



Student Ambassadors Program



GEORGIA
SECRETARY OF STATE
BRAD RAFFENSPERGER





Dear Ambassador,

Congratulations on your selection as my office's Ambassador for your high school! This is a high honor, and you should be proud of your accomplishment. This wonderful program will give you the opportunity to grow as a leader among your peers, to learn more about Georgia government, and to help register your friends to vote.



I am excited to welcome you to this program because you will one day be the leaders of the United States, and voting is the cornerstone of our great democracy. Even though you may not have had the opportunity to cast your first ballot, this program will allow you to become engaged in the elections process in a very meaningful way. You will be presented with new challenges, but these challenges will help prepare you for college and the world beyond. We have built a team in the Secretary of State's office to help assist you and support you through this journey.

As young leaders, it is very important that you and your friends become registered to vote to make sure your voice is represented in our government. This program will help accomplish this goal, and my staff is available and ready to assist you and your faculty advisor as you serve as an Ambassador this year.

Sincerely,

Brad Raffensperger
SECRETARY OF STATE

To Learn more about the Office of the Secretary of State, visit sos.ga.gov

Ambassador Program Overview



As Georgia's Chief Elections Official, the Secretary of State is required to conduct secure, accessible, and fair elections. This duty includes providing opportunities for voter registration and promoting voter education. This is where you come in!

The goal of the Secretary of State's Ambassadors Program is to provide high school students an opportunity to engage as a leader within their school and community. Through this program, you will gain leadership experience by learning about and teaching Georgia civics to your peers, learning about voter registration, and promoting and encouraging other students to register to vote. You will work in a team environment to create a dialogue that gets first-time high school voters educated, excited, and engaged about elections.

Ambassador Responsibilities

There are three basic responsibilities for serving as an Ambassador:

1. Learn about Georgia government and the importance of voting.

You will receive a lot of assistance from the Secretary of State's office to help you learn about these important topics. Not only do you have this guide that gives you an overview of Georgia Civics and voter registration, but you will also attend an Ambassador Regional Kick-Off Event where you will learn from the Secretary of State staff about voter registration and how to engage your friends at your school.

2. Encourage your friends to get involved.

You can accomplish this objective every day you are at school. Tell your friends about what you have learned and how they should get involved in your community by registering to vote, volunteering as a poll worker, attending a civic meeting, or staying up to date on important current events. To help guide you in sharing these important goals with your friends, you should speak to at least five classes in your grade level or below at your high school about the importance of getting involved in the community. Although you can do this at any point throughout the year, you should speak to these classes before the voter registration deadline.

3. Encourage your peers to register to vote when they are eligible, volunteer as a poll worker, and actually vote in elections.

Voter registration is the most important responsibility of being a Secretary of State's Ambassador. So often, high school students become eligible to vote but do not register. It is important that you and your friends' voices are heard in the process. The only way that can happen is if they register to vote and then vote on Election Day. Fulfilling this responsibility through the Ambassador's program is easy as well. We've outlined responsibilities for each of the grade levels on the next page.

Grade Levels

At your school, you should have at least three students serving as Ambassadors: a senior, a junior, and a sophomore. However, if you attend a larger high school, you may have many more. There are three different grade levels that participate in this program so that you can build knowledge and experience about the Ambassador Program at your school. Also, having at least three students ensures that there are enough helping hands for the projects you will do throughout the year!

Seniors

Seniors are the leaders of the Ambassador Program in each school. They are in charge of planning meetings, setting goals, and scheduling events. Seniors should set the tone and the direction for the Ambassador Program at each school. They are ultimately responsible for the impact of the program at their high school. Therefore, Senior Ambassadors should work hard to ensure all the Ambassadors work as a team to accomplish these goals. Seniors will also play a particularly important role as they encourage their classmates to register to vote once they are eligible.

