

2026 VOTER PARTICIPATION TOOLKIT

Office of the Minnesota
Secretary of State



Fellow Minnesotans,

Minnesota has long led the nation in voter turnout, and that tradition does not happen by accident. It is the result of neighbors, organizations, and employers working together to make participation in our democracy accessible and expected. Civic responsibility and voter engagement matter in every election year.

In 2026, Minnesotans across the state will vote in primary elections and the midterm general election. These elections shape leadership and decisions that affect our schools, workplaces, infrastructure, and communities. Every vote plays a role in ensuring our government reflects the voices of the people it serves.

To support your outreach efforts, my office has updated this comprehensive, nonpartisan voter participation toolkit. Inside, you will find ready to use messages, timelines, and resources to help inform and encourage voters in your networks. We invite you to adapt these materials to fit your audience and share them widely. Or simply copy and paste. Just share them widely.

Thank you for being a trusted partner in strengthening civic participation and helping keep Minnesota a national leader in voter engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Simon".

Steve Simon

Minnesota Secretary of State



Continue the proud Minnesota tradition of high voter turnout. Incorporate easy to use messages and links into your employee communications and social media postings.

Visit mnvotes.gov for all your voting information.

Contact Melanie Hazelip, 612-327-1621, for additional information or with questions.

2026 VOTER PARTICIPATION TOOLKIT

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2026 ELECTION CALENDAR

SPECIAL ELECTIONS

APRIL 14, 2026

- Special Election Faribault County (Question)
- School District Special Election ISD 1 - Aitkin (Question)
- School District Special Election ISD 13 - Columbia Heights (Vacancy)
- School District Special Election ISD 284 - Wayzata (Question)
- School District Special Election ISD 482 - Little Falls (Question)
- School District Special Election ISD 2170 - Staples-Motley (Question)

SPECIAL ELECTION DATES

Most special elections may only be held on one of the following five dates:

- Second Tuesday in April
- Second Tuesday in May
- Second Tuesday in August
- First Tuesday after the first Monday in November

REGULAR ELECTION DATES

TOWNSHIP ELECTIONS

- March 10, 2026

PRIMARY ELECTION DATES

- June 26 through August 10, 2026: vote early by mail or in person for the Primary
- July 21, 2026: register in advance to save time on Primary Election Day
- Tuesday, August 11, 2026: Primary Election Day

GENERAL ELECTION DATES

- September 18 through November 2, 2026: vote early by mail or in person for the General Election
- October 13, 2026: register in advance to save time on Election Day
- Tuesday, November 3, 2026: General Election Day

ELECTIONS FOR FEDERAL & STATE OFFICES

On General Election Day, all Minnesotans will vote for:

- *U.S. Senator*
- *U.S. Representative*
- *Governor and Lieutenant Governor*
- *Secretary of State*
- *State Auditor*
- *Attorney General*
- *State Senator and State Representative*
- *Judicial seats*

Voters may also vote for county and local offices and ballot questions on November 3, 2026.

SPECIAL ELECTIONS

Suggested Priority Messages: Special Elections

Prepare to send these communications out prior to any of the special election dates listed above.

Special elections are used to fill vacant offices or decide ballot questions; they can be scheduled at various times during the year, and may be held in conjunction with a regularly scheduled election.



SUGGESTED NEWSLETTER OR EMAIL MESSAGE

Subject Line: Special Election Information

Dear [recipient name],

When we think about elections, we often focus on major elections. But special elections are just as important – and sometimes even more impactful.

Special elections are held to fill vacancies and ensure your community continues to have representation. These elections can determine who makes decisions on issues that affect daily life, from local services to state or national policy.

Because fewer people typically participate in special elections, each vote carries even greater weight. A small number of ballots can decide the outcome – meaning your participation truly matters.

Your voice matters – not just in big election years, but every time voters are called to the polls. Call 877-600-VOTE, text 651-217-3862, or email secretary.state@state.mn.us with any questions.

Thank you for being an engaged and informed voter,

[Your signature]



SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA

📢 Special election coming up!
Low turnout = higher impact for every voter.

