

ELECTIONS 2021

COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE

vote.ri.gov













INTRODUCTION

Letter from the Secretary

Voting is fundamental to our democracy. Unfortunately, all too often the importance of this single act is ignored. It is imperative to engage Rhode Islanders in the civic process. As a community leader, I need your help to make sure that all eligible Rhode Islanders are engaged and ready to be votersl.

This guide outlines how you can support efforts to educate and engage voters.

The single act of casting a ballot is fundamental and how we make government accountable to the people it serves. I thank you again for being engaged and for working to engage others. Your efforts are truly what make our democracy thrive!

If you have any questions, please call our Elections Division at 401-222-2340 or contact us by email at elections@sos.ri.gov.

Nellie M. Gorbea Rhode Island Secretary of State

Tullin U. Horles

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CONTACT US

ELECTION DIVISION

vote.ri.gov

elections@sos.ri.gov

401-222-2340

148 West River Street

Providence, RI 02904

SPECIAL ELECTION 2021



Here are the important dates that every voter should know concerning the 2021 Special Election:

JANUARY

JAN

Deadline to register to vote

FEBRUARY



Deadline to apply for a mail ballot





MARCH - ELECTION DAY



All mail ballots must be received by 8 p.m.

VOTER REGISTRATION IN RHODE ISLAND



The first step in being a voter is to make sure you are registered to vote and that your voter information is accurate in the Central Voter Registration System.

KEY DATE TO REMEMBER



VOTER REGISTRATION

It is easy and secure for you to register to vote or to update your voter information at vote.ri.gov using a DMV issued driver's license or state ID number.

If you do not have a license or ID, you can still register or update your voter information by filling out a paper voter registration form. This form can be downloaded and printed from vote.ri.gov or you can call your local board of canvassers to have a form mailed to you.

UPDATING VOTER INFORMATION

Did you know that if you move to a new home or apartment, you also need to update your voter registration with your new address? Rhode Island automates that process through DMV transactions, but if you have moved and haven't been to the DMV lately, it's a good idea to go to vote.ri.gov to make sure your voter information is up to date and accurate.

PRE-REGISTRATION

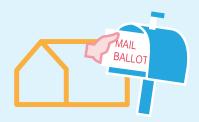
Rhode Island has pre-registration, meaning 16 and 17-year-olds are eligible to register to vote! This helps ensure young voters can cast their ballot when they turn eighteen without waiting to process a new voter registration. Sixteen and seventeen year olds can pre-register when they go to the DMV to get their first license by simply checking the Voter Registration box on the license form. They can also request a paper voter registration form at the Voter Information Center.

Would you like to host a voter registration drive to pre-register young Rhode Islanders? Check out our Voter Registration Drive guide to learn important processes for a successful event. You can also contact our Elections Division if you would like assistance.

VOTING IN RHODE ISLAND

WAYS TO VOTE

Know your voting options!



FROM HOME

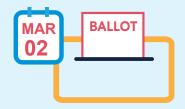
Go to **vote.ri.gov** to download a mail ballot application -OR- contact your city or town hall.



EARLY IN-PERSON

Contact your city or town hall.

Wear a mask.



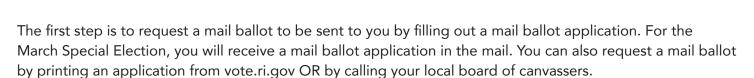
ON ELECTION DAY

Go to **vote.ri.gov** to find your polling place.

Wear a mask.

VOTE FROM HOME

Voting from home using a mail ballot is such a safe and easy way to cast a ballot, you can even do it while wearing your pis.



REQUEST YOUR
MAIL BALLOT



Mail ballot applications must be received by February 9 at 4 p.m.

RETURN YOUR VOTED
MAIL BALLOT

Once you receive your mail ballot, be sure to fill it out, sign it and send it back right away.

Mail ballots must be received by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

TRACK YOUR BALLOT

You can check the status of your mail ballot application or returned ballot on vote.ri.gov.



DROP BOX

Worried it won't get back in time to be counted?

There are 24-hour secure drop boxes located around Rhode Island for voters to drop off their completed mail ballots. You can go to vote.ri.gov to find where these drop boxes are located.

VOTE EARLY IN-PERSON





Contact your local board of canvassers office directly for information on early in-person voting in your community.