Juniors

Juniors are the drivers of the Ambassador Program in each school. Once the Seniors have provided a vision for the Ambassador Program at their school, the Juniors should work with the Seniors to help execute that vision. The focus of the Junior year will be learning about voting, the process of registering to vote, and will assist Seniors in meeting goals and planning events. Juniors should also educate their classmates about the importance of registering to vote once they become eligible. They should also encourage their classmates to volunteer at a polling location or elsewhere in their community.

Sophomores

Sophomores are the supporters of the Ambassador program in each school. Once the Seniors have provided a vision, and the Juniors begin driving the vision, sophomores should support those efforts and pitch in when and where they are needed. By working with the upper classmen, Sophomores will learn how to be an effective Ambassador. Moreover, the focus of the Sophomore year will be to learn about Georgia government, civics, and the electoral process. They will also assist Senior and Junior Ambassadors with meeting goals and planning events.

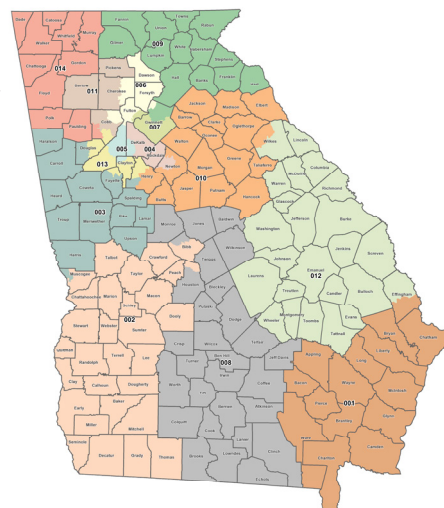


Ambassador Program Competition

Competition Regions

Throughout the school year, teams will organize and carry out various activities. For each activity the students complete they will receive points towards regional and statewide competitions. Regions are determined by Congressional Districts, which are shown in the color-coded map below. At the end of the year, schools who achieve the most points will be celebrated at the State Capitol.

To view map, visit: legis.ga.gov/api/document/docs/default-source/reapportionment-document-library/congress/congress-prop1-2021-packet-upd.pdf?sfvrsn=2c018aaf_2



Activity and Point System

Throughout the program your team will actively work to educate your peers about Georgia Civics and encourage them to register and vote. For each event that you conduct you will receive points towards our regional and statewide competitions. You will submit your points throughout the year through the Ambassador website: studentambassadors.sos.ga.gov/SitePages/externallanding.aspx

Upload your proof within one week of your event. We will keep track of everyone's points and keep you updated on the rankings. At the end of the semester, the school with the highest number of points will receive a prize along with their name added to the Ambassador Cup. The trophy will be housed at the winning school for the following year.

Below are the list of events and possible points. There is no limit to how many of each event can be conducted.

ACTIVITY	POINT VALUE
Work at a Polling Place on Election Day	1,000 points/student
Organize a Service Project	1,000 points
Recruit Poll Workers	1,000/person
Meet with a Local Elected Official	700 points
Work as a Page at the State Capitol	600 points/student
Work at a Polling Place/Volunteer at Your County Elections Office	500 points/student
Host a Voter Registration Drive	500 points
Social Media Challenge	500 points
Attend a Civic Meeting	300 points/student
Serve in an Elected Position	200 points
Host an Opinion Poll	100/poll + 1 additional point/vote
Volunteer with a Non-Profit Organization	100 points/hour of service
Share an Election Announcement	100 points

Student Ambassador Program Point Guidelines

Work at a Polling Place on Election Day

1000 points/Student Ambassador

Election Day is a very important day. Now, more than ever, county election offices are counting on young, adaptable leaders to serve their communities on election day. Contact your local county elections office and ask how you and your team can serve at a Polling Place on Election Day.

- Serve with your County Election Office at a polling place on election day.
- Points are based on # of SAs serving at the polling place on election day.

Organize a Service Project

1000 points

As a Student Ambassador, you are encouraged to come together with our peers and neighbors to give back to your community. You could dedicate time to clean up your school, promote a cause or initiative, hold a food drive, etc. There are endless opportunities to serve!

