

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (10/23/2025):
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*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

MAYOR'S OFFICE ISSUES GUIDANCE ON HOW DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS CAN PROTECT VOTING RECORDS

New York, NY – No one should experience fear when simply exercising their right to vote, and today the NYC Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence is issuing guidance to protect the confidentiality of survivors' voter registration information ahead of the General Election on November 4th, 2025.

[Local Law 31 of 2025](#), passed in February, requires the Campaign Finance Board, in consultation with the Board of Elections and our office, to develop guidance on the procedures under New York State Election Law for making a voter record confidential and for voting by special ballot.

Protecting the confidentiality of domestic violence survivors' voter registration information, an often-unseen consequence of domestic violence, is critical to ensuring their safety. This will help survivors avoid potentially dangerous situations, such as voting locations near the residence of a person causing harm or confidential shelters, or the risk of being tracked if their voter registration details are leaked.

Please see the guidance below, and attached, and distribute with your audiences. As a reminder, the last day to register to vote in this election is 10/25.

Guidance on how to make your voter registration record confidential

What does confidential registration mean?

- New York State Election Law allows survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault to apply for a confidential registration.
- Your voter registration record will be kept separate from other voter registration records and will not be included in the public database. Only authorized election officials will have access to your registration record.

How long is your voter registration record kept confidential?

- This confidential status remains in effect for four years. The Board of Elections will contact you six-months before your confidential status will expire. After it expires, you may re-apply.
- If you don't reapply, your registration returns to the standard public voter roll.
- Expiration of your confidential voter status does not affect your voter registration status.

Are you concerned about keeping your voter registration information confidential?

Here's how you can safely exercise your right to vote.

Step 1: Check your Voter Registration

- Check your registration status through the NYC Board of Elections.
 - If you are registered to vote, continue to Step 2
 - If you are not yet registered to vote, you must register first!
- Learn more about how to register to vote in NYC [here](#).

Step 2: Fill Out the Confidential Voter Form

- [Download the New York State \(NYS\) Confidential Voter Form](#) from the [NYS Board of Elections website](#) or you may pick up a copy in person at your county Board of Elections office.
- Complete the form. It is a sworn statement that you are a survivor of domestic violence and believe that public access to your voter registration record could lead to physical or emotional harm to you or someone in your household.
- Sign the form.

Step 3: Deliver the Form to Your County Board of Elections

- Submit the completed and signed form in person or by mail to your county Board of Elections office.
- Find your county Board of Elections [here](#).

Step 4: Vote by Special Ballot

- In order to keep your voting record confidential, you must vote by special ballot. See instructions in the next section of this guide.

Guidance on how to vote by special ballot

What is a **special ballot**?

- New York State Election Law allows survivors of domestic violence to request a special ballot.
- A special ballot allows you to vote without going to your polling place. They are intended for survivors of domestic violence who might fear physical or emotional harm.

Are you concerned about physically going to your polling place?

Here's how you can request a special ballot.

Step 1: Fill Out a Special Ballot Application

- Fill out the [NYS Special Ballot Application](#). The application confirms:
 - That you are a survivor of domestic violence.
 - That you have left your residence due to this.
 - Your address of registration (where you were registered before needing to leave).
 - That you wish to vote by special ballot in the next election as a result.

Step 2: Deliver the application to your County Board of Elections

- You can deliver the Special Ballot Application in person or by mail to the Board of Elections in the county where you are registered.
 - Find your county Board of Elections [here](#).
- Submit your Special Ballot Application during the same period that absentee or early mail ballots are available (usually starting several weeks before Election Day).
 - You can check deadlines for your county [here](#).
- You may need to reference [Election Law § 11-306](#) to help staff understand the request. Bring or send this law with your application if needed.

Step 3: Receive a Special Ballot, Fill It Out, and Vote!

- Once the Board receives your sworn statement, they will mail you a special ballot to the address you provided on your Special Ballot Application.
- Fill out your special ballot. You must vote by special ballot to keep your voting record confidential.
- After filling out your special ballot, you can return it in one of two ways:

- By mail, just like an absentee ballot, or
- By delivering it directly to your county Board of Elections office by the close of polls on Election Day.

Prepared by the Campaign Finance Board in August 2025 to comply with Local Law 31 of 2025.