

Early voting

What is early voting?

- In November 2022, Michigan voters overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment that gives voters the right to vote early and in person at early voting sites before statewide and federal elections. Communities may also choose to provide early voting for local elections.
- Early voting allows a voter to cast a ballot before Election Day, in an experience similar to voting on Election Day.
- During the early voting period, voters are issued a ballot and can then insert their ballot directly into a tabulator at their early voting site.

What is an early voting site?

- An early voting site is like a polling place where voters can cast a ballot prior to Election Day, during the early voting period. Voters from more than one precinct, city, or township may be assigned to a single, shared early voting site.
- The early voting period takes place for at least of nine consecutive days, for 8 hours each day, ending on the Sunday before an election. Communities may decide to provide additional days of early voting, up to 29 days total.
- Early voting is offered for all statewide and federal elections. Communities may also choose to provide early voting for local elections.
- Early voting site locations, dates, and hours are available 60 days prior to Election Day beginning in 2024 at Michigan.gov/Vote. A list of jurisdictions piloting early voting for the November 2022 election is available at Michigan.gov/EarlyVoting. To locate their early voting site for November, voters are encouraged to visit their local clerk's website. Find your local clerk at Michigan.gov/Vote.

Where do I find my early voting site?

- A list of jurisdictions piloting early voting for the November 2022 election is available at Michigan.gov/EarlyVoting. To locate their early voting site for November, voters are encouraged to visit their local clerk's website. Find your local clerk at Michigan.gov/Vote.
- Some voters may only have one assigned early voting site, while others may have several locations to choose from.

Who is holding early voting?

- Early voting will be available beginning with the presidential primary in 2024 and every statewide and federal election thereafter.

How is early voting different from absentee voting?

- Early voting allows voters to cast a ballot similar to how they would do so at a polling place on Election Day. Voters are issued a ballot and can personally insert it into the tabulator at their early voting site.
- Absentee voting allows voters to request a ballot by mail or in person at their local clerk's office. Voters can complete their absentee ballot at home or at their local clerk's office and submit it in an envelope by mail, in person, or by drop box. After an absentee ballot is received by the local clerk, the voter's absentee ballot is processed and tabulated by their local clerk.
- Absentee voters also have more flexibility to "spoil" their ballot, or change their vote, after it has been submitted.

Do other states have early voting?

- Yes. In fact, many states have some form of early voting. This includes states with smaller populations such as Delaware, North Dakota, and West Virginia as well as larger states like Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas.
- For more information, visit the [National Conference of State Legislatures' brief on early in-person voting](#).

Can I register to vote at an early voting site?

- It is recommended that voters be registered to vote at their current address prior to visiting an early voting site. Voter registration is available online at [Michigan.gov/Vote](https://www.michigan.gov/Vote). Within 14 days of an election, voters must visit their local clerk's office and provide proof of residency to register to vote.
- Early voting sites do not offer voter registration. However, if an early voting site is located at a clerk's office or satellite office, voters may register to vote on site at the clerk's office, and then cast a ballot at the early voting site. Contact your local clerk's office or visit their website to learn more.

Do I need a photo ID to vote at an early voting site?

- No. Voters should remember to bring an acceptable form of photo identification to an early voting site or to the polls on Election Day. However, a photo ID is not required to cast a ballot. Voters without a photo ID, or voters who forgot to bring their photo ID, can still vote after signing an Affidavit of Voter Not in Possession of Picture Identification.

What if I have a disability?

- All voters, including voters with disabilities, have the right to vote in person at an early voting site, at a polling place, or by using a standard or accessible absentee ballot.

- Early voting sites feature at least one Voter Assist Terminal (VAT), a ballot-marking device that can be used by any voter. VATs also provide assistive tools for voters with visual, hearing, mobility, or other disabilities.
- Accessible curbside voting is also available at early voting sites. Voters may contact their local election clerk to request curbside voting. Voters may need to send someone into the early voting site to request curbside voting on their behalf. An election official will then bring the ballot outside for the voter to complete.

How are the location and number of early voting sites determined?