- Points are based on the individual project.
- Points are NOT based on the # of participating SAs.

Recruit Poll Workers



1000 points/person

Bring a friend or two or three! You can invite your friends and family to be Poll Workers at a local polling place on

Election Day. Please submit a photo of you and your friends at the polling place, but be mindful

of photo restrictions at the polling place. All of the information that you need to get started can be found on your county's website.

The contact information for your county can be found by visiting:

sos.ga.gov/county-elections-offices

- Points are based on the # of poll workers recruited.

Meet with a Local Elected Official

700 points per elected official

Connect with an elected official (Secretary of State, State Representative, State Senator, Congressman, etc.) to have a meeting with your team of ambassadors. Discuss an issue that your group is interested in.

- The meeting needs to be planned in advance, and not part of another event.
- The elected official must be from Georgia.

Work as a Page at the State Capitol

600 points/Student Ambassador

The Georgia Legislative Session is an important part of the year that affects Georgians all over the state and serving as a Page during session is your opportunity to be a part of it. Reach out to your State Representative or State Senator and ask how you and your team can serve as Pages during the legislative session! Make sure to reach out early, as spots fill up quickly.

- Points are based on the # of SAs serving as Pages during the legislative session.



Work at Polling Place/Volunteer at your County Elections Office

500 points/Student Ambassador

While Election Day is very important, you can volunteer to help your county elections office anytime! Your team can volunteer for voter registration training, help prepare for election day, and so much more! Contact your local county elections office and ask how you and your team can serve.

- Serve with your county elections office.
- Points are based on the # of SAs serving with the county elections office, each day of volunteering is a separate event.

Social Media Challenge

500 points

Occasionally, the SOS team will post a social media challenge via Facebook or Instagram. Be sure to include the necessary hashtags included with the challenge!

- Guidance varies from challenge to challenge.

Host a Voter Registration Drive
500 points

Dedicate a few hours of your day to help others register to vote. Holding a voter registration drive is easy; all you need is your laptop and the Online Voter Registration System. You can set up a registration booth at school or at a community event and help others register to vote today!

- Points are awarded per registration drive.

Attending a Civic Meeting
300 points/Student Ambassador

Attend school board meetings, city council meetings, etc. to gain insight to what is going on in your community and the changes being made.

- Points are based on the #of SAs attending the meeting.
- Meetings must be civic in nature (government or near-government organizations) Ex. school board meetings, city council meetings, chamber meetings, etc.

Serve in an Elected Position

200 points

Student Ambassadors are leaders both in and outside of the classroom, and they understand that every vote matters! Earn points when you are elected to serve in a leadership role. These can include class President, Treasurer of a school club, team Captain, etc. If you have questions as to whether a position will count towards the competition, please don't hesitate to ask. Please submit photos of you serving in your position and a brief description of your role.

- Points are awarded when a Student Ambassador is elected to a leadership position.
- Student Ambassadors must be voted into their position.

Host an Opinion Poll

100 points

You can demonstrate the voting process to your peers by hosting an opinion poll online or in person. While Student Ambassadors are free to write their own poll questions, topics are limited to politics and current events. Teams are limited to posting 1 poll per week for points. You can post your polls on Instagram or Facebook, or you can host a booth at lunch to collect results in person. Take advantage of every opportunity to get involved! Please submit a photo of your poll question and results.

- Host either a physical or digital poll and encourage your peers to participate.
- Topics are limited to politics and current events.
- Teams are limited to 1 poll per week.

Volunteer with a Non-Profit Organization

100 points per hour of service

Non-profit organizations are a great way to directly affect issues that you believe are important. Partner with a non-profit, either as a group or individually, and impact your community with meaningful service.

- The organization must be in Georgia.
- The organization must be a non-profit organization.
- The organization cannot have any political ties.
- Online volunteering will only be considered if approved beforehand by the Secretary of State's Office.
- Points are based on the number of volunteers and the number of hours.

