

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE
30 Trinity Street, Hartford CT 06106

ACQUISITION OF RIGHTS OF PARTY ENROLLMENT

Memorandum re: The time when an elector who applies for enrollment on the enrollment list of a particular party becomes entitled to the rights of enrollment in said party

Please Note: Section references are to the General Statutes of Connecticut.

There are six separate and distinct cases in connection with which the above question may arise, namely, (1) the new voter, (2) the newly-made cross-town voter, (3) the unaffiliated voter, (4) the transferee, (5) the erasee, and (6) the voter who removed his name from the registry list.

1. NEW VOTER: There is no waiting period in the case of the new voter who immediately applies. Section 9-57 provides that any new elector may enroll in a party. The names of such individuals are added to the proper enrollment list or supplementary enrollment list when they are printed. However, separate lists of eligible voters according to party must be prepared the day before a primary, caucus or convention. Six exceptions: (1) One who applies for enrollment in person to the registrars or town clerk after 12:00 noon on the last business day before a primary obtains his enrollment privileges immediately after the primary (this includes the physically disabled who apply in town under Sec. 9-31a); (2) The person who applies for enrollment in person to his registrars of voters or town clerk on the day of a caucus or convention receives his privileges immediately after the caucus or convention (this includes the physically disabled who apply in town under Sec. 9-31a); (3) A person who is pre-registering as a seventeen year old and who designates a party upon his registration form, if found qualified, has his name added to the enrollment list, together with the effective date of his registration (18th birthday); consequently, he acquires party rights on his birthday even if that day is the day of a caucus, convention or primary. (Secs. 9-12(b) and 9-57); (4) A person who is registered door-to-door and who designates a party upon his registration form does not acquire enrollment privileges until he acquires electoral privileges when his application for admission is approved. (Secs. 9-19b (b)(4), 9-57 and 9-431a) Any such person approved after 12:00 noon on the last business day before a primary or on the day of a caucus or convention does not acquire enrollment privileges until after the primary, caucus or convention (Secs. 9-431, 9-55 and 9-57); (5) A member of the armed forces or related group or citizen overseas who applies for absentee admission and who designates a party upon his registration form does not acquire enrollment privileges until he acquires electoral privileges when his application for admission is approved by the town clerk. (Secs. 9-30, 9-23a and 9-431a). Any such person approved on the day of a primary, caucus or convention does not acquire enrollment privileges until after the primary, caucus or convention. (Secs. 9-431, 9-55 and 9-23a); (6) A person who applies on a mail-in registration form and designates a party upon his registration form does not acquire enrollment privileges until he acquires electoral privileges on the day the registrar of the town of voting residence approves the application and mails a notice of acceptance to such applicant. A person who applies for admission and enrollment by the mail-in procedure obtains electoral and enrollment privileges on the day after the primary if (1) the mail-in application is postmarked after the fifth day before the primary, (2) the mail-in application is received by the DMV or a voter registration agency (under Sec. 9-23n) after the fifth day before the primary, or (3) the mail-in application is delivered to the office of the registrars by someone other than the applicant after the fifth day before the primary. Any person whose mail-in application form is approved on the day of

a caucus or convention does not acquire enrollment privileges until after the caucus or convention. If a new voter does not apply for enrollment at the time he applies for admission as an elector, then he falls into the same category as an unaffiliated voter. (See paragraph numbered "3".) (Secs. 9-23g (c) and (d), 9-431(a) and 9-55(d))

2. NEWLY-MADE CROSS-TOWN VOTER: Cross-town admission also allows for simultaneous enrollment. The privileges of enrollment become effective, however, from the time the application for admission as an elector is approved by the town clerk or registrars of voters of the town of voting residence. As to applications approved after 12:00 noon on the last business day before a primary, the qualifications of party enrollment attach immediately after the primary. As to applications approved on the day of a caucus or convention, the qualifications of party enrollment attach immediately after the caucus or convention. (Secs. 9-19e, 9-431, 9-55 and 9-57). The same deadlines apply for the physically disabled who apply cross-town under Sec. 9-31a.
3. UNAFFILIATED VOTER: Under Section 9-56, an unaffiliated voter may at any time make application for enrollment to the registrars of voters on an application for admission as an elector. Upon making application he becomes immediately entitled to all party privileges including the right to vote in primaries and caucuses, to be an opposition candidate by petition, to sign a primary petition, to serve as a circulator of a primary petition and to be appointed a primary official. The qualifications of party enrollment attach as of the date that such applications are filed with the registrars of voters of the town of residence of the applicant. The names are then added to the proper enrollment list or supplementary enrollment list. However, if a primary, caucus or convention is to be held, separate lists of eligible voters according to party must be prepared.

There are four exceptions: (1) If the unaffiliated voter files his application in person with the registrar of voters after 12:00 noon on the last business day before a primary, he receives his privileges immediately after the primary; (2) if the unaffiliated voter files such application, otherwise than in person, with the registrar of voters after the fifth day before the primary, he does not acquire enrollment privileges until after the primary, (3) if the unaffiliated voter is overseas or a serviceman or related group who files such application with the town clerk under Secs. 9-23a and 9-26 on the day of the primary, he does not acquire enrollment privileges until after the primary, (4) if the unaffiliated voter files his application with the registrar of voters after 5:00 p.m. on the last business day before a caucus or convention, he receives his rights immediately after the caucus or convention.

4. TRANSFEREE: Under Section 9-59, an elector who applies for a transfer of his name from one party list to another immediately loses all rights in his former party. Moreover, he may not vote in a primary or caucus or exercise any other rights of enrollment in any party for a period of three months from the date of filing of his application for transfer. The date on which he becomes eligible to enrollment rights must be entered on the enrollment list following his name; i.e., the expiration of such period of three months.
5. ERASEE: Under Section 9-59, the erasee, (i.e., the individual who applies for erasure of his name from a party enrollment list) immediately loses all the rights accompanying enrollment in his party, and he becomes an unaffiliated voter. If an erasee later applies for enrollment in the same or another party, he is in the same situation as a transferee, i.e., he does not acquire the rights of enrollment until the expiration of three months from the date of the filing of his application for erasure. Moreover, should he so apply for enrollment after filing an application for erasure, his eligibility date (being the date of the expiration of three months following the date on which he filed his application for erasure) must be entered on the list following his name, provided the three-month period has not already expired.

6. VOTER WHO REMOVED HIS NAME FROM THE REGISTRY LIST: Any voter who removed his name from the registry list and from an enrollment list in accordance with Section 9-35b, and who re-registers, is not entitled to enroll in any party or vote in any primary for three months after such removal. (Sec. 9-59)

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