2020 Voter Guide
Hillsborough County

Are you ready to vote?

VoteHillsborough.org
Dear Voter,

Voting brings us together as citizens and gives us a voice. It is my honor to be your Supervisor of Elections and oversee elections in the county that’s always been my home.

We do our work with both transparency and security, ensuring that our elections are accessible, fair and efficient, and that election results are tabulated quickly and accurately. I’m immensely proud that we are the first elections office to earn Florida’s prestigious Governor’s Sterling Award—proof that we are doing things right.

I hope you find this Voter Guide helpful. Please visit our website, too, where you’ll always find the most current information about voting and elections.

Your voice matters. That’s why I’m working hard to make Hillsborough County the best place in America to vote.

Craig Latimer
Supervisor of Elections

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

facebook: HillsboroughSOE
Twitter: HillsboroughSOE
Instagram: HillsboroughSOE
YouTube: HCSOE
VoteHillsborough.org
These offices are up for election in 2020:

- President and Vice President
- U.S. Representatives
- State Senators and Representatives
- State Attorney
- Public Defender
- FL Supreme Court Justices
- Clerk of Circuit Court
- Property Appraiser
- Sheriff
- Supervisor of Elections
- Tax Collector
- County Commissioners
- Judges
- School Board Members
- Soil and Water Conservation Supervisors
- Special District Trustees and Community Development District Supervisors
- Precinct Committeemen and Committeewomen
- Temple Terrace Municipal Offices
- Plant City Municipal Offices
3 Ways to Vote

Vote By Mail
Mark your ballot at home, then mail it back or drop it off. Vote By Mail ballots must be in one of our offices no later than 7 p.m. Election Day.

Early Voting
Choose the location and day convenient for you. The number of days and locations vary by election and are subject to change. Check our website for the most current information.

Election Day
The last day to vote. You must vote in your assigned polling place.

2020 Dates & Deadlines

Presidential Preference Primary
February 18 | Registration Deadline
Last day to register to vote or change party affiliation.
March 2 - 15 | Early Voting 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
You can even vote on the weekend!
Visit VoteHillsborough.org for locations and wait times.
March 17 | Election Day 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
The last day to vote in person and the deadline for Vote By Mail ballots to be in our office.

Primary Election
July 20 | Registration Deadline
Last day to register to vote or change party affiliation.
August 3 - 16 | Early Voting 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
You can even vote on the weekend!
Visit VoteHillsborough.org for locations and wait times.
August 18 | Election Day 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
The last day to vote in person and the deadline for Vote By Mail ballots to be in our office.

General Election
October 5 | Registration Deadline
Last day to register to vote.
October 19 - November 1 | Early Voting 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
You can even vote on the weekend!
Visit VoteHillsborough.org for locations and wait times.
November 3 | Election Day 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
The last day to vote in person and the deadline for Vote By Mail ballots to be in our office.

All dates and times are subject to change.
During Presidential Election years, we have a Presidential Preference Primary, which allows parties to narrow down the field of candidates for president. Voters receive a ballot according to their party affiliation, and voters who are not affiliated with a major party are not eligible to vote in this election.

A Primary Election is used by political parties to nominate a candidate to move on to the General Election. Florida has closed primaries, which means that you must be registered with a political party to vote in that party’s primary races.

If all candidates in a race have the same party affiliation and the winner will be unopposed in the General Election, anyone may vote in the primary for that race, regardless of party affiliation. This is known as a Universal Primary Contest. The primary is also used to narrow down the number of candidates in nonpartisan races (such as school board) and may include some amendments or referenda. All voters, whether affiliated with a political party or not, vote on nonpartisan races and issues in the Primary Election.

A General Election is where the final decision on office holders is made. Voters choose among candidates with no party affiliation and candidates nominated by parties. During the General Election, you can vote in any race, regardless of party affiliation.

Before each election, watch for your personalized sample ballot to arrive by mail or email, or look it up at VoteHillsborough.org.
REGISTER TO VOTE IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

To register and vote here, you must be:

• a U.S. citizen
• a resident of Hillsborough County, Florida
• at least 18 years old*

*You may pre-register on or after your 16th birthday. You may vote in any election held on or after your 18th birthday.

