

girl scouts   
river valleys

Ready, Set  
**✓** VOTE



## Welcome to Ready, Set, Vote!

### In Minnesota, you can pre-register to vote when you are 16 or older

#### Why register to vote early?

- Voting is an important part of our democracy!
- By pre-registering to vote, you are ensuring that you are able to vote on Election Day once you are 18.

Your vote matters! Elected officials advocate for you, so it's your responsibility to research and vote for people that will make your community better. Each and every vote is important, so it's very special that you're almost able to vote!

We would like to thank the Secretary of State Steve Simon and his office for their collaboration on this patch program. The Secretary of State serves as the state's Chief Election Officer. The Secretary of State's office is responsible for providing information about voter registration, training election officials, and providing polling locations and election results.

### About this patch

By completing this patch program, you will learn important information about voting, like how to pre-register to vote, research current elected officials, and encourage your friends to pre-register to vote. You will not be pre-registered to vote. You will do that through the State of Minnesota after you complete the patch requirements!

#### Patch Requirements:

- Read the letter from the Secretary of State and the Frequently Asked Questions about voting
- Research who represents you
- Complete the practice voter registration form
- Me + Three – share what you've learned and encourage





**STATE OF MINNESOTA**  
Office of Minnesota Secretary of State  
Steve Simon

Dear Girl Scout,

I want to personally offer my congratulations as you embark on your voting journey. Voting is a critical right, enshrined in our nation's Constitution. Today you're taking the first step towards exercising that right.

The freedom to vote has been hard-won. Obtaining access to voting required overcoming many challenges. Even when groups won the right to vote through constitutional amendments, some states still tried to deprive them of that right. Measures like poll taxes and literacy tests were meant to discourage and prevent people from voting. Physical violence and intimidation were even used to scare people away from polling places. In 1965, the Voting Rights Act was passed, which outlawed poll taxes and literacy tests – and banned racial discrimination in voting.

At the Secretary of State's Office, one of our primary jobs is to oversee Minnesota elections to ensure they're fair, honest, accurate, and secure. We want every eligible citizen to have access to registering and voting.

Minnesota is a national leader in voting. Our turnout is consistently among the highest in the nation. In 2022, over 60% of our population cast ballots, and in the 2020 presidential election nearly 80% of eligible Minnesotans were voters. We can't wait for you to be one of them!

In gaining your Ready Set Vote patch, you'll discover who your elected officials are, learn answers to frequently asked questions, practice pre-registering to vote, and share what you've learned with three friends. When you're ready to pre-register, head over to <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote> to get started. Thank you for taking this important step to make your voice heard!

Sincerely,

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

Steve Simon  
Minnesota Secretary of State

## Get your questions answered!

It's important to feel prepared when you are registering to vote. First time voters have lots of questions, and so we asked the Secretary of State's office to help you out! Here's what they had to say:

### Why is it important to pre-register?

Pre-registration will ensure you are ready to vote once you turn 18. It will save you time on Election Day as when you walk into your polling place, you will be all ready to vote. Pre-registration also gets 16- and 17-year-olds thinking of themselves as voters before they turn 18. It increases voter turnout among the youngest voters, ensuring they have a say in who governs them.

### Is pre-registering the same as registering?

It is the same process (as in you fill out the same paperwork or use the same online tool at [mnvotes.gov/register](http://mnvotes.gov/register)) but it is not the same as registering. Your registration doesn't officially become active until you turn 18.

### Do I need a driver's license to pre-register?

You need either your driver's license or the last four digits of your social security number. Either one works!

### Will I need ID when I vote?

If you are registered to vote (if you've pre-registered) you will not need your ID. If you do not, you'll need to do same-day voter registration, and you should bring your ID to your polling place.



## Get your questions answered!

### **What address should I use if I live in multiple homes?**

This is outlined in state statute as “the residence of a single individual is in the precinct where the individual lives and sleeps.” We don’t make that determination for the voter, they make it themselves. If the person registering to vote lives in more than one household (say for split custody with parents) they would decide which home they want to register in and vote in.

