



City of New Bedford
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City of New Bedford
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

P R E S S R E L E A S E

New Bedford Allowing Residents to Vote Early for the First Time

Early voting is similar to absentee voting, but you don't need a reason or excuse to vote early

New Bedford, Massachusetts- The New Bedford Elections Office today announced important information about the city's participation in the statewide early voting initiative which will give New Bedford registered voters the option to vote before Election Day (November 8th) for the first time ever.

The early voting period will begin on October 24th and continue through November 4th, 2016. Prior to the enactment of a new 2014 state law allowing early voting, the only way a registered voter was allowed to vote prior to Election Day was through absentee voting. Although absentee voting will still be available for registered voters who qualify, only those who will be absent from their city or town on Election Day, or have a disability that prevents them from going to the polls, or have a religious belief preventing the same, are legally allowed to vote by absentee ballot.

Unlike absentee voting, early voting is for every registered voter. Registered voters do not need an excuse or reason to vote early. Regardless of whether a voter wants to take advantage of early voting, vote absentee or vote on Election Day, the first step is making sure you are registered. To check to see if you are registered to vote, and to find information on how to register to vote, you may visit the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website: www.sec.state.ma.us/ele.

If you need to register to vote, you may do it online by visiting: www.RegisterToVoteMA.com . All you need is a license or an I.D. issued by the Registry of Motor Vehicles to apply online. To be eligible to vote in the November 8th State Election, you must register to vote or make any necessary changes to your voter registration by October 19th, 2016.

Early voting can be done in person or by mail. During the early voting period, City Hall will be New Bedford's main early voting site, with voting daily during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.). For public convenience, City Hall will also be open on three evenings as well as on one Saturday and one Sunday. In addition, early voting will be offered at the Wilks Branch Library (1911 Acushnet Ave.) on October 27th from 1-7PM and at the Howland Green Library (3 Rodney French Blvd.) on November 3rd from 1-7PM. For New Bedford's complete early voting schedule, visit <http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/election-commission/> .

Also, registered voters have the option to request an early voting ballot through the mail. Simply fill out an application and mail it to New Bedford Elections Office- City Hall 133 William Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts, 02740. You can find the application on the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele>.

Please note, however, once a voter has cast an early voting ballot, the voter may no longer vote at the polls on Election Day.

Residents with questions about early voting in New Bedford are encouraged to contact the City's Elections Office at (508) 979-1420 or at elections@newbedford-ma.gov .

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