



NORTH CAROLINA
STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Help Station Guide

Revised 2023

What is the Help Station?

The help station is the place for a discussion with voters about irregularities. A voter is to be directed to the help station when there is a registration issue or other reason the voter is unable to receive a regular ballot. Provisional voting or precinct transfers are typically handled at the help station.

If election officials have determined that a voter is not eligible to vote a regular ballot, they must use a **Help Referral Form** to refer the voter to the help station. Information on the form enables the help station officials to determine the identity of the voter, the nature of the issue, and whether the voter should be offered a provisional ballot.

Submitted **Help Referral Forms** should be kept in a binder or folder and returned to the board of elections offices along with other election materials. Do not place this form into a voter's provisional ballot envelope.

What is Provisional Voting?

If a person does not appear on the official list of eligible registered voters in the voting place, the voter will be offered a provisional ballot. Voters who lack HAVA ID or are unable to show Photo ID will also be offered a provisional ballot. Provisional means conditional – the ability to have the vote counted depends on a determination of a voter's eligibility after research.

A provisional ballot looks like any other ballot; however, the ballot does not get inserted into the tabulator. Instead, a provisional application and the ballot are completed by the voter. The application will contain information about the voter and the provisional voting reason. This application is placed in a clear sleeve on (or otherwise attached to) the outside of a provisional voting envelope. The voter completes and seals the ballot on the inside of the envelope where it remains private.

It is critical that the election official assisting with this provisional process ensures that **the application and any associated documents (e.g., a Photo ID Exception Form) are placed in the clear sleeve** or attached to the outside of the envelope **and are not sealed inside the envelope**. The ballot will be the only item sealed within the envelope to maintain privacy and security of the ballot.

ID-RELATED SITUATIONS THAT COULD REQUIRE A VOTER TO BE OFFERED A PROVISIONAL BALLOT

SITUATIONS	INSTRUCTIONS	NEXT STEPS
<p><u>Photo ID Situation 1</u> Voter presents a Photo ID, but the ID provided does not meet all legal requirements</p>	<p>The voter has three options:</p> <p>Option 1: Provide a different Photo ID that meets all legal requirements.</p> <p>Option 2: Vote a provisional ballot and bring their Photo ID to the county board office in person, as described below in Photo ID Situation 2.</p> <p>Option 3: Complete a Photo ID Exception Form affirming that the voter has a qualifying exception to the Photo ID requirement and vote a provisional ballot, as described below in Photo ID Situation 3.</p>	<p>If the voter chooses Option 1 and the Photo ID meets all legal requirements, the voter can receive a regular ballot.</p> <p>If the voter cannot provide another Photo ID, they must be offered Options 2 and 3 to vote a provisional ballot. <u>Proceed to Photo ID Situations 2 and 3 below for instructions.</u></p>
<p><u>Photo ID Situation 2</u> Voter has an acceptable Photo ID but did not bring it</p>	<p>If a voter does not present a Photo ID because the voter forgot to bring the ID with them to the voting site, the voter has the option of going to get their Photo ID and returning to the voting enclosure with it.</p> <p>If the voter does not have time to do so or chooses not to, the voter may vote a provisional ballot. The voter must complete the provisional application and the reason selected would be ID NOT PROVIDED – NO EXCEPTION FORM/RETURN WITH ID. For the voter’s provisional ballot to be counted, the voter would then be required to bring their Photo ID to the county board office in person, no later than the close of business (i.e., 5pm) on the business day before canvass.</p>	<p>Review the provisional voter instruction sheet with the voter before they leave the enclosure. Provide the voter with clear instructions to <u>present their acceptable Photo ID in person</u> at the county board of elections by 5pm the day before county canvass.</p>
<p><u>Photo ID Situation 3</u> Voter has a qualifying exception from the Photo ID requirement</p>	<p>If a voter cannot show photo ID when voting in person, they can still vote by completing a Photo ID Exception Form if they: 1) have a reasonable impediment that prevents them from presenting an acceptable Photo ID; 2) have a religious objection to being photographed; or 3) are the victim of a declared natural disaster within 100 days of Election Day.</p> <p>The voter must complete the provisional application and the reason selected would be ID NOT PROVIDED – EXCEPTION FORM. The voter must then complete the Photo ID Exception Form. The form can only be completed at the voting site if the voter is voting in person. Once this form is completed, they can vote a provisional ballot that will be counted by the county board unless the county board members unanimously find the form to be false.</p>	<p>A voter asserting a qualifying exception and who completes a Photo ID Exception Form is <u>not required</u> to bring a Photo ID before county canvass to have their ballot counted.</p> <p>If there is any issue with the form, the county board will notify the voter and give them an opportunity to address those issues.</p>
<p><u>HAVA ID Required in Addition to Photo ID</u></p>	<p>If the voter has <i>ID Required</i> on their voter record they will need to provide a HAVA ID in addition to a Photo ID. Sometimes this may be the same ID—a driver's license with a <i>current</i> address would serve both requirements. But not every ID with a photo will meet both HAVA ID and Photo ID requirements.</p> <p>If the voter is unable to provide <u>both</u> an eligible HAVA ID and Photo ID, the voter will vote a provisional ballot for both reasons. If the voter has an acceptable Photo ID that does not meet HAVA ID</p>	<p>If the voter has voted a provisional ballot due to a HAVA ID issue but was able to provide acceptable Photo ID, the voter may mail, fax, email, or deliver in person a HAVA ID by 5pm the day before county canvass.</p>

