

How to get a photo ID for elections January 25, 2016

The state's voter identification law will be in effect for the first time at elections this spring. Although the law passed last year, it wasn't in place for the spring 2015 elections because of the short time between the law passage and Election Day.

Now, anyone who wants to vote this spring must have a photo identification with them.

There are two elections coming up — the Feb. 16 primary, which includes a state Supreme Court primary and local government primaries, and the April 5 spring elections, which includes local government races and the presidential preference primary.

Here's how to make sure you have the right ID to vote:

- No special "voter ID cards" exist. The law did not create new IDs, but required that existing photo IDs be used to vote
- A Wisconsin DOT-issued driver's license or ID card, military ID card or a United States passport are accepted for voting
- Student ID cards from a Wisconsin university or college must have an issue date, signature of student and an expiration date no later than two years after the issue date to be accepted. Students must also have documentation, like a tuition bill, to prove they are enrolled in higher education
- The address on the ID does not have to be a current address. However, you should bring a bank statement, pay stub, hunting or fishing license, or a utility bill to proof your residency
- If you need a photo ID, free ID cards are available. Head to your local Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office and bring an original birth certificate, Social Security card, a utility or cell phone bill to get your free ID.

A good website for more information is www.bringit.wisconsin.gov, which is dedicated to helping Wisconsinites comply with the voter ID law. It can also give you info on DMV offices in your area if you need to get an updated driver's license or free ID card.