

Voting Fact or Fiction?

Adapted from content that came from the Hamilton County Board of Elections

1. Fiction: Voting machine counts cannot be verified.

Fact: In Hamilton County, a voter casts their ballot by marking a paper ballot by hand then feeding it into a scanner. The paper ballot can be hand counted in an audit or recount.

2. Fiction: Election workers inside a polling place on Election Day (poll workers) are volunteers.

Fact: Election workers (poll workers) receive payment for their service. They receive training; set up the polling place the night before the election; and work Election Day.

3. Fiction: A voter who is homeless cannot vote.

Fact: A shelter or other location where a person has been a regular inhabitant and where they are intended to return in a residence for voting purposes.

4. Fiction: Voters must vote on Election Day or have a valid reason to vote early.

Fact: Ohio does not require a reason to vote early. Any voter can choose to vote early by mail, early in person at the Board of Elections, or at their polling location on Election Day.

5. Fiction: A voter with a disability usually needs assistance while voting.

Fact: The Board works hard to provide accessible voting for all. Options include our ballot marking system (Access Station), or using a Remote Ballot Marking device from home.

6. Fiction: ID isn't required when voting early (in-person or by mail).

Fact: Acceptable ID is the same at the polls as for voting absentee (early) EXCEPT using your social security number as ID at the polls requires you to vote provisionally.

7. Fiction: You must be 18 years old to work inside the polls (poll worker).

Fact: In Ohio, 17 year old high school seniors can work the polls. Find out about the Youth and the Booth program.

8. Fiction: Persons convicted of a felony cannot vote.

Fact: if you are convicted of a felony and are incarcerated your voter registration will be cancelled. Once released from incarceration, you may re-register to vote.

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9. **Fiction: The Board of Elections automatically sends me an absentee ballot every election.**

Fact: A voter must request a ballot by submitting an application every election.

(Exception: military and civilian overseas voter applications are good for all elections occurring in that year).

10. **Fiction: Absentee ballots are only counted in close elections.**

Fact: All validly cast ballots are counted, regardless of the closeness of a race. They are the first ballots counted on Election Night.

11. **Fiction: Polling places are changed randomly.**

Fact: Polling places in Ohio must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Some polling places are changed to meet this requirement. Some private facilities choose to no longer be polling places.

12. **Fiction: A U.S. passport is a valid form of ID for voting in Ohio.**

Fact: A U.S. passport is NOT an acceptable form of ID for voting purposes. Passports do not contain a person's address.

13. **Fiction: Election results are transmitted over the internet.**

Fact: In Ohio, it is not permitted to send vote totals over the internet from polling locations to county Board of Elections. The Board of Election's vote counting room has no internet connection.

14. **Fiction: I have legal power of attorney for my relative so I am allowed to sign their name for voting.**

Fact: In Ohio, the only person who can sign your name for voting (& must be in your presence) is someone you appoint in a Attorney-In-Fact form filed with your BOE.

15. **Fiction: A voter who is registered in Ohio but did not update their new address before the deadline cannot vote in the upcoming election.**

Fact: An Ohio registered voter who moved may cast a provisional ballot at the BOE office or at their NEW polling location on Election Day.

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16. Fiction: Provisional ballots are only counted in close elections.

Fact: All validly cast provisional ballots are counted in the official count. In Nov 2019 General Election, 90% of provisional ballots cast were counted in Hamilton County. A provisional ballot is used to record a vote if a voter's eligibility is in question. The most common reason for someone to vote provisionally is because they did not update their current address, they did not bring ID to the polls or they may have requested an absentee ballot and not voted it yet. By voting provisional, a voter has a second chance to cast a ballot in an election. The voter is given their precinct ballot to vote but is cast 'provisionally' until election officials at the Board can verify the voter's eligibility to vote in the particular precinct at that election.

17. Fiction: Election Night results are the final count.

Fact: Election Night results are unofficial. It takes 2-3 weeks for an official count that includes all valid provisional and absentee ballots that were cast.

18. Fiction: You must be at least 18 years old to vote in a Primary Election.

Fact: 18 year old voters who will be 18 by the November General Election may vote to nominate candidates in the Primary Election.

19. Fiction: Voters declare party affiliation when registering to vote.

Fact: In Ohio, voters do not declare party affiliation when registering. Party affiliation is based on the type of ballot (political party or issues only) the voter chooses in a Primary Election.

20. Fiction: Voters must vote for the same candidate in the General Election as they voted for in the Primary Election.

Fact: A voter may choose to vote for any candidate on their ballot in the General Election (a Primary Election is where political parties nominate candidates for the General Election).