



VOTER EDUCATION

First-Time Voter Guide

A plain-language guide for young voters, first-time voters, and families in Pontiac, Michigan. Every fact here comes from the Michigan Secretary of State. Print it, post it in a classroom, or share it with a student who turns 18 before Election Day.

Key 2026 dates

Last day to register online or by mail: Monday, October 19, 2026

Early in-person voting: October 24 – November 1, 2026

Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail: Friday, October 30, 2026

General Election: Tuesday, November 3, 2026 (polls 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM)

After October 19 you can still register in person at your clerk's office — through Election Day.

Una versión en español de esta guía está disponible en riveraforpontiacschools.com/first-time-voters

Four steps: from not registered to ballot cast

1. Can I register to vote?

- You must be a U.S. citizen and a resident of Michigan.
- You must be at least 18 years old by Election Day.
- You can pre-register at 17.5 years old.
- You must be a resident of your city or township for at least 30 days before voting.

2. How do I register?

- Online at Michigan.gov/Vote with a Michigan driver's license or state ID.
- By mail, or in person at your city or township clerk's office.
- At any Secretary of State branch office.
- Within 14 days of an election and on Election Day: register in person at your clerk's office with proof of residency.

3. Do I need an ID to vote?

- Bring photo ID if you have it.
- If you do not have photo ID, you can still vote — sign an affidavit and you will be issued a ballot.
- Accepted IDs: driver's license, state ID, passport, school ID, military ID, tribal ID, or other government photo ID.

4. How do I cast my ballot?

- Absentee by mail — no excuse needed; join the permanent mail-ballot list to get one every election.
- Early in-person voting — at least nine days before Election Day, same ballot, shorter lines.
- Election Day — polls open 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM. In line by 8:00 PM? You still vote.

Students and young voters

- College students may register at either their home address or their school address — but only one, and you vote where you are registered.
- A school-issued student ID is an accepted form of photo ID at the polls.
- If you recently moved into a dorm or apartment, update your registration so your ballot lists the right local races.
- First-time voters who registered by mail may be asked to vote in person or show ID — bring one to be safe.

Know your rights

- If you are in line when polls close at 8:00 PM, you may still vote.
- You can ask a poll worker for help at any point.
- If you make a mistake on your ballot, ask for a replacement.
- You can bring notes or a marked sample ballot into the booth.
- Voters with disabilities can use accessible voting equipment at every polling place.
- No one may intimidate, threaten, or pressure you about how you vote.

Who to contact

City of Pontiac Clerk — Elections

47450 Woodward Ave., 1st Floor, Pontiac, MI 48342
(248) 758-3200
Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Official Michigan resources

Register, check your status, view your ballot: Michigan.gov/Vote
Find your local clerk: mvic.sos.state.mi.us/Clerk
Oakland County Elections: oakgov.com
Campaign: riveraforpontiacschools.com | info@riveraforpontiacschools.com

The one-page infographic

Print this page and post it anywhere students gather.



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FIRST-TIME VOTER GUIDE

A quick guide for young voters, first-time voters, and families

Maicol Rivera for Pontiac School Board
Helping our community get ready to vote.

1. WHO CAN REGISTER?

- U.S. citizen
- Michigan resident
- Resident of your city or township for at least 30 days by Election Day
- 17.5 years old to register
- 18 years old by Election Day to vote
- 16- and 17-year-olds can preregister
- Must not be currently serving a sentence in jail or prison

2. HOW TO REGISTER

- 15+ days before an election: register online, by mail, or in person
- Within 14 days of an election and on Election Day: register in person at your local clerk's office
- Bring proof of residency if registering within 14 days of the election
- Check your status at Michigan.gov/Vote

3. DO I NEED AN ID TO VOTE?

- Bring photo ID if you have it
- If you do not have photo ID, you can still vote
- You may sign an affidavit and be issued a ballot
- Acceptable photo IDs include a driver's license, state ID, passport, school ID, military ID, tribal ID, or government-issued photo ID

4. IMPORTANT 2026 DATES

- **General Election:** Tuesday, November 3, 2026
- **Early Voting:** October 24 – November 1, 2026
- **Last day to register online or by mail:** October 19, 2026
- After that, eligible voters can still register in person at their local clerk's office through Election Day

NEED HELP?

Visit Michigan.gov/Vote to check registration, find your clerk, and get official voting information.


 248-931-6907


Riveramaicol@maicolcomputerservice.com


riveraforpontiatschools.com


 965 Cameron Ave.
 Pontiac, MI 48340

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