If you did not get to apply for a mail ballot but want to vote before Election Day, you can vote early in-person at your local board of canvassers! Simply go to your city or town hall (where boards of canvassers offices are located) during their normal business hours in the 20 days leading up to Election Day.

VISIT YOUR CITY/ TOWN HALL DURING BUSINESS HOURS

FEBRUARY 10 - MARCH 1

EARLY VOTING PERIOD

The early in-person voting process is nearly the same as voting at a polling place.

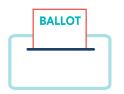
First, you check in by scanning your photo ID into an electronic poll book. Then the clerk will print out your ballot. You will fill out your ballot and insert it into the voting machine to be counted.

Remember to wear your "I Voted" sticker with pride





VOTE ON ELECTION DAY





Your local city or town, along with the State Board of Elections, will determine which polling places are open on Election Day.

Elections aren't a pop quiz and there are steps you can take to be prepared to vote!

PREVIEW YOUR BALLOT AND FIND YOUR

POLLING PLACE

Go to vote.ri.gov

to preview your ballot and find a map to your polling place.

AT THE

POLLING PLACE

You will be checked-in by scanning your photo ID into an electronic poll book. Then the poll worker will hand you a ballot and direct you to any available voting booth.



VOTE!

You will fill out your ballot and insert it into the voting machine to be counted.

Remember to wear your "I Voted" sticker with pride!

IF YOU APPLIED FOR A MAIL BALLOT:

You will be required to vote with a provisional ballot if you attempt to vote in person. This means your local board of canvassers will check to make sure you haven't already voted. As long as you didn't already vote, your provisional ballot will be counted.

KNOW YOUR VOTER RIGHTS



If you are still in line when the polls close on Election Day, do not get out of line! You can still vote.

KEEP YOUR VOTE A SECRET

Your vote is private! No one is allowed to ask who you voted for and you should not be intimidated into sharing that information.

REQUEST HELP FROM A BIPARTISAN PAIR OF POLL WORKERS.

You can request the assistance of a bipartisan pair of poll workers. If you need assistance to mark your ballot because you cannot read or write or due to a disability, you may bring the person of your choice into the voting booth to assist you.

REQUEST A PROVISIONAL BALLOT

You have the right to vote with a provisional ballot if you forget your ID or your name does not appear on an e-poll book when voting in person. If your signature matches the one in your voter record on file and you haven't already cast a ballot, your vote will be counted.

HAVE YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION RESTORED WHEN YOU ARE RELEASED FROM PRISON

If you are a convicted felon who was registered to vote in Rhode Island, you will have your voter registration restored when you are released from prison. If you are sentenced to home confinement, you are eligible to vote.

BILINGUAL VOTER EDUCATION MATERIALS

Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls, and Woonsocket all must provide voter education materials, ballots, and voter assistance in Spanish and English per Voting Rights Act regulations.

VIOLATIONS OF STATE ELECTION LAW

Any attempt to interfere with your right to vote or to unduly influence your vote is a crime. It is a crime to try to make you vote a certain way by making threats or offering gifts.

It is also against the law to force you to reveal your vote once you have cast your ballot. Contact your local board of canvassers if anyone tries to interfere with your right to vote.

OUTREACH COMMUNICATIONS



This section contains sample language for you to easily disseminate information about Rhode Island's upcoming elections.

SAMPLE EMAILS

Sample emails topics:

- Voter Registration
- Vote from Home for the Special Election
- Vote Early In-Person
- Vote on Election Day

SAMPLE POSTS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Sample post for social media topics:

- Voter Registration
- Mail Ballots
- Ways to Vote
- Early voting
- Vote on Election Day

VIDEOS AND ANIMATIONS

- Mechanics of Voting at a Polling Place
- Why voting matters for every level of government
- Peer responses to "voting doesn't matter"
- Peer responses to "I don't have time to vote"

HASHTAGS

#VoteFromHomeRI

#VoteEarlyRI

#VoterReadyRI

#BeAVoterRI

LINKS TO FORMS

- **Registration Form**
- Mail Ballot Application-Special Election

TOPIC: Voter Registration

CALL TO ACTION: Register to vote today at vote.ri.gov.

KEY DATE: Send emails for this deadline:

Voter registration deadline

Send your email by January 24

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS:

- Check it off your list: Register to Vote!
- Wish you didn't procrastinate as much? Register to vote now!

MAIN MESSAGE:

Dear____.

[Insert opening about why voting matters to you and why you want this person to be a voter.]

Make sure you're not left out this election. Be sure you are voter ready and register to vote today at vote.ri.gov. It only takes 2 minutes, and the deadline is fast approaching. You must be registered to vote by [Insert deadline.]

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS:

- Be Voter Ready!
- Come Vote With Me!

MAIN MESSAGE:

Dear____.

[Insert opening about why voting matters to you and why you want this person to be a voter.]

I'm asking you to make the commitment to be a voter. That means being voter ready. Take a couple minutes to go to vote.ri.gov to make sure your voter registration is all set and up to date. Even though the election seems miles away, the voter registration deadline is [Insert deadline.]

Attach images, animations, and infographics, you can also add links to forms included on vote.ri.gov.



Have you moved recently? **Update** your voter information today! Go to vote.ri.gov to check your voter registration #BeAVoter

TOPIC: Voting from home with a mail ballot

CALL TO ACTION: Request your mail ballot asap!

KEY DATE: Send emails for this deadline:





Mail ballot applications must be received by February 9 at 4 p.m.

Send your email by February 1

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS:

- Don't be the last one to request your mail ballot.
- Vote at your own pace! Request a mail ballot.
- Vote from home! Request a mail ballot.
- Don't forget to request a mail ballot deadline is October 13!

MAIN MESSAGE:

Dear ____,

I know you want a safe option for voting this year, so I'm reminding you that voting from home is a safe and secure way to make your voice heard in Rhode Island. Remember that you need to apply for a mail ballot to be sent to you and that deadline is quickly approaching.

Fill out the mail ballot application you received in the mail. Put it in the postage-paid envelope and return it today! It must be received by 4 p.m. on February 9.

Attach an image and hyperlink to the appropriate forms on vote.ri.gov!





TOPIC: Vote Early In-Person

CALL TO ACTION: Don't wait until Election Day, vote early!

KEY DATE: Send emails for this deadline:



FEBRUARY 10 - MARCH 1

EARLY VOTING PERIOD

Send your email throughout this time period.

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS:

- No excuses not to vote this year!
- Can't vote on Election Day? No problem...
- Want to vote in person before Election Day?

MAIN MESSAGE:

Dear ____,

I know you've been swamped and you're working really hard, but that's no reason not to make your voice heard by voting in Rhode Island. Not sure if you knew that you have another option for voting in person, and that is voting early at your local board of canvassers!

Go to your city or town hall during their business hours, scan your photo ID into the electronic poll book, cast your ballot, and insert it into the voting machine! You'll get the satisfaction of voting in person, but on your time, without any crowds. And you'll get an I Voted sticker!

Attach an image and hyperlink to the appropriate forms on vote.ri.gov!



TOPIC: Vote on Election Day

CALL TO ACTION: Check your polling place, wear a mask!

KEY DATES: Send emails for this deadline.



SUGGESTED SUBJECTS:

- No excuses not to vote this year!
- Are you a voter? Come vote with me!

MAIN MESSAGE:

Dear ____,

Planning to vote on Election Day? Make sure you're voter ready! Go to vote.ri.gov to find your polling place and preview your sample ballot. Remember to bring a photo I.D. with you to vote. Please be courteous and wear a mask to keep your poll workers safe.

Can't wait to see your "I Voted" selfie!

Attach an image and add the website vote.ri.gov



SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA



Remember to use following hashtags: #VoteFromHomeRI, #VoteEarlyRI, #VoterReadyRI, and #BeAVoterRI.

VOTER REGISTRATION





REGISTER TO VOTE:

Check it off your list-register to vote or update your voter information on vote.ri.gov. It takes less than 5 minutes to make sure you are #VoteReadyRI. Share to spread the word about this important election deadline!

MAIL BALLOTS



MAIL BALLOTS:

Voting from home is safe and secure- this infographic explains the process from start to finish in RI. Go to vote.ri.gov for more information #VoteFromHomeRI

DROP BOX:

Whoops- forget to mail your ballot back? Secure drop boxes are located at town halls around the state. I just dropped mine at my local town hall. Don't wait! Mail ballots must be received by 8 p.m. on Election Day. #VoteFromHome #BeAVoterRI

MAIL BALLOT APPLICATIONS:

Look what arrived in the mail today (pic of mail ballot application). I'm very excited to #VoteFromHome this March! Who's with me?

