

## For Iowa College Students, Voting Has Never Been Easier!

Written by Veronica Lorson Fowler  
Tuesday, 25 October 2011 13:23

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Changes in election laws have given Iowa college students more options than ever on how they cast their votes. And it's especially important that college students vote. "Of all the people in society, young adults have the most to lose if democracy falls off the rails," said Ben Stone, ACLU of Iowa Executive Director. "They are the ones who, as older adults, will have to deal with all the problems we create now. It's important that they make their voices heard."

### Are You Registered?

Before you vote, you must make sure you're registered to vote. Go online to the Iowa Secretary of State's office at [www.sos.state.ia.us](http://www.sos.state.ia.us). There's a handy tool you can use to plug in your zip code and other info to find out if you're registered. In fact, the entire site has tons of handy college student voter information.

If you're not registered to vote, the deadline in Iowa to register for the November 8 election is October 28. If you cannot meet this deadline, you can also register on the spot at your polling place on Election Day. To prevent hassles, bring a valid, current driver's license or a student ID with photo.

As a college student, you have the option of registering to vote in your hometown or in your college town. Your decision of where to register will determine which candidates and what issues will appear on your ballot. You can register in only one location. You can't register to vote in both your hometown and in your college town.

When it comes to actually voting, you have four options:

#### 1. Absentee Voting

If it's hard for you to get to your polling place; you travel a lot; or you're simply a busy person who doesn't want stand in line or break away from work or classes, an absentee vote is a convenient option.

First, you must request that an absentee ballot be sent to you. Go to the Secretary of State web site ([www.sos.state.ia.us](http://www.sos.state.ia.us)) and print out an "absentee ballot request form." Or call 1-888-SOS-VOTE (1-888-767-8683) to ask for the form.

Once you have the request form in hand, fill it out and mail it to the county auditor's office in the county in which you are registered.

A few days later, you'll receive the actual absentee ballot in the mail. Fill out the actual

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ballot and mail it promptly back to your county auditor's office. Absentee ballots received after November 8 will not be counted.

### 2. Absentee Voting "In Person"

Another convenient way to vote before the November 8 election is to cast an absentee ballot "in person." Simply show up at your local county auditor's office during normal business hours. For the upcoming election, county auditors' offices will also have special hours Saturday, October 29 and Saturday, November 5.

No need to do any paperwork in advance (other than make sure you're registered). Just show up!

### 3. Satellite Voting

In some counties, to make voting easier, county auditors have set up convenient "satellite" voting stations, usually on college campuses, schools, libraries, or shopping centers. Hours vary so check in advance.

Keep your eye on local media or contact your county auditor's office to find out when and where satellite voting is in your community.

### 4. Traditional Voting

And, of course, you always have the option of traditional voting--going to the designated voting place for your neighborhood and casting a vote in a voting machine. Polls are open November 8 from 7:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. If you're unsure where to vote, simply Google "polling places" and use the handy tool to find your precinct's voting place.

If you experience any unfair difficulties or hassles in casting your ballot, it's important to report it. Please contact the ACLU of Iowa at [legal.program@aclu-ia.org](mailto:legal.program@aclu-ia.org) or call 515-992-0150.

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