

# Early voting is here: What you need to know

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## What dates does early voting start?

There will be nine days for early voting between Oct. 26 and Nov. 3.

The general election is Nov. 5.

All the usual neighborhood polling places will be in use on that day, and you can vote at those locations if you have not already taken part in early voting.

## When will the early-voting locations be open?

Times will vary. There is potential for confusion so it's important to double-check before you head out to cast your vote.

These are the times currently proposed by the Monroe County Board of Elections.

- 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 26
- 1 to 6 p.m. Oct. 27
- 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 28
- Noon to 8 p.m. Oct. 29
- Noon to 8 p.m. Oct. 30
- 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 31
- 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 1
- 1 to 6 p.m. Nov. 2
- 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Nov. 3

## Where will I be able to vote?

As of early September, the Monroe County Board of Elections is offering these seven locations. They could change, so double-check before traveling to vote.

- Greece Town Hall, 3 Vince Tofany Blvd.
- Ogden Town Hall, 269 Ogden Center Road

- Monroe Community College Downtown Campus, 321 State St., Rochester
- Penfield Town Hall, 3100 Atlantic Ave.

- The Marketplace Mall, 1 Miracle Mile Drive, Henrietta

- Ridge Culver Plaza (former Fallas store), 2255 E. Ridge Road, Irondequoit
- SUNY Empire State College, 680 Westfall Road, Brighton

## Can I vote in any of the seven spots?

Yes, voters who are registered in Monroe County can vote in any of the seven locations. It does not have to be the one closest to your home.

## Why were these 7 sites chosen?

It appears county elections officials tried to disperse them geographically. All are on or near major roads, reachable by personal vehicle.

All seven locations have ample free parking, officials say.

Three of the seven locations are served by RTS buses. These are the voting sites at Marketplace Mall, Ridge Culver Plaza and the MCC Downtown Campus.

In addition, the site at Empire State College on Westfall Road is a short walk from bus stops, while the sites at the Ogden and Greece town halls involved a walk of a half-mile or more.

Several locations are not easily reached by pedestrians, though bicycle access is possible.

Some county lawmakers have pointed out that people in the farther corners of the county — in towns such as Riga, Hamlin, Webster and Mendon, for example — could face drives of up to a half-hour to reach a polling place.



Daniel Williams holds his 4-year-old daughter Penelope while voting in Brighton.  
CARLOS ORTIZ/ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE FILE PHOTO

## Are seven enough?

Seven is the legal minimum for Monroe County under the state law that created early voting.

After realizing that other large New York counties had more polling sites, Monroe County Democrats proposing increasing the number to 15. That proposal is pending.

## What about accessibility?

All sites are required to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Each site will be equipped with ballot-marking devices to assist voters. Officials say the sites have ample free parking.

## What else will be different?

All New York state counties, including Monroe, will use electronic poll books (e-poll books). These are secure databases of eligible voters that are used to record when someone has cast a ballot. They replace the paper poll books that contained each voter's signature

and that voters had to sign for comparison purposes.

But the e-poll books work similarly to the old paper model. People who appear to vote will be asked their name and to verify their address, and then will be asked to sign on a touch-screen pad. The poll worker will compare that signature to one on file in the e-poll book.

Early voters will not be asked to present driver's licenses or other ID, election officials say.

If a voter's name doesn't appear properly in the e-poll book, he or she will be able to vote via affidavit (provisional) ballot.

Note that if you vote early, the e-poll books will reflect that, and you will not be allowed to cast a ballot at a second early-voting site or at your neighborhood polling place on Election Day.

## Will early votes be counted ... early?

The number of votes cast each day at each location will be recorded, but the actual votes will not be counted until the polls close on Nov. 5.