You cannot register or vote if you are:

• currently adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting
• a convicted felon whose rights have not been restored

Are you registered to vote in another state? Make sure to cancel your previous registration.

How To Register

ONLINE...a convenient option for Florida voters! If you have a Florida Driver License or Florida ID, you can visit VoteHillsborough.org and register online.

ON PAPER...Voter Registration Applications can be downloaded from VoteHillsborough.org and are displayed at voter registration agencies throughout the county. It only takes a few minutes to fill one out and mail or deliver it to our office, the Division of Elections, or any voter registration agency.

VOTER REGISTRATION AGENCIES:

• Supervisor of Elections offices
• Driver license offices
• Public assistance offices
• Public libraries
• Offices that serve people with disabilities
• Armed forces recruitment offices
• Centers for independent living

Don’t wait! If you aren’t already registered, you must register at least 29 days before an election to vote in that election.
UPDATE
YOUR VOTER INFORMATION

Once you have registered to vote in Florida, you do not have to register again. But you do need to keep your information up-to-date.

You can change or update your voter information at any time, but a political party change for a Primary Election must be made by the registration deadline for that election.

Our Voter Registration Application can be used to update your address, name, political party or signature. You can also use any of these methods to let us know about your change:

**Address Change**

Phone: (813) 612-4180

Email: voter@hcsoe.org

Letter or Registration Application:
Drop off at any of our offices or mail to 2514 N. Falkenburg Rd., Tampa, FL 33619

*Include your date of birth*

**Name or Party Change**

Letter or Registration Application:
Drop off at any of our offices or mail to 2514 N. Falkenburg Rd., Tampa, FL 33619

*Include your signature, and date of birth or voter registration number*

⭐️ **Your signature is important**

Your handwriting may change over time, so it’s important to update your signature periodically. We use the signatures on file to verify your identity on petitions, provisional ballots and Vote By Mail ballots.

You must use a Voter Registration Application to update your signature.
GET READY TO VOTE

Marking Your Ballot

Read the voting instructions at the top of your ballot.

Use a black pen to carefully fill in the ovals next to your choices.

Remember that your ballot may be two-sided and have more than one page.

If you vote for too many candidates in a race, your votes in that race will not be counted.

It is okay to skip races.

If you make a mistake, ask for a new ballot.

Understanding Your Ballot

Some of the elected officials we vote for represent the entire county, while others represent a specific district or section of the county.

Your Primary Election ballot includes races and issues based on your party affiliation and the districts you live in.

Your General Election ballot is based only on the districts you live in.

After you register to vote or update your information, you’ll receive a Voter Information Card. The card tells you the districts you live in.
For 35 years, I enforced the law, retiring as a Major for the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office. So when you ask me, as your Supervisor of Elections, about voter fraud and tampering with elections, I have a unique perspective.

Top 10 reasons your vote is safe and secure:

1. The Florida Division of Elections checks each voter registration form to verify the applicant's identity.

2. Our voter registration database is updated regularly to remove deceased and ineligible voters.

3. Voters have to show photo and signature identification to vote.

4. We update voter records electronically to record when a voter has requested a mail ballot or voted. If someone comes to vote in person, we immediately cancel their mail ballot. And vice versa.

5. Our state-certified equipment is tested before each election with a public logic and accuracy test to make sure machines are counting votes correctly. During this test, we put pre-marked ballots in a randomly selected sample of our machines to make sure the count is what it's supposed to be and that every position on the ballot is being read by each machine.

6. Our ballots and equipment are under 24-hour camera surveillance and stored in areas with restricted key card access until they are deployed for voting. During voting, our ballot scanners are kept in plain sight and secured with seals to prohibit tampering.

7. We use a stand-alone server, not connected to the Internet, to tabulate and report results.

8. Electronic results from each ballot scanner are encrypted and backed up by printed results that are posted on the doors of each polling place and driven to our central office.

9. Paper ballots are held for 22 months and can be rescanned if there is a problem with the equipment or question about results.

