

Town of Nahant



Voting In Nahant

The Nahant Board of Registrars are appointed by the Town Administrator and report to the Town Clerk.

Poll Locations

Nahant Town Hall (7 a.m. to 8 p.m.) Direct questions to the Town Clerk at Town Hall, (781) 581-0018

Municipal Elections: Last Saturday in April of each year.

State/Congressional Elections: 1st Tuesday after the 1st Monday in November every two years.

Presidential Elections: 1st Tuesday after the 1st Monday in November every four years.

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk administers nomination and election processes, registers voters, and conducts the annual municipal census. The Town Clerk prepares and provides all statistics on elections and census, and general assistance for citizens, political parties and members of the press.

Elections Administration

The Town Clerk conducts all presidential primaries, state primaries, and state and presidential elections. The Town Clerk also conducts Town general elections. Responsibilities of the Town Clerk include: voter registration; supplying nomination papers for candidates, initiatives and referenda; certification of signatures on all nomination papers and petitions; printing ballots for Town elections; maintenance of elections equipment; recruitment of poll workers; tallying elections results; and maintaining and preserving the records of the election.

List of Voters

The Town Clerk maintains the voters roll for Nahant. The Clerk endeavors to maintain as accurate a list as possible for use at the polls on election day.

Voter Registration

Voter registration in Nahant has never been easier than it is today. You may visit the Election Office in Nahant Town Hall and complete a voter registration form in person. Or, you may obtain a mail-in voter registration form from the Town Hall lobby. Mail-in forms also may be obtained by calling the State Elections Division at (800) 462-VOTE. In addition, the state registries of motor vehicles, social service agencies and military recruitment offices provide voter registration services.

Any person who is a Massachusetts resident, a United States citizen and will be eighteen years old as of the next election is eligible to register to vote. You do not need a drivers license or any other form of identification to register. However, when you sign the registration form, you must attest, under the pains and penalties of perjury, that you are legally eligible to register and that the information you provide is accurate and truthful. The penalty for fraudulent registration increased recently to a fine of ten thousand dollars or imprisonment for up to five years, or both.

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When you register, you may choose to become a member of a political party, select a designation for a political organization which has not achieved party status in the state or choose to become an "unenrolled" voter (commonly referred to as "independent"). Remember that if you register in a party or select a political organization designation, in a primary election you only may receive a ballot for that party. Unenrolled voters may request any ballot in a primary election.

You will remain on the list of voters so long as you vote regularly and complete and return the annual municipal census. If you move to another city or town, you must re-register in your new community.

Registration Deadlines

Be aware that there are voter registration deadlines. You must register to vote at least twenty days before any Town or State election or the Presidential Primary.

The Annual Municipal Census

The Town Clerk conducts the annual census of Nahant's households and publishes the results in a printed residents' lists (commonly known as the "Street List"). The publication contains a list of all residents seventeen and older sorted by street name. The Town Clerk also prepares a non-public list of persons age three and older for the School Department.

Nomination and Petition Papers

The first step to running for office or placing a question on the ballot is to gather the required number of signatures of registered voters on petition papers. The number of signatures depends on the office or the type of question. (See the various Elections Guides for the required number of signatures for a particular nomination or question, time tables and other requirements.) The Election Office supplies the petition papers.

Candidates or question proponents must gather the required number of signatures on the petition papers supplied by the Election Office. Once the signatures are gathered, the petition papers are submitted to the Election Office for certification. The Town Clerk will certify the signature of any registered Nahant voter. (If the paper is for the nomination of a candidate for a party primary, the signatures of voters enrolled in another political party or political designation will not be counted.) If the required number of signatures is certified, the candidate or question will appear on the ballot.

Campaign and Political Finance Filings

State law requires an accounting of all money received or spent in the course of a political campaign.

In Nahant, the Town Clerk serves as the Town's Campaign and Political Finance Director for all local campaigns. As a result, the financial disclosure statements of candidate and ballot question committees must be filed with the Clerk and maintained for public inspection.

The financial disclosure statements must be on forms prescribed by the Town Clerk and include the name of the candidate or ballot question committee; the address of the committee; the committee's chairman and treasurer; an accounting of all contributions received; and a listing of all individuals who contributed over a prescribed amount. The statements also must include an accounting of all campaign expenditures.

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The statements, which are filed periodically throughout the year, are reviewed and audited by the Town Clerk. The filing deadlines for Town candidates or questions are: the eighth day before a Town preliminary election, general election or special election; thirty days after an election; and the twentieth day of January, with an accounting of all required information through December 31 of the preceding year.

Voting Procedure in Nahant

Municipal elections are held annually in Nahant on the last Saturday in April.

The polls are open in Nahant on election day from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. for both town and state elections.

