

Script for Casting Your Ballot: In-Person Voting



Slide 1: Notes for Teachers

Slide 2: Casting Your Ballot: In-Person Voting

Welcome to this presentation by the League of Women Voters. The league assists people register to vote and provides nonpartisan information, so people can be educated voters. In-Person Voting is currently the most used mode of voting. The goal of this PowerPoint is to provide information so that you know what to expect when you go to vote in person and are familiar with what you will encounter when you go a polling place.

Slide 3: Are you registered?

Before you go to vote, check to make sure that you are registered because you **must be registered in order to vote**. Check your registration about a month ahead of an election. You can do this online by clicking on the address in the slide or typing <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation> in the search box on your computer. Then if you need to update your address, you will have time to do it.

If you receive a notice about your registration from the Office of Elections, be sure to read it and reply.

Slide 4: Are you informed?

You need information so that you are prepared to make good decisions about candidates and issues that are on the ballot. Go to Vote411.org (<https://www.vote411.org/>) to learn about the candidates and the issues that will be on your specific ballot. Think about your values and your views. Decide which candidate most supports your views and will do a good job representing you.

Understand the issues that are on the ballot. Learn more about both sides of these issues and make an informed decision ahead of time. You can print a sample ballot from this website and take it with you to the polling place, if you wish.

Slide 5: Do you know when and where to vote?

There are two ways to vote in person. Early Voting (also called in-person absentee voting) and Voting on Election Day. Let's look at each of them

Slide 6: Early Voting or In-Person Absentee Voting

In Virginia, you can vote 45 days before election day. This *Early Voting* is also called *In-Person Absentee Voting* because people are voting in person, but they are

absent from voting on election day. To vote early, you do NOT need a specific reason, and you do NOT need to request an absentee ballot.

The specific locations and times for early voting differ across Virginia. In Fairfax County one location is usually in the Fairfax County Government Center. To find additional locations, dates, and times when you could vote early, go to the website of your county or city Office of Elections. This information also might be posted online. If you are a registered voter, you can vote at any *Early Voting* location provided by your county or city.

Slide 7: Voting on Election Day

Election Day is the same day across the United States. It is always on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. That's why the specific date changes from year to year. This year in Virginia, the polls will be open from 6 in the morning to 7 in the evening. As long as you are in line by 7 p.m., you will be allowed to vote no matter how long the line is at 7 p.m.

You must vote in your assigned polling place. That location is listed on the notification you received with confirmation of your registration. You can also find it by clicking on the link on the slide or type

<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation> in the search box.

Slide 8: Outside the Polling Location

When you arrive at a polling place, look for reserved parking for voters. There probably will be signs around the outside of the building. People may also be distributing campaign materials. This is one last attempt to influence your vote.

By law, signs and people distributing campaign literature must stay 40 feet away from the entrance. You can accept the handouts or not. You can talk to the people or not.

Slide 9: Equal Access for People with Disabilities

Parking spaces are often reserved for voters. In addition, special parking places are available for disabled people and sometimes for the elderly. Additionally, if people are handicapped and cannot walk into the polling station, there should be a sign with a phone number so that someone from the polling station will come out to the car with a ballot.

For people with disabilities who choose to vote inside the polling place, there are special machines to help them vote. This ensures equal access for ALL to vote.

Slide 10: Inside the Polling Location

Once inside, follow the signs directing you to the polling place location in that building. You can take written material with you that will help you to vote. You can also wear a sticker, button, shirt, hat, or other apparel with a candidate's name or a political slogan on it.

However, you can NOT campaign or try to influence other voters inside a polling place.

Slide 11: Sign in with Election Officials

Election officials will be sitting at a table. There may be other people behind them or on the side, as well. These people are “election observers” or “poll watchers” who are there to ensure that the required procedures are being followed correctly.

The election officials will ask you for an ID. You must show proof of your identity. Many documents can be used including a driver’s license, a voter registration verification that you received in the mail, or a student ID issued in the United States. If you forget your ID, you must sign an ID Confirmation Statement, and you will be allowed to vote. Look at the next slide to view all the acceptable documents that can be used for voter identification.

You will be asked to state your name and address and this information will be checked against official voter registration records. You will receive a paper ballot or be directed where to go to get one.

Slide 12: Acceptable Forms of Identification

This is a list of acceptable forms of identification for voting. Remember to bring an ID with you when you vote. If you forget, you must sign an ID confirmation statement in order to vote.

Note: For the latest information about voting in Virginia go to this site:

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/>

Slide 13: Mark your ballot in private

The election officials may give you a pen or you can use one that you brought. You cannot use pencil or a gel pen. It must be a **blue or black ballpoint pen**.

Take your ballot to the table as directed to vote in private. The ballot might be two-sided, so look at both sides to ensure that you are voting on everything.

Your secret ballot does not need to be shared with anyone. That’s why you may get a file folder to hold your ballot when you are finished marking it.

Slide 14: Mark Your Ballot Correctly

Completely fill in the oval next to your choice. Do not make other marks on the ballot. Make sure you vote for only the correct number of candidates.

Remember to check your ballot to make sure you have marked your choices correctly before proceeding to the next station.

Slide 15: Scan Your Paper Ballot

After you have marked your choices on the ballot, put it in the folder to maintain your privacy, and go to the election official by the scanning machine. You will be directed to insert your paper ballot into the machine which will scan it and keep it for the records in case there is a need for a recount of votes. You do not need to show how you voted to anyone.

Slide 16: Congratulations! You have Voted!

Congratulations! You have voted, and your voice will be heard. Remember, every vote counts!