10. After every election, we run a post-election audit using a separate system to retabulate the ballots and confirm the accuracy of our results.
Any registered voter may vote by mail—the most convenient way to vote. We mail your ballot to you, and you can take your time making your voting decisions. If you already enjoy voting by mail, it’s a good idea to check to be sure your request is still current.

We send out our first batch of Vote By Mail ballots about a month before Election Day. After that, we fulfill requests within 48 hours of receiving them. The deadline to request that a ballot be mailed to you is 5 p.m. on the 10th day prior to an election.

After you request your ballot, track it at VoteHillsborough.org. You’ll see when we send it out and when we receive it back from you.

**Requesting your ballot**

Stop by our office, call (813) 612-4180, submit an online request at VoteHillsborough.org, or send us a written request with:

- Your name and residential address
- Your date of birth
- Your mailing address
- Your signature

**Requesting someone else’s ballot**

An immediate family member or guardian may request a ballot for someone else. The requester must provide:

- Voter’s name and residential address, date of birth and mailing address
- Requester’s relationship to the voter
- Requester’s name and address
- Requester’s driver license number (if available)
- Requester’s signature (for written requests)

**Important to know**

- Requests expire after two General Elections.
- You may cancel your requests at any time.
- If you are not deployed or overseas and would like your ballot sent somewhere other than the address we have on record, you must submit a signed, written request.
RETURNING YOUR BALLOT

Your Vote By Mail ballot arrives with instructions, a ballot, a secrecy sleeve, an ‘I Voted’ sticker, and a postage-paid return envelope.

After you’ve filled out your ballot, follow these simple steps:

1. Put your marked ballot in the secrecy sleeve.
2. Put the secrecy sleeve in the return envelope.
3. Seal, sign and date the back of the return envelope.
4. Mail your ballot back—we’ve pre-paid the postage—or drop it in a secure ballot box at any of our offices or Early Voting sites (when they’re open).

Your mail ballot MUST be in our office (not postmarked) no later than 7 p.m. on Election Day to be counted.

You may not drop off your mail ballot at a polling place on Election Day. If you prefer to vote in person, poll workers will cancel your mail ballot and give you an Election Day ballot.

★ WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? ★

1. We verify your signature and update your voter record to show that you have voted.
2. We securely store your ballot until it’s ready to be counted.
3. We separate the envelope from the secrecy sleeve that contains your ballot, and then separate the ballot from the secrecy sleeve, so that your ballot remains secret.
4. We scan your ballot.
5. We tabulate and report unofficial results on Election Night. (Mail ballots and Early Voting ballots are the first reported.)
6. We securely store ballots for audits and recounts.
Early Voting

For our 2020 elections, we’ve scheduled 14 days of Early Voting — the maximum number of Early Voting days allowed by Florida law.

During Early Voting, we set up different voting sites throughout the county and you can vote in any one you choose.

Before you head out, we recommend you visit our website to check the wait times at each voting site.

When you arrive at the voting location, we’ll print your ballot for you.

WHEN CAN YOU VOTE EARLY?

PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY
March 2 - March 15, 2020
10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

PRIMARY ELECTION
August 3 - August 16, 2020
10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

GENERAL ELECTION
October 19 - November 1, 2020
7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

*Early Voting dates, times and locations are subject to change. Visit VoteHillsborough.org before you head out to vote.

Watch for your Sample Ballot

We mail or email personalized sample ballots before each election. Use that to make your voting decisions in advance, and bring it for reference when you’re ready to vote.

Read pages 14 - 15 of this guide for more on what to bring and what to expect when voting in person.
Election Day

Election Day is your last chance to vote.

During countywide elections, we set up approximately 300 polling places for Election Day voters, but you can only vote in the one polling place that is assigned to your precinct. Your ballot will be waiting for you at that polling place.

WHEN CAN YOU VOTE ON ELECTION DAY?

PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY
March 17, 2020
7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

PRIMARY ELECTION
August 18, 2020
7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

GENERAL ELECTION
November 3, 2020
7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

*Everyone in line at 7 p.m. is allowed to vote.
Dates are subject to change.

Know your Polling Place!