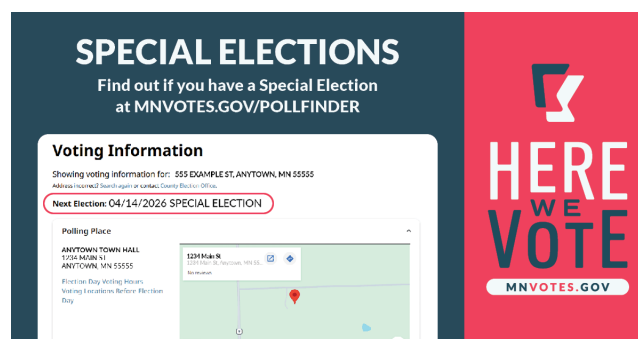
- ✓ Check your eligibility
- ✓ Find your voting options
- ✓ Cast your ballot

Your voice still counts - use it.
mnvotes.gov for more info

Think special elections don't matter? Think again.

⚖️ Outcomes are often decided by just a handful of votes.
🗳️ When turnout is low, every ballot has more power.

Check the date, know your options, and vote in the special election.
Go to mnvotes.gov for more info



PRIMARY ELECTION

Suggested Priority Messages: Primary Election

Prepare to send these communications out the **week of July 13, 2026**. The Primary Election is what determines who is on the ballot in the November General Election.



SUGGESTED NEWSLETTER OR EMAIL MESSAGE

Subject Line: Primary Election Information

Dear [recipient name],

Minnesota's Primary Election on August 11, 2026. This election determines which candidates will appear on the ballot for the General Election on November 3, 2026. Your voice matters at every stage of the election process.

Make sure you are registered and ready to vote. Visit mnvotes.gov to check your voter registration status or register to vote.

Ways to Vote:

 In-Person Voting – Most polls are open from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. on Election Day.

 Early Voting – Minnesota offers early voting options. Check with your [local election office](#).

 Absentee Voting – Request an absentee ballot online at mnvotes.gov.

Call 877-600-VOTE, text 651-217-3862, or email secretary.state@state.mn.us with any questions.

Be a voter and make your voice heard.

[Your signature]



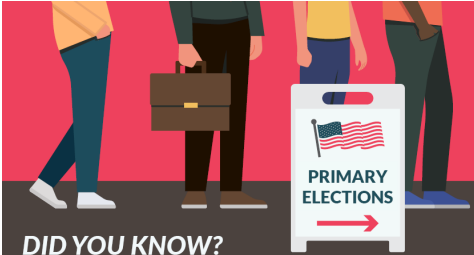
SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA

 Minnesota's Primary Election is August 11, 2026.
Check your registration and vote early or on Election Day.
Visit mnvotes.gov today.

Primary elections are how it all begins.

Voting in your primary is your chance to help choose who moves forward,
and which issues get the spotlight.

Make your plan to vote now at mnvotes.gov.

PRIMARY ELECTION 	 MNVOTES.GOV	 DID YOU KNOW? Minnesota does not have party registration. Voters can choose which party ballot to participate in when they vote in a primary election.	 MNVOTES.GOV
PRIMARY ELECTION: EARLY VOTING June 26 – August 10 	 MNVOTES.GOV	PRIMARY ELECTION: EARLY VOTING June 26 – August 10 	 MNVOTES.GOV
You can vote early by ballot or in person at an early voting location. https://www.sos.mn.gov/elections-voting/other-ways-to-vote		You can vote early by absentee ballot https://mnvotes.sos.mn.gov/abrequest/index	

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY



Suggested Priority Messaging: National Voter Registration Day

Prepare to send these communications out the **week of September 7, 2026.**

National Voter Registration Day is Tuesday, September 15, 2026. Use this day to encourage your community, friends, neighbors, and colleagues to register to vote or confirm their registration before the General Election.



SUGGESTED NEWSLETTER OR EMAIL MESSAGE

Subject Line: National Voter Registration Day!

Dear [insert recipient],

September 15 is [National Voter Registration Day](#). If you are not registered, or if you have moved or changed your name, please register now so you are ready for the General Election on November 3. You can register online at mnvotes.gov/register or at your local election office.

Don't forget 16- and 17-year-olds can pre-register to vote so they are automatically registered to vote when they turn 18.

Let's make sure every eligible Minnesotan is ready to vote in November.

Find all the information you need at mnvotes.gov. Call 877-600-VOTE, text 651-217-3862, or email secretary.state@state.mn.us with any questions.

[Your signature]



SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA

📢 National Voter Registration Day is September 15! Register or update your registration at mnvotes.gov/register today.

Moved? ✅ Changed your name? ✅ Just turned 18? ✅ National Voter Registration Day is the perfect time to update your information. Minnesota voters can register online or on Election Day – start at mnvotes.gov.

