

# **KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**

## *A Guide for Early/Advance Voting*

Early, or sometimes called “advance,” voting offers a flexible solution for individuals who may face scheduling constraints on Election Day. Whether due to work obligations, travel plans, or other commitments, early voting provides an opportunity to participate in shaping our collective future at a time that suits your schedule. This guide presents key takeaways specific to the early voting process.

- **Check your registration status.** You **must** be registered to vote. Unregistered voters will not be allowed to cast a ballot. You can confirm your status on the Georgia Secretary of State’s My Voter page online, or you can call or visit the local elections office. Both of those avenues can be used to register to vote or make changes to your registration information, but the time period to do so varies by election. Our election calendar includes deadline details for each election, or you can call or visit the elections office for in-person inquiries.

- **Know where to go.** Unlike voting on Election Day when you’re required to report to your assigned precinct to cast your ballot, early voting is conducted solely at the county elections office.

- **Know your timeframe.** The date of any given Election Day will vary. However, it will always fall on a Tuesday selected by the state, and it will always be preceded by three weeks of early voting, including two Saturdays—unless the election is a runoff, in which case the early voting period decreases to one week and excludes Saturday voting.

- **Know the hours.** The elections office is open for early voting from 8:30 AM to 5 PM during weekdays. Saturday voting starts a half-hour later (at 9 AM), but the closing time remains the same (5 PM).

Beyond those three points, much about the early voting process is synonymous with Election Day voting. As a reminder, here are some standard practices for that:

- **Review your sample ballot.** To do that, log onto the Georgia Secretary of State’s My Voter page online using your first initial, last name, county, and date of birth. You can even bring a copy (or other notes) if you’d like.

- **Bring your photo ID.** Acceptable forms include: any state or federal government-issued photo ID; a free photo ID issued by the county’s registration office or the Georgia Department of Driver Services; a Georgia driver’s license (even if it’s expired); a student photo ID from a public Georgia college or university; a valid county, state, or federal government employee photo ID; a valid U.S. passport; a valid military photo ID; and a valid tribal photo ID.

- **Avoid campaign attire and accessories.**

- **Leave cell phones, cameras, and weapons in your vehicle.**

- **Avoid campaign/political discussion on the premises.**

- **Watch your distance.** No food or drink can be provided or received within 150 feet of the polls. Campaign signs are also not allowed to be placed within that same distance (or in public rights-of-way.)

- **No loitering.**

As your elections director, I urge you to embrace early voting as a convenient option to participate in our democratic process. If you have any questions about early voting, consult our county elections calendar or reach out to my office.

Kerry Curry

