



RETURNING YOUR CENSUS AND VOTING

January 2016

Do you return your town census every year? Are you surprised when you are on the inactive voter list at the polls? The only way that the Board of Registrars can know that you still reside in Westford is by returning your census. The only way to ascertain the current population for grant awards and state funding is through the census. It's that important. The Board of Registrars is responsible for keeping the resident and voter lists up to date and the law obliges them to move non responding voters to the inactive voter list. We want to hear from you! Please return your census form. If you have lost it, please contact the Town Clerk's Office and we will mail you a blank form.

New voters to Westford are reminded that you cannot register to vote on the census form, but here are some options – request a registration form be mailed to you, download one from www.westfordma.gov or **Register Online and save time!** www.sec.state.ma.us

Please refer to the calendar below for elections and town meetings planned for 2016.

Date	Event	Voter registration deadline
March 1, 2016 7am – 8pm	Presidential Primary (Tues.)	Wed., February 10, 2016, 8:00pm
April 2, 2016 10am	Annual Town Meeting, Abbot School (Sat.)	Fri., March 11, 2016, 8:00pm
May 3, 2016 7am – 8pm	Annual Town Election (Tues.)	Wed., April 13, 2016, 8:00pm
September 8, 2016 7am – 8pm	State Primary (Tues.)	Fri., August 19, 2016, 8:00pm
October 2016 7:30pm	Special Town Meeting Abbot School (Mon.)	10 days prior to special town meeting
November 8, 2016 7am – 8pm	Presidential Election (Tues.)	Wed., October 19, 2016, 8:00pm

Absentee ballots are typically available at least three weeks prior to an election. Contact the Town Clerk's office for more information at 978-692-5515. Information for overseas and military voters is available on the Secretary of State's website at: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/elemil/milidx.htm>. Absentee ballot applications may be filed beginning in January for any elections in that calendar year.

EARLY VOTING



There will be early voting for the November 8th Election. Check the Town Clerk's website for more details as it gets closer.

BECOME AN ELECTION WORKER!

The Town Clerk's Office is looking for enthusiastic individuals who can work at the upcoming elections. If you are interested in this civic opportunity, please stop by the Town Clerk's Office to complete an Election Officer Profile or find it on the Town Clerk's homepage at www.westfordma.gov/clerk.

OPEN POSITIONS FOR LOCAL OFFICE IN 2016

The table below lists open seats for the May 3, 2016 Town Election. Nomination papers are now available at the Town Clerk's Office for those who are interested in running for office. The deadline to file nomination papers bearing the signatures of at least 50 Westford voters is Tuesday, March 15th at 5:00pm.



Office	# positions	Terms expiring for:	Length of term
Selectmen	2	John Scott Hazelton Andrea Peraner-Sweet	3 years
Board of Health	2	Susan M. Hanly Jillian L. Lokere	3 years
Library Trustees	2	Elizabeth S. Diercks Kathleen A. Canavan	3 years
Planning Board	1	Katherine M. Hollister	5 years
School Committee	2	Arthur F. Benoit George Thomas Clay	3 years
Westford Housing Authority	1	Carol S. Engel	5 years

UPPER MERRIMACK VALLEY MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

Interested in helping your community in times of need? Join the 550 members of our local MRC who are willing to serve their community in times of need. Be part of the national program of 996 units with nearly 205,000 members. Both medical and non-medical volunteers are welcome. Anyone who would like to be trained and ready for helping with public health emergencies and regional preparedness is encouraged to apply. Contact us to volunteer your help in case of emergencies! Call 978 399-2549 if interested.



WINTER PARKING BAN: NOVEMBER 1 – APRIL 1

Residents are reminded that a winter parking ban is in effect from November 1st until April 1st.

- On-street parking is prohibited for more than 1 hour between the hours of 1:00 am and 6:00 am or when snow operations are in effect.
- Vehicles that are illegally parked will be ticketed and may be towed at the owner's expense if they interfere with snow removal operations.
- The Highway Dept's informational brochure on snow and ice removal procedures is available online at: <http://www.westfordma.gov/highway>



DOG LICENSING

All residents are reminded that **the grace period for licensing ends on March 31st** per Town bylaw. That means that a late fee of \$25 will be charged beginning April 1st. The only exceptions are for owners and dogs new to town.

Dog licensing fees for 2016 are as follows:

- **\$15 for spayed/neutered dogs and \$20 for non-altered dogs**
- Residents age 70 and over do not have to pay to license your dog (however, the late fee does apply!)