Share an Election Announcement

100 points

Elections are such an important aspect of our democracy, and we want to make sure you and your community aren't missing a beat! Each year, the Secretary of State's office publishes a calendar on our website with important elections dates and voter registration deadlines. Your team will earn points sharing these important dates and information regarding the offices to be filled on your team's Facebook page.

- Elections Dates and Voter Registration Calendars are available at sos.ga.gov/elections-division-georgia-secretary-states-office
- Teams create their own Facebook/Instagram/Tik Tok posts with information regarding key election dates & offices to be filled, voter registration deadlines, early voting dates, etc.
- Points are awarded once per Key Date announcement.



Ambassador Useful Tips

Public Speaking

Public speaking can be nerve-racking for most people, but it is a very useful skill to have in life. During your time as an Ambassador, you will be called on to speak, but don't sweat it! Below are some simple tips that you can use to prepare for your next public speaking event.

- Talk about what you know
- Practice
- Visit the room
- Visualize confidence
- Realize the audience is on your side
- Concentrate on your message
- Observe other speakers
- Organize your talk
- Grab the audience's attention
- Have one main message
- Tell stories
- Develop your own style.
- Avoid filler words
- Vary your tone, volume, and speed
- Make the audience laugh
- Find a friendly face
- Don't apologize
- Smile!



Planning an Event

Planning an event with any organization for any purpose can be a stressful and time-consuming task. However, an event can be used to really impact people. You can use an event as an Ambassador to have a big impact on people to get them excited about registering to vote and participating in democracy.

Before the Event

- Know the goal of your event.
- First decide on a date, time, and location to hold your event.
- Make sure you get permission.
- Gather your friends.
- Publicize your event.
- Train your volunteers.
- Explain your goals.
- Talk about each person's role at the event.
- Prepare the day before your event.
- Breathe easy and do not panic - if you have prepared, your event will be great!

The Day of Your Event

- Arrive an hour before your event starts.
- Set up whatever you will use - including your table and swag.
- Tell your volunteers to arrive a few minutes before you anticipate needing their help. It is always better to have more time than not enough.
- Remind your volunteers how you need them to help.
- Have fun!

After Your Event

- Thank your volunteers! Without your team your event could not have happened.
- Talk about the impact your event had and the difference each one of them made!
- Talk about the successes you shared and any problems that were encountered.
- Think about future events. Think about the lessons you learned with your first event.
- Think about whether you want to host another event and begin making those plans.
- Share the success of your event! Post pictures of your event and don't forget to use the hashtags!

#GASOAmbassadors
#gavotes

Voting in Georgia

3 WAYS TO CAST A BALLOT

Election Day Voting

The form of voting that most people are familiar with is traditional Election Day voting. This voting opportunity is where each county opens specific precinct locations for Election Day canvassing. This type of voting only occurs on Election Day when polls are open from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM.



If you are curious about where your precinct is located, you can look it up on the MVP Page of the Secretary of State's website at mvp.sos.ga.gov. Your county Board of Elections can also provide you with a map showing all the precincts in your county and where the voting locations are located.

Advance In-Person Voting

Advance in person voting is very popular. This period begins on the 4th Monday before Election Day and runs through the Friday before Election Day.



The hours for advance voting are Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. In addition, counties are required to open during the second and third Saturdays before Election Day to conduct advance voting from at least 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM but could be as long at 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Counties can also choose to open their offices for voting on the second and/or third Sunday prior to Election Day.

Advance by Mail Voting

Absentee voting by mail is the third way a Georgian can cast their ballot. The absentee by mail period begins 78 days ahead of the election. Any registered voter can request an absentee ballot for any reason to be mailed to their home. The voter only has to take the ballot, vote, sign it, and return it to their county elections office so that it is in hand by 7:00 PM on Election Day.