EARLY VOTING

Suggested Priority message: Early Voting

Prepare to send these communications out the **week of September 18, 2026**. Minnesotans have 45 days to vote early. Early voting by mail or in person begins September 18, 2026.



SUGGESTED NEWSLETTER OR EMAIL MESSAGE

Subject Line: Vote Early in 2026

Dear [recipient name],

You can begin voting early for the General Election starting September 18, 2026. Early voting by mail or in person gives you options and convenience. Avoid last minute conflicts and get your ballot submitted early.

Check with your [local election office](#) or go to mnvotes.gov to learn more about early voting locations, deadlines, and ways to vote by mail.

Make a plan to vote early. Go to mnvotes.gov/absentee to request a ballot, call 877-600-VOTE, text 651-217-3862, or email secretary.state@state.mn.us to learn more.

[Your signature]



SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA

 Early voting starts September 18, 2026. Check mnvotes.gov/absentee for details on how to vote early. Vote early, and help keep Minnesota #1 in voter turnout.

 Early voting in Minnesota makes it easier to have your voice heard – on your schedule. You can vote early by mail or in person before Election Day, giving you flexibility and convenience. Make your plan, check your registration, and find early voting locations at mnvotes.gov.

Can't make it to the polls on Election Day? Minnesota offers secure and convenient early voting options. Learn how to request a ballot, find locations, and get ready to vote at mnvotes.gov.

MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE

Suggested Priority Messaging: Make a Plan to Vote

Prepare to send these communications out the **week of October 5, 2026**.

Studies show making a plan to vote makes it more likely a voter will follow through and cast a ballot. Help those in your networks make their plan to vote with these messages.



SUGGESTED NEWSLETTER OR EMAIL MESSAGE

Subject Line: Make a Plan to Vote

Dear [recipient name],

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2026. If you plan to vote in person that day, put it on your calendar now. If you prefer to vote early, choose a day between September 18 and November 2 to vote by mail or in person.

Find your polling location, check your registration, and find what's on your ballot at mnvotes.gov. Making a plan to vote increases the chances you will cast your ballot, so make your plan today. Our [Make Your Voting Plan](#) form can help!

Ways to Vote:

 In-Person Voting – [Most polls](#) are open from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. on Election Day.

 Early Voting – Minnesota offers early voting options. Check with your [local election office](#).

 Absentee Voting – Request an absentee ballot online at mnvotes.gov.

Contact the Election Hotline with questions: call 877-600-VOTE, or text 651-217-3862. You can also email secretary.state@state.mn.us.

[Your signature]



SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA

 Make your plan to vote in Minnesota's General Election on November 3, 2026.

Go to mnvotes.gov today. Cast your ballot and help keep Minnesota #1 in voter turnout.

Voting is easier when you make a plan. In Minnesota that means knowing

 when you'll vote

 where you'll vote

 if vote early or by mail.

Take two minutes to plan your vote at mnvotes.gov, your future self will thank you.

✓ A plan turns good intentions into action. Minnesota voters can choose Election Day, early voting, or voting by mail. Whatever works best for you! Make your voting plan today. Get the details at mnvotes.gov and help keep Minnesota #1 in voter turnout!



HERE WE VOTE

VOTER'S BILL OF RIGHTS

Minnesota Voters have the right to:

- TAKE TIME OFF WORK TO VOTE
- VOTE IF IN LINE BY 8 PM
- REGISTER ON ELECTION DAY
- ASK FOR HELP
- A NEW BALLOT IF A MISTAKE WAS MADE BEFORE A BALLOT WAS CAST
- BRING CHILDREN TO THE POLLS
- BRING A SAMPLE BALLOT

And more...

MNVOTES.GOV



GET THE ANSWERS!
MNVOTES.GOV

HERE WE VOTE
MNVOTES.GOV

WHERE DO I VOTE?

HERE WE VOTE
MNVOTES.GOV

YOU CAN VOTE BY MAIL

EARLY IN-PERSON

OR IN-PERSON ON ELECTION DAY

GET INFORMED! VIEW WHAT'S ON YOUR BALLOT.
Your sample ballot shows a list of the candidates and ballot questions you'll be voting on.
Remember, you can print a copy of your sample ballot and bring it with you to the polling place when you vote!
Visit [MNVOTES.GOV/MYBALLOT](https://mnvotes.gov/myballot) for more information.

SAMPLE BALLOT
Minnesota General Election Ballot

HERE WE VOTE
MNVOTES.GOV

DON'T FORGET!

- ▶ You can register online
- ▶ You can register by paper
- ▶ Or you can register on Election Day!