Every election matters! Don't forget to apply for a mail ballot to make your voice heard during the March Special Election.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA

Remember to use following hashtags: #VoteFromHomeRI, #VoteEarlyRI, #VoterReadyRI, and #BeAVoterRI.



WAYS TO VOTE







THREE OPTIONS:

Decisions, decisions, Rhode Islanders have three options for casting a ballot.

Choose one: #VoteFromHomeRI #VoteEarlyRI, #BeAVoter on election day.

Go to vote.ri.gov for more information. Help me spread the word to your family and friends!

EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING





EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING:

This is new! Rhode Island voters can now vote early in person at their city/ town hall. You even get to insert your ballot into the voting machine and get the I Voted sticker. #ElectionsRock #BeAVoterRI #FlattenTheVotingCurve

ELECTION DAY





ELECTION DAY:

Election day checklist: Preview sample ballot on vote.ri.gov Find polling place Bring Voter ID Wear a mask

I'm a voter! (Show off your I Voted sticker!)

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE A VOTER

As someone who understands the value of voting, it might be difficult to know where to start when talking with friends and colleagues about the importance of voting.

"I'm not interested" or "I don't vote."

Do you care about [issue of importance]? Well then you should care about voting. State and local elected leaders make decisions on all sorts of issues like health care, public safety, and school funding. I know you want to have a say in who is making those decisions. (Show them the levels of government infographic or animation.)

"I don't know enough about politics"

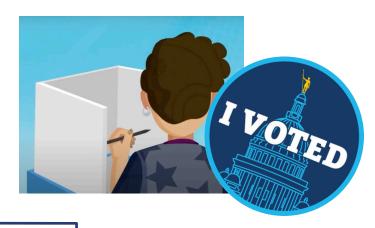
Election day is not a pop-quiz! Go to vote.ri.gov to preview who and what will be on your ballot before Election Day. Then you can research before deciding who and what to vote for.

'I've never voted before. don't know how"

Lucky for you it is super easy. Check out these animations that show you how.

"I don't have time"

I get it. People are busy. But filling out a ballot will take you less time than choosing a filter on Instagram, especially if you preview your ballot ahead of time. And with voting from home and early in person voting, you have options to cast a ballot even if your schedule is jammed on Election Day.



"We just voted! What is this Special Election?"

The Special Election scheduled for March 2, 2021 is related to state spending through bonds. A bond is like a mortgage or loan. Just like people might borrow money to get an education or buy a home, the State is asking voters for permission to borrow money from a lender with the promise to pay it back over time with interest. Your vote is your voice in how Rhode Island allocates funding on projects across the state.

CONTACT INFORMATION

There are statewide resources available to support your efforts to register voters and encourage voter participation. Here's how to get in touch with them!

RI DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Facebook: www.facebook.com/RISecState

Twitter: @risecstate or @rivotes Instagram: @risecstate or @rivotes

YouTube:

Email: elections@sos.ri.gov

Website: vote.ri.gov

RI BOARD OF ELECTIONS

https://www.facebook.com/riboardofelections/ Facebook:

Twitter: @ri_boe

Email: boe.elections@elections.ri.gov

Website: https://elections.ri.gov/

LOCAL BOARDS OF CANVASSERS

For a compete list with addresses and phone numbers, go to pages 20-21.

HOTLINE FOR VOTER QUESTIONS

Call the Rhode Island Department of State Elections Division 401.222.2340.