Finding your assigned polling place is simple, and it’s important to get it right:

1. Check VoteHillsborough.org. The website always has the most current information.

OR

2. Look at your Voter Information Card. We send new cards out whenever your precinct or polling place changes.

OR

3. Call (813) 744-5900 and ask us.

It’s the law! If you vote in the wrong polling place on Election Day, your ballot will not be counted.
How to Vote, Step By Step:

1. **Bring current, valid identification with your photo and signature.** You may present one or two forms of ID. If you forget your ID, ask a poll worker for a provisional ballot.

   Did you know? After you vote, your voter record will be updated to show that you voted, but there is no way for anyone to see who you voted for. Every ballot is anonymous, with no name or number attached to it.

   (see page 15)

   **ACCEPTABLE PHOTO ID FOR FLORIDA VOTERS**
   
   - Florida Driver License
   - Florida ID Card (issued by the DHSMV)
   - U.S. Passport
   - Debit or Credit Card
   - Military ID
   - Student ID
   - Retirement Center ID
   - Neighborhood Association ID
   - Public Assistance ID
   - Veteran Health ID (issued by VA)
   - Concealed Weapon License (issued pursuant to s. 790.06)
   - Government Employee ID

2. You may bring your sample ballot for reference.

3. Sign in with a poll worker.

4. Receive your paper ballot and a privacy folder.

5. Go to the voting booth and mark your ballot.

6. **Review your ballot.** If you made a mistake, ask for a new ballot. Otherwise, put your ballot in the privacy folder and walk over to the scanning machine.

7. Insert your ballot into the optical scanner, one page at a time. A poll worker will be standing by the machine to answer any questions you have.

8. Once your ballot has been accepted by the scanner, your votes have been cast and no changes can be made.
What is a Provisional Ballot?

If you do not bring ID or if there is any question about your eligibility to vote, you may vote a provisional ballot.

You'll mark your ballot just as you would normally, but instead of putting it through the scanner at the voting site, your voted ballot will go into a “provisional envelope” and be delivered to our office. If your eligibility to vote can be verified, the ballot will be counted. You’ll be able to check the status of your provisional ballot on our website.

Optical Scan Voting

Our state-of-the-art voting equipment was purchased in 2016.

Accessible Voting

Our ADA-compliant ballot marking devices allow voters with disabilities to vote independently, using:

- audio
- Braille keypad
- zoom-in large print
- sip-and-puff
- two-switch pedal
What voting equipment is used? ES&S DS200 optical scanners and ExpressVote ballot marking devices are at all Early Voting and Election Day sites. High-speed, central count scanners are used to tabulate Vote By Mail ballots. All voters use paper ballots to vote.

Does it matter how I insert my ballot in the scanner? No. You can place either end into the scanner with either side up.

Do I have to vote in all the races? No. The ballot scanner will count your votes in all of the races that you marked.

What if I vote for too many candidates in a race? If you’re voting in person, the ballot scanner will alert you that you have “overvoted” and allow you to request a new ballot or cast the ballot anyway. If you cast a ballot with an overvote (in person or by mail), all races except the overvoted race will be counted.

What if I do not vote in ANY races? The scanner will alert you that the ballot is blank. You can choose to cast the blank ballot or get assistance from a poll worker.

What if I make a mistake on my ballot? If you’re voting by mail, call our office and let us know you need a new ballot. If you’re voting in person, tell a poll worker. You can have up to three ballots, including the original. The ballot(s) with mistakes will be sealed inside a “spoiled ballot” envelope. If you make a mistake on your third ballot, the ballot cannot be corrected.

Can I change my ballot once it has been cast? No. Once your ballot has been scanned and accepted by the optical scanner or your signature has been verified on a mail ballot, your ballot cannot be retrieved or changed. You may only cast one ballot.
Can I write in a candidate? We can only count votes for candidates who have submitted qualifying paperwork before the election. In races with qualified write-in candidates, your ballot will include a blank space with an oval next to it. If you fill in the oval and write in the name of a qualified write-in candidate, that vote will be counted.

If I receive a Vote By Mail ballot, can I change my mind and vote in person? Yes. In that case, your Vote By Mail ballot will be canceled at the polling place.

