MDCR
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Voting with a Record in Michigan

Your Civil Rights, Your Voting Eligibility, and Your Path Back to the Polls

Voting is a Fundamental Civil Right

If you have been arrested, spent time in jail or prison, have a criminal conviction, or are on probation or parole, you may have questions about whether you can vote. If you have completed a sentence of incarceration, you can vote. If you are on probation or parole, you can vote. In some circumstances, you can even vote while you are in jail. **Michigan.gov/Vote** is the state's official source for personalized voting information, including your voter registration, polling locations, early voting information, mail-in ballot information, sample ballot, and local clerk.

A Criminal Record Does Not Automatically Mean You Cannot Vote

In most cases, you can vote if:

- You have a past felony conviction
- You have a past misdemeanor conviction
- You have completed a jail or prison sentence
- You are on probation
- You are on parole
- You have been charged with a crime but have not been convicted
- You are awaiting arraignment or trial
- You are waiting to be sentenced
- You are being held in jail before trial or sentencing

If You Have a Felony Conviction

A felony conviction does not permanently take away your right to vote in Michigan. Once you are no longer serving a sentence in jail or prison, you can register and vote if you meet the other eligibility requirements.

- You do not have to wait until you complete probation or parole
- You do not have to wait a certain number of years after your release
- Your voting rights are not permanently lost because of a felony conviction
- If you have returned to your community after incarceration, you can register to vote

If You Are on Probation or Parole

You can vote. Michigan allows eligible citizens who are on probation or parole to register and cast a ballot. Being under supervision in the community does not, by itself, prevent you from voting.

If You Are in Jail Awaiting Trial

You may still be able to vote. Being held in jail does not automatically make you ineligible. If you are in jail while awaiting arraignment, awaiting trial, or awaiting sentencing, you can still register and vote if you otherwise meet Michigan's eligibility requirements. This is different from being incarcerated while serving a sentence.

When Can’t You Vote

Michigan’s restriction applies while a person is currently serving a sentence in jail or prison. If you are currently incarcerated as part of your sentence, you cannot register or vote during that period. Once you are no longer serving that sentence in jail or prison, you can register and vote again if you meet the state’s other eligibility requirements.

You Can Register Through Election Day

Michigan allows eligible residents to register through Election Day. If an election is approaching and you discover that you are not registered, or your information needs to be updated, you still have time. As long as you are in line at your clerk's office by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, you can still register and cast a ballot.

Don’t Have a Photo ID? You Can Still Vote.

Not having a photo ID with you does not automatically prevent you from casting a ballot in Michigan. If you go to vote without an acceptable form of photo ID, you can sign an affidavit stating that you are not in possession of photo identification and then cast your ballot. This can be especially important for people returning from incarceration who may be working to replace identification or other documentation.

If Some Tells You That You Cannot Vote

Do not assume that information is correct simply because you have a criminal record. Michigan’s voting rules are different from those in some other states.
Having a felony conviction does not permanently take away your right to vote in Michigan. Being on probation or parole does not prevent you from voting. Being detained before trial or sentencing does not necessarily prevent you from voting. Check your eligibility by using official Michigan election information at (**Michigan.gov/Vote**) or contact your city or township clerk if you have questions about your individual situation.

Know Your **Voting Rights**

Your involvement with the criminal legal system does not necessarily determine whether you can participate in Michigan elections.

Voters can also contact the Michigan Department of Civil Rights if they believe they have been discriminated against during the voting process. To file a complaint:

Phone: **800-482-3604**
URL: **www.michigan.gov/mdcr/public-portal**