



# Members Brief

An informational brief prepared by the LSC staff for members and staff of the Ohio General Assembly

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## Voter Identification

This brief explains the forms of voter identification that are acceptable in Ohio.

### Overview

Form of voter ID	Register to vote on paper	Register to vote online	Election Day voting	In-person absent voting	Absent voting by mail	Provisional ballot
Ohio driver's license or state ID card	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Military ID	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
U.S. passport or passport card	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ohio driver's license or state ID card number	✓	Must provide both	✗	✗	✓	✗
Last four digits of Social Security number	✓		✗	✗	✓	✗
Affidavit of religious objection to being photographed, including last four digits of Social Security number	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓

## Types of voter ID

The law defines “photo identification” as an Ohio driver’s license or state ID card, a military ID, or a U.S. passport or passport card. Photo ID is required to vote in person, but certain other types of ID are acceptable for voter registration, absent voting by mail, and provisional voting, as shown in the table above.<sup>1</sup>

### Ohio driver’s license or state ID card

An Ohio driver’s license or state ID card (Ohio DL/ID) issued by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) is a valid form of photo ID for voting as long as it is not expired and it shows the person’s name and photograph. An Ohio DL/ID is not required to show the person’s current address. (A state ID card is a similar form of ID to a driver’s license, but does not allow the person to drive.)

In addition to a regular driver’s license or state ID card, all of the following documents issued by the BMV are considered an Ohio DL/ID for voting purposes:

- An interim identification form, which is a paper document the BMV issues to a person to use until the person’s new permanent card arrives in the mail;
- A commercial driver’s license or motorcycle operator’s license;
- A probationary or restricted license;
- A temporary instruction permit.

An Ohio DL/ID can be used to vote by any method and to register to vote. For purposes of registering or voting absentee by mail, a person may provide the person’s Ohio DL/ID number instead of the card itself.

Initial and renewed state ID cards are available to any person 17 or older at no cost. If a person’s state ID card is lost or destroyed before it expires, the person must pay a fee to replace it. But, if a person has a change of name, a replacement card is free.<sup>2</sup>

In order to receive an Ohio DL/ID, the BMV requires an applicant to present proof of the person’s legal name, date of birth, legal presence in the U.S., Social Security number, and Ohio street address. For example, an applicant might provide a birth certificate, a Social Security card, and a utility bill.<sup>3</sup>

### Military ID

For voter ID purposes, a military ID includes an ID card issued by the U.S. military, the Ohio National Guard, or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. A military ID must not be

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 3501.01, 3503.14, 3503.20, 3505.18, 3505.181, 3505.182, 3505.183, 3509.03, 3509.05, 3511.02, and 3511.05.

<sup>2</sup> R.C. 4507.50, 4507.51, and 4507.52.

<sup>3</sup> Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles, [Acceptable Documents](#), available at [bmv.ohio.gov](http://bmv.ohio.gov) under “Licenses & ID Cards.”

expired, and must show the person's name and photograph.<sup>4</sup> A veteran ID card issued by a county recorder or county veterans service office is not acceptable as voter ID.

A military ID is valid for voting by any method, but not for registering to vote. A copy of a military ID that is submitted for the purpose of voting absentee by mail must show the front and back of the card.

### **U.S. passport or passport card**

To be used as voter ID, a U.S. passport or passport card must not be expired and must include the person's name and photograph. (A U.S. passport card is similar to a passport book, but can only be used to cross the border by land or sea from Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, and the Caribbean.)<sup>5</sup>

A U.S. passport or passport card is acceptable ID to vote by any method, but not to register to vote. A copy of a passport card that is submitted for the purpose of voting absentee by mail must show the front and back of the card. A copy of a U.S. passport submitted for that purpose must show the ID page of the passport that shows the person's name, photograph, and other identifying information and the passport's expiration date.

### **Last four digits of Social Security number**

A person may provide the last four digits of the person's Social Security number in order to register to vote and to vote absentee by mail. A different form of ID is required to vote in person or by provisional ballot.

### **Affidavit of religious objection to being photographed**

A person who does not have a photo ID because the person has a sincere religious objection to being photographed may vote in person by casting a provisional ballot at the person's polling place or at the board of elections during in-person absent voting. This option is not available for voting by mail.

The person must sign an affidavit stating that the person does not have photo ID because the person has a sincere religious objection to being photographed. The form must include the last four digits of the person's Social Security number and the person's date of birth. When a person submits an affidavit, the board of elections must check the BMV's records, and the affidavit is not valid if the BMV database indicates that the person has been issued a currently unexpired Ohio driver's license or state ID card.

A religious objector cannot submit an affidavit for purposes of registering to vote, but still may register on a paper form using the last four digits of the person's Social Security number.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, [Common Access Card](#) and [Next Generation Uniformed Services ID Card](#), available at [cac.mil](#), and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, [Get a Veteran Health Identification Card \(VHIC\)](#), available at [va.gov/health-care](#) under "Manage benefits."

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of State, [Apply for a Passport Card](#), available at [travel.state.gov](#) under "U.S. Passports."

<sup>6</sup> Ohio Secretary of State, [Form 12-O \(PDF\)](#), available at [ohiosecretaryofstate.gov](#) under "Elections and Voting," "Elections Officials," "Forms and Petitions."