- At least one early voting site must be available to all voters in every city and township.
- Local clerks select the number and location of early voting sites that work best for their community by examining the area's population density, site accessibility, and expected voter turnout.
- Local clerks may also partner with other cities and townships, or their county, to run an early voting site together.

If I'm in line to vote when an early voting site closes, can I still vote?

- Yes. During each day of the early voting period, eligible voters waiting in line when an early voting site closes have the right to stay in line and cast a ballot.

Can I vote early with an absentee ballot?

- Yes. Voters can request an absentee ballot and submit it prior to Election Day by mail, in person at their local clerk's office, or by drop box.
- Voters who no longer wish to use their absentee ballot and who would prefer to vote early in person should bring their absentee ballot to surrender at their early voting site. After surrendering their absentee ballot, a new ballot is issued to complete and submit on-site.
 - Or voters can bring their absentee ballots to an early voting site to insert into a tabulator. The election inspector must verify that voters with absentee ballots are in the correct location and that they have the correct ballot number. Once the election inspector has confirmed this information, the voter can insert a completed absentee ballot into the tabulator, just like at a polling place on Election Day.

Can I change my vote after voting early?

- Once a ballot has been inserted into a tabulator, it cannot be changed.
- Voters who complete and submit an absent voter ballot by mail, in person at a local clerk's office, or via drop box, have the option to change their vote by spoiling their original ballot and requesting a new one. The deadline for spoiling an absentee ballot is 5 p.m. on the second Friday before an election.

- Voters who insert their absentee ballot into a tabulator at an early voting site do not have the ability to spoil their ballot or change their vote.

When are early voting ballots counted?

- At early voting sites, voters insert their completed ballot into a tabulator, just like in an Election Day polling place. Ballots inserted into the tabulator are sealed in secure containers every night during the early voting period.
- After polls close at 8 p.m. on Election Day, all ballots submitted at an early voting site are totaled and reported, along with the vote totals from absentee and Election Day ballots. Results are posted on local election websites.

What steps are taken to ensure early voting is secure?

- Steps taken to ensure secure voting include the following:
 - Voting equipment used to tabulate ballots are certified by the bipartisan Board of State Canvassers and tested by local election officials before use during early voting.
 - All voters are checked in at their early voting site to make sure they are registered to vote, and that they have not already voted before they are issued a ballot.
 - The early voting electronic pollbook prevents double voting by providing regular updates on voter activity, reflecting when a voter has cast a ballot or been issued an absentee ballot.
 - Bipartisan groups of election inspectors run early voting sites under the supervision of local clerks.
 - Voters cast their ballot using paper ballots which are then stored in secure, sealed ballot containers.
 - Precinct results from ballots cast at early voting sites are not posted until after polls close at 8 p.m. on election night so that no early election results are known or made public.
 - All early voting site results are reviewed by the bipartisan Board of County Canvassers before certification. Early voting ballots are available for recounts and audits like all other ballots.

How is double voting at early voting sites prevented?

- Each early voting site accesses the Qualified Voter File, a secure voter records database that sends and receives regular updates of a voter's ballot activity. Ballot information entered at any early voting site or at a local clerk's office is regularly communicated to prevent the issuance of duplicate ballots.

- This means that if a voter has already submitted an absentee ballot or an early voting ballot, this information is flagged for election workers to prevent double voting. If a voter submits an absentee ballot, and then attempts to vote at an early voting site, they will not be issued a ballot.

Can someone vote twice by voting early and later submitting an absentee ballot?

- No. The Qualified Voter File, a secure voter records database, receives regular updates of a voter's ballot activity. If a voter votes at an early voting site, the system indicates a vote has already been submitted, and the absentee ballot will be rejected.

Are election observers, such as poll watchers and challengers, allowed in an early voting site?

- Yes. Election observers are an important part of the electoral process to ensure transparency and properly run elections. Volunteer election challengers and poll watchers may observe the voting process at early voting sites as permitted by Michigan election law. All election observers must strictly adhere to [proper standards and procedures](#).