



Deborah Clark
Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections

Guest Column/Editorial

Title: *5 Steps to Easy Voting*

By: Deborah Clark

Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections

(727) 464-6108

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The November 7th General Election is just around the corner and all 616,000+ registered voters in Pinellas County are eligible to vote! This election, we encourage you to exercise one of your most valuable privileges as Americans and **VOTE**. You can help us make your voting experience enjoyable by following these simple guidelines:

- 1. Bring photo and signature ID to the polls.** To avoid delays and extra paperwork, bring your Florida driver license or a Florida ID issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Other acceptable forms of ID include a military ID, an employee badge or ID, a U.S. passport, a retirement center ID, a student ID, a debit or credit card, a public assistance ID, a buyer's club ID or a neighborhood association ID. If you are unable to provide such identification, you may vote a provisional ballot.
- 2. Update your voter registration information.** You must be registered to vote by October 10 in order to vote in the General Election. If you have changed your name or address, or if you would like to update your signature, please contact us as soon as possible. This will prevent unnecessary delays at the polls as poll workers verify your name and address.
- 3. Locate your polling place and other election information at www.votepinellas.com.** Your current voter information card lists your precinct number. You can also find your polling place address by using the *Precinct Finder* on our Web site: www.votepinellas.com, or by calling our office at (727) 464-6108.
- 4. Vote early.** Florida law allows voting to begin 15 days prior to each election. All voters may vote at any of the 11 early voting locations between October 23 and November 4. Early voting locations and times are listed online at www.votepinellas.com.
- 5. Vote by absentee ballot.** Any voter may request an **absentee ballot** by calling (727) 464-6788. New law: The deadline to request an absentee ballot be mailed to you is 5 p.m. November 1 for the General Election. Ballots may also be picked up at any Elections office, or a designee may pick up your ballot no earlier than Friday before the election, provided the designee has a signed note from you and his or her photo identification.

Just follow these guidelines, and the voting process will go smoothly for you. If you still have questions, please call us before Election Day at (727) 464-6108 or visit our Web site: www.votepinellas.com. We hope all voters will exercise their right and privilege to vote.

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