Reminders for Provisional Voting

If a voter needs to vote provisionally, the following pages will outline the process to follow both for the manual process for counties who use paper pollbooks on Election Day and the SOSA/OVRD process when using your electronic pollbook. If you are using a third-party pollbook these steps may be different.

When assisting a voter with provisional voting, North Carolina's Administrative Code requires every polling site to have a separate voting booth in your Help Station area. This provides another method for ensuring that the provisional ballot goes into the envelope and not into the tabulator.

Final note – make sure that all documents are signed by the voter and, when required, by the Help Station official.

Provisional Voting Procedures (Manual)

- 1 Accept Help Referral Form from voter and ask voter for Photo ID (Unless form indicates no Photo ID).
- 2 Complete provisional poll book.
- 3 Complete administrative section of **Provisional Voting Application**.
- 4 Affix PIN labels to poll book log, provisional application, and provisional instructions.
- 5 Ask voter to complete and sign **Provisional Voter Application**.
- 6 *If voter is unable to provide photo ID and has a qualifying exception, ask voter to complete Photo ID Exception Form.*
- 7 Accept and review all forms with voter. Sign or initial where needed.
- 8 Obtain appropriate ballot and write the word “Provisional” and the precinct number of the voter’s eligible precinct on the ballot. Present voter with ballot, provisional application and envelope, and provisional instructions.
- 9 Provide voter with verbal instructions on voting ballot in private, placing voted ballot in envelope, and returning voted ballot sealed in the provisional envelope.
- 10 If applicable, provide voter with instructions on time for providing the county board of elections with acceptable Photo ID and/or HAVA ID.

Provisional Voting Procedures (SOSA/OVRD)

- 1 Accept Help Referral Form from voter and ask voter for Photo ID (Unless form indicates voter has no Photo ID).
- 2 Search voter and select Add Existing to choose an existing voter. If voter cannot be located, select Add New.
- 3 Complete the provisional data entry information screens.
- 4 If applicable, note whether voter provided acceptable ID under HAVA.
- 5 Print the **Provisional Voter Application**.
- 6 Ask voter to sign the **Provisional Voter Application**.
- 7 Accept application from voter.
- 8 Obtain appropriate ballot and write the word “Provisional” and the precinct number of the voter’s eligible precinct on the ballot.
- 9 Present voter with ballot, provisional application and envelope, and provisional instructions.
- 10 Provide voter with verbal instructions on voting ballot in private, placing voted ballot in envelope and returning it sealed in the provisional envelope.
- 11 If applicable, provide voter with instructions on time for providing the county board of elections with acceptable Photo ID and/or HAVA ID.

Provisional Voter Instructions

1

Provisional Voting Reason

Provide the voter with the **Provisional Voter Instructions**. If voting provisionally due to a Photo ID exception provide voter with the Photo ID Exception Form. (If a voter has an Exception they do not have to return before canvass)

2

PIN

Show the voter their **Provisional Identification Number** on the instructions. A voter can use the PIN to check the status of their provisional application. This information will be available **7 days** (for municipal elections in Sept./Oct.) or **10 days** (for all other elections) after the date of the election.

