org/cgi-bin/zipcodesearch.exe.

Other state officials can be found at: http://www.sc.gov/Portal/Category/GOVERNMENT.

Please contact your municipality for local information.

What identification is required on Election Day?
According to South Carolina law, each voter must present one of the following:
- Voter Registration Card (signed)
- South Carolina Driver's License (current name and residential address)
- South Carolina Identification Card issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) (current name and address)

Additional identification may be required if proof of residence was not provided at time of registration. Voters who register by mail, without providing proof of residence, are given instructions to bring proof of residence on Election Day, such as a current, valid photo ID, current utility bill, current bank statement, current government check or other current government document (other than your registration card.)

Other forms of identification that are NOT accepted on Election Day include: passports; military IDs; police IDs; birth certificates; or Social Security cards.

I cannot go to the polls on Election Day. How will I be able to vote?
You may vote in person, prior to Election Day, by visiting the Board of Elections and Voter Registration Office. The deadline for in-person absentee voting is 5 p.m. the day before the

election.

You may also vote absentee by mail. You, or an immediate family member, must request an application for absentee voting. You may request an application by mail using the request form, by calling the Board of Elections and Voter Registration at (843) 744-8683, or by sending an e-mail to Absentee@charlestoncounty.org.

When requesting an absentee application, please be prepared to provide:
- Your relationship to the applicant (self or family member)
- Applicant's full name
- Applicant's voter registration number, social security number, and/or birth date
- Mailing address where the application should be mailed
- Phone number
- The election(s) in which the applicant would like to vote absentee. If the applicant is interested in voting absentee in a primary election, please specify the political party.

The application will be mailed upon request. The completed, signed application must be submitted to the Board of Elections and Voter Registration at least four days before the election. For example, if the election is on a Tuesday, the application must be received before 5 p.m. on the previous Friday. However, it is highly recommended that absentee voters submit their application early, in order to allow ample time for mail delivery and return.

Completed absentee ballots must be returned to the Board of Elections and Voter Registration on or before Election Day. The applicant may return the absentee ballot by mail or in person. The applicant may also authorize another individual to return the absentee ballot, by carefully following all instructions provided with the ballot.

The following people are eligible to vote absentee:
- Students, their spouses and dependents residing with them outside their county of residence
- Armed Forces, Merchant Marines, their spouses and dependents residing with them
- Persons serving with the American Red Cross or with the United Service Organizations who are attached to and serving with the Armed Forces
- Employment: Those persons who are required by their employment obligations to be absent from their county of residence or at their place of employment in their county of residence on election day during the hours the polls are open and who will be unable to vote in person
- Persons with physical disabilities
- Government employees, their spouses and dependents residing with them who are out of their county of residence on Election Day during the hours the polls are open
- Persons with a death in the family, or persons attending a funeral within a three-day period before the election
- Persons on vacation (who by virtue of vacation plans will be absent from their county of residence and unable to vote in person)
- Poll managers, certified poll watchers, County Registration Board members and staff, and County Election Commission members and staff working on election day
- Overseas citizens
- Persons attending to a sick or physically disabled person
- Persons serving as jurors in state or federal court on Election Day
- Persons admitted to hospital as an emergency patient on the day of an election or within a four-day period before an election
- Persons 65 years old or older
- Persons confined to a jail or pre-trial facility pending disposition of arrest or trial

What if I wish to vote for someone not listed on the ballot?

Voters may write in candidates of their choice in general and municipal elections. However, voters may not write in candidates for the office of president or vice president. Write-in candidates are not allowed in primary elections.

In a recent election, I voted an absentee or provisional ballot (challenged/fail-safe). How do I know if my ballot counted?
You may look up the status of your ballot online at
https://webprod.cio.sc.gov/SCSECVoterWeb/voterInformationSearch.do.

When is the list of absentee voters available?
The list is available at 9 a.m. the day before each election.

I have been convicted of a felony. When will I be able to vote again?
You may register to vote once you have served your entire sentence, including probation time. Documentation of completion must be provided in order to register.

Where can I find maps of election districts?
For municipal or school district maps, please contact the relevant agency.

For example, the city of Charleston produces Charleston City Council maps, and the city of North Charleston produces North Charleston City Council maps.

Federal and state selection district maps can be obtained from the S.C. Office of Research and Statistics. Electronic maps are available online. Printed or customized maps may be ordered for a fee.

Charleston County Council maps are available online from Charleston County. Additional geographic information is available online through the GIS Department.

Maps of Charleston County voting precincts can be produced by the Charleston County Planning Department. The Charleston County Planning Department is also able to generate some types of customized maps, although fees will apply.

Where can I find more information about elections?
SCVotes.org – The Web site of the S.C. State Election Commission provides comprehensive information about registering and voting in South Carolina, as well as information about past election results and voter participation statistics.

US Federal Voting Assistance Program - Provides voter registration and absentee voting information to military and overseas citizen voters.