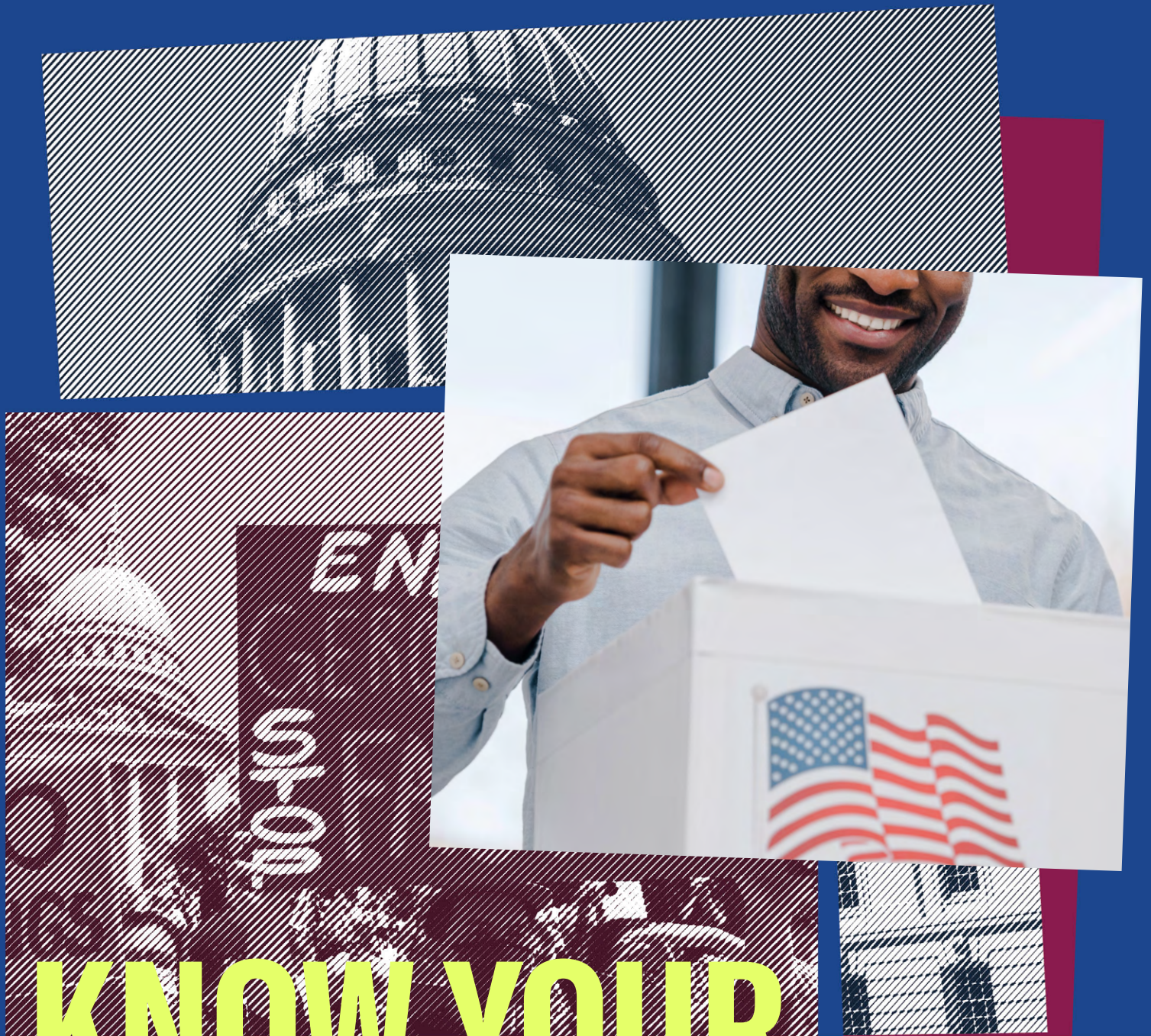


2026-2028

# VOTING IN WISCONSIN



# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

[aclu-wi.org](http://aclu-wi.org)

