

Voter Registration Questions and Answers

Many USLA members have inquired about the process of registering to vote in the Towns of Santa Clara or Harrietstown. There have been different statements made regarding the requirements. This series of questions and answers may help you to make the best decision for your personal situation. The Upper Saranac Lake Association provides this information as a public service and does not take a position on this issue.

Q. What are the requirements to register to vote in New York State?

A. You must:

- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be 18 years old by December 31 of the year in which you file the registration form
- Be 18 years old by the date of the election in which you want to vote.
- Live at your present address at least 30 days before an election.
- Not be in jail or on parole for a felony conviction.
- Not claim the right to vote elsewhere.

Q. I only spend part of the year in the area. Can I still register to vote here?

- It is possible to register to vote here without being a permanent resident. In addition to the requirements listed you must have an address here. This does not mean permanent residency but have an address. The issue is where in your heart is “home”. There are many things that are looked at including where your car is registered, where you give to charity, where do you spend your time, etc. If you are challenged, typical questions you might be asked are: How long have you lived there, do you own the property, where is it located. You might also be asked to produce a utility bill. It is not normal to be challenged and is perfectly legal to be a permanent resident somewhere else, including another state. However, you may not vote in two places. Many registered here have permanent addresses somewhere else, including out of state.

Q. Where can I obtain a voter registration form?

A. There are three ways to obtain a voter registration form:

- Call the Franklin County Board of Elections 518-481-1664 and they will mail one to you.
- Go to the New York State website at <http://www.elections.state.ny.us/voting/voting.htm>
- Call 1 800 FOR VOTE (1 800 367 8683)

Q. I may not be in the area during November. How can I obtain an absentee ballot?

A. There are two ways to obtain an Absentee ballot:

You can send a letter to the Franklin County Board of Elections at 355 West Main Street, Malone, NY 12953-1821. The letter must be received by the Board of Elections no

earlier than 30 days or later than 7 days before the election. The letter must contain the following information:

- The address where you are registered
- An address where the ballot is to be sent
- The reason for the request
- Signature of the voter.

You may also download a PDF version of the ballot application from the NY State website at <http://www.elections.state.ny.us/download/voting/absentee.pdf>.