

QUESTION

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Election Day Registration

IN PLAIN LANGUAGE

This question asks voters whether eligible Massachusetts residents should be allowed to register to vote and cast a ballot during the same trip to the polls on Election Day.

YES

A YES VOTE WOULD...

Permit anyone who is eligible — but not yet registered to vote — to register at their polling place on Election Day. Already-registered voters could also update the address attached to their voter registration on Election Day, but not their political party affiliation.

PROPOSENTS CLAIM

- The current 10-day cutoff creates an unnecessary obstacle that disenfranchises many prospective voters. In 2024, elections officials rejected more than 3,300 provisional ballots, and many of those could have counted if Election Day registration were in place.
- Primary elections in Massachusetts typically happen in September, when many renters change apartments. Allowing them to update the address for their voter registration on Election Day will prevent them from losing their political voice because they recently moved.

The ballot question campaign is led by Secretary of State William Galvin, the state's chief elections official, with support from voting-rights advocates such as MassVOTE.

OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

- To register on Election Day, Massachusetts residents would need to show proof of residency, such as a driver's license or residential lease, and sign an oath that they are eligible.
- If the measure passes, voter registration still would not be possible at the polls during in-person early voting periods before Election Day.
- The state Senate supported same-day voter registration in 2021, but the measure died in the House, where lawmakers are far more skeptical. Galvin decided to pitch the idea directly to voters to circumvent the lack of movement in the Legislature.
- Twenty-four other states and Washington, DC, allow voters to register and cast a ballot either on Election Day itself or during early-voting periods.

NO

A NO VOTE WOULD...

Keep the current registration deadlines in place. Under existing law, new voters cannot register — and existing voters cannot change the address at which they are registered — within 10 days of the election. Anyone who misses that window is ineligible to cast a vote.

OPPOSENTS CLAIM

- Municipal election workers are already facing significant burdens from policies such as early voting and widely available mail-in voting. Requiring them to manage new voter registrations or address changes on Election Day will stretch them too thin.
- Same-day voter registration would increase the risk of errors and threaten electoral integrity.

There's no formal campaign committee working to oppose the question, but some local officials have voiced concerns about the proposal.