**ACLU**  
Wisconsin



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## INTRODUCTION

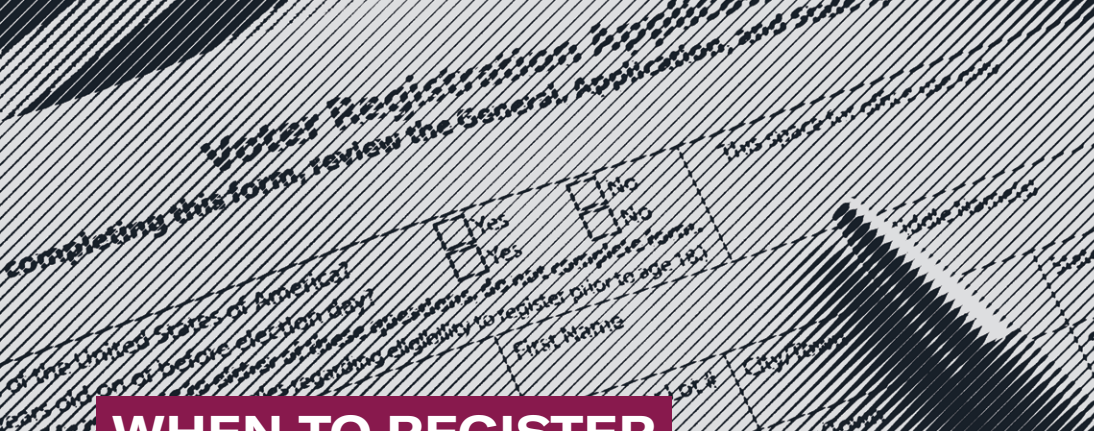
We know the importance of voting. It's a cornerstone of our democracy, and the importance of free and fair elections has never been more critical. Information is power, and that's why the ACLU of Wisconsin has put together this resource guide to be your go-to nonpartisan voting guide for the 2026, 2027, and 2028 election cycles.

This voter guide provides you with information on all aspects of voting, including voter ID requirements, absentee and in-person voting options, and resources to help you find more information on how to participate in the voting process. It also provides valuable information for voters with special circumstances, such as those with disabilities, individuals with a criminal conviction, those who have changed their names, are transgender, and people experiencing homelessness, on how they can participate in voting this year.

We've also included a section specifically about what a poll worker does and how you can get involved and become a poll worker.

As you know, election rules can change, so it's essential to stay up to date on the most current rules. **The most up-to-date information about our work to protect free and fair elections, strengthen our democracy, is available [here](#).**





## WHEN TO REGISTER

To vote in Wisconsin, you must be registered. [Check online](#) to make sure you are registered to vote at your current address.

### You must register if:

- You've never voted in Wisconsin before
- You've moved since you voted last in Wisconsin – even if you just moved across the street or to a new apartment in your building
- You changed your name (by marriage, divorce, etc.) since you last voted
- If you changed your name, you must first update your name in person at the Social Security Office and the DMV
- You haven't voted in four years or more (and have been taken off the voter registration rolls); or
- You were removed from the voter registration rolls due to a felony conviction, but now that you have completed probation, parole, or extended supervision ("off paper"), you are eligible to vote again

More info on voting if you have a criminal conviction is available [here](#).

## HOW TO REGISTER

You can register to vote in many ways, including by mail, online, at your clerk's office, and at your polling place on Election Day. Register online or find out if you are registered at your current address [here](#).

Bring proof of residence to register in person on Election Day or to your local clerk. Proof of residence can be a hard copy or an electronic document (displayed from your phone or laptop). Some examples of acceptable proof of residence include:

- A current and valid State of Wisconsin ID or driver's license
- A utility bill (within 90 days of registering to vote)
- A check issued to you by the government
- A bank statement
- A real estate tax bill from the current year
- A paycheck or paycheck stub
- Any other official identification card or license issued by a Wisconsin governmental body or unit
- Residential lease effective when registering to vote

This information is correct as of January 1, 2026. For the most up-to-date information, including any changes to registration laws, go to [myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Register-To-Vote](https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Register-To-Vote) or [elections.wi.gov/register](https://elections.wi.gov/register).

\*Student voting ID requirement information is different and can be found on page 6.