3

NO ID

If the voter voted provisionally due to ID NOT PROVIDED – NO EXCEPTION FORM/RETURN WITH ID (because the voter will bring their Photo ID to the county board office and/or is unable to provide an acceptable form of HAVA ID), inform the voter that they must provide the county board of elections with the ID no later than 5:00 pm on the day before canvass.
*Remind voter that Photo ID must be provided in person but HAVA ID can be mailed/faxed/mailed.

*Be sure to provide “Notice to No ID Voters” (HAVA) or “Common ID Flyer” (Photo ID).

4

County Canvass Day

Inform the voter of the date the county canvass day will be held:
7 days (for municipal elections in Sept./Oct.) or **10 days** after Election Day.

Provisional Voting Reasons

- 1 Photo ID Exception
- 2 A. No Photo ID (has a Photo ID but does not have it with them), OR
B. Voter Does Not Have Acceptable HAVA ID (has eligible photo ID)
- 3 No Record of Registration
- 4 Unreported Move
- 5 Incorrect Precinct
- 6 Unrecognized Address
- 7 Previously Removed
- 8 Other Provisional Issues



Photo ID Exception

One Stop or Election Day

If a voter cannot show photo ID when voting in person, they can still vote by completing an ID Exception Form. Exceptions to photo ID are the following:

- **ID Not Provided-Exception – Reasonable Impediment.** *A reasonable impediment means that something is preventing the voter from showing ID. The voter must provide their reason by selecting from the following choices on the form.*
 - Lack of transportation
 - Disability or illness
 - Lack of birth certificate or other documents needed to obtain ID
 - Work or school schedule
 - Family responsibilities
 - Lost, stolen, or misplaced photo ID
 - Photo ID applied for but not yet received
 - Other reasonable impediment (if selected, the voter must write the reason on the form)
 - State or federal law prohibits voter from listing reason
- **ID Not Provided Exception - Religious Objection to Being Photographed**
- **ID Not Provided Exception – Natural Disaster** *(victim of a natural disaster declared by the President or NC Governor and occurring within 100 days of Election Day)*



Voter does not have a Photo ID with them-No Exception Form

One Stop

If a voter does not have an acceptable photo ID with them and does not have a qualifying exception, they can vote a provisional ballot under the reason in SOSA: ID NOT PROVIDED – NO EXCEPTION FORM/RETURN WITH ID.

The provisional envelope will be marked with No ID Provided.

Election Day

If a voter does not have an acceptable photo ID with them and does not have a qualifying exception, they can vote a provisional ballot under the reason in OVRD: ID NOT PROVIDED – NO EXCEPTION FORM/RETURN WITH ID.

The provisional envelope will be marked with No ID Provided.



Voter does not have acceptable HAVA ID

A first-time voter must show HAVA ID if one of the following apply:

- Registered to vote by mail and does not have a verified North Carolina drivers license number or last four digits of a social security number, or did not provide acceptable identification at the time of their registration, and has not previously voted in an election for federal office in North Carolina
- Registered to vote by any means and does not have a verified North Carolina drivers license number or last four digits of a social security number, and has not previously voted in an election for federal office in North Carolina

The first-time voter will be asked to show one of the following forms of ID or documents when they present to vote:

- a current and valid photo ID
- a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that contains their address

This is a requirement to verify a new voter's address under the Help American Vote Act (HAVA) and N.C.G.S. 163-166.12. This is NOT the same as the Photo ID requirement.

If the first-time voter does not show one of the forms of ID noted above, the voter must be offered the opportunity to cast a provisional ballot. The provisional envelope will be marked with No ID Provided and will need to be noted as HAVA ID on the additional notes section on the provisional envelope. In SOSA/OVRD ID NOT PROVIDED – NO EXCEPTION FORM/RETURN WITH ID will be selected.



No record of registration

Same-day registration and voting at one-stop sites

An individual who is qualified to vote may register in person and then vote at a one-stop voting site in that person's county of residence during the one-stop early voting period. To register to vote, the person must complete a voter registration application and provide **proof of residence**. Proof of residence may be provided by presenting any of the following valid documents that show your current name and current residence address:

- a North Carolina driver's license;
- a photo identification from a government agency; or
- a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document.

