



Know Your Government: The Voters Guide

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Voting is your right and responsibility in a democracy. By voting, you can choose among candidates and among issues. In a small town and state, your vote can really make a difference. Even if you support a sure loser, the amount of support your candidate receives may affect the winner's actions. Furthermore, if you do not vote, you are allowing other people to determine how you will be governed.

Who may register to vote in Deering?

You are strongly encouraged to register to vote if you are

- A citizen of the United States, and
- At least eighteen years old on Election Day, and
- A resident of Deering.

How do you register to vote in Deering?

It's easy! With documentation proving the three requirements listed above (such as a birth certificate, passport, driver's license, or bank records), you may register in advance or at the voting polls on Election Day.

- *At Town Hall:* at the Town Clerk's office any time of year, up to ten days before an election. If you cannot be there in person, request a voter registration form and absentee registration affidavit: fill them out, have the latter witnessed, and return them both to Town Hall.
- *With the Supervisors of the Checklist,* who meet on Saturdays before any election; the place and hours are publicized in the local newspapers.
- *At the voting polls* on any Election Day.

Registration is permanent unless you move out-of-town. However, once every decade (in years ending with a "1"), all registered voters who did not vote in the previous election are contacted and must respond if they wish to remain registered.

How do you register for a political party? Do you need to affiliate with a party?

- *Party affiliation:* You may choose to affiliate with a political party when or after you register; you may also choose not to affiliate by registering **undeclared**. If you choose to affiliate, you may do so with the Democratic, Republican, or any other party that received over three percent of the gubernatorial vote in the previous election.
- *Primary elections:* You must be affiliated with a party to vote in a primary election. (1) If you are affiliated with a party, you may change or remove your party affiliation at the Town Clerk's office at least 90 days before any primary election. (2) If you are undeclared, you may ask for the ballot of any party; by doing so, you become a member of that party. If you wish to change back to undeclared, you may do so in writing before you leave the polls.

How do you get information before voting?

Information for voters is available through:

- the local newspapers and postings,
- the town website: www.deering.nh.us; and
- the Town Clerk's Office

When do you vote?

- *January-March: Presidential Primary Election.* Held every four years (2004, 2008, etc.) on whichever date is earlier: (1) the Tuesday before the date on which any other state holds a similar election, or (2) the second Tuesday in March.
- *March: Hillsboro-Deering school district Annual Meeting.* Held yearly in March.
- *March: Deering Town Meeting.* Held yearly on the second Tuesday in March.
- *September: Primary Election* for county, state, and all federal officials except president and vice president. Held in even-numbered years on the second Tuesday in September.
- *November: General Election* for federal, state, and county officials. Held the Tuesday after the first Monday in November in the following years: (1) every two years (even-numbered years) for federal congress, state legislature, governor, and county officials; (2) every four years (2004, 2008, etc.) for U.S. president and vice president; and (3) every six years for U.S. senate.

How do you vote if you will be out-of-town or cannot get to the polls?

- If you will be out of town on Election Day, or if you are disabled and cannot get to the polls, you may vote by absentee ballot. To receive an absentee ballot form (which must be signed), drop by the Town Offices or call the Town Clerk, 464-3224.
- Absentee ballots must be either (1) returned in person to the Town Clerk no later than 5 pm on the day before the election, or (2) received in the mail by the Town Clerk by 5 pm on the day of the election.