2026-2028

## ELECTION DAYS

Spring primary  
**February 17, 2026**

Spring general election  
**April 7, 2026**

Fall primary  
**August 11, 2026**

Fall general election  
**November 3, 2026**

Spring primary  
**February 16, 2027**

Spring general election  
**April 6, 2027**

Spring primary  
**February 15, 2028**

Spring general election  
**April 4, 2028**

Presidential preference  
primary  
**April 4, 2028**

Fall primary  
**August 8, 2028**

Presidential election  
**November 7, 2028**

## VOTER ELIGIBILITY

**In Wisconsin, to be eligible to vote, you must be:**

- 18 years or older by Election Day
- A U.S. citizen
- A Wisconsin resident for at least 28 days before Election Day
- Registered to vote (or registering on Election Day)



# WAYS TO VOTE

## 1 IN-PERSON ABSENTEE VOTING

You don't have to wait for Election Day to vote at the polls! In-person absentee voting, also known as "early voting," is available in many locations across Wisconsin. Early voting days and times vary by city, village, and town. **You can find the information for your municipality [here](#).**



## 2 ABSENTEE BALLOT BY MAIL

Any registered Wisconsin voter is eligible to request an absentee ballot. You can request an absentee ballot online at [myvote.wi.gov/en-us/voteabsentee](https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/voteabsentee); by mail (download the application at <https://elections.wi.gov/wec-form/absentee-ballot-request>); by email to your clerk's office; or in-person at your clerk's office. You should request your absentee ballot at least two weeks before the election and return it via mail no later than seven days before the election, or hand-deliver it to your clerk's office, polling place, or central count location (if your community uses one) by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

If you have an absentee ballot, follow the instructions to fill it out correctly. **Remember that you need a witness.** You and your witness must sign the envelope, and your witness must write their full address on it.

## 3 AT THE POLLS

Of course, you can also vote in person at the polls on Election Day! You can find your polling place [here](#). Polls in Wisconsin are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Remember: if you are waiting in line when polls close, you are still allowed to vote. Stay in line!



And don't forget your ID. A form of photo ID is required to vote, but your name does not need to match exactly, and your address does not need to be current. Acceptable forms of ID for voting in person are:

- A Wisconsin DOT-issued driver's license, even if driving privileges are revoked or suspended, with or without a star in the right-hand corner
- A Wisconsin DOT-issued identification card, with or without a star in the right-hand corner
- A Wisconsin DOT-issued identification card or driver's license without a photo, issued under the religious exemption
- Military ID card issued by a U.S. uniformed service
- A U.S. passport
- An identification card issued by a federally recognized Indian tribe in Wisconsin (May be used even if it expires before the most recent general election)
- A photo identification card issued by a Wisconsin-accredited university or college that contains a date of issuance, the signature of the student, and an expiration date no later than two years after the date of issuance. (May be used even if expired before the most recent general election)
- A student ID must be accompanied by a separate document that proves current enrollment if your university or college ID has expired

**More information about Voter ID and possible exceptions that might apply to you is available [here](#).**

# SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN VOTING

## VOTING AFTER A CRIMINAL CONVICTION IN WISCONSIN

**If you have been convicted of a felony, you can vote after you have finished their sentence and are “off paper”** (completed any term of confinement, probation, parole, or extended supervision for the felony offense). If you have only been convicted of a misdemeanor (except for misdemeanor treason or bribery), you do not lose your right to vote. People who have only been charged with a felony but not convicted are still eligible to vote. This means that many people in Wisconsin jails are eligible to vote, including those awaiting trial on a felony who have not yet been convicted and those with a misdemeanor as their most serious conviction.

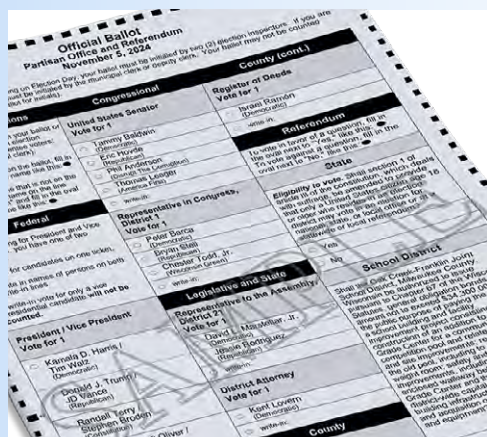
Learn more about Wisconsin voting rights for individuals with a criminal conviction [here](#).