After registering, a same-day registrant must show an acceptable Photo ID (if they have not done so already) and then may vote a regular ballot.

If the person declines to vote immediately, the voter registration must still be accepted. The registrant may later return to a one-stop site in that county and cast a ballot; however, the registrant **may not** wait to cast their ballot on Election Day. If returning during the one-stop voting period, the voter will need to provide Photo ID prior to voting.

The one-stop election official must give all same-day registrants a **Notice to Same-Day Registrant** document.



Unreported Moves

MOVED 30 OR MORE DAYS TO ADDRESS WITHIN COUNTY

One Stop

During the one-stop early voting period, if the voter moved 30 or more days before the date of the election, the voter's address in the county should be updated and the voter given the ballot style for which they are eligible based on the updated address.

Election Day

- If voter presents to their **NEW PRECINCT**, permit the voter to be transferred in and offered a regular ballot if you are able to reach their old (previous) precinct to ensure they have not already voted. If you are unable to reach their former precinct allow voter to cast a provisional ballot.
- If voter presents to **OLD PRECINCT**, transfer voter to new precinct or assist voter in casting a provisional ballot.
- If voter presents to a **TRANSFER (CENTRAL) PRECINCT**, receive transferred voter from old precinct and permit voter to cast a regular ballot.
- If voter with an Unreported Move presents to a voting site other than one of the sites listed above, the voter may cast a provisional ballot.



Unreported Moves

MOVED LESS THAN 30 DAYS TO ADDRESS WITHIN COUNTY

One Stop

During the one-stop early voting period, if the voter moved less than 30 days from the date of the election, the voter's address should not be updated. The voter should be issued both a ballot based on their previous address in the county and a voter registration form to update their address in the county for future elections.

Election Day

On Election Day, the voter's proper precinct is based on their previous address. If the voter presents to vote at the polling place for the precinct based on their previous address, they should be issued a regular ballot. The voter should be given a voter registration update form to update their address in the county for future elections. If the voter presents to vote at any other polling site, they should be referred to their proper voting site or to the Help Station to vote a provisional ballot.



Unreported Moves

MOVED TO ADDRESS IN ANOTHER COUNTY

Moved More than 30 Days

Regardless of whether the voter is presenting to vote during the one-stop early voting period or on Election Day, the voter is no longer qualified to vote in the county. If the voter insists on voting, the voter should be referred to the Help Station and offered a provisional ballot.

Moved Less than 30 Days

The voter's proper precinct is still based on their previous address. The voter is still eligible to vote a regular ballot at the voting site based on their previous precinct. Inform the voter that they should register to vote in their new county for purposes of future elections.



Incorrect Precinct

This is used when a voter is requesting to vote at a polling place on Election Day that is not the polling place for the voter's precinct. The voter's precinct assigned to them based on their address 30 or more days prior to Election Day.

You should only use this reason if the voter presents at a voting site other than their proper precinct. Do not use this reason if the more appropriate reason is *Unreported Move*.



Incorrect Party

This is used only in a partisan primary when a voter insists on voting a ballot for a party other than the voter's affiliated party.

Do not use this reason for any election other than a partisan primary.



Previously Removed

This is used when it is determined that a voter was previously registered in the county, but the registration was canceled. A voter's registration may be cancelled due to any number of reasons (moved within state, moved to another state, felony conviction, removed due to list maintenance, sustained challenge, deceased, etc.).

During one-stop this reason would not be used. A voter who has been removed should be offered Same Day Registration during the OS early voting period.



Unrecognized Address

This is used when an election official is unable to locate the address stated by the voter in the county's street lookup files.

**Do not use these reasons unless instructed to do so
by the county board of elections**



Voter Already Voted

This is used if the voter record indicates that the voter who is presenting to vote has already cast their ballot in the election.



Jurisdiction Dispute

This is used if a voter presents to vote and has no eligible ballot style or the voter requests to vote for an election contest that is not in the voter's assigned voting district based on his legal voting residence.



Voted During Extended Hours

This is used if the hours for voting are extended by the State Board of Elections or a court order.