### **Where should I vote if I pre-register but go to college in a different state?**

College students have the option to vote either where they go to school or where they considered home before going to college. It is up to them. It is important to note you must be registered where you vote. If you would like to vote where you go to college and not where you pre-registered, you will need to update your registration at [mnvotes.gov/register](https://mnvotes.gov/register). Check here for our [College Student](#) factsheet.

### **What if I need accommodations to be able vote?**

Please take a look at the [Voter Assistance](#) factsheet.



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## Prepare yourself to vote!

When you register to vote, you'll need to have some personal information ready to go. Be prepared to fill out your voter registration form by completing this practice form – it asks for all of the same information as the State of Minnesota. You might need to ask your parents or guardians for some of this info – they can help you find things like your social security number.

**REMEMBER: This is a practice form – this is not what you will submit to the state to actually register to vote!**

Make sure that you don't share personal information, like your social security number, driver's license number, and address online or with people you don't know.



# Minnesota Voter Registration Practice Application

Complete lines 1 through 8. Please print clearly (this is not an official voting document)



## Personal Information and Qualifications

<b>1</b>	Are you a U.S. citizen? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Election Official Use Only IP M AB
<b>2</b>	Are you at least 16 years old and will you at least 18 years old on or before the day of the election in which you intent to vote? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <b>If you mark "NO" to either of these questions, DO NOT complete this form.</b>	

<b>3</b>	Last name or surname	First name	Middle name	Suffix
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<b>4</b>	Address where you live (residence)	Apt number	City	ZIP code
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<b>5</b>	If mail cannot be delivered to the address above, provide P.O. Box	City	ZIP code
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<b>6</b>	Date of Birth (not today's date) / /	School District (if known)	County where you live
	Phone number	Email address	

<b>7</b>	Mark one box and provide the number that applies to you:	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="radio"/> I have a MN-issued driver's license or MN ID card number: <input type="radio"/> I do not have a MN-issued driver's license or MN ID Card. The last four digits of my Social Security Number are: <b>XXX-XX-</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="radio"/> I do not have a MN-issued driver's license, a MN-issued ID card, or a Social Security Number.	

### Registration Update - Are you currently registered under a different name or address?

Previous last name	Previous first name	Previous middle name
Previous address where you were last registered		City ZIP code

### Read And Sign Only If All Parts Apply To You.

<b>8</b>	I certify that I: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• am at least 16 years old and understand that I must be at least 18 years old to be eligible to vote;</li> <li>• am a citizen of the United States;</li> <li>• will have maintained residence in Minnesota for 20 days immediately preceding election day;</li> <li>• maintain residence at the address given on the registration form;</li> <li>• am no under court-ordered guardianship in which the court order revokes my right to vote;</li> <li>• have not been found by a court to be legally incompetent to vote;</li> <li>• am not currently incarcerated for a conviction of a felony offense and</li> <li>• have read and understand this statement that giving false information is a felony punishable by not more than 5 years imprisonment or a fine of not more than \$10,000, or both.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Sign Here X</b> _____ <b>Date:</b> ____ - ____ - 20____	

### Election Judge Official Use Only

W _____	<b>ID with Current Name &amp; Address</b> ID Number: _____	<b>Photo ID + Document with Current Name &amp; Address</b> Document Type: _____ Photo ID Number: _____	<b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Vouched For <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Late Registration <input type="checkbox"/> Valid Registration in Same Precinct <input type="checkbox"/> Student ID with College List ID Number: _____
P _____	<input type="checkbox"/> MN Driver's License Learner's Permit, MN ID Card, or Receipt	<input type="checkbox"/> Driver's License, Learner's Permit, or State ID Card <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Passport <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal ID	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Military ID or Veteran ID <input type="checkbox"/> Student ID
SD _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribal ID Card		
Initials _____			

# Research your representatives!

You can't vote yet – but you'll be able to soon! While you're waiting to go to the polls, you can become a more informed voter by researching who currently represents you in your government. Elected officials represent YOU, and they make decisions and choices that affect you and your community. By researching the folks in your government, you'll gain a better understanding of who is making decisions that impact you, and you'll learn more about how you'd like to vote in your future.

