

## **What to Expect at the Polls on Election Day and What to Do if You Encounter Voter Intimidation**

If you choose to vote in person on Election Day, you should be confident that you will be able to vote without fear of being intimidated in any way. Secretary of the State Merrill doesn't expect there to be problems at the polls on November 3, and along with Attorney General Tong and Chief State's Attorney Colangelo, she made it clear that "In Connecticut, we take potential voter intimidation very seriously, and Connecticut voters deserve to know that no one will be allowed to interfere with or deny their right to cast their ballot and make their voice heard." Secretary Merrill is not aware of any planned activity to disrupt the election, and expects that local election officials will be vigilant in ensuring that every voter is able to safely cast their vote without intimidation, enforcing our strong state and federal protections.

However, given the rhetoric being heard at the national level and in Connecticut about Election Day, and misleading information about the integrity of our elections, **this guide outlines what you can expect at the polls, what constitutes voter intimidation and what you should do if you or other voters encounter intimidation or threats by anyone.**

There are three zones at polling locations that determine who is allowed to be present and what activities are allowed: inside the polling location, within 75 feet of any polling location entrance, and beyond.

### **Inside the Polling Location**

The only people allowed inside the polling location are poll workers, voters and two types of individuals appointed by the political parties with permission of the town's Registrars of Voters: "unofficial checkers" and "challengers." Unofficial checkers sit alongside poll workers and check off the names of voters as they announce themselves to the poll worker. By law, challenges to a voter's eligibility "may only be made if the challenger knows, suspects or reasonably believes such a person not to be qualified and entitled to vote." Challenges must be made under oath, administered by the moderator. Press are also allowed inside the polls.

### **Within 75 feet of a polling entrance**

No electioneering is allowed within the 75 foot radius, which includes wearing, displaying or handing out materials with a candidate's name or likeness. Nor are individuals allowed to loiter or approach voters within that area.

### **Beyond 75 feet of a polling entrance**

While "campaigning" is allowed beyond the 75 foot perimeter, it is illegal for anyone to attempt to or actually intimidate, threaten, or coerce an individual for the purpose of interfering with that

person's right to vote. Doing so is a felony, and can be fined and/or punished by up to five years in prison.

### **What to do if you experience or witness voter intimidation**

Capture the act on video if possible and immediately report the incident to the moderator, who is the senior election official on duty at the polling location. If the offender does not cease the prohibited activity, the moderator, or any individual, should inform local police if present, or call them if not.

**If you feel the situation is not being dealt with appropriately, you should report it to the election day hotline run by the Secretary of the State's office and the State Elections Enforcement Commission at 1-866-733-2463 or email [elections@ct.gov](mailto:elections@ct.gov).**

Should you not be able to get through, you can also call the Election Protection Hotline at 1-866-OUR-VOTE (1-866-687-8683) or chat online at [866ourvote.org](https://866ourvote.org). Support in other languages is offered at 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA (en Español), 1-888-API-VOTE (Asian multilingual assistance) and 1-844-YALLA-US (Arabic). You may also submit a report of election irregularities, including voter suppression and intimidation, to [seesay2020.com](https://seesay2020.com) (this is not a substitute, however, for reporting irregularities to the authorities.)

### **What type of voter ID do you need to vote?**

In [most cases](#), voters are **not** required to show any ID in order to cast a ballot. In particular, a photo ID is not required. However, you likely will be asked to show an ID. Acceptable IDs include: Social Security card or other pre-printed ID or form that shows your name and address (such as a utility bill, bank or credit card statement) or name and signature, or name and photograph.

If you're a first-time voter who registered by mail or online without a driver's license, you **will** need to show proof of residence. Acceptable forms include: a current and valid photo ID that shows your name and address; or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or government document that shows your name and address.

If you are unable to provide ID, you will be asked to sign an affidavit and then you can vote normally. If you're a first-time voter without ID, you may vote a provisional ballot.

### **What are the requirements for wearing masks inside the polls?**

Per Executive Order 7NNN, "any person in a public place in Connecticut, whether indoors or outdoors, who does not maintain a safe social distance of approximately six feet from every other person shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face-covering."

The Secretary of the State has issued the following guidance regarding any individual who appears at a polling place and is not wearing a mask (note, some individuals are exempt from the mask requirement due to medical reasons, they should have a letter attesting to such). The moderator and/or poll workers should offer the voter options to vote in a way that does not put the health of other individuals at risk. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Offering the voter an opportunity to return to their car to get a mask without losing their place in line;
2. Offering the voter a mask;
3. Offering the voter the option to complete their ballot outside of the polling place;
4. Offering the voter a provisional ballot that they can complete in their car and leave the ballot with a poll worker upon completion; or
5. Offering the voter the opportunity to complete their ballot in a segregated part of the polling location away from other voters.

Should any voter become unreasonable or attempt to interfere with the process of voting, they should be removed from the polls by the moderator or a police officer if necessary.

**Remember, if you experience intimidation of any kind, or witness someone else being intimidated, tell the poll moderator. If they can't or won't stop the behavior, call the police or the state election hotline at 1-866-733-2463 or send an email to [elections@ct.gov](mailto:elections@ct.gov). As a last resort, call the national voter protection hotline at 1-866-OUR-VOTE or chat online at [866ourvote.org](http://866ourvote.org). Support in other languages is offered at 1-888-VE-Y-VOTA (en Español), 1-888-API-VOTE (Asian multilingual assistance) and 1-844-YALLA-US (Arabic).**