

# 2018 VOTER GUIDE FOR CHESTER COUNTY



**INDIVISIBLE**  
CHESTER COUNTY

[www.indivisiblechesco.org](http://www.indivisiblechesco.org)

**Your Vote is Your Voice**

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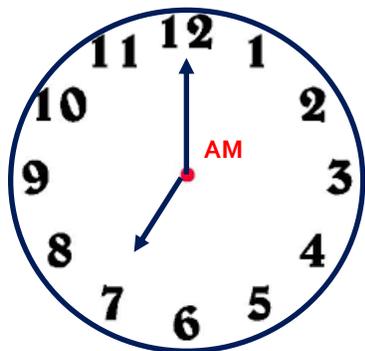
# Welcome to the 2018 ICC Voter Guide

Building on the success of our 2017 Guide, we have expanded our coverage to include both the Primary and General elections, lists of offices up for election this year and moving forward, a calendar of important dates for the year, and more!

## 2018 Election Calendar Dates

- Petition Season: **February 12 – March 6**
- Last day to REGISTER before the primary: **April 16**
- Last day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot: **May 8**
- Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots: **May 11**
- **MUNICIPAL PRIMARY: May 15**
- First day to REGISTER after primary: **May 16**
- Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military and overseas absentee ballots: **May 22**
- Last day to REGISTER before the November election: **October 9**
- Last day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot: **October 30**
- Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots: **November 2**
- **MUNICIPAL ELECTION: November 6**
- First day to REGISTER after November election: **November 7**
- Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military and overseas absentee ballots: **November 13**

## When to Vote?



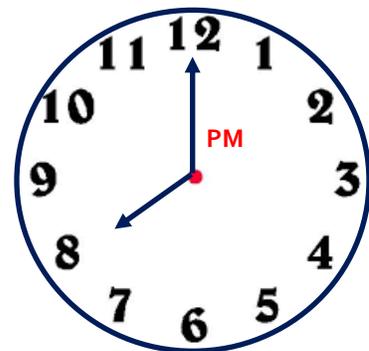
Polls open at 7 a.m.

Primary Day: 15 May 2018

General Election Day: 6 November 2018

On both days, polls in Pennsylvania are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

If you are in line at 8 p.m. you will be able to vote, even if it is after 8 pm, but you *must* be on line by 8.



Polls close at 8 p.m.

## More Election Calendar Information

The yearly calendar begins with "Petition Season". This is the two and a half week period when candidates in the Democratic and Republican parties get on the ballot by having petitions signed by members of their respective parties. There is a different process, after the primaries for Independents and the minor parties.

While yes, there are write-ins, this is Pennsylvania, and the choices will come down to the candidates of the major parties.

During petition season, the candidates and their helpers will circulate petitions. These petitions can only be signed by people registered to the candidate's party. If the race is contested, a voter can only sign for one candidate or all their signatures will be invalidated.

The next step in the process is to register voters and to make sure that people know there is a primary. This is an excellent time to get non-Democrats and non-Republicans to AT LEAST TEMPORARILY register as a party member because only registered Democrats and Republicans can vote in the primary.

Voters cannot register nor change any information on their registration for the month leading up to the Primary or the General.

The next concern about the calendar is making sure that everyone who cannot be at the polls gets an absentee ballot application and then follows up! (See page 4.)

Between the Primary and the General, in addition to Voter Drives, it's time to make sure that your friends, family and neighbors know there IS an election. Practice the quote in the inset below until it rolls off your tongue. Believe it or not, most people do not know that there are elections every year. They mistakenly believe that the only election is the one in presidential years.

Educating your friends, family and neighbors goes a long

way to getting them to vote. If you don't believe me, ask 5 random strangers when the next election is, and they'll start counting from 2016.



## What if I can't Make it to the Polls?

If you know you will be out of the area, or out of the country, on Primary or Election Day, or if you cannot get to the polls because of a medical issue, you can cast your vote using an absentee ballot. In addition, if your child is away at college, her or she can vote absentee in Pennsylvania. Further, there are special options for those serving in the military.

Using an absentee ballot is a two-step process.

First, you need to request an absentee ballot application. Click [here](#) to download an application, follow the instructions exactly, and return it to Voter Services at the address on the instructions page.

Deadlines for applying for, and returning, absentee ballots are shown on page 2 of this Guide. Voter Services **must** receive your absentee ballot request, as well as your completed ballot, by the deadlines shown on the page 2 chart. So if it is close to the deadline make sure to hand carry your ballot to Voter Services by the deadline

because postmarks don't count, they must have the physical ballot. You can also go to Voter Services for an application and fill it out there.

