



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DOOR COUNTY

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TO: Door County Area Media
FROM: League of Women Voters of Door County

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We apologize for the length of this release. There is so much important information people need to know.

For Immediate Release

League Urges Snowbirds to Prepare for Voting Before Leaving

Snowbirds, as you pack your bags before heading south, the League of Women Voters of Door County urges you to consider how the changes in Wisconsin's voting laws may affect your packing. You may need to include some items you have previously not considered taking along! Although there are no fall elections in Wisconsin this year, the spring will bring a variety of elections at the local level, as well as the Presidential Preference Primary. The changes will affect you whether you plan to be back in Wisconsin by election day or vote by absentee ballot.

Changes that will affect snowbirds, as well as all voters, include:

- Beginning in 2012 **all voters** will need to present an **acceptable photo ID** to receive a ballot. The acceptable photo ID does not need to show a current address.
- Voters must reside at their address for 28 consecutive days to be eligible to vote (formerly 10 days). Voters may no longer use a corroborating witness as proof of residence.
- Voters must sign or make their mark on the poll book in order to obtain a ballot. (Voters unable to sign the poll book because of a disability are exempt from this requirement.)

Before snowbirds leave for the winter, they must make sure they:

1. Are registered to vote by contacting their municipal clerk. If they need to register, they will be required to show proof of residence.
2. Have an **acceptable photo ID** before leaving. If they do not have one, getting one may require several steps in order to collect the required documentation. **It is important to begin collecting it NOW!**

3. Contact their municipal clerk to make sure they know the procedures and timeline for absentee voting. Some arrangements for receiving an absentee ballot can be made before leaving.

The list of Identification Cards (IDs) acceptable for voting includes:

- ✓ Wisconsin DOT-issued driver license (even if driving privileges are revoked or suspended) which expires after 11/2/10
- ✓ Wisconsin DOT-issued identification card which expires after 11/2/10
- ✓ Military ID card issued by a US uniformed service which expires after 11/2/10
- ✓ US passport which expires after 11/2/10
- ✓ Certificate of naturalization issued within the last two years
- ✓ Unexpired driver's license or state ID receipt
- ✓ ID card issued by a federally recognized Indian tribe in Wisconsin
- ✓ Unexpired ID card issued by a Wisconsin-accredited university or college – must contain issuance date, student signature, expiration date within two years of issuance, along with proof of current enrollment.

If you are eligible to vote but do not have an acceptable Wisconsin ID card, you may obtain a **FREE ID for the purpose of voting from any Wisconsin Department of Motor Vehicle Center.** (Door County's DMV Center is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 AM to 5 PM.) To obtain the FREE ID, the box on the DMV application must be checked indicating the ID is for voting purposes. (The regular ID fee is \$28, checks or cash only.)

Due to the need to provide several types of documentation to receive a DOT-issued ID, you should **start the process of obtaining statutory identification IMMEDIATELY!** You will need to provide:

- Proof of name and date of birth, for example, a certified U.S. birth certificate, valid passport or certificate of naturalization (Hospital birth certificates or registrations are not acceptable.)
- Proof of identity (usually a document with a signature or photo such as a social security card, military papers, or marriage papers)
- Proof of Wisconsin residency such as a utility bill, pay stub, an account statement from a Wisconsin bank/financial institution, or certified school record issued within the last 90 days
- Proof of U.S. citizenship, legal permanent resident status, legal conditional resident status or legal temporary visitor status
- Social security number.

If you have questions about the documents that will satisfy these requirements, you should:

- Visit the Government Accountability Board website <http://gab.wi.gov>
- Call 1-866-VOTE-WIS
- Call the GAB Help Desk at [\(608\) 261-2028](tel:6082612028) or TTY [1-800-947-3529](tel:18009473529)

If you plan to vote by **absentee ballot from within the US**, you will need to give yourself plenty of time to make sure you receive the ballot and return it by the appropriate deadline. Changes in the law require:

- ❖ Requests for absentee ballots sent by mail must be accompanied by a photo copy of an acceptable form of voter ID.
- ❖ Requests for absentee ballots sent by fax or email, must submit a photocopy of the acceptable ID in the envelope with the completed ballot.

Military and overseas voters are exempt from the proof of ID requirement.

In order to make sure your **absentee ballot** is counted, be aware of the following timeline changes:

- ❖ Absentee ballots returned by mail must be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by 4 PM on the Friday after the election.
- ❖ Absentee voting in the Clerk's Office is now restricted to the two weeks before an election. Absentee voting ends at 5 PM the Friday before the election. Absentee voters in the Clerk's Office must present the same type of photo required at the polls.

The League urges voters TO PLAN AHEAD! Any questions should be directed to your municipal clerk or County Clerk Jill Lau at 746-2200.

**MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, DO NOT LET THESE NEW REQUIREMENTS
KEEP YOU FROM VOTING!
IT IS YOUR RIGHT AS AN ELIGIBLE VOTER TO CAST A BALLOT AND
HAVE THAT BALLOT COUNTED!**

END