

## Prepared for the Polls: Everything You Need to Know Before Casting Your Vote

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Early voting has started in Wisconsin, and with election day roughly a week away, it is important to be fully prepared before you head out to cast your vote. Plus, for many people on this campus, it is our first time participating in such a major election. It can be helpful to know what to expect and what you'll need before you arrive at your polling place. Here is a list of things you should do before you cast your vote in the 2024 Presidential Election.

### 1. Check your voter registration status.

If you have voted in an election of any size before now, you are likely already registered to vote, but it's always helps to double-check. You will need to re-register or change your registration if you have changed your name or moved within your state. Make sure that the information on your registration and the form of identification you bring to the polls matches. If you are voting as a resident of St. Norbert College, you must be a full-time student and registered using your campus address.

To check your voter registration status online visit <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/My-Voter-Info>. At this point, online registration is closed for the state of Wisconsin, but you can still register in person on the day of the election. To register in person, you will need to provide proof of residence in some form. If you live on campus, the City Clerk will already have your proof of residence. Anyone choosing to register in person on Election Day must also bring a photo ID that meets state requirements, such as a driver's license or student ID.

### 2. Research the ballot.

Although this is a presidential election, there are also going to be a handful of other things that you should vote for on the ballot. Thus, it is important to be prepared for the decisions you make down the ballot.

For example, if you are voting as a resident of SNC, your ballot will include candidates for positions such as a representative for the 8th Congressional District, U.S. Senator, State Senator District 30, Representative to the Assembly District 88, Brown County District Attorney and more. There is also a possibility that you will be asked to vote on things such as amendments or referendums.

It is important to understand what these are asking you before you get to the polls, as they are often worded in ways that can feel confusing or overly complicated. Be an informed voter! You can check what will be on your ballot at <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Whats-On-My-Ballot>.

### 3. Research the candidates.

Similar to researching the ballot, it is important to have a good understanding of what each candidate for each elected position on the ballot stands for. A good place to start is finding the candidates' own websites where you can see the issues that they prioritize and the policies and plans that they are wanting to enact. There are also a multitude of non-partisan resources that allow you to learn more about the candidates on your ballot.

For example, <https://www.ballotready.org/> is a very user-friendly website that easily allows you to select the issues that are important to you and then compare and contrast the stances of the candidates on your ballot.

### 4. Make a voting plan.

Not only is it important to know what's on your ballot and who you're voting for, but there are a few other things that you should plan ahead of time. First, if you are going to vote in person, decide if you are going to vote early or if you want to vote on Election Day. Then, figure out where and when you are able to cast your ballot. If you are living on campus, try and coordinate with your friends! Figure out who might need a ride to the polls and who might want a companion. Maybe someone has more experience with participating in elections. Regardless, this is a great way to make sure that everyone you know is able to exercise their right to vote.

5. Know what you'll need to bring with you.

If you are voting in person, whether it's early or on Election Day, you'll want to ensure that you have everything you need with you in order to vote. In Wisconsin, you will need to present an acceptable form of photo identification. You could bring a Wisconsin DOT-issued driver license, a Wisconsin DOT-issued identification card, a Military ID card issued by the U.S. Uniformed Services or a U.S. passport book or card. If you are voting as a resident of SNC, you should also bring your student ID. Out-of-state residents on campus will need a voting ID card, which you can get by bringing your student ID to Campus Card Services in Michels Commons.

It is also important to note that political attire of any kind is not allowed at the polls in Wisconsin. Generally, this is considered anything that has a candidate's name, face or particular slogan on it. Even if it's as small as a hat or a button, it is still technically considered electioneering, which is against the law, and you will be turned away by poll workers and asked to change or remove the apparel. If you're voting on Election Day, it might be beneficial to bring snacks, water and entertainment of some sort in case you have to stand in line for long periods of time.