To learn more, visit: [MNVOTES.GOV/REGISTER](https://mnvotes.gov/register)

HERE WE VOTE
MNVOTES.GOV

Voting questions?

CALL or TEXT our call center staff for answers!

New TEXT messaging service!
651-217-3862

1-877-600-VOTE

HERE WE VOTE
MNVOTES.GOV

ELECTION DAY

Suggested Priority Messaging: General Election Day

Prepare to send these communications on **November 3, 2026**.

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2026. This is the last chance for voters to participate in voting in the Midterm Election. Help ensure every vote is cast by sending out these messages.



SUGGESTED NEWSLETTER OR EMAIL MESSAGE

Subject Line: Election Day is November 3, 2026

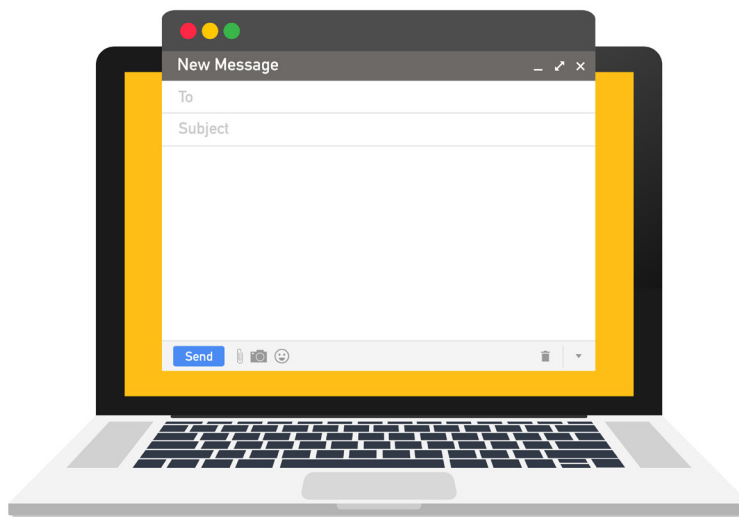
Today is Election Day and your vote matters. Local, state, and federal elections shape our communities, workplaces, and daily lives, and participating is one of the most important ways to make your voice heard.

Polls are open from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M., so there is still time to vote if you haven't already. Remember, you can vote as long as you are in line by 8 P.M.!

You can find your polling place and get voting information at mnvotes.gov. You can also call 877-600-VOTE, text 651-217-3862, or email secretary.state@state.mn.us for assistance.

Thank you for taking part in our democracy and helping strengthen our community.

[Your signature]





SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA

 Today is Election Day! Polls are open until 8 P.M. Vote now and let your voice be heard. Find out more at mnvotes.gov. Help keep Minnesota #1 in voter turnout and cast your ballot today!

 Today is Election Day! Polls are open 7 A.M. to 8 P.M. If you're in line by 8 P.M., you can vote. Find your polling place and what's on your ballot at mnvotes.gov. Make your voice heard.

It's Election Day, Minnesota! Whether you vote before work, after dinner, or anytime in between, today is your chance to participate in our democracy. Check your polling place, registration, and voting info at mnvotes.gov – then go vote.



ADDITIONAL OUTREACH TOOLS & IDEAS



FACTSHEETS

[Factsheets](#) on 18 subjects are available for use on websites, social media, email and in print. You can download and print copies for your use. Many of them are available in 12 languages.

Subjects include:

- How to Vote
- New Voters
- Election Day Registration
- Vote Early By Absentee Ballot
- Know Your Rights
- Time Off Work To Vote
- Voter Assistance
- Military and Overseas Voters
- College Students
- High School Students
- Voting with a Criminal Record
- Primary Election
- Precinct Caucuses
- Students Abroad
- What's New 2026

And more! To request materials, free of charge, visit [our catalogue](#).



VISIT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE AT COMMUNITY AND EMPLOYEE GATHERINGS

Please consider making voter participation a topic for one or more of your neighborhood events, social, or workplace gatherings this fall. OSS staff can help design a program and Secretary Simon may be available to attend events throughout Minnesota.

Contact Melanie Hazelip: melanie.hazelip@state.mn.us, 612-327-1621 to schedule a visit with Secretary Simon or [fill out this form](#).



CONSIDER HOSTING A VOTER 101 INFO SESSION WITH THE OSS

Voter 101s are a great way to get critical election information to your communities. They are typically one hour with space for Q&A, and the topic can be anything related to voting and elections that you think best suits your audience. Voter 101s are presented by Melanie Hazelip or other OSS staff and can be virtual or in-person.

