GET OUT THE VOTE 2018



A voting and election guide for New Jersey citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families

The Arc of New Jersey

Achieve with us.®

985 Livingston Avenue, North Brunswick, NJ 08902 | 732.246.2525

Email: info@arcnj.org | Website: www.arcnj.org

GET OUT THE VOTE

When you head to the polls on November 6th, you will decide who represents you in our nation's capital. No matter what part of the state you live in, you will pick a US Senator and you will choose a Representative to serve in the House. While a US Senator represents the entire state and is elected to a six year term, each Representative is elected to a two-year term serving the people of a specific congressional district.

The Arc of New Jersey put together this Guide to help you as you plan your trip to the voting booth. In addition to frequently asked questions, make sure you read more from current US Senator Bob Menendez and candidate Bob Hugin to learn more about where they stand on issues impacting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In addition, hear first-hand from self-advocates and a family member about why they never miss an opportunity to cast their vote on Election Day and neither should you.

The people we elect to hold public office will represent our best interests when it comes time to vote on important public policy issues. This could include everything from access to health care and transportation to employment regulations and special education services. It's critical to set aside time and learn more about the individuals running for office. Think about what matters to you and determine who will do the best job fighting for those things.

We hope this 2018 Get Out the Vote Guide helps you on your voting journey. As always, check out our web site, www.gotvnj.org, for additional information and content.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who are the candidates?

Voters in November will elect one United States Senator, and because this is a statewide position, the candidates for this office will appear on every ballot regardless of where in New Jersey you live. The candidates for the Senate seat are US Senator Bob Menendez (D), the incumbent, and Bob Hugin (R).

Voters will also elect a candidate to serve in the United States House of Representatives. New Jersey has twelve Congressional districts and you can find out who is running for your local district by visiting this site: http://bit.ly/DistrictCandidates.

Why should you vote?

Voting allows you to elect people that will represent you and fight for the issues you believe in.

What is voting?

Voting is your right. Voting is your choice. Voting is your voice.

What time is voting?

Voting starts at 6 a.m. and ends at 8 p.m.



When is voting?

Voting takes place on Tuesday, November 6, 2018.

Who can vote?

To vote you must be a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years old and registered to vote.

You cannot vote if you are in jail, on parole or on probation. You must also be able to understand what it means to vote. It is **not** legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she has an intellectual or other disability. Only a judge can declare that an individual lacks capacity to vote. It is **not** legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she has a legal guardian. It is **not** legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she lives in an institution, developmental center or group home. It is **not** legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she receives services or supports related to a disability.

How can I register to vote?

You can register to vote by mailing in the Voter Registration Application to your county clerk. You can also register to vote in person at the Office of the County Commissioner of Registration. The application can be printed from the New Jersey Division of Elections website: Elections.NJ.gov. The registration deadline to vote is 21 days prior to the November General Election (Tuesday, October 16, 2018). To find your county clerk, visit http://bit.ly/CountyClerkLocator2018.

Where do I vote?

Polling places are typically set up at schools, libraries or firehouses in your town. Registered voters are assigned a specific location to vote. To find your polling place, and to check if you are registered, visit the NJ Division of Elections web site at Elections.NJ.gov. The web site will also let you know if your polling place is ADA compliant or accessible.

What should I do if I go to vote and am told I can't vote because I have a disability?

If you have a problem on Election Day with being allowed to vote or getting assistance with voting, call Disability Rights NJ at 1-800-922-7233.

What do I need to vote in person?

You must bring proof that you live in your county before you can register to vote and cast your vote on Election Day. Proof can include a driver's license, a student ID, a government issued ID or a document with your name and address on it such as a bank statement or government issued check like a Social Security check. If you did not provide identification to the county commissioner of registration, or if the identification information could not be verified (i.e., your driver's license number or the last four digits of your social security number), you may be asked to show identification at the polling place when you go to vote.

Are polling places accessible for people with disabilities?

One accessible polling machine adapted for audio must be available at every polling place to allow voters with a visual impairment to verify and cast their votes in private and without assistance. Polling places should be integrated settings, meaning that all people (with and without disabilities) should vote together in the same space. People with disabilities have the right (1) to reasonable accommodations that make it possible for them to vote, and (b) to use auxiliary aids (such as Assisted Listening equipment, registration forms in Braille and large print, ramps to access the polling area) to ensure that communication is effective. You can also either (a) ask a friend, family member or staff member to enter the booth with you, or (b) ask for help from poll workers at your polling place on Election Day.