If you need an emergency ballot, the process is somewhat cumbersome. If you need an absentee ballot because of, say, getting very ill the weekend before Election Day, you will need someone to run between a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas and Voter Services and the hospital room on Monday, 6 November. Call Voter Services and use the application [here](#).

For those in the military, or living overseas, you will need [this application](#), and to follow the instructions on the second page of the application.

## VOTING IN PA: ABSENTEE BALLOTS 101

## What if I have a Criminal Conviction?

You made a mistake. You still may be able to vote!  
Who is allowed to register and vote?

- People in jail or prison who have been convicted of misdemeanors (must vote with an absentee ballot).
- People who are under house arrest (must vote with an absentee ballot)
- People who are on probation or on parole.
- People who are on parole or probation and living in a halfway house or community corrections center (must vote with an absentee ballot and cannot use the address of the halfway house as their registration address. Must use previous or future address.)
- People being held in jail while waiting to go to trial (must vote with an absentee ballot).

Who is not eligible to register and vote?

- People who are in prison or jail because of a felony conviction and who won't be released before the election.
- People who have been convicted of violating Pennsylvania election laws within the past four years.

If you are already registered to vote, you do not need to do anything to regain your voting rights.

If you are not registered or you need to update your address, you must do so by 16 April 2018. You can register to vote and update your personal information at [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com). Follow the instructions in the article above to apply for an absentee ballot.

## What do I Bring to the Polls?

If this is the first time you are voting in Pennsylvania, OR the voting at your current polling place, you will need to bring an ID with you. There are a number of polling places that will move before Election Day. If you voted at the old location of the same precinct, you will not need ID.

Acceptable forms of ID include:

- ◇ Driver's license
- ◇ U.S. passport
- ◇ Military, student, or employee ID
- ◇ Voter registration card
- ◇ Firearm permit
- ◇ Current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck or government check
- ◇ Any ID issued by the PA or federal government

**Note:** IDs without a photo must have your address on it.

If you have voted at your polling place in the past, you do not need to provide any ID of any sort.

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS  
JOHN M RUSSELL  
PO BOX 895  
ABITE LA 70422-895

TANGIPAHOA

FIRST CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
ABITE LA  
PERMIT NO. 12

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED  
voter identification card

YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS OF RECORD

IMPORTANT: RETAIN FOR VOTE PURPOSES.  
YOU VOTE AT SUBJECT PRECINCT LOCATED AT:

POLLING PLACE  
STREET ADDRESS

Registrar of Voters  
JOHN M RUSSELL

Parish  
TANGIPAHOA

Your Name  
Physical Address  
City, State and Zip Code

voter number REG DATE D.O.B. Issue Date PTY

## What if Something Goes Wrong?

Chester County has a long history of honest and fair elections, with a commitment to making sure all eligible voters can vote.

If there is a problem with your registration, or not being on the voter rolls, the Judge of Elections (at every polling place) will work with you and Voter Services to make sure that you can cast a provisional ballot, and will explain the process to you at that time.

If you end up at the wrong polling place, the Judge of Elections will be able to find out where you should be voting and you'll get directions to that location.

All polling places in Chester County offer Optical Scan ballots. If you have any concern about your vote not counting, make sure to use an Optical Scan ballot. You'll use a provided pen to blacken in the circles next to the candidates of your choice. It's like a standardized test - fill in the circles completely, no stray marks, and mark the correct number of entries. For



some positions, there will be one candidate who will win, but for some positions, there may be more in odd numbered years. For example, in 2017 each precinct elected one Judge of Election, but four candidates as Judge of the Superior Court.

Your ballot will be counted by the Optical Scanner. After the polls close, the absentee ballots will be run through the scanner. Then, the total number of ballots (used, unused, spoiled) will be

added together to ensure that all were counted and none were lost. All election materials are returned from the polling places to Voter Services, which will hand-count all of the ballots and certify the results. If necessary, the County may order a recount, of, say, a very close race.

Polling places in Chester County also have electronic voting. The rule for county workers is to offer electronic voting only if requested, but some polling places offer them anyway. Say no to electronic voting.

## Which Offices are up for Election?

On the next page is a table showing which offices are up for election from 2018—2024. Everyone knows that the President is up for election every four years, but other offices have different terms.

Each state has two Senators, and each senate position is either Class 1, 2 or 3, which relate to which year that Class is up for election. Barring a special election, normally only one Senator is up for election, and there is a Senate election 2 of every 3 even years.

State Senators run on a staggered schedule, with even numbered districts alternating with odd numbered districts in even-numbered years. All State Representatives in the General Assembly are up for election every even numbered year. If you don't know which Senate and Assembly districts you live in, click [here](#) to find out.