All dogs ages 6 months and older must receive a rabies vaccination and be licensed per state law. For your convenience, the dog license application form is on the reverse of your census form.

Owners of four or more dogs are required to obtain a "Kennel License" following an inspection by the Animal Control Officer.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT SHARPS COLLECTION FOR WESTFORD RESIDENTS

In an effort to safely dispose of needles and lancets, the Health Department has a disposal program which offers 2 convenient locations for residents to dispose of sharps. Collection sites are at the Health Department office located on the 2nd floor of Town Hall from 8am-4pm and at the sharps kiosk located in the Police Department entry way, open 24/7. All materials must be delivered in a sharps container, and it is requested that containers are full before dropping them off. This will help minimize costs associated with disposal. No commercial businesses may use this service and it is for Westford residents only.

Please follow these directions to ensure proper disposal of sharps containers:

- No Loose Needles
- All Sharps must be disposed of in a sharps container-if you do not have a personal sharps container, you may use a puncture resistant container such as a one gallon bleach bottle; a one pound sealed and taped coffee can or a 1.5 liter plastic soda bottle
- No glass containers
- No plastic or paper bags
- Do not leave any items outside the kiosk or office



If you have questions, please call 978-692-5509



MEDICATION DISPOSAL

This is a great time to clean out those medicine cabinets and get rid of unused, expired drugs or over the counter medications. Empty all pills and medications into Ziploc-type bags. Drop medications in the kiosk at the Police Station Lobby (across from the sharps kiosk), accessible from Town Hall parking lot, 55 Main St. The kiosk is available 24/7. For any questions, please call the Health Department at 978 692-5509.



MOSQUITO AND TICK-BORNE ILLNESS

Tick-borne illness and Lyme disease cases continue to grow in the United States, MA and Westford. During the fall, outdoor activities and recreational sports occur, and we encourage families to continue to take precautions to prevent tick and mosquito borne illness. The peak time for exposure to West Nile Virus and Lyme disease extends through the fall. Go to www.westfordma.gov/health page and link to the tick and mosquito borne illness tab for more information. You can test your knowledge about tick-borne diseases and learn how to prevent them by taking our survey at www.tinyurl.com/MiddlesexTickSurvey. The survey contains answers to questions about ticks, tick-borne illnesses, and prevention strategies for residents and their pets. Information can also be found at www.tickencounter.org

LIBRARY FEASIBILITY AND DESIGN STUDY UNDERWAY

With grant funding from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and support from both Town Meeting and Library Trust Funds, the Library is half-way through a two-year grant to study the feasibility of a potential renovation/addition to the library facility. At twenty-seven years since the most recent addition — and in preparation for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Project grant application due January 2017 — the library is anticipating a design that makes space for the “public” in the “public library!”

With the Owner’s Project Manager and Architect/Design Team on board, community input will be sought on the future offerings and design of Westford’s public library; this will be the basis of a competitive grant round for up to 50% funding from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. While the next grant is due in 2017, Westford could be on a waiting list for several years past that date.

So, a future 21st Century Westford Library might be realized only by 2021; it might offer the following:

- a larger, responsive Youth Services and Story Hour area that works for families
- an imaginative and collaborative Young Adult area
- space for study, research and interaction
- a Conference area/lab/maker space
- more relaxing and inviting seating and browsing areas
- energy-efficient sun-lit public spaces
- ample Community Meeting space
- a Reading Garden or outdoor courtyard public building compliant with current safety and building codes (rather than those of the mid-1980’s design era)
- public building compliant with current safety and building codes (rather than those of the mid-1980’s design era)

Look for more details about the upcoming Community Forum(s) via the Library eNewsletter, Facebook and Twitter posts and share your input, views, hopes for a 21st Century Library!

BE STORMWATER WISE: HELP PROTECT OUR WATER

The Town of Westford is currently developing a “**Stormwater Management Master Plan**” to proactively manage the runoff from rain storms and snow melt (known as “stormwater”). Much of this runoff is carried by drain pipes, which were designed to quickly move the water off the land surface to nearby streams, ponds and wetlands with little or no treatment. On its way over the land, this runoff picks up pollution such as oil, fertilizers, pesticides, salt and pet wastes. This stormwater pollution also gets absorbed into the ground where it travels to the wells that supply our drinking water. **We treasure living, working and playing in the scenic landscape of Westford. Together we can protect the quality of our lakes and ponds and maintain clean drinking water.**

We need your help! Learn about the issues and be part of the plan to address them. To be added to the study contact list to receive email notices about upcoming Public Meetings, write to stormwater@westfordma.gov, and check the website for updates at www.westfordma.gov/stormwater.