## GETTING AN ID TO VOTE

In Wisconsin, you need a state ID to vote. You can get a free Wisconsin state ID card, which can be printed on the same day as a DMV visit, and can be used for voting purposes by following these steps:

1. Go to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to apply
2. Bring the following, if available:
  - Proof of name and date of birth (such as a birth certificate)
  - Proof of identity (social security card, Medicaid/Medicare Card, etc.)
  - Wisconsin residency (utility bill, government mail, lease, etc.)
  - Proof of U.S. citizenship (U.S. birth certificate or citizenship paperwork)
  - Social security number
3. You can still get an ID for voting if you don't have all or any of these. Simply bring what you have to the DMV, fill out two forms (Form MV3004 and Form MV3012), and you will receive a photo ID document in the mail that you can use in time for voting
4. If you have the materials necessary to get an ID for voting or a driver's license, you can use the temporary printout that the DMV provides you to vote. You do not need to wait for your card to arrive in the mail

For assistance, call the DMV's voter ID hotline: (844) 588-1069.



## CASTING A PROVISIONAL BALLOT

If you cannot provide the required proof of identification at the polling place on Election Day, you can still cast a provisional ballot. To cast a provisional ballot, you must complete a Provisional Ballot Certificate Envelope. While at the polling place, you vote on the ballot, seal your ballot in the Provisional Ballot Certificate Envelope, and return the sealed envelope to the election inspector. Your provisional ballot is not counted until you provide the required proof of identification to the election inspectors, and you must do so by 8 p.m. on Election Day at the polling place or to the municipal clerk or deputy clerk by 4 p.m. on the Friday after the election. If you need to vote provisionally because you have misplaced your ID, you can obtain a new one from the DMV before the deadline – if you do so in person, the DMV will issue a paper ID with your photo on it that is sufficient for voting instantly.



# SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN VOTING

## VOTING WHILE LIVING ON CAMPUS

If you are a student and living on campus on election day, make sure you have everything you need to cast your ballot, including:

A university, college, or technical institute identification card (must include a photo, address not required) with one of the following:

- A fee payment receipt issued to the cardholder by the university, college, or technical college dated no earlier than nine months before the election date (the fee payment receipt must include the student's name and address)
- A certified and current list of students who reside in housing sponsored by the university, college, or technical college (this list should be provided by the university, college, or technical college, and the election official must verify that the student presenting the card is included)

**Will your college student ID be accepted for voting purposes?**

Find out by checking out the following links:

- [UW 4-year schools](#)
- [UW 2-year schools](#)
- [WI private universities and colleges](#)
- [WI technical and community colleges](#)

## VOTING IF YOU ARE UNHOUSED

You can vote if you don't have a home mailing address, but you will still need to provide documentation about your usual residence when registering to vote. This physical location cannot be a P.O. Box. Still, **it can be the address of a shelter, church, or even a description of a place like a specific street corner or park**, as long as you usually reside there and have an intention to return to that location. Note that even if a shelter does not permit you to use its address as a residential address, you can still use it for voter registration purposes if you usually reside there.

To provide proof of residency at the time of voter registration, you can give any of the documents listed above that includes your registration address, if available to you, or if you reside at a location without a mailing address, you can provide a letter from any public or private social service agency (day shelter, church, meal program, etc.) identifying you and describing the physical location of your usual residence. **When you vote, you do not need to prove your residence; you only need to provide proof of your identity.** If you need help navigating these requirements, please call the **Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)**.

## VOTING WITH A DISABILITY

In Wisconsin, all voters, including people with disabilities, have the following rights as protected by federal law:

- To vote privately and independently.
- Accessibility to the polling place, including an accessible route to enter the building.
- Use of an accessible voting machine that allows voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently.
- To receive assistance in marking your ballot.
- To request reasonable accommodations at the polling place, examples include a chair to sit on, a magnifying glass, pen/paper, or a signature guide.
- To use an assistant to state your name and address when the poll worker asks, if you cannot state your name and address independently.
- To vote curbside if you cannot get into your polling location due to disability.

Voters with disabilities can also have someone assist them in returning their absentee ballot. Find more information on absentee ballot return assistance [here](#).



# SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN VOTING

## VOTING IF YOU ARE HOSPITALIZED

If you are in the hospital on Election Day or the seven days before Election Day, you can appoint an “agent” to bring you an absentee ballot. Hospitalized voters should follow these steps to request their absentee ballot:

1. Use [myvote.wi.gov](https://myvote.wi.gov) to complete an absentee ballot request form. In box 7 of the form, the voter must certify that they are hospitalized.
2. Hospitalized voters may then appoint anyone as their agent to request/deliver the ballot on the voter’s behalf. The agent will need to provide their information on Box 7 of the absentee ballot application.
3. If you are hospitalized and still need to register, you must complete a voter registration [application here](#). Your agent may deliver the registration along with the absentee ballot request. You must also provide a proof of residence document with your registration.
4. The agent for the hospitalized voter then delivers a completed absentee ballot application or the written equivalent (and possibly the voter registration form) to the municipal clerk for the hospitalized voter’s municipality of residence.
5. The agent must also show a copy of the voter’s photo ID, or the voter’s original photo ID, to the municipal clerk when making the absentee ballot request. An agent must provide proof of identification before the municipal clerk may issue an absentee ballot to the agent.
6. The municipal clerk issues an absentee ballot, an absentee certificate envelope, and uniform instructions in an absentee carrier envelope to the agent for the hospitalized voter.
7. The agent transports the absentee ballot to the hospitalized voter. The hospitalized voter fills out their ballot in the presence of a witness. The hospitalized voter places the voted ballot in the absentee certificate envelope, seals it, and signs the envelope. The witness also needs to sign the absentee certificate envelope. The voter may also choose their agent to serve as their witness.
8. The agent must deliver or mail the absentee ballot in the certificate envelope to the voter’s municipal clerk. Whether the agent personally delivers the ballot or mails it, it must be received by the municipal clerk by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

**Hospitalized voters have until 5 p.m. on Election Day to request an absentee ballot.**



## VOTING IF YOU ARE TRANSGENDER OR NONBINARY

All voters must present a photo ID to vote in person or when they vote absentee for the first time. Election workers are trained to accept photo IDs that “reasonably” resemble the voter, ignoring minor variations in appearance, such as the length or color of hair, facial hair, scars, and similar changes. There is also no reason for election workers to check the gender/sex marker on the ID. So, while you should be able to vote with your valid ID even if your appearance has changed, if you are concerned that your photo ID could be refused, you should consider using an alternative ID that matches your current appearance, if there is time to acquire a new ID that does. In the worst case, attempt to use your current, valid ID; if refused, cast a “provisional ballot,” described on page 5.

# SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN VOTING

## VOTING IN A NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Certain jurisdictions are required to provide voting materials in languages other than English, depending on the size of their non-English-speaking populations. If you vote in Milwaukee, West Milwaukee, Sharon, Curtiss, Arcadia, or Abbotsford, you can request voting materials, including a Spanish-language ballot. Numerous other cities, towns, and villages must provide voting materials in Native languages.

If the place you vote is not required to provide those materials, or if you speak a less-common language, you are entitled to have an assistant help you vote in person or absentee – this could be a family member or a trusted translator. If you use this assistance, you must inform the election worker when you vote that you have brought translation assistance with you. If you don't have someone to translate for you, call the Election Protection hotline:

**Spanish/English:** 888-VE-Y-VOTA/888-839-8682

**Asian languages/English:** 888-API-VOTE/888-274-8683

**Arabic/English:** 844-YALLA-US/844-925-5287



## VOTING IF YOU ARE IN THE MILITARY OR STATIONED OVERSEAS

If an individual is stationed overseas on a military assignment, temporarily overseas for school, or permanently relocated overseas, they are considered an overseas elector.

Military and permanent overseas voters are subject to special procedures for voter registration and are the only types of voters exempt from providing proof of residence. Temporary overseas voters are required to provide proof of residence.

All military and overseas voters, as well as any absentee ballots issued to them, are tracked in the Statewide Voter Registration System (WisVote). Most military and overseas voters have until 5 p.m. on the fourth day (Friday) preceding the election to request an absentee ballot. If requested, the clerk must transmit an absentee ballot by email or fax to military or overseas electors, whether permanent or temporary.

