



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3505.181 Eligibility to cast provisional ballot - procedure.

Effective: March 20, 2026

Legislation: Senate Bill 293

(A) All of the following individuals shall be permitted to cast a provisional ballot at an election:

- (1) An individual who declares that the individual is a registered voter in the precinct in which the individual desires to vote and that the individual is eligible to vote in an election, but the name of the individual does not appear on the official list of eligible voters for the precinct or an election official asserts that the individual is not eligible to vote;
- (2) An individual who does not have or is unable to provide photo identification to the election officials;
- (3) An individual whose name in the poll list or signature pollbook has been marked under section 3509.09 or 3511.13 of the Revised Code as having requested an absent voter's ballot or a uniformed services or overseas absent voter's ballot for that election and who appears to vote at the polling place;
- (4) An individual whose name in the official registration list and in the poll list or signature pollbook has been marked under section 3503.201 of the Revised Code;
- (5) An individual who has been successfully challenged under section 3505.20 or 3513.20 of the Revised Code;
- (6) An individual who changes the individual's name and remains within the precinct without providing proof of that name change under division (B)(1)(b) of section 3503.16 of the Revised Code, moves from one precinct to another within a county, moves from one precinct to another and changes the individual's name, or moves from one county to another within the state, and completes and signs the required forms and statements under division (B) or (C) of section 3503.16 of the Revised Code;



(7) An individual whose signature, in the opinion of the precinct officers under section 3505.22 of the Revised Code, is not that of the person who signed that name in the registration forms.

(B) An individual who is eligible to cast a provisional ballot under division (A) of this section shall be permitted to cast a provisional ballot as follows:

(1) An election official at the polling place shall notify the individual that the individual may cast a provisional ballot in that election.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in division (F) of this section, the individual shall complete and execute a written affirmation before an election official at the polling place stating that the individual is both of the following:

(a) A registered voter in the precinct in which the individual desires to vote;

(b) Eligible to vote in that election.

(3) An election official at the polling place shall transmit the ballot cast by the individual and the voter information contained in the written affirmation executed by the individual under division (B)(2) of this section to an appropriate local election official for verification under division (B)(4) of this section.

(4) If the appropriate local election official to whom the ballot or voter or address information is transmitted under division (B)(3) of this section determines that the individual is eligible to vote, the individual's provisional ballot shall be counted as a vote in that election.

(5)(a) At the time that an individual casts a provisional ballot, the appropriate local election official shall give the individual written information that states that any individual who casts a provisional ballot will be able to ascertain under the system established under division (B)(5)(b) of this section whether the vote was counted, and, if the vote was not counted, the reason that the vote was not counted.

(b) The appropriate state or local election official shall establish a free access system, in the form of



a toll-free telephone number, that any individual who casts a provisional ballot may access to discover whether the vote of that individual was counted, and, if the vote was not counted, the reason that the vote was not counted. The free access system established under this division also shall provide to an individual whose provisional ballot was not counted information explaining how that individual may contact the board of elections to register to vote or to resolve problems with the individual's voter registration.

The appropriate state or local election official shall establish and maintain reasonable procedures necessary to protect the security, confidentiality, and integrity of personal information collected, stored, or otherwise used by the free access system established under this division. The system shall permit an individual only to gain access to information about the individual's own provisional ballot.

(6) If, at the time that an individual casts a provisional ballot, the individual provides photo identification, the individual shall record the type of identification provided on the provisional ballot affirmation and, if the individual provides an Ohio driver's license, state identification card, or interim identification document, the individual also shall write the individual's driver's license or state identification card number on the provisional ballot affirmation.

(7)(a) For a provisional ballot to be eligible to be counted when it is cast by an individual who does not have photo identification because the individual has a religious objection to being photographed, the individual shall complete an affidavit of religious objection under section 3505.19 of the Revised Code. The election officials shall attach the affidavit to the individual's provisional ballot envelope. If the individual does not complete the affidavit at the time of casting the provisional ballot, the individual may appear at the office of the board of elections within four days after the day of the election and complete the affidavit.

(b) For a provisional ballot to be eligible to be counted when it is cast by any other individual who does not have or is unable to provide photo identification to the election officials, the individual who cast that ballot, within four days after the day of the election, shall appear at the office of the board of elections and provide photo identification.

(8) For a provisional ballot cast by an individual who has been successfully challenged under section 3505.20 of the Revised Code to be eligible to be counted, the individual who cast that ballot, within



four days after the day of that election, shall provide to the board of elections any identification or other documentation required to be provided by the applicable challenge questions asked of that individual under section 3505.20 of the Revised Code.

(C)(1) If an individual declares that the individual is eligible to vote in a precinct other than the precinct in which the individual desires to vote, or if, upon review of the precinct voting location guide using the residential street address provided by the individual, an election official at the precinct at which the individual desires to vote determines that the individual is not eligible to vote in that precinct, the election official shall direct the individual to the precinct and polling place in which the individual appears to be eligible to vote, explain that the individual may cast a provisional ballot at the current location but the ballot or a portion of the ballot will not be counted if it is cast in the wrong precinct, and provide the telephone number of the board of elections in case the individual has additional questions.

(2) If the individual refuses to travel to the correct precinct or to the office of the board of elections to cast a ballot, the individual shall be permitted to vote a provisional ballot at that precinct in accordance with division (B) of this section. If the individual is in the correct polling location for the precinct in which the individual is registered and eligible to vote, the election official shall complete and sign, under penalty of election falsification, a form that includes all of the following, and attach the form to the individual's provisional ballot affirmation:

(a) The name or number of the individual's correct precinct;

(b) A statement that the election official instructed the individual to travel to the correct precinct to vote;

(c) A statement that the election official informed the individual that casting a provisional ballot in the wrong precinct would result in all or a portion of the votes on the ballot being rejected;

(d) The name or number of the precinct in which the individual is casting a provisional ballot; and

(e) The name of the polling location in which the individual is casting a provisional ballot.



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(D) The appropriate local election official shall cause voting information to be publicly posted at each polling place on the day of each election.

(E) As used in this section and sections 3505.182 and 3505.183 of the Revised Code:

(1) "Precinct voting location guide" means either of the following:

(a) An electronic or paper record that lists the correct precinct and polling place for either each specific residential street address in the county or the range of residential street addresses located in each neighborhood block in the county;

(b) Any other method that a board of elections creates that allows a precinct election official or any elector who is at a polling place in that county to determine the correct precinct and polling place of any qualified elector who resides in the county.

(2) "Voting information" means all of the following:

(a) A sample version of the ballot that will be used for that election;

(b) Information regarding the date of the election and the hours during which polling places will be open;

(c) Instructions on how to vote, including how to cast a vote and how to cast a provisional ballot;

(d) Instructions for mail-in registrants and first-time voters under applicable federal and state laws;

(e) General information on voting rights under applicable federal and state laws, including information on the right of an individual to cast a provisional ballot and instructions on how to contact the appropriate officials if these rights are alleged to have been violated;

(f) General information on federal and state laws regarding prohibitions against acts of fraud and misrepresentation.



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(F) Nothing in this section or section 3505.183 of the Revised Code is in derogation of section 3505.24 of the Revised Code, which permits a blind, disabled, or illiterate elector to receive assistance in the marking of the elector's ballot by two precinct election officials of different political parties. A blind, disabled, or illiterate elector may receive assistance in marking that elector's provisional ballot and in completing the required affirmation in the same manner as an elector may receive assistance on the day of an election under that section.