VOTER IDENTIFICATION

For voters that choose to vote on Election Day or during the advance in-person period, Georgia law requires they must show a form of photo identification when they check-in at the polls. There are many different kinds of acceptable voter ID, but the intent is the same – to ensure that no voter fraud occurs at the polls.

Below, there is a list of the acceptable forms of identification for in-person voting. If a registered voter does not have one of the forms of acceptable voter ID, the State offers a free Voter Identification Card. A Voter Identification Card can be issued at any county registrar or Department of Driver Services office free of charge. The Voter Identification Card may be used for voting purposes only.

Acceptable Forms of Voter ID

State and federal law require a form of ID when a person registers to vote. The required ID can be any one of the following items and can be submitted with a voter registration application or at the voter's first time voting at the polls:

- A Georgia Driver's License which was properly issued by the Department of Driver Services.
- A valid employee identification card containing a photograph of the voter and issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States government, this state, or any county, municipality, board, authority, or other entity of this state.
- A valid Georgia Voter ID card.
- A valid U.S. passport ID.
- A valid U.S. military photo ID.
- A valid Tribal photo ID.

Voter Registration

Qualifications to Register

- Must be a citizen of Georgia and the United States
- Must reside at the address shown on voter registration application
- Must be at least 17 1/2 years of age to register
- Must be 18 years of age by Election Day
- A person may not register to vote if they have been convicted of a felony and are under the term of their sentence.

However, after a felony sentence has been served, a person may register to vote.

- Also, no person who has been determined by a judge to be mentally incompetent may register, remain registered, or vote unless the disability is removed.

Requirements for Voter Registration



When you are assisting in a voter registration drive, or are simply helping someone register to vote, there are certain things you must do and certain things you cannot do. These requirements and prohibitions are in law and violations of these rules carry penalties. Therefore, it is very important that you read and remember these rules when you are doing your job as a Secretary of State's Ambassador.

Mandatory Requirements



- **You must inform** all applicants that they are not officially registered to vote until their eligibility has been determined by the Board of Registrars. Also inform them that, if they have not received notification of the disposition of the application within three to four weeks of submitting the application, the applicant should contact the appropriate Board of Registrars to determine if such applicant's eligibility has been determined and the applicant's name entered on the official list of electors.
- **You must inform** all Georgia applicants of the availability of an online registration status check and polling place locator service on the Secretary of State's website and encourage all applicants to access it in advance of a primary or Election Day to verify their registration status and correct polling place at: mvp.sos.ga.gov.
- **You must inform** all applicants that, if they are registering to vote for the first time in the jurisdiction by mail or through a private entity, they must present current and valid identification.
- **You must inform** all applicants of their right, under certain circumstances, to cast a provisional ballot in the event that their names do not appear on the official list of electors at the polls.

Prohibited Activities



- **You cannot** represent to any person that you are an employee of the Secretary of State or a member of a Board of Registrars.
- **You cannot** make any statement to an applicant or take any action that would discourage a qualified applicant from registering to vote.
- **You cannot** be inebriated or otherwise impaired by drugs, alcohol, or other substances.
- **You cannot** conduct voter registration where illegal or criminal activities are being conducted.
- **You cannot** accept a completed registration application from the applicant unless the application has been sealed by the applicant.
- **You cannot** copy a completed registration application without the express, written permission of the applicant.
- **You cannot** conduct voter registration activities in places where alcoholic beverages are sold and consumed on the same premises.

Using Paper Applications



Georgians can register to vote in two ways. Through the [Online Voter Registration \(OLVR\)](#) or by filling out a paper application.

You may encounter a scenario when someone prefers or needs to register using a paper voter registration application. This could occur if someone does not have a valid Georgia Driver's License or ID card. You should know that there are some specific rules that apply to these applications. What you need to know is listed below, but if you ever have a question regarding a paper application, please contact a team member in the Secretary of State's office or your local Board of Registration. It is important that every application is processed correctly.

Online Voter Registration



Georgia's Online Voter Registration System (OLVR) is a tool Georgians can use to [register to vote](#). In order to use the OLVR, voters must have a valid Georgia Driver's license or Georgia ID card. Voters can also use the OLVR tool to update their information (such as a name or address change.)

Security of Applications



Individuals who complete a paper voter registration application always have the option to mail the application themselves. But note, if you register someone to vote with a paper application and you volunteer to turn the application in for the individual, you must keep all completed original voter registration applications in a secure and confidential manner at all times until the applications are submitted to the appropriate Board of Registrars. Voter registration applications contain confidential information. You may not open or share any information contained on a voter registration application. Doing so is against the law and carries criminal penalties. Applications are very important documents and must be submitted as soon as possible after they are completed. The law only allows ten (10) days at most for a third party (you) to send the application to the Secretary of State's office or Board of Registrars. This period is shorter if it is within two weeks of a voter registration deadline. You should always turn over paper voter registration applications to the correct County Elections office as soon as possible.

Voter Eligibility and Notifications



A voter is not added to the voter rolls until the county registrar's office approves the voter's eligibility and processes his or her voter registration application. Each person who is registered to vote is notified of their application by receiving a precinct card in the mail. Precinct cards are sent to the mailing address listed on the application.

Sometimes applications are not approved as a voter. This can be due to a variety of different issues. Normally, it is because the applicant mistakenly included incorrect information on their voter registration application, or the applicant does not possess the eligibility requirements to register to vote. When an applicant is found ineligible to be registered, that person is notified of the reason for ineligibility and given the opportunity to correct any incorrect information. If the information can be corrected, they are added to the voter rolls.

Any voter registration applicant can check the status of their voter registration on the Secretary of State's website at mvp.sos.ga.gov. All applicants are encouraged to access this website in advance of a primary or Election Day to verify their registration status and correct polling place. Voters can also use this website to view a sample ballot for county, state, and federal elections and track the status of their absentee ballots.

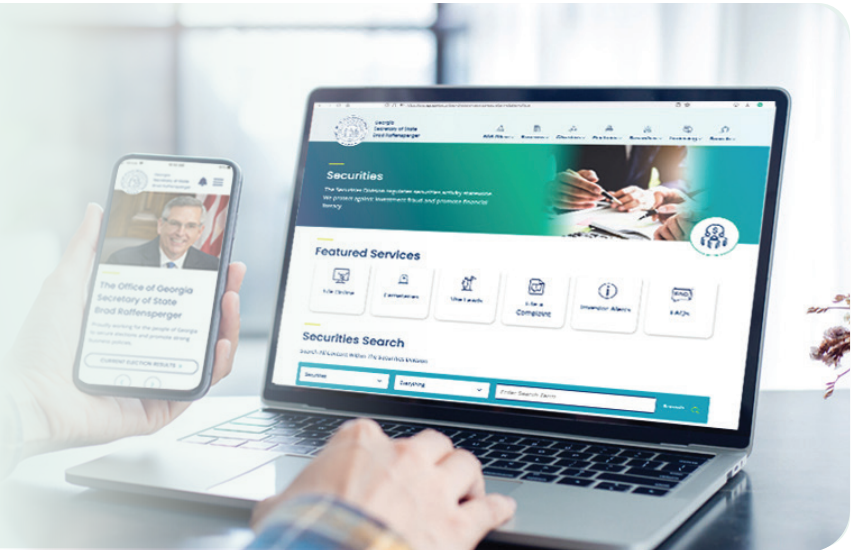
Georgia VoteSafe Program



State law requires that voter lists be made available to the public. These lists include the names and addresses of registered voters. In 2009, the Georgia Legislature enacted the VoteSafe law to provide for the confidentiality of residential addresses of certain voters who have been, or may be subject to, acts of family violence, stalking, or who currently reside in a family violence shelter. Applicants who are interested in program participation should be directed to the Secretary of State's online VoteSafe website at sos.ga.gov/page/votesafe.