### Military

A member of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Merchant Marine of the United States, Peace Corps, the commissioned corps of the Federal Public Health Service, the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, civilian employees of the United States and civilians officially attached to a uniformed service who are serving outside the United States, and any spouse or dependents of the above residing with or accompanying them.



### Permanent Overseas

A U.S. Citizen who is not disqualified from voting and is qualified to vote except for residency, but who last resided (or whose parent last resided) in Wisconsin before living outside the United States. Permanent overseas voters should provide the last address in Wisconsin where they or their parents last resided before moving overseas. Permanent overseas electors only receive ballots for federal offices.



# HOW TO BECOME A POLL WORKER

Poll workers serve a vital function in our elections. They are also typically in short supply, and they play a crucial role in ensuring that voting proceeds smoothly. Poll workers check in voters, assist people in registering to vote, verify photo IDs, and process absentee ballots. These positions are often paid, training is provided, and they can provide an excellent opportunity to become more involved in the democratic process.

To become a poll worker, you must submit an application to the municipal clerk where you are registered to vote. You can find your clerk's contact information and apply to be a poll worker [here](#).



## ELECTION PROTECTION



For many years, the ACLU of Wisconsin has been engaged in Election Protection efforts alongside a broad coalition of nonpartisan organizations across the state. We achieve this by collaborating with our coalition partners to offer individualized assistance through the **Election Protection Hotline (1-866-OUR-VOTE)**, monitoring and addressing systemic issues that affect access to the polls, and, when necessary, seeking relief for voters in the courts.

If you are a voter seeking assistance on Election Day, during early voting, or in preparing to register or vote, or if you have witnessed issues at the polls, such as voter intimidation or other barriers to access, you can contact Election Protection, which is available in multiple languages.

# GET INVOLVED

## DONATE

Your gift to the ACLU of Wisconsin Foundation is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law and supports litigation and civil rights education in Wisconsin and across the country. The ACLU receives no government funding and does not charge its clients for legal representation. Our work depends entirely on private donations and legal fees earned from successful cases.

## BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR (OUR GUARDIANS OF LIBERTY)

Strengthen our lobbying efforts and grassroots activity by joining the ACLU of Wisconsin! Paying annual dues of \$35 or more entitles you to a membership in the state and national ACLU. Monthly donors also reduce our costs, meaning that a greater portion of your gift goes directly to fight injustice.

## WORKPLACE GIVING

Many companies offer employees various ways to donate to their preferred organizations, including convenient options such as payroll deduction and a company match. This is a perfect way to make a larger contribution and pay for it in small, more feasible installments. Check with your company to learn about your options for workplace giving.

## PLANNED GIFTS

Naming the ACLU-WI as a beneficiary of your will, life insurance policy, HSA fund, or retirement fund is a simple and effective way to support the ACLU. Additional legacy giving vehicles, such as gift annuities, are also available. Connect with our development staff to learn more about how you can leave a legacy that protects civil rights and liberties for generations to come.

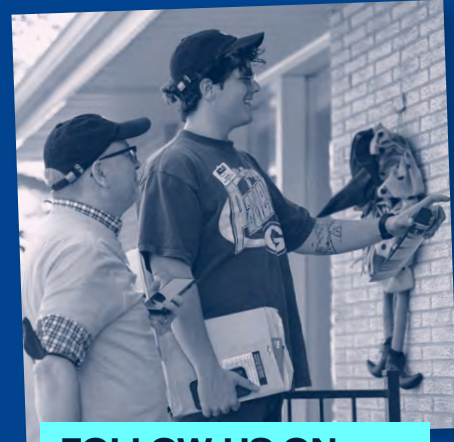
## CORPORATE SUPPORT

Join our Business Partnership program. Whether through philanthropic gifts, event sponsorships, or in-kind support, corporations and businesses are important partners in the work. Our business partners receive recognition, volunteer opportunities, and tools for advocating for the issues that matter most to them.

## VOLUNTEER

There are many ways you can take action as a volunteer – from canvassing and message actions to activating your local community. Join our team of dedicated volunteers and make a difference.

Please contact our Development & Engagement Department for more information at [development-engagement@aclu-wi.org](mailto:development-engagement@aclu-wi.org) or 414-272-4032.



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