When you approach the check-in table, first tell the poll worker your last name and first name.

In a primary election, voters who are registered in a political party only may obtain a ballot for that party. If you are an "unenrolled voter" (commonly referred to as an "independent voter"), you may request the ballot of any party participating in the primary election.

If your name does not appear on the list of voters, the poll worker should contact the Town Clerk to determine if you are registered.

If you are not on the list, but believe you registered, you may request an "escrow" ballot. The escrow ballot allows you to cast your votes. Escrow ballots will not be counted in the tally of votes unless any race is close enough that the number of escrow ballots could affect the outcome. In such cases, the Town Clerk will review each of the escrow ballots individually to determine which should be counted.

Once you receive a ballot, you cast your votes in the privacy of the voting booth. You may vote for the choices available on the ballot or, if you prefer, write-in the name of a candidate in space provided on the ballot. If you mismark your ballot, you must return it to the poll worker to have it marked as "spoiled" so that you may receive a new ballot. If you are disabled and need assistance, you may be accompanied by someone who can provide the needed assistance or request a poll worker to provide you with confidential, nonpartisan help. When you have finished voting, you must proceed to the check-out table and again state your name. (The check-in/check-out procedure allows for a full accounting of all ballots to reduce the chance of fraud.) After you have checked-out, you deposit your ballot in the ballot box.

Prohibited Activities

State law prohibits the display of political paraphernalia within 150 feet of the entrance to the polling location. Signs, stickers and even lapel buttons are not permitted within this restricted zone. Political conversation, including a candidate greeting the voters and soliciting votes, is allowed within the restricted zone so long as there is no active interference or badgering, and no prohibited paraphernalia is displayed.

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Absentee Voting in Nahant

Voters who are unable to vote on election day because of physical disability, religious beliefs or travel may vote by absentee ballot. State law limits the availability of absentee ballots to the three listed circumstances only. Absentee ballots are not available for mere inconvenience, or because of ordinary commuting-related difficulties. If you will be absent from Nahant for an extended period of time, you may submit a single application for all elections occurring within the year the application is accepted.

Applications for absentee ballots may be obtained from the Election Office or the Office of the Secretary of State. Applications may be submitted in person, by mail or by fax. The voter, or a "family member" (father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter, grandparent, grandchild, a spouse or person residing in the same household, in-laws, adopting parent or adopted child, stepparent or stepchild, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew), may submit an application. All applications must be signed under the pains and penalties of perjury by the voter, or a family member, before a ballot will be made available.

In a primary election, a voter who is not registered in a political party must specify the ballot of the party of choice in the application. You will not become registered in a party because of your participation in a state primary.

A voter who is admitted to a health care facility after noon of the fifth day before an election may apply for a ballot up until the close of the polls and may request to have the ballot delivered by a family member.

Absentee ballots generally are available three weeks before an election.

Permanently Disabled Voters

A voter who is permanently disabled need not submit a request for an absentee ballot every election. If such a voter submits a note from a registered physician indicating that he is disabled permanently, the Election Office will send an application for an absentee ballot twenty-eight days before every election. Upon the Election Office's receipt of the signed application, the voter will be sent an absentee ballot.

In the event that the Election Office cannot find the name of a voter requesting an absentee ballot, the voter must be sent an escrow ballot with a letter explaining the reason.

If the voter submits the application in person, he may obtain the ballot (call first to see if it is available) and vote over-the-counter. If the ballot is not available, it will be sent to the voter when available. When the application is submitted in person by a family member, the ballot only will be sent by mail to the voter. In all other cases, the ballot is sent by mail. Ballots may be returned by mail or in person by the voter or a family member. All ballots must be signed by the voter, or if the voter is unable to sign, an assisting person.

Specially Qualified Voters

In addition to registered voters, certain "specially qualified voters" may vote by absentee ballot. A "specially qualified voter" is a person who is a Massachusetts citizen, living outside of the United States, who is at least eighteen years old and whose last residence in the United States was Massachusetts. You also may be a "specially qualified voter" if you are otherwise eligible to be a registered voter and your present domicile (a place where you live

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and plan to remain) is Massachusetts and you are: out of the Town because you are in the active service of the armed forces or merchant marine of the United States, or a spouse or dependent of such person; absent from the Commonwealth; or confined in a correctional facility or jail.

Return of Ballots

In general, absentee ballots must be received before the polls close to be counted. However, absentee ballots for the Presidential general election completed outside the United States will be counted if received by 5:00 p.m. on the tenth day following the election. This exception does not apply to Nahant Town elections or state primaries.

A listing of all voters who obtained absentee ballots is sent to the poll locations to prevent such a voter from voting a second time.

If the Election Office learns that an absentee voter has died before the election, his votes will not be counted.