## Local Government:

Elected officials in your area help make laws and rules for your city, school district, town, or township. Do an online search to see who represents you close to home!

What city or town do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_

Who is your mayor (if you have one)? \_\_\_\_\_

Who represents you in your City Council or Town Council (if you have one)? \_\_\_\_\_

Find a person who serves on the school board of your school district: \_\_\_\_\_





# Research your representatives!

## State Government:

At this level of government, your elected officials work together to make decisions that impact your state. A legislator is a person who is elected to write and pass laws for a specific part of their state. These areas are called districts. Legislators make laws, meet their constituents (the people who live in their district, like you), and learn about issues affecting their area.

There are two types of state legislators – senators and representatives. There are sixty-seven senators in Minnesota – and they work in the Senate. Representatives work in the House of Representatives. Minnesota has 134 representatives.

Use <https://gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/> and type in your address to see the elected officials that represent you in the state government.

Who represents you in the Minnesota House? \_\_\_\_\_

Who represents you in the Minnesota Senate? \_\_\_\_\_



## Research your representatives!

### Federal Government:

At the federal government, politicians make decisions that affect the whole country. You get to vote for a senator and a representative from your state to represent you at the national level. These folks spend part of their time in Washington D.C., bringing the needs of your state to the whole country.

<https://congress.gov/members/find-your-member/>

Who represents you in the US House of Representatives? \_\_\_\_\_

Who represents you in the US Senate? \_\_\_\_\_

Now that you've found out who represents you in all levels of government, choose one person that you researched above. Go to their website and see what they advocate for!

Politician name \_\_\_\_\_

Do they serve at a local, state, or federal level? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the issues they care about? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you feel about these issues? \_\_\_\_\_



## Me + Three!

One of the most important things you can do as a citizen is to vote. You also have the opportunity to advocate for other people to vote! Now that you have learned about the process of voting and have practiced filling out your voter registration, it's time to share what you've learned. You'll share what you've learned with at least three people who are able to pre-register to vote (anyone who's 16 or 17 years old and lives in Minnesota).

**Here are some examples of ways you can tell others to pre-register to vote:**

- Have a conversation with your friends about why you completed this patch program.
- Share a post or a story on your social media.
- Make posters or fliers to display in your school or community encouraging people to vote.
- Give a presentation at a student council meeting, a school club meeting, or at a community event.

I shared the importance of voting with at least three other people by \_\_\_\_\_

It's important to vote, and encourage others to vote, because \_\_\_\_\_

### Congratulations!

You have completed the Ready, Set, Vote patch! You are now ready to pre-register to vote! You can register online or on paper. To register to vote or to learn more about voting, visit this website. Keep your practice registration form handy – you'll need that information to register!

To get your patch, email [girlscouts@girlscoutsrv.org](mailto:girlscouts@girlscoutsrv.org). Please send a photo showing your completed Me + Three activity (page 11) OR your completed research on your elected officials (pages 8-10)



## Additional Resources

[Register to vote in Minnesota](#)  
[Voter accessibility information](#)  
[Mnvotes.gov - Learn all about voting in Minnesota](#)  
[Secretary of State's office](#)

### Dig Deeper

**Want to learn more about democracy or advocacy? Here are ideas on how to learn more about your responsibility as a citizen and your government:**

- Write to a politician that represents you to bring attention to issues you care about.
- Earn your Democracy or Public Policy badge to explore more ways that government works.
- Advocate in your community! Learn more about Girl Scouts River Valley's advocacy program [here](#). We help Girl Scouts like you advocate for change!
- Hold a mock election at your school or in your community to practice voting.  
[Learn more here!](#)
- [Tour the Minnesota State Capitol](#) (for free!) or visit your local city offices.
- Visit the [Justice and Democracy Center](#) in Saint Paul. We hold programs there throughout the year. Check out our events page to see if one is happening soon, or visit on your own.

