

July 25, 2019

**This 2-part alert from League of Women Voters NH concerns two issues at the heart of the League's current work: voting regulations and public education.** We believe that all League members and friends care about voting, but not all of you follow it with the intensity that your board members do. Therefore we want to bring you up to date. If you already know about recent election law changes and upcoming issues, skip to part 2, which relates to the NH Board of Education and the recent objection lodged against their proposed Learn Everywhere program rules.

**First: ELECTION LAW in 2019.** If you are already registered to vote, none of this affects you personally. But if your new neighbors haven't yet registered, or if your grandchild is now 18 and wants to vote in the presidential primary next February, you can help by explaining some things.

1. To register to vote, you are expected to go to the town or city clerk's office. No change in that. And people can still register at the polls on election day. No change there either.
2. New Hampshire's voter ID law, to get a ballot on election day, has not changed since 2014. Present a photo ID, be identified by the moderator or supervisors of the checklist, or sign an affidavit and return a follow-up postcard from the Secretary of State.
3. To register to vote, people are asked to bring documents with them to prove identity, age, citizenship, and where you live. One or more of several documents can prove this: a NH drivers license with your current actual address (proves ID, age, and where you live). A birth certificate or naturalization papers (proves citizenship and age). A US Passport (proves ID, age, and citizenship). If someone does not have all the papers to prove identity, age, citizenship, and where you live, he or she can sign an affidavit.
4. Here is the new part. As of July 1 of this year, by registering to vote in a particular town, you are declaring New Hampshire residency. (the old term was "domicile," different in several respects). New Hampshire residents are expected to get a NH drivers license and motor vehicle registration within 60 days of moving to NH, if they own a vehicle and drive in the state. NOTE: If someone doesn't drive and/or doesn't own a car, this doesn't apply to that person.
5. What does this mean for college students studying in NH but coming here from another state? The law means they will have to spend money within 60 days to get a NH drivers license and register their car, if indeed they have a car while they're at college in NH. If they don't drive/don't have their own car, nothing changes. BUT...
6. A bill that passed the legislature this year but hasn't yet reached the Governor's desk carves out an exemption for students from the motor vehicle requirement. If the Governor signs it and it becomes law, college students can choose whether to register in the town where they live while attending college without having to pay NH DMV fees, or they can of course register at their family's home address in another state, and probably vote absentee.
7. In either case, an out-of-state driver's license is still acceptable proof of identity on election day to get a ballot. So is a student ID card or US passport or military ID (no change there).

8. If you are doing "get out the vote" work with students, you may want to wait to see whether the Governor signs or vetoes SB67, the bill that carves out an exemption to the DMV regulations for college students whose families live in another state.

9. New Hampshire college students whose families live in NH also have a choice: register in their home towns and maybe vote absentee, if they can't get back home on election day, or register in the town where they live while attending college (no change in laws for them.)

10. Now the big news: The voter registration procedures created in 2017 by Senate Bill 3 will be tried in court in early December (postponed from early September, which we had reported earlier.) Those procedures and the complicated and confusing voter registration form that goes along with them are not now in place. They were "stayed" by a preliminary injunction that took effect Nov. 7, 2018. In postponing the trial until December 2019, presiding Judge David Anderson stated he would not issue a ruling until after the NH presidential primary (which will probably be in early February 2020--date still to be announced). League is a plaintiff in the case so we'll be busy in early December, but we are happy that new voters eager to participate in the presidential primary will not be faced with complicated forms and requirements that could deter their participation.

**Second, PUBLIC EDUCATION news.** On July 18, a legislative committee (JLCAR) filed a formal objection to the proposed "Learn Everywhere" rules as submitted by the NH Board of Education. Rather than go into a lengthy explanation, here is the link to an excellent description of what happened and what it means, written by former state Bd of Ed member Bill Duncan and published in the July 24 edition of the Concord Monitor. <https://anhpe.org/2019/07/24/a-big-hurdle-remains-for-learn-everywhere/>

League was prepared to offer testimony on July 18 but did not have the opportunity before the objections were voted on by JLCAR. Based on what we heard that morning, the two League members who had planned to testify revised some of their testimony. You can read it, if you like, on the Action and Testimony page of the League's website. <http://lwvnh.org/action.html>

Thank you, League members, for the support you've given the League board in the past 7 months in a busy legislative session!

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