

Documents Proving Their Citizenship Readily Available

Are your documents “Readily Available

What does “readily available” mean?

Situation: You need or want a cup of sugar.

In each of the three scenarios, the question is: how desperate do you need the sugar, how long do you want to wait, and are there any quicker ways to obtain it?

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Scenario #1: If you asked me for a cup of sugar, I might tell you I don’t have it readily available, that I would have to go home, go to my kitchen, and reach the cabinet for the bag of sugar. I then would have to go into another cabinet and get a container equal to or greater than a cup. After I sealed it in a container, I would then have to go back to where you asked me for a cup of sugar and finally give it to you.

Solution: You would have to wait a certain amount of time to get that cup of sugar.

How bad do you really need that sugar?

Did I have the cup of sugar readily available?

Well, I had it, but it would take a bit of time to get it to you.

Scenario #2: Whereas. If you asked me for a cup of sugar at my front door, I could give it to you rather quickly in comparison.

Solution: You would have that cup of sugar almost instantly.

Another scenario #3: If you asked me for a cup of sugar and you lived 3,000 miles away, that could take a long time, especially if I had to walk from Pennsylvania to Washington state. In fact, I might not ever get it to you because of all the dangers of walking that vast distance.

Solution to scenario #3: I would most likely tell you to go to the grocery store and buy a bag of sugar, and I would mail you the cost via a check.

Let's replace the cup of sugar with papers you need that are used to identify you as a citizen of the United States of America.

Requiring Americans to prove their citizenship to register to vote would exclude millions of citizens from the political process.

I am not a fan of the Brennan Center; their message and statistics are just wrong, wrong for America, wrong for American citizens, and wrong about requiring voter identification.

They allegedly asked respondents whether they had documents that prove their citizenship — a passport, birth certificate, or naturalization papers — readily available.

(They consider a document to be “**readily available**” if respondents “could quickly find it if they had to **show it tomorrow.**”)

If you read my parable about sugar, how much of a desire do you have and really want to vote?

They are saying more than 9 percent of American citizens of voting age, or 21.3 million people, don't have proof of citizenship readily available. So, I say get out of your easy chair and do something about it. As a U.S. citizen, you might get free food and housing, but there are some things you need to do yourself and, if needed, with help from those that care.

The Brennan Center says there are myriad reasons for this — by the way, myriad means a very large number, yet they list only two. Two to me is not a very large number; even 10 reasons would not be a myriad.

They note that possibly your documents might be in the home of another family member or in a safety deposit box. If you can't get to those documents before an election, then you are most likely still sitting in your easy chair watching television.

And then the Brennan Center notes that at least 3.8 million don't have these documents at all, often because they were lost, destroyed, or stolen. In any of those cases, you know certainly well that a copy can be obtained, usually from the government for a very low fee and/or researched by asking family members where to look for a copy, and you might even find the original.

Then they say they uncovered evidence, as if it was hidden on purpose, of racial disparities in these numbers; they say while just over 8 percent of self-identified white American citizens don't have citizenship documents readily available, that number is nearly 11 percent among Americans of color. What does that mean? To me, it means that possibly U.S. citizens of color will have to do the same as those white Americans. If I have a class of 15 Americans who are of color and 5 white, they all must work just as hard as the other to get a good grade. Just because one race has more doesn't mean they won't succeed.

The Brennan Center brings up the word "Convenience" and that it matters when it comes to consistent participation in American elections. Are they trying to say we should make it more Convenient for certain people of color to vote? For surely, voter identification has nothing to do with Convenience. It's a matter of getting up and, if need be, getting the documents required. Most of the time, this only needs to be done once. And if required another time, guess what, you already have the documents from the first time you got them.

Then the Brennan Center goes on to say, "Even if a citizen is certain that a passport or birth certificate is in a safety deposit box at the bank, voters are busy; an additional trip to the bank would surely prevent some voters from registering to vote if such documents were required." Are you kidding me? Who in America doesn't consider themselves busy? Most banks are open late on Friday and open on Saturday as well. If having to get the document out of a safety deposit box prevents you from registering to vote, well maybe you need to find another place to store them. If they are lost in a fire, they can always be replaced. Birth Certificates are always kept on file these days. And if you served in the military, most states will get you a free copy. Maybe you should get two copies, one for the bank and one for you to have **"READILY AVAILABLE."** There's those words again

While it's true that most Americans can access these documents, most of us don't walk around town carrying our passport or birth certificate.

If those documents were required for voter registration, most would not have them **readily available** to take advantage of opportunities they encounter at schools, churches, or other community spaces where registration drives register many Americans to vote.