How can I vote by mail instead of in person?

If you want to vote by mail, you must first be a registered voter. Download a Vote By Mail Application online at: http://bit.ly/NJVoteByMail. A voter may also apply for a Vote By Mail Application in person at the Clerk's office in your county. Keep in mind, the County Clerk cannot accept faxed or emailed copies of an Application for a Vote by Mail Ballot, unless you are a military or overseas voter, since an original signature is required. When your Vote By Mail Ballot arrives, it will include instructions. Your Mail-In Ballot must be received by the County Board of Election before close of polls on Election Day. Also, if you have already asked for a Vote by Mail Ballot, you may NOT vote in person during that election.

Looking for more information?

Visit our website, www.GOTVNJ.org for additional content and resources!

Quick Facts & Resources

- **Voting takes place on Tuesday, November 6, 2018.**
- **Voting starts at 6:00 AM and ends at 8:00 PM.**
- **For more information and resources visit: www.GOTVNJ.org**
- **Locate your district: http://bit.ly/FindYourVotingDistrict**
- **Locate your voting location: http://bit.ly/VotingLocations2018**
- **The Arc of US Voting Toolkit: http://bit.ly/VotingToolkit**

Ballot Question

This year's ballot asks voters to decide on a Public Question.

The ballot question, if approved, would allow the State to borrow $500 million. This money would be used to provide grants to county vocational school districts and county colleges to construct and equip buildings to increase capacity in career and technical education programs. The money would also be used to provide grants for school security projects at kindergarten through grade 12 schools. In addition, the money would be used to provide grants for school district water infrastructure improvement projects.

To read the question and see how it will appear on the ballot when you head to the polls, visit this link: http://bit.ly/2018ElectionsPublicQuestion



Join the Self-Advocacy Movement!

Voting is an important way to make your voice heard, but it's not the only way you can speak up for yourself. If advocacy is something you want to get more involved with, then contact the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project to learn more about the Governmental Affairs Ambassador Program. NJSAP staff offer a workshop that helps you learn to communicate with your elected officials about the issues you care about. The workshop promotes self-advocacy in state legislative affairs.

Ambassadors are self-advocates who want to speak up for themselves and other people with disabilities in New Jersey. This program is a way for self-advocates to develop the necessary skills to reach out to legislators, educate them about the issues affecting the lives of thousands of people with disabilities across the state, affect change on multiple levels, and develop an understanding on which candidates can best represent their needs.

Skills being taught in the workshop include: public speaking, writing and delivering testimony, effective communication across multiple platforms, government affairs, and understanding the law-making and budget processes. There will also be "mock hearings" where advocates prepare and present a brief, hypothetical testimony individually or as a group.

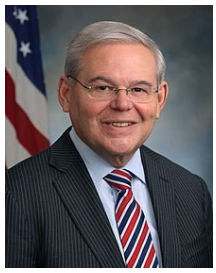
Want more information?

Contact NJSAP Director Ashley Ritchey at 732-743-8345 or Aritchey@arcnj.org



Candidate Questionnaire

Both candidates were offered the opportunity to participate in our candidate questionnaire. Mr. Bob Hugin did not submit a response. Senator Menendez's response appears below, unedited and in its entirety.



Name: Senator Robert Menendez, NJ

Party: Democrat, Incumbent

Question 1.

Medicaid is the lifeline for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) who depend upon services and supports to reach their full potential and to live integrated lives in the community. If elected in November, what will you do to protect Medicaid from cuts and/or changes to eligibility that would ultimately reduce access to these critical supports and services?

"I will continue my lifelong defense of Medicaid and will always work to expand Medicaid in New Jersey and across the country. Instituting Medicaid caps will harm individuals with I/DD and the elderly the most. It will interrupt care and access to services and supports that allow individuals to thrive. Republicans in Congress continue to want to end Medicaid as we know it and I will fight against those efforts.

In 2017, the program was under assault from Republicans in Congress and I worked with Democrats to preserve the program. I introduced and received a vote on an amendment during consideration of the 2017 budget resolution that would have created a budget point of order against any legislation that would eliminate or reduce federal funding to states under Medicaid expansion.

