

PRESS RELEASE

(To be released the week of October 31st)

From: Franklin County Election Board

Subject: **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2016**

What Time Do the Polls Open and Close?

Polls in Franklin County will open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. Registered voters who are in line at 8:00 p.m. will be allowed to vote.

Am I still registered to Vote?

To search for your voter registration status (Active or Inactive), your party affiliation, or your polling place address log onto the SURE Public Portal at www.pavoterservices.state.pa.us and click on “Find Voter Registration Status”, or call the Voter Registration Office at (717) 261-3886. **New this year is 2Vote, a voter registration text messaging service. Simply text “PA” to “2Vote” (28683) on a smartphone to receive a link that provides direct access to find your voter registration status.**

What does Inactive mean on my voter registration status?

If your voter registration status states you are “Inactive”, you are still eligible to vote but will be asked to complete an Affirmation of Elector form while at the polling place. Inactive means that we mailed you a piece of mail and it came back “Undeliverable” so we need to confirm your address.

Where do I go to Vote?

There are seventy-five (75) polling places in Franklin County and you need to go to the polling place assigned to you based on your residence address. Check your registration card for the polling place location or log onto the SURE Public Portal at www.pavoterservices.state.pa.us and click on “Find Your Voter Registration Status”. This website will also provide directions from your home to your polling place.

Whom do I vote for?

Registered voters will be voting for the following offices: President of the United States, United States Senator, Attorney General, Auditor General, State Treasurer, Representative in Congress, Senator in the General Assembly-33rd Senatorial District, and Representative in the General Assembly – 78th, 82nd, 89th & 90th Legislative Districts. There is also one Constitutional Amendment question on the ballot. **A sample ballot is available on the County’s website at www.franklincountypa.gov or may be obtained from the Franklin County Commissioners’ Office, 14 North Main Street, Chambersburg beginning on Thursday, November 3rd.**

IMPORTANT – All registered voters, including those registered Independent or with a Minor Political Party, will receive the same ballot as those registered Republican or Democrat.

What do I Need to take with me to the Polling Place?

If you are voting in an election district for the first time, you will need an approved form of identification, either photo or non-photo. **No other voter will be asked to present an ID.**

Is My Polling Place Handicapped Accessible?

All polling places are considered handicapped accessible.

May I receive Assistance in Voting?

No person is allowed to receive assistance in voting unless his/her registration record indicates the need for assistance or the voter completes and signs a declaration of the need for assistance at the polling place prior to entering the voting booth. A voter may select anyone to assist them EXCEPT: 1) The Judge of Elections; 2) The voter's employer or agent of that employer; or 3) An officer or agent of the voter's union. **Also, each polling place will have a lighted magnifier w/ bifocal lens available to assist those voters who may have trouble reading their ballot.**

Can I feel secure in my ballot being counted accurately in Franklin County?

Absolutely! Franklin County has been using the ES&S precinct counters since 2006 and they are rated "extremely accurate". The County owns the election equipment and it is stored in a secured location with very limited access. In addition, the voting equipment is NEVER connected to the internet and so it is not possible for someone to "hack" the results.

Prior to each election, staff tests each and every precinct counter to ensure they are counting correctly. We test for such things as Straight Party voting, Split Party voting, Overvoting, Write-ins, and Blank Ballots. Once the Logic & Accuracy testing is complete, all test votes are erased from the PC card. On election morning before the polls open, the pollworkers run a zero report showing no votes have been cast on the precinct counter. At the close of the polls, a results tape is printed off of the precinct counter and presented to the County Election Board where it is compared to the results on the PCMCIA card for that precinct. After the election, all voted ballots, absentee ballots, spoiled ballots, and unused ballots are accounted for in each voting precinct.

Also, after every election the law requires a 2% hand count where a certain number of ballots are hand-counted and those results compared to results from the precinct counter. In every election since 2006, these hand counts have come out exactly as reported on election night. We have also had multiple recounts over the years where the Courts perform their own recount and in every instance the results matched those coming from the precinct counters.

The voters in Franklin County can have the utmost confidence in the accuracy of election results.

Will I have to wait in line when I go to my polling place?