Again, the Brennan Center states, "we have known for nearly two decades that **many Americans** do not have readily available documentary proof of citizenship. First, who is

“we”? And for twenty years this has been going on? You mean to tell me that in 20 years the same people haven’t been able to get the documents required to obtain identification that they are United States Citizens? That just sounds prosperous to me, or they just refused to do it.

Here is about the most insane statement that the Brennan Center notes in their article and still wrote it, “Requiring proof of citizenship would solve nothing, but it would create major barriers to registration for eligible voters, especially those who already face disproportionate barriers to participation in our democracy.”

Of course, this is exactly what some of the Democrats say as well. Why is it only democrats who are known to have suppressed the vote on black people starting from the time they were granted voting all the way up until the 1960’s?

And many people of color today are indeed registering as Republicans.

Lastly, the Brennan Center states, as well as most Democrats, “We should **make it easier**, not harder, for these citizens to participate.” Although I agree we should not make it harder, like giving a literacy test or counting jellybeans in a jar, making elections fair must be a priority in our elections. And if making elections fair makes it harder for ALL the PEOPLE, then that is the way it must be.

Brennan Center Link to article

[Who Are Most Affected by Voter ID and Documentary Proof of Citizenship Laws | CDCE | Center for Democracy and Civic Engagement](#)

The Brennan Center *Methodology: The survey reached 2,386 US citizens, age 18 or older, between September 12 and October 4, 2023.*

The survey was conducted using the SSRS Opinion Panel (web and phone calls) and pre-paid cell phone numbers. Two-thousand one-hundred fifty-five SSRS Opinion Panel respondents took the survey on the web, 110 SSRS Opinion Panel respondents took the survey over the phone, and 121 respondents took the survey over a phone call to pre-paid cells. The margin of error is $\pm 2.6\%$. The margin of error among subgroups is larger and varies.

Link to Center for Democracy and Civic Enagement

So, What Really is the Problem?

All the above issues are solvable and are not disenfranchising the legal citizen but enhancing not only the voting process but may indeed help them with other types of registration they eventually will come across, like registering their children for school, or even possibly running for office, or maybe getting a job that requires documentation of identification.

SOLUTION,
Yes Virginia,
There is a Solution to Your Problem
And there is a Santa Claus too

What are the reasons voters get turned away is the first step toward making sure it does not happen to you.

Missing or incorrect identification

Maybe you either lost or never had the required documentation to register to vote. If you have been out of high school more than 5 years, why haven't you voted? In any case, documentation for Voter Identification can vary in different states

Here are some acceptable documents in most states:

- Driver's license or state ID card
- U.S. passport
- Military or employee ID

- Student ID
- Bank statements, utility bills, or paychecks
- Concealed handgun license

So, you're missing one of the Above documents; what do you do? Some would call foul and say this is voter suppression; that's just absolutely wrong.

Here is the solution.

Before Election Day, yes, way before. Maybe do these 6 months or more before Election Day. Go and check your state's specific requirements. You can do so through the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) [Common Election Day Voting Problems \(And How To Solve Them\) - FindLaw](#) voter ID law database. If you need to get or update an ID, act early; don't wait and then blame a political party for the requirements, just get it done. Remember, some government-issued IDs could take several weeks to arrive.

So there's one problem solved, and it involves you doing something about it. Get out of your easy chair and solve your own problems.

Registration problem

You moved, you just got married, maybe first-time voting. There are a few reasons your name might not appear on the voter rolls. Don't get angry or frustrated; find out why.

Your registration may not have been fully processed yet. When you moved, did you update your address? And if you haven't voted in two federal elections- that's just four years- your name may have been removed during a routine voter list maintenance review.

Solution:

Here's what you must do. Check your registration status at least two to three weeks before Election Day through your state's official election website or [vote.gov](#). Catching a problem early gives you enough time to re-register or fix the issue before the deadline passes.

Your state may allow same-day voter registration. If not, you can **request a provisional ballot**. You have the right to request a provisional ballot if there are questions about your voter registration or eligibility to vote. If you are refused a provisional ballot, this needs to be reported and possibly get witnesses.

Name mismatches

Even a minor spelling difference between your registration and your ID can delay the check-in process. This can become a larger headache. Remember, people can make mistakes, especially if you are a new voter and the clerk mistyped your name.

Solution:

When you verify your registration status, confirm that your name appears exactly as it does on your ID. If there is an error, contact your local election office and request a correction before Election Day.

