

**NYC VOTER
ASSISTANCE COMMISSION**

**MAYOR'S OFFICE OF
IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS**

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Contact: Erica González
212-788-9964

**CITY FORUM PROMOTES
NEW CITIZEN VOTING**

The New York City Voter Assistance Commission (VAC) and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) today hosted a forum to help facilitate the participation of new citizens in the electoral process. The forum, which took place at the office of the NYC Board of Elections, covered registration guidelines, the use of absentee ballots, and language accessibility. Speakers also described procedures for becoming a poll worker and outlined the implications of the Help American Vote Act (HAVA) on New York City.

"Today's forum is one of the services the Voter Assistance Commission provides to ensure that voters have access to voting information," said Dr. Jerry Kraus, Chairman of VAC. "New citizens need to understand the electoral system so they can fully participate in a process that is so central to U.S. citizenship."

"Participation and accountability are what make democracy work," said Commissioner Guillermo Linares of the Office of Immigrant Affairs. "Voting is an act of engagement and empowerment. It's a way of letting your voice be heard."

"Our mandate is to register as many voters in the City of New York as possible," said John Ravitz, Executive Director of the NYC Board of Elections. "The forum today gives the Board of Elections an opportunity to form relationships and reinforce lines of communication that will help us fulfill that mission."

To register to vote in the City of New York, you must:

- Be a citizen of the United States (Includes those persons born in Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands)
- Be a New York City resident for at least 30 days
- Be 18 years of age before the next election
- Not be serving a jail sentence or be on parole for a felony conviction
- Not be adjudged mentally incompetent by a court
- Not claim the right to vote elsewhere (outside the City of New York)

- Although you can register any time during the year, your form must be delivered or mailed at least 25 days before the next election for it to be effective for that election.

For more information on the voting process, call 311. Operators at 311 are ready to assist callers in 170 languages.

A second forum on the electoral process will take place on May 19th at Barnard College.

The **New York City Voter Assistance Commission** works to encourage and facilitate voter registration and voting by all eligible United States citizens residing in New York City. VAC is strictly nonpartisan, and does not promote any candidate for elected office, political party, or political agenda.

The **Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs** is committed to promoting the full and active participation of immigrants in the civic, economic, and cultural life of the City. Foreign-born New Yorkers are 36 percent of New York City's population.

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