For the upcoming election on November 8th, Franklin County is expecting over a 70% voter turnout. What this means for voters is that voters may have to wait in line to vote. Our pollworkers have initiated many efficiencies that should speed up the voting process including adding extra pollworkers, extra booths, extra pollbooks, etc. **Voters may want to vote at less peak times during mid-morning to mid-afternoon. The busiest times tend to be before 9:00 a.m. and after 4:00 p.m.**

Do I have to vote Straight Party?

The first option on every ballot is to vote Straight Party. By marking the oval next to the party of your choice, this automatically gives every candidate from that party a vote. A voter can skip the Straight Party option entirely and just vote for each candidate, office by office. **IMPORTANT: If voting Straight Party, a voter will still need to vote YES or NO on the Constitutional Question.**

Can I split my ticket?

A voter can mark the oval beside a party listed under the Straight Party block and then split their ticket by marking an oval next to any individual candidate from another party. The mark beside the candidate will override the straight party vote for that office and the machine is programmed to count this correctly.

Are Candidates allowed to Pass Out/Display Campaign Literature at the Polling Place?

The Election Code states that those individuals or candidates that are campaigning must remain at least ten (10) feet distant from the entrance of the polling place during the progress of the voting. We ask that if voters carry any campaign literature into the voting booth that they make sure they take it with them when they are done voting.

Am I allowed to display or wear any type of attire with a candidate's name on it into the polls?

The Franklin County Election Board reminds all voters that NO electioneering is allowed within the polling place. This includes the display of candidate names on buttons, signs, or clothing within the polling place as well as items advocating a political party, etc. Voters will be asked to remove the item or to cover it up before receiving a ballot.

Who can I expect to be in my polling place while I am voting?

The following persons are permitted in the polling place while voting is occurring:

- Precinct Election Officials – These are elected or appointed Judges of Election, Inspectors and Clerks, normally from your municipality, who have been tasked to run the election.
- Voters in the process of voting
- Poll Watchers appointed by a candidate or party
- Constable or Deputy Constable

Where can I find information about the Candidates that will be appearing on the Ballot?

Check the local newspapers or contact either the Franklin County Democratic Committee (717-597-4332) or the Franklin County Republican Party (717-263-7999) for information.

What is an Overvote and what happens if I overvote my ballot?

An overvote occurs when an individual indicates on his/her ballot a vote for more candidates than the number of candidates for which an individual is permitted to vote for a particular office. When a voter overvotes for a particular office, all of the votes cast by that voter for the overvoted office are **CANCELLED**. For example, the office of Representative in Congress states to "Vote for ONE". If you mark the oval to the left of two candidates for this office, you have overvoted and neither candidate will receive a vote. This will not cause your entire ballot to be cancelled, just the votes for the office of Representative in Congress. The precinct counter is programmed to detect overvotes and will beep upon the voter scanning in their ballot. The voter will have a choice to either "ACCEPT" the ballot which allows the scanner to count as much as the ballot as it can or a voter can choose "REJECT". This will cause the ballot to be ejected from the scanner and they may ask to have it spoiled and a new ballot issued.

What is Undervoting?

Undervoting should not be confused with overvoting. A voter undervotes when he/she casts fewer votes for a particular office than he/she is permitted to cast. **NO BALLOT OR VOTE WILL BE CANCELLED AS A RESULT OF AN UNDERVOTE.**

Who do I Contact with Questions regarding voting or the election day process?

All voter registration questions should be directed to the Franklin County Voter Registration Office at (717) 261-3886. All election related questions should be directed to the Franklin County Election Board at (717) 261-3810.

What type of voting system do we use in Franklin County?

Franklin County uses optical scan paper ballots which are fed into a precinct counter to be counted. For information on voting in Franklin County, you may watch an online demo and/or instructional video on voting an optical scan ballot using a M100 Precinct Counter at the following website – www.votespa.com (Voting & Elections; Types of Voting; In Person). We also have an assistive marking device for the blind or visually impaired in each polling place that is called an AutoMark and a demo of this machine can be viewed at this website as well.

Where can I view election results?

Franklin County results will be located on the County's website at www.franklincountypa.gov (*you can access results by clicking on the election banner on the homepage*). To view results from other counties or for all of Pennsylvania, please use the Department of State's website which is www.electionreturns.state.pa.us.

REMEMBER, VOTING IS A PRIVILEGE AND EVERY VOTE COUNTS!