You could also let poll workers know about the name mismatch. Minor differences do not always result in disqualification. If officials cannot resolve it at the polls, ask for a provisional ballot.

Wrong Party Affiliation in a Primary in a State that has a Closed Primary

[Closed primary election](#) states only allow you to vote in the primary of the party you are registered with. This almost always is either Republican or Democrat. Other parties such as the Independence Party are usually excluded from the primaries. Republicans can't vote in Democratic primaries, and vice versa. If your party affiliation is listed incorrectly or is missing entirely, you may not be able to vote in your preferred primary. Again, that is why you need to check your voter registration long before election day.

Solution:

Verify your party registration through your state's voter portal before any primary election. The deadline to change your party affiliation is often earlier than the general election registration deadline.

Absentee Ballot Conflicts

If you requested a [mail-in ballot](#) but later decide to do in-person voting instead, your record will likely show a pending absentee ballot. Election officials may flag this as a potential double vote, even if you never sent the mail-in ballot.

Laws governing vote-by-mail and in-person voting vary significantly from state to state. In some states, you may exchange your unvoted absentee ballot at the polling place for a regular ballot. In others, you must surrender the mail ballot to receive a regular ballot. If you arrive without it, you will be limited to a [provisional ballot](#). In some jurisdictions, you must cast a provisional ballot in person, regardless of whether you bring the mail ballot.

Solution:

Keep track of your ballot status through your [state's ballot tracking system](#). If you plan to vote in person, bring your unvoted absentee ballot to your polling place so it can be voided. The process for doing this varies by state, so check with your local election office before you go.

Preventing These Issues

The best way to avoid problems at the polls is to handle things in advance whenever possible. The excuses- I can't find my birth certificate, they should've known I moved, I haven't voted in 5 years- all these are your problem and not the government's problem. There is no suppressing the vote; you are suppressing your own vote. So, go and sue yourself. If you don't pay your taxes, isn't that going to be your problem as well?

At least two to three weeks, maybe even six months before Election Day.

Make sure you've done the following:

- **Check your registration status at [vote.gov](#) or your state's official election portal:** Confirm your name, address, and party affiliation are all correct
- **Know your state's registration deadline:** Most states require registration between eight and 30 days before the election, so don't wait to make changes
- **Look up your state's voter ID requirements:** Make sure you confirm that your ID qualifies
- **Get proper ID if needed:** Government-issued IDs can take several weeks to arrive, so act early if yours needs to be replaced or updated
- **Confirm your polling place address:** Voting locations can change between elections, so verify yours even if you have voted there before
- **Anticipate wait times and long lines on election day:** Lines can vary widely depending on your location and the time of day, with swing

states like Georgia, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan having lengthy delays during the day

This might seem like a lot, but it is your duty as an American to vote, and to vote you must ensure you are registered correctly. Happy Voting, America.

Your Rights at the Polling Sites

Just when you thought it was safe to get back in the water..... Even well-prepared voters can encounter administrative errors or unexpected glitches on Election Day. Federal law gives you important protections when that happens, as we alluded to earlier.

Provisional ballots

Section 302 of the [Help America Vote Act \(HAVA\)](#) gives you the right to cast a provisional ballot. If officials cannot verify your eligibility on Election Day, they can issue provisional ballots. This might happen if you do not have an acceptable ID or if your name is not on the voter rolls. So, say you didn't find your birth certificate in time; you have one more chance to get it and prove your identity and have your vote counted.

Some polling places let you vote by [signing an affidavit](#) that says you are eligible. Election officials may ask for your personal information, usually your name and address. If you do not have any forms of identification, election officials may also ask you to sign the voter registration list or poll book.

[Provisional ballots](#) exist to protect one's voting rights. It ensures that voters are not excluded from exercising this right solely because of administrative oversight or error.

Same-day voter registration

Some states allow voters to register and vote on the same day. According to the [NCSL](#), [approximately 23 states](#) plus Washington, D.C. (Pennsylvania does not) allow same-day voter registration. These are:

- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut

- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Maine
- Maryland
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Montana
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

Closed Primary Elections

The [following states](#) have closed primaries for at least one political party:

- Connecticut
- Delaware

- Florida
- Idaho (Republican Party only)
- Illinois (voters must declare an affiliation on election day)
- Indiana (state law requires voters to have voted for a party's nominees in the previous election or plan to vote for a party's nominees in this election to vote in the primary)
- Iowa (only registered voters may vote in the primary, but voters may change their party affiliation on the day of the primary)
- Kansas (Republican Party only)
- Kentucky
- Maryland
- Nebraska (Republican Party only)
- Nevada
- New York
- New Jersey
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- **Pennsylvania**
- South Dakota (Republican Party only)
- Tennessee
- Utah (Republican Party only)
- Washington, D.C.
- West Virginia (Republican Party only)
- Wyoming