CAMERON SENIOR CENTER

Provides many wellness and enrichment programs for those aged 60 and over. If you would like to learn more about our vibrant center please contact us at 978-692-5523 and request that we mail or email you a monthly newsletter at no cost. The Cameron also has a social worker on staff, who is available to help Westford residents (regardless of age) in difficult situations. Other helpful programs offered through the Cameron include the following:

Transportation

For rides to medical appointments, grocery shopping or trips to the Senior Center, call 978-399-2322 at least 48 hours in advance to schedule a ride. Trips to Market Basket are available every Wednesday. The cost for round trip is \$3, for surrounding towns is \$6 and outlying towns are \$8.

Cameron Closet

Most affordable place to shop in Westford, including name brand gently used clothes and unique household items. All shoppers are invited to the Cameron Closet - Monday thru Friday 9:00am to 3:00PM. **Clean donations accepted.**

Westford Food Pantry

Our food pantry is open in conjunction with St. Vincent de Paul on the first and third **full week** as follows: Mon. 1-3:30pm, Wed. 8-11:30am, Thurs. 8-11:30am and Fri. 8-11:30am and other hours: Sat. 9-11:00 and Wed. and Thurs. evenings from 6-8PM.



VETERAN OR SURVIVING SPOUSE?

Separate Veterans and Surviving Spouse check boxes are found on the Census form. If you are a widow or widower of an honorably discharged veteran, you may be eligible for many government services as well. Checking these blocks is "optional".

ATTENTION VETERANS, SURVIVING SPOUSES OR NEXT-OF-KIN

A Veterans' Census is being conducted to identify:

- 1) Living Veterans in Westford;
- 2) Deceased Veterans from Westford; and
- 3) Surviving spouses or next-of-kin of a Westford veteran.

The Veterans' Census is **Confidential**.

Information obtained will not be disclosed to anyone, except employees of the Town of Westford - Office of Veterans Services.

The purpose of the Veterans' Census is to:

- 1) Assist the Department of Veterans Services in its outreach to all living Veterans and their families;
- 2) Ensure that all Veterans or their surviving families are aware of any benefits or services that they may be entitled to; and
- 3) Provide a place in history for all those who have served in times of war and peace.

If there are multiple veterans in your household, you can download additional forms at the Westford Veterans Services web page or write the information on the back of the form. The form can be found at:

http://westfordma.gov/pages/government/towndepartments/WestfordMA_veteran/documents/VeteransCensusForm.doc

Please complete the enclosed form and return with the Census form to be returned to the Town Clerks office.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Town of Westford's Veterans Service office at (978) 392-1170 or email us at veterans@westfordma.gov





TOWN of WESTFORD
Veterans' Census
Confidential

NAME of VETERAN: _____ SSN: _____ - _____ - _____

Address: _____ City/Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone No.: _____ Email: _____

Place of Birth: _____ Date of Birth: Mo: _____ Day: _____ Year: _____

Date of Death: Mo: _____ Day: _____ Year: _____ Place of Burial: _____

Branch of Service: (Check applicable service) Army _____ Navy _____ Marine Corps _____ Air Force _____ Coast Guard _____

Merchant Marine _____ National Guard _____ Other (specify) _____ Service No: _____

Date of Entry to Active Service: Mo: _____ Day: _____ Year: _____ Date of Discharge: Mo: _____ Day: _____ Year: _____

Military Service: (Check applicable) WWII: _____ Korea: _____ Vietnam: _____ Persian Gulf: _____

Iraq: _____ Afghanistan _____ Peacetime _____ other (specify) _____

Highest Rank Attained: _____ Medals/Decorations: _____

Are you currently receiving VA benefits: Yes _____ No _____ If yes, are you Service Connected rated? Yes _____ % _____ No _____

Do you have a copy of your **DD-214** (Discharge/Separation papers): Yes _____ No _____

Are additional Veterans living at this residence? Yes _____ No _____ Names: _____

Name of Surviving Spouse/Next-of-Kin _____ Relationship to Veteran _____

The Town of Westford, Department of Veterans Services is conducting this voluntary census of all VETERANS, living or deceased who are now or ever have been resident of the Town of Westford. This information is CONFIDENTIAL to be used for official local use only.

Questions? Please contact Westford DVS at (978) 392-1170 or via email veterans@westfordma.gov