I also voted worked with many New Jerseyans to push back on cuts to the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and I could not be prouder that CHIP is now funded for another 10 years."

Question 2.

Direct Support Professionals provide the hands-on support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in the community. Unfortunately, it has become increasingly difficult to hire and retain these critically-important staffers because the average starting salary for this profession is only $10.50 an hour. We are now in a crisis situation, where vacancy rates exceed 20% and turnover rates exceed 44%. With that in mind, what will you do as an elected official to solidify this workforce and thus ensure services will continue uninterrupted to those who need them?

"I believe this requires a two-step approach. First, we must ensure we properly train direct support professionals, and second, we must ensure we support them as well by paying a living wage and ensuring they too have the supports they need to be successful in their roles. I support providing direct support professionals workplace protections and a living wage to help attract and retain qualified professionals."

Meet the Candidates!

US Senator Candidates

Bob Menendez: https://www.menendezfornj.com
Bob Hugin: https://bobhugin.com

District Candidates

District 1
* Donald Norcross: https://www.donaldnorcrossforcongress.com
Paul E Dilks: https://www.pauldilks.com

District 2
Jeff Van Drew: https://www.vandrewforcongress.com
Seth Grossman: https://grossmanforcongress.com

District 3
* Tom MacArthur - http://www.tmac4congress.com
Andy Kim - https://andykimforcongress.com

District 4
Josh Welle: https://welleforcongress.com
* Chris Smith: http://smithfornj.org

District 5
* Josh Gottheimer: https://josh4congress.com
John McCann: https://www.mccannforcongress.com

District 6
* Frank Pallone Jr: http://www.pallonefornewjersey.com
Rich Pelzzullo: http://www.pezzullo.com

District 7
Tom Malinowski: https://www.malinowskifornj.com
* Leonard Lance: http://www.lanceforcongress.com

District 8
* Albio Sires: No campaign website found
John R Muniz: No campaign website found

District 9
* Bill Pascrell Jr: http://billpascrell.com
Eric P Fisher: No campaign website found

District 10
* Donald Payne Jr: No campaign website found
Agha Khan: http://www.khanforcongress.com

District 11
Mikie Sherrill: https://mikiesherrill.com
Jay Webber: https://www.webberforcongress.com

District 12
* Bonnie Watson Coleman: http://www.bonnieforcongress.com
Daryl Kipnis Esq: http://kipnisforcongress.com