The [following states](#) have **semi-closed primaries** for at least one political party:

- Arizona
- Colorado
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- Nebraska
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- Rhode Island
- South Dakota (semi-closed for Democratic Party)
- West Virginia (semi-closed for Democratic Party)

Challenges to your vote

- Political party representatives and other authorized observers are sometimes present at polling stations. If someone challenges your right to vote, the judge of elections decides whether you have adequately proven your identity and residence, and whether the challenge is made in good faith. If the judge of election cannot immediately confirm your eligibility, you can still request a provisional ballot.

Special Circumstances

- Provisions are included for voters with disabilities or those who can't be at the polling place on the day of an election.

Voters with disabilities

Under Title II of the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#), state and local governments must ensure that people with disabilities have a full and equal opportunity to vote. HAVA also requires each polling location to provide at least one accessible voting system for voters with disabilities during federal elections. Voting machines and polling stations must meet accessibility standards to accommodate a wide range of physical needs. What this means is that polling places should have:

- Audio ballots or assistive voting technology for people with hearing or visual impairments
- Wheelchair-accessible places
- Information in large print or Braille
- Accessible electronic information and information technology

If you need accommodations, you can contact your local election administration office before Election Day to confirm what is available at your assigned location.

Language assistance

Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act contains provisions that cater to voters who are members of a [language minority group](#). The Act mandates that covered jurisdictions have poll workers who can provide language assistance on Election Day. This aims to aid language minority voters who are not fluent in English. This provision is under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act and covers the following language minority groups:

- American Indian
- Alaska Native
- Asian
- Hispanic

This means that regular ballots and other written voting materials are available in non-English translations. Covered jurisdictions should have the following election materials adapted for language minorities:

- Absentee ballots
- Sample ballots
- Voter registration
- Polling place notices
- Instructional forms
- Election information pamphlets

Absentee and overseas voting

U.S. Citizens outside of the United States can also exercise their right to [vote through absentee voting](#).

Absentee voting is available to eligible voters who cannot vote in person. Some of the reasons cited that prevent one from voting in person are the following:

- Military duties outside of the U.S.
- Traveling overseas for business or work
- Studying outside of the U.S.
- An illness that hinders one from voting in person

Eligibility to register and vote by absentee may vary by state. It is essential to check your election office or ask your local election officials for more details about absentee ballot applications.

Get Legal Help With Voting Rights Issues

Your right to vote is a fundamental right. Understanding the common problems on Election Day and the steps you can take to resolve them helps protect your rights. A [civil rights attorney](#) can also protect your voting rights. They can review the problems you faced while voting and guide you on the steps you can take to resolve these legal issues.

[Common Election Day Voting Problems \(And How To Solve Them\) - FindLaw](#)

What Is a Closed Primary? [What Is a Closed Primary? - FindLaw](#)

What Is a Blanket Primary? [What Is a Blanket Primary? - FindLaw](#)

After reading and after understanding all this, how can you possibly say requiring Identification before you register to vote is suppressing your vote? I understand that there are poor people in this country, but even those that cannot afford the small amount of money that might be required to obtain those papers can be paid for by your church, neighbor, and various organizations.

Here is a website I found that might be of help to you. I don't know much about them except for what I read on their website.

VoteRiders - *Help: Educating and assisting citizens to secure their voter ID*

[**Voter ID Help: Educating and assisting citizens to secure their voter ID | World Justice Project**](#)

38 U.S. states have voter ID laws for the 2024 election cycle. New ID requirements for in-person and mail-in voting are leading to unprecedented levels of ballot rejection and overarching voter confusion. **VoteRiders** seeks to support every eligible U.S. voter to cast a ballot despite the mounting barriers presented by voter ID laws. **VoteRiders** provides personalized assistance for voters, including covering the cost of required documents like birth certificates or Social Security cards; arranging and paying for transportation to their local ID-issuing office; and providing pro bono legal assistance.

I don't know why the democrats disagree with having Identification to vote.

It is only common sense unless they have some alternative reason for not requiring identification when you vote to prove who you are and that your neighbor or uncle or aunt or anyone else is voting in place of you.

And isn't it a shame that too many United States Citizens do not exercise their right to vote? I believe it is every American's duty to vote in every election. And it is your duty to be informed about the candidates you vote for who are running for office. We are a representative government, and the candidates are the people that represent you.