What happens if the power goes out or there are technical problems at a voting site? We have backup equipment, generators, internal batteries, printed check-in registers and an auxiliary ballot box to keep everything going with minimal interruption. If a ballot scanner stops working, you can wait for a replacement scanner to cast your ballot, or put your ballot in the auxiliary ballot box and it will be scanned after the polls close.

What happens to my ballot after I've voted? Paper ballots are secured and available for recounts or audits. We store ballots with federal races or issues for 22 months and all other ballots for 12 months.

How do I know that my ballot will be counted? If you vote by mail, you can track your ballot on our website to see when your voted ballot has been received. When you vote in person, the screen on the scanner indicates that your ballot has been accepted.

What checks and balances ensure an accurate vote count? To make sure every ballot is counted, we have systematic, redundant procedures in place to track how many ballots are issued, returned and counted. To make sure every ballot is counted accurately, our ballot scanners are tested repeatedly and publicly before every election. Afterwards, we run a post-election audit using a separate system to retabulate the ballots and confirm the accuracy of our results. Finally, to ensure accountability, election results and voter history become public record that anyone can check.
A poll worker must:

- Be a registered voter in Hillsborough County
- Read, write, and speak English fluently
- Have reliable transportation
- Have access to email and online training
- Successfully complete all training and assessments prior to each election
- Remain nonpartisan while at the polls
- Refrain from any comments or discussion concerning a voter, a voter’s party preference, a candidate, or an issue while working at the polls
- Abide by a “no smoking” policy on Election Day
- Be able to work a 14-hour day
- Be able to lift 15 to 30 pounds

BE A POLL WORKER

You can make a difference in our community by joining our team of poll workers. It takes about 2,500 poll workers to staff our polling places on Election Day.

Our poll workers are engaged citizens from all walks of life who are committed to making Hillsborough County the best place in America to vote.

All poll workers are trained for their jobs, and by law, poll workers in Florida are paid for their work on Election Day.

Interested in applying to be a poll worker? Visit VoteHillsborough.org.
Each registered voter in Florida has the right to:

- Vote and have his or her vote accurately counted.
- Cast a vote if he or she is in line at the official closing of the polls.
- Ask for and receive assistance in voting.
- Receive up to two replacement ballots if he or she makes a mistake prior to the ballot being cast.
- An explanation if his or her registration or identity is in question.
- If his or her registration or identity is in question, cast a provisional ballot.
- Written instructions to use when voting and, upon request, oral instructions in voting from elections officers.
- Vote free from coercion or intimidation by elections officers or any other person.
- Vote on a voting system that is in working condition and that will allow votes to be accurately cast.

Each registered voter in Florida should:

- Familiarize himself or herself with the candidates and issues.
- Maintain with the office of the Supervisor of Elections a current address.
- Know the location of his or her polling place and its hours of operation.
- Bring proper identification to the polling station.
- Familiarize himself or herself with the operation of the voting equipment in his or her precinct.
- Treat precinct workers with courtesy.
- Respect the privacy of other voters.
- Report any problems or violations of election laws to the Supervisor of Elections.
- Ask questions, if needed.
- Make sure that his or her completed ballot is correct before leaving the polling station.

Failure to perform any of these responsibilities does not prohibit a voter from voting.
OUR MISSION
To conduct open, secure, reliable and accurate elections for the citizens of Hillsborough County

OUR VISION
To be the best place in America to vote

Supervisor of Elections Offices

Fred B. Karl County Center
601 E. Kennedy Blvd, 16th floor
Tampa, Florida 33602

Robert L. Gilder Elections Service Center
2514 N. Falkenburg Rd.
Tampa, Florida 33619

Find other regional office addresses on our website

VoteHillsborough.org
(813) 744-5900
voter@hcsoe.org
Fax (813) 744-5843

Please note: Florida has a very broad public records law. Voter registration applications and other written communications to or from the Supervisor of Elections are public records and available to the public and media upon request unless the information is subject to a specific statutory exemption. Email addresses are also public records. If you do not want your email address released in response to a public records request, please contact us by mail or phone, or visit us in person.

OUR VOTER VALUES

Value diversity
Operate with integrity, fairness and fiscal responsibility
Trust in each other
Earn community confidence through excellent customer service
Recognize excellence, innovation and teamwork