Of note: actual Judicial positions for all positions except the local Magistrates are variable: not the dates, but the positions based on which of the Justices or Judges are up for election as individual positions are staggered. In addition, some of the positions will be for new judges, and some will be 10-year retention elections. Magistrates serve six year terms, but different Districts are on different schedules, so there are some elections every two years.

The County positions are relatively straightforward, with the Magistrate information in the paragraph above.

There are two other types of elected positions that are not listed on the chart.

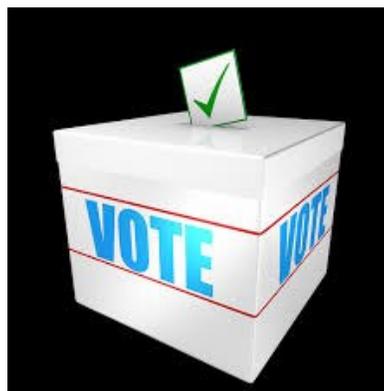
First, there are local positions, including, but not limited to, School Board, Borough Council, Township Supervisor, Mayor, Auditor, etc. The exact positions are determined by the set-up of the municipality, and the size of the town/city. Also, certain positions rotate, for example, School Board members representing different school precincts in the district may be elected on a staggered schedule. Your municipality will be able to advise you as to which positions are up in which years. Normally, as many local elections as possible are held in odd-numbered years.

Finally, there are Party positions. In Pennsylvania these are limited to the Democratic and Republican parties. While candidates can run in the General Election from a minor party, no party other than Democratic and Republican are given ballot lines. In other states, there are additional parties with granted lines, meaning their candidates can run in primaries for those parties. In some states, like California, there are jungle primaries, which are incredibly cool, but don't exist here.

The parties hold elections for local Committee People, and Statewide officers from the various counties, generally every four years. Committee People run hyper-local, that is, they are elected by precinct. The current rule is that there is to be one male and one female Committee Person per precinct. This system is true for most of Pennsylvania, but different in the City of Philadelphia, which has wards. In most instances these Party elections are on Primary Day and not during the General Election.

In addition, in presidential election years, the parties run candidates in the Primary only for delegates and alternate delegates to the Democratic and Republican National Conventions held during the summer. In Pennsylvania, the delegates are pledged to a specific candidate.

Now that you know which positions are up for election, you may want to run for an office. Contact your local Voter Services for the forms and instructions you'll need to run. If you will be running for a position that will involve raising funds, you will need to set up your committee and your accounts and then make financial reports to either the State or the FEC.



## Which Offices are up for Election? (Con't)

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>National</b>							
President of the United States			X				X
United States Senator (1)					X		
United States Senator (2)	X						X
United States Representative	X		X		X		X
<b>State</b>							
Governor	X				X		
Lieutenant Governor	X				X		
Attorney General			X				X
Auditor General			X				X
Treasurer			X				X
Senator in the General Assembly (even districts)	X				X		
Senator in the General Assembly (odd districts)			X				X
Representative in the General Assembly	X		X		X		X
Justice of the Supreme Court		X		X		X	
Judge of the Superior Court		X		X		X	
Judge of the Commonwealth Court		X		X		X	
<b>County</b>							
Commissioners		X				X	
District Attorney		X				X	
Prothonotary		X				X	
Recorder of Deeds		X				X	
Register of Wills		X				X	
Sheriff		X				X	
Treasurer				X			
Controller				X			
Clerk of Courts				X			
Coroner				X			
Judge of the Court of Common Pleas		X		X		X	
Magisterial District Judge (6 year terms)		X		X		X	
Election Officials (Judge of Elections and Inspectors)				X			

## Helpful Contacts

◇ **Chester County Voter Services:**

601 Westtown Road, Suite 150  
West Chester, PA 19380-0990  
Phone: 610-344-6410  
Fax: 610-344-5682

- ◇ List of Candidates by Ballot Position: No, they're not alphabetical, positions are selected by lottery. Click [here](#).
- ◇ Interactive map of polling places is listed [here](#). Type in your home address to get directions to your polling place. You can also use [this link](#) if you need an address but don't need directions.
- ◇ Looking for information on candidates? See the ICC Candidate Guide on our [website](#).
- ◇ Most Chester County Townships, on their websites, will list any changed or emergency polling places a few days before the election. Sometimes things happen (like a collapsed roof) and the most recent information is available from your township.



This booklet was prepared by Indivisible Chester County.

**Our Mission:**

**Indivisible Chester County makes our voices known to our elected representatives, supports candidates with progressive positions, and takes part in non-violent exercise of our First Amendment rights.**

[www.indivisiblechesco.org](http://www.indivisiblechesco.org)

