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## SECRETARY OF STATE ENCOURAGES PENNSYLVANIA VOTERS TO KNOW THEIR RIGHTS AT THE POLLING PLACE

**Harrisburg, PA** - Secretary of State Pedro A. Cortés today encouraged Pennsylvania voters to educate themselves about rights they have when they go to the polls on November 8.

“State and federal laws endow voters with certain protections as they carry out their constitutional right to vote,” Secretary Cortés said. “Voters should be aware of those rights before going to their polling place.”

Here are some important points regarding voter rights:

- Only first-time voters or those voting for the first time in a new precinct need to show ID. [Acceptable ID](#) includes both photo and non-photo ID. Registered first-time voters who do not bring ID to the polls can return with identification or must be offered a [provisional ballot](#).
- If a voter’s name is not in the poll book, poll workers should call the County Board of Elections to see if the voter’s name was left out of the poll book inadvertently. Registered voters who are in the wrong precinct polling place should go to the correct polling place to vote. A voter who believes he or she is registered in the precinct and should be listed in the poll book may cast a provisional ballot.
- Voters who have moved within Pennsylvania but did not update their address in time before the election may vote in their previous precinct, if they are able to do so, one time as long as they update their address at the polling place.
- If 50 percent or more of the voting machines at a polling place are not working, voters have the right to use an emergency paper ballot. Poll workers should immediately offer the ballots, but if they do not, voters should request one instead of leaving without voting.
- If a voter is challenged on the basis of identity or residency, the voter may vote normally by signing a challenge affidavit and producing a witness who is also a registered voter in the precinct to vouch for him or her. If the voter cannot or does not want to produce a witness, the voter may cast a provisional ballot.
- Voters have the right to assistance at the polling place, including foreign language or literacy assistance. A voter may select any person to assist as long as the person is not their employer, union representative or the Judge of Elections. Voters do not need to be designated in the poll book as “assistance permitted” to receive help. A person who wants assistance will be asked to sign an Assistance Declaration at the precinct, unless the poll book already indicates “assistance permitted.”
- Voters have the right to refuse assistance.
- Voters have the right to vote without being subjected to intimidation, harassment or discriminatory conduct. A voter who experiences intimidation should report it to the [County Board of Elections](#) and the District Attorney’s office. Voters can also call the Department of

State at 1-877-VOTESPA (1-877-868-3662) or the US Department of Justice's Voting Section at 1-800-253-3931.

The Department of State offers voter rights information in two downloadable brochures.

The brochures are: "[Everyone VotesPA 2016 Voter Guide](#)" and "[Top 5 Things Every Pennsylvania Voter Should Know for the 2016 Election](#)."

"Voters can download and print their own copy to take to the polling place," said Marian K. Schneider, deputy secretary for elections and administration. "It is important that voters know what they should expect and who to contact if an issue arises."

To [confirm your registration](#) or [locate your polling place](#), visit [votesPA.com](http://votesPA.com) for complete voter information.