



Register to Vote

Voting is an important part of being a member of your community. The Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) is committed to ensuring that the people we serve are given the opportunity to register to vote because New Yorkers with developmental disabilities have the same right to vote as anyone else.

The National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) is the federal law that ensures voting rights to all Americans. The law requires state agencies, such as OPWDD, to offer support and assistance to people who wish to register to vote.

If you would like to register to vote, please complete the attached New York State Voter Registration Form (*available in English and Spanish*) and return it to your County Board of Elections. If you have a care manager, they can assist you with filling out and returning the form. **If you need more information about this form or the process to register to vote, please contact the [NYS Board of Elections](#) at (518) 474-6220 or info@elections.ny.gov.** *Although you must be 18 years old before you can vote in an election, citizens who are 16 and 17 years old can **pre-register** to vote. If you pre-register, your county will process your application and it will become active when you reach the age of 18.*

Adult New Yorkers with developmental disabilities have the right to vote. New Yorkers with guardians still maintain the right to vote unless the original order appointing the guardian was accompanied by an additional “order of incompetence” issued by a court and signed by a judge. This is true for guardianships under both of New York’s guardianship laws (SCPA Article 17-A and MHL Article 81). An “order of incompetence” is uncommon and is not the same thing as a finding of incapacity, an order appointing a guardian, or the issuing of letters of guardianship. Therefore, most adult New Yorkers with guardians maintain the right to vote.

For more information or assistance in registering, please contact OPWDD's National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) statewide coordinator at NVRA.Coordinator@opwdd.ny.gov or visit <https://opwdd.ny.gov/access-supports/frequently-asked-questions-about-voting/>

The [NYS Board of Elections](#) also has helpful information for people with developmental disabilities, with tips on [How to Register](#), [Knowing Your Voting Machine](#), [Meeting Voter Access Needs](#), and more.



**Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities**