



TOWN OF CHESTER
15 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD
CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01011

Town Clerk's Office
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Questions and Answers About the Annual Street List Form

Why do I need to fill this out every year?

Massachusetts state law requires each town to compile an annual street list. In Chester, as in most towns, this responsibility falls to the Town Clerk's Office. The law governing the annual street list can be found in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 51, particularly Sections 4 and 6, although other sections of the law also apply.

How is the information used?

Information collected from returned street list forms serves many important purposes, including:

- The Town Clerk uses it to maintain the list of registered voters and keep an up-to-date record of where residents live.
- The School Department may request reports to help project future school enrollment.
- The Council on Aging uses the information when applying for grants and estimating the potential need for services for residents aged 60 and over.
- The Veterans' Agent receives a list of U.S. military veterans residing in town to assist them with available services and benefits.
- The Office of the Jury Commissioner uses each town's street list to compile a list of residents eligible for jury duty. An accurate list helps ensure a fair and representative jury pool.
- A person's inclusion on the street list may be used to establish residency for various purposes, such as in-state college tuition, job applications, special loan programs, and adoption applications.
- Years from now, you or your children may need proof that you lived in Chester or Massachusetts at a specific time. The street list for that year serves as official proof of residency.



What information should I review on the form?

Please carefully review the form and:

- Check that each person's date of birth is correct.
- Add or correct occupations as needed.
- Review the "Party" column, which indicates voter registration status:
 - U = Unenrolled (often referred to as "independent")
 - D = Democrat
 - R = Republican
 - L = Libertarian
 - J = Green/Rainbow
 - A blank space means the person is not registered to vote in Chester.

Please note: The Annual Street List Form cannot be used to register to vote or change voter registration. To do so, you must complete a Voter Registration Form. Contact the Town Clerk's Office at 413-354-6603 if you need one.

Who should complete the form?

Any adult residing in the household may complete and sign the form.

What do I need to do with the form?

- Review the names listed on the form.
- If there are no changes, simply sign and return the form to the Town Clerk.
- Add any new residents living at the address.
- Indicate with an "M" if someone has moved away or a "D" if someone is deceased.

What if a family member is serving in the military, away at college, or in a nursing home?

If a family member is currently serving in the military, away at college, or living in a nursing home or assisted living facility—and has not established legal residency elsewhere—**do not remove them from your residence**. Continue to list them as residents of the household. This helps preserve residency for voting purposes and may be needed to establish eligibility for certain veterans' benefits and other residency-based programs.



What happens if I don't return the form?

State law requires that every household that does not return the Annual Street List Form be contacted a second time. This follow-up process requires additional time, paper, and postage, creating unnecessary expense for taxpayers.

Registered voters who do not return the form and do not respond to a follow-up mailing must be designated as **inactive voters** on the street list. All registered voters at that address will become inactive. Inactive voters may vote only after completing an "Affirmation of Current and Continuous Residence" at the polls.

Failure to return the form may also affect the Town's ability to obtain grant funding based on population counts and may impact representation at the state and federal levels.

When and how should I return the form?

Please return your completed form within **10 days** by:

- Mailing it via U.S. Mail, or
- Placing it in the black lock box located outside Town Hall.

If using the lock box, please clearly mark the envelope "**Town Clerk**" to ensure proper delivery.

Is the information confidential?

Yes. Only a limited number of authorized individuals have access to the information you provide. Multiple layers of password protection safeguard the data, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts maintains the system in compliance with state data security laws.

Information for residents age 17 and under is never released to the public. Certain protected classes of residents, such as public safety personnel, do not appear on the public street list. No Social Security numbers or financial information are associated with the street list.

What if I have other questions or concerns?

Please feel free to call, email, or visit the Town Clerk's Office. The Annual Street List is an important tool for the Town and keeping the information accurate benefits the entire community.