**** = Represents the incumbent (official currently in position)***

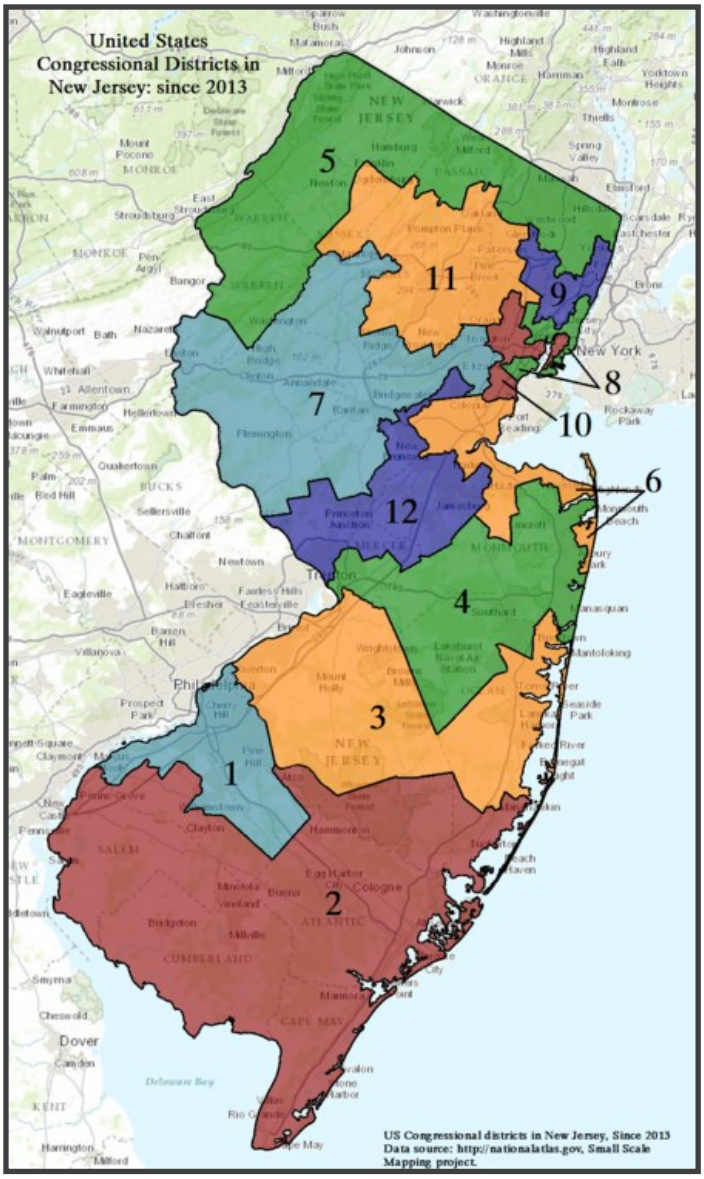


What is the *easiest* way to find your District?

New Jersey is divided into ***12 Congressional Districts***. Some counties and even towns are divided into multiple districts. The easiest way to determine what district you live in is by using the online resource below.

United States House of Representatives - Street Address Lookup.

http://bit.ly/FindYourVotingDistrict



In their own words - Why I Vote!

Kyle Picone, *Self-Advocate*



“Voting is important to me because I want to express my opinion of who I want to choose as a candidate for governor, congress, president, and other official positions. The people want a leader who can support and defend their constitutional rights as well as the economy. People need to go out and vote to voice their opinions of what they want and how they pick their candidates. The candidate needs to use their leadership skills to help us focus on important topics and to ensure that people feel safe and have opportunities to make money.

When I first voted in 2017 I voted for who I wanted to be the next governor of New Jersey and the Board of Education and my state legislators. I did research to understand what each candidate found most important so I could decide who I wanted to represent me and my interests. Voting made me feel confident and passionate to go out and voice who I want to represent me in office!

In the 2018 midterm election I might vote for either Bob Menendez or Bob Hugin - I am still undecided. I am concerned about the middle class, the budget, and taxes. I will research where each candidate stands on these issues so I can decide who I will vote for.”

- Kyle P.

Michael McRae, *Self-Advocate, Council 4 Chair*



"Voting is important because when you need to put someone in office, people will get out and vote for somebody who cares for their needs. People have the right to vote so that they can express their opinion and exercise freedom of speech.

I make sure to find a candidate who fights for my needs and the needs of people with disabilities. Social Security benefits, employment, and group home placement are my main concerns as a voter. The current system makes it difficult for people living in group homes to gain employment. We need to elect an official who can change that."

- Michael M.

In their own words - Why I Vote!

Kara Sellix, *Sibling*



"Voting is a right in this country, and something I feel none of us should take for granted. The first thing I did, as soon as I turned 18, was register to vote. From a young age, the significance of that action was thrust upon me; it is a simple yet deeply meaningful way to use your voice to show support for the things that matter most to you.

As a sibling to a young woman with a disability, I've learned to recognize the importance of my participation in the political process so that the things that matter most to her life will be addressed. We hear about these issues all the time: Medicaid, barriers to health care and community based services, special education law, accessibility of buildings, the list goes on. They all dramatically impact the lives of those we love from the local to the federal level. If we do not show up to the polling places to express our concerns and opinions, how can we expect those in office to show up for our loved ones when the decisions matter?

When Katie turned 21 (and "fell off the cliff" of entitlements in special education), I recognized, more than ever, how important it was for individuals with I/DD, their family members and service providers to vote. Collectively, we have a moral obligation to represent the voices of those whose service needs are fundamentally and directly impacted by the administration we choose.

So, I say this to you, my call to action is simple: show up. Show up at the offices of your local politicians. Show up at the state house for hearings on issues that matter to you or your loved one. Show up in Washington. Show up in various forms of media, and call others to action. Show up at the polling places. Self advocates, parents, siblings, professionals - SHOW UP!

Together we need to make sure that every local, state and national politician knows who we are, what we want and that the stakes are too high for us to stay quiet. Show up, educate, and vote!"

- Kara S.



The Arc®
of New Jersey

√ote

Connect with us!

www.facebook.com/TheArcofNJ

www.twitter.com/@TheArcofNJ

985 Livingston Avenue, North Brunswick, NJ 08902 | 732.246.2525
Email: info@arcnj.org | Website: www.arcnj.org