LOCAL BOARD OF CANVASSERS



City or Town	Address	Phone #
Barringtown Town Hall	283 County Rd. 02806	247-1900 x1
Bristol Town Hall	10 Court St. 02809	253-7000 x2
Burrillville Town Hall	105 Harrisville Main St., Harrisville 02830	568-4300 x7
Central Falls City Hall	580 Broad St. 02863	727-7450
Charlestown Town Hall	4540 South County Trl. 02813	364-1200
Coventry Town Hall	1670 Flat River Rd. 02816	822-9150
Cranston City Hall	869 Park Ave. 02910	780-3121
Cumberland Town Hall	45 Broad St. 02864	475-9040
East Greenwich Town Hall	125 Main St., P.O. Box 111 02818	886-8603
East Providence City Hall	145 Taunton Ave. 02914	435-7502
Exeter Town Hall	675 Ten Rod Rd. 02822	294-2287
Foster Town Hall	181 Howard Hill Rd. 02825	392-9200 x1
Glocester Town Hall	1145 Putnam Pike, P.O. Box B 02814	568-6206 x0
Hopkinton Town Hall	1 Town House Rd. 02833	377-7777
Jamestown Town Hall	93 Narragansett Ave. 02835	423-9801
Johnston Town Hall	1385 Hartford Ave. 02919	553-8856
Lincoln Town Hall	100 Old River Rd., P.O. Box 100 02865	333-1140
Little Compton Town Hall	40 Commons P.O. Box 226 02837	635-4400
Middletown Town Hall	350 East Main Rd. 02842	849-5540
Narragansett Town Hall	25 Fifth Ave. 02882	782-0625
Newport City Hall	43 Broadway 02840	845-5386
New Shoreham Town Hall	16 Old Town Rd., P.O. Box 220 02807	466-3200
North Kingstown Town Hall	100 Fairway Dr. 02852	268-1553
North Providence Town Hall	2000 Smith St. 02911	232-0900 x234
North Smithfield Town Hall	83 Greene St. 02896	767-2200 x116
Pawtucket City Hall	137 Roosevelt Ave. 02860	722-1637

LOCAL BOARD OF CANVASSERS



City or Town	Address	Phone #
Portsmouth Town Hall	2200 East Main Rd. 02871	683-3157
Providence City Hall	25 Dorrance St., Room 102 02903	421-0495
Richmond Town Hall	5 Richmond Townhouse Rd., Wyoming 02898	539-9000 x9
Scituate Town Hall	195 Danielson Pike, P.O. Box 328, North Scituate 02857	647-2822 x1
Smithfield Town Hall	64 Farnum Pike, Esmond 02917	233-1000 x116
South Kingstown Town Hall	180 High St., Wakefield 02879	789-9331 x1231
Tiverton Town Hall	343 Highland Rd. 02878	625-6703
Warren Town Hall	514 Main St. 02885	245-7340 x4
Warwick City Hall	3275 Post Rd. 02886	738-2010
West Greenwich Town Hall	280 Victory Hwy. 02817	392-3800 x 108
West Warwick Town Hall	1170 Main St. 02893	827-9038
Westerly Town Hall	45 Broad St. 02891	348-2503
Woonsocket City Hall	169 Main St., P.O. Box B 02895	767-9221

How voting by mail works in Rhode Island

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, we encourage Rhode Islanders to vote safely from home with a mail ballot. This illustration explains the safe and secure mail ballot process in Rhode Island.



Fill out and sign your mail ballot application.

Return it by the date indicated at the top of the form.



Let's Vote!

A ballot will be mailed to you. Cast your vote and place your ballot in the Voter's Mail Ballot Certificate envelope.

SIGNATURE VERIFICATION

Elections officials will verify your signature on the mail ballot application with your signature in the voter registration system.



Your ballot must be received by the **Board of Elections** by 8 p.m. the day of the election.

Sign the Voter's Mail Ballot Certificate envelope and return it in the postage-paid return envelope.



SIGNATURE VERIFICATION



Elections officials will verify your signature on the Voter's Mail Ballot Certificate envelope with the one on your mail ballot application.

Track your ballot

Go to vote.ri.gov to check the mail status of your ballot.



Nellie M. Gorbea

Secretary of State Infographic produced by the Rhode Island Department of State



Once your signature is verified, your mail ballot will be removed and inserted into a voting machine to be counted by the Board of Elections.



Update my Information

If you have changed your name or were already registered to vote in RI or in another state.

Get Involved!

Previous Name

Previous Address (County, City/Town, State, Zip Code)

(mm/dd/yyyy)

☐ I am interested in being a poll worker



Deadline to REGISTER for the SPECIAL ELECTION is January 31

Go to **vote.ri.gov** to register today!



Apply for a Mail Ballot

Deadline to request a MAIL BALLOT

for the SPECIAL ELECTION is

February 9

Go to **vote.ri.gov** to download an application today!



#BeAVoter

Ways to Vote

Know your voting options for the Special Election



FROM HOME

Go to <u>vote.ri.gov</u> to download a mail ballot application -OR- contact your city or town hall.



EARLY IN-PERSON

FEBRUARY 10 - MARCH 1

Contact your city or town hall.

Wear a mask.



ON ELECTION DAY

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Wear a mask.

Be A Voter

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