Georgia Secretary of State's Office

The Georgia Secretary of State's office is responsible for a wide variety of administrative and regulatory duties. Among these are administering elections, regulating state securities, managing the professional licensing boards, and receiving corporation filings. The office also regulates charities and immigration assistance providers.



To organize these various duties, the Secretary of State's office is divided into five divisions: Corporations, Securities, Charities, Elections, and Professional Licensing.



Corporations Division

The [Corporations Division](#) helps facilitate commerce in Georgia by serving the corporations, limited liability companies, and limited partnerships. Corporations, limited liability companies, and limited partnerships in Georgia are formed by filing with the Corporations Division. Any business conducting business in Georgia must file with the Secretary of State's office. This includes some foreign (out-of-state) entities.



Securities Division

The [Securities Division](#) is charged with the administration and enforcement of the Georgia Uniform Securities Act. The Securities Division registers securities offered or sold in Georgia, oversees firms and individuals selling securities or providing investment advice in Georgia, enforces the Securities Act through criminal, civil and administrative penalties, and promotes investor education.



Charities Division

The [Charities Division](#) enforces the laws regulating charitable organizations, paid solicitors, and solicitor agents.



Elections Division

The [Elections Division](#) organizes and oversees all election activity in Georgia, including voter registration, and state, county, and federal elections. This division is responsible for certification of election results, qualification of candidates, preparation of ballots, and election forms and materials. The division also maintains the Georgia Voter Registration System to ensure that voter registration lists are current. Investigation into election fraud and enforcement of state election law occurs through the division as well.

By setting overall state election policies, training local officials, and educating voters, the division plays a key role in keeping Georgia elections secure, accessible, and safe. The Elections Division also provides Great Seal certification for authentication of public documents for foreign use.

As a Secretary of State Ambassador, you will interact primarily with this division of the Secretary of State's office. You will be working to educate your peers about the importance of voting and registering them to vote when they are eligible. This program has a support team within the Elections Division (see last page) that will help assist and guide you as you participate this year.

Georgians are fortunate to have many different ways they can cast a ballot in an election. In addition to traditional Election Day voting, Georgia also offers voters the ability to vote up to 21 days before Election Day at advance voting locations. There is also a 45 day period before Election Day where voters can vote absentee ballots by mail. These various options make Georgia a state with exceptional access to the polls.



Professional Licensing Division

The [Professional Licensing Boards Division](#) of the Secretary of State's office serves as administrative support to the 40 licensing boards housed with the agency. In addition to staffing the board meetings, the agency assists the boards with processing applications for licensure, license renewals, and complaints. Although the Professional Licensing Boards Division of the Secretary of State's office provides administrative and clerical support to assist the boards in carrying out their licensing responsibilities, the agency does not directly oversee or direct the actions and decisions of the boards.

About Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger



Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger is the CEO and owner of Tendon Systems, LLC. Tendon is a specialty contracting and engineering design firm with nearly 200 employees. The firm has operated in 35 different states. Raffensperger also owns and operates a specialty steel manufacturing plants based in Forsyth County. Additionally, he served two terms in the Georgia General Assembly from 2015-2019.

Brad Raffensperger earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Western University and was awarded his MBA from Georgia State University. He is a licensed Professional Engineer in over 30 states.

Brad and his wife, Tricia, have been married for over 40 years and live in Johns Creek. Brad is a member of North Point Community Church.





Your Support Team

As you work this year as a Secretary of State's Ambassador, do not worry if you have questions or any issues come up. There is a whole team of people at the Secretary of State's office that is ready to help you!

Below are just some of the key people that are in the office ready to support you. There is also a dedicated email address and hotline where you can call to receive immediate assistance for any of your questions.

All Questions, email: ambassadorsupport@sos.ga.gov

Student Ambassadors website:

studentambassadors.sos.ga.gov/SitePages/externallanding.aspx

MAGGIE HAISTY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

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