To schedule a Voter 101 contact melanie.hazelip@state.mn.us, 612-327-1621.



VIDEOS

Share these videos on websites, social media, email, other e-communications, in-house monitors, and at events.

- “[It’s Election Year, Minnesota!](#)” (2 minutes) — Animated, fast-paced video provides voters with an overview of the voting process. Also available in [Hmong](#), [Somali](#) and [Spanish](#).
- “[Vote Early, Vote Absentee!](#)” (1 minute 30 seconds) — Animated video provides voters with details of the absentee voting process.
- “[Get Ready to Vote!](#)” (30 seconds) — Animated video provides overview of helpful voter tools. Also available in [Hmong](#), [Somali](#) and [Spanish](#).
- “[Ojibwe Tribal Voting](#)” (4 minutes) – video with a native Ojibwe speaker providing general information about voting and particulars to voting for those in the native community. Also available in [English](#).
- Find many more at www.youtube.com/@mnsecstate



UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES

Brainstorm; come up with new ways to promote civic engagement and voter participation.

- Add [election dates](#) to computer login screen
- Put [factsheets](#) on message boards
- Post [factsheets](#) in break room
- Post your voting pics
- Ask your community to share the first time they voted
- Create a voter mini-website

To order factsheets, free of charge, visit [our catalogue](#).

ADDITIONAL PROMPTS FOR EMAILS, SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS, AND E-NEWSLETTERS

Perhaps your community or company calls for communication on a particular voting topic. Here are some additional voting topics you may want to consider. Find full-size graphics ready for social media or email [here](#).

More information about these subjects and many others can be found at mnvotes.gov. If you want help on a particular topic or clarification on a voting question, please contact Melanie Hazelip:

melanie.hazelip@state.mn.us | 612-327-1621



ADDITIONAL VOTING TOPICS

Voter Registration: If you are new to Minnesota, have recently moved within Minnesota, haven't voted in more than 4 years, or will be voting for the first time, you will need to register before you vote. You can register on Election Day, but it will save you time if you complete your registration before October 13, 2026.

- [Online registration](#)
- [Print a registration form](#) and return by mail
- If you plan on [registering on Election Day](#), be prepared!
- 16- and 17-year-olds can [pre-register to vote](#)
- You can [vote with a criminal record](#), as long as you are not currently incarcerated

Military personnel and their families if stationed away from home:

- [Order your absentee ballot](#) now
- Return your absentee ballot [by these suggested dates](#)

Need to Vote Absentee? [Here's how.](#)

- Working out of state or won't be home:
 - [In-person voting](#) before you leave
 - [Mail-in absentee ballot](#)
- Working/travelling out of country:
 - [In-person voting](#) before you leave
 - [Overseas absentee ballot application](#)

No Excuse Absentee Voting By Mail

- You no longer need a reason to vote by absentee ballot. Any eligible voter can [apply for a mail-in absentee ballot](#) and vote from home.

Early Voting

- Eligible voters can now cast their ballot starting 46 days before Election Day at designated [early voting locations](#)
- You now have the right to time off work to vote at any time during the 46-day voting period.

Registering at the polls on Election Day

- If you plan on registering at the polls on Election Day, you will need [proper identification](#). There are several options.

Find your voting location

- Not sure where to vote? [Find your polling location](#) right now!

GOTV

- Voting matters! It is the foundation of our democracy. It is a crucial way for you to participate in the democratic process and make your voice heard. And, sometimes, your vote truly does determine the outcome of an election – maybe it will this year. [Confirm your registration](#), [find your voting location](#), [check out your ballot](#). Be a voter!

Election Security and Integrity

- Minnesota's election system is accessible, safe, and secure.
 - [Check out our new website](#) to learn elections facts, and how we know Minnesota elections are fair, accurate, and secure.
 - When a foreign government tried to hack our elections system in 2016, the attempt was identified early and stopped.
 - Federal intelligence officials and law enforcement recently tested the security of Minnesota's election system by trying to hack into it. We passed the test.
 - Minnesota is proudly old school – we use paper ballots so that you can be certain that your vote is counted, counted accurately and stored for any future need.



SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA

September 18, Absentee Ballots Are Available

Save time on Election Day from the comfort of your own home—[vote early by mail or in person](#). #mnvotes

September 15, National Voter Registration Day

Every registration is a step towards a stronger democracy. [Register today](#). #mnvotes

October 6, One Week to Voter Pre-Registration Deadline

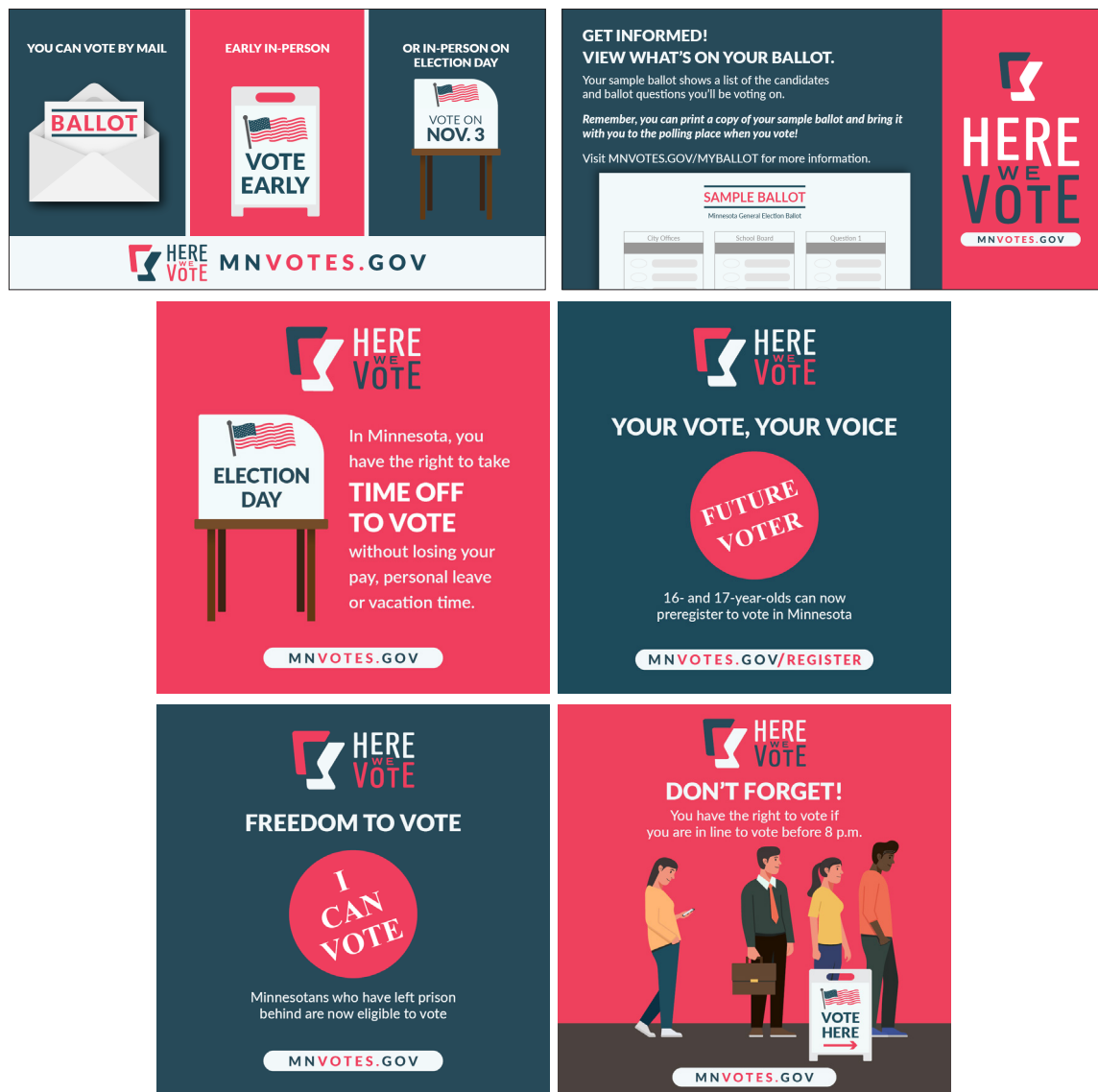
You can [register online](#) to vote through Oct. 13. #mnvotes

October 27, one Week to Election Day

Get ready to cast your vote and actively participate in shaping our future. [Go here](#) to find your polling place, hours, and Election Day registration needs. #mnvotes

Social Media Graphics

[Here](#) you'll find full-size graphics ready for social media or email. Feel free to include any of these graphics in your communications.



If you have any questions, please contact [Melanie Hazelip](#):
612-327-1621, melanie.hazelip@state.mn.us