



Frequently Asked Questions about Absentee Voting

What is absentee voting?

Absentee voting refers to the process of voting before Election Day. In Virginia, you may vote either absentee by-mail or vote early in-person.

Who can vote absentee?

In Virginia, any registered voter may vote absentee either by-mail or early in-person.

Is an absentee ballot the same as the ballot I would receive on Election Day?

Yes. The absentee ballot is identical to an Election Day ballot.

VOTING ABSENTEE BY-MAIL

What is absentee by-mail?

“Absentee by-mail” refers to the process of applying to receive a ballot in the mail, and then returning that absentee ballot by mail, an express delivery service, personally to the General Registrar’s Office, or to a drop-off location.

How do I vote absentee by-mail?

In order to vote absentee by-mail, you will first need to complete an **absentee ballot application**. You can complete that application online, [here](#). Once you receive your ballot, follow the instructions included to complete and return the ballot.

Where can I find an absentee ballot application?

You can complete an absentee ballot application online, [here](#). If you would prefer to complete a paper application, call your local registrar’s office. You can find your registrar’s contact information using the registrar look-up tool found [here](#). You can also find a printable paper copy of the absentee ballot application [here](#).

What is the last day I can request an absentee ballot?

The final day to submit an absentee ballot application is Friday, October 23 at 5:00 p.m.

When will I receive my by-mail absentee ballot?

Local registrars will begin issuing absentee ballots on Friday, September 18 to those who have already been approved for an absentee ballot. If you apply for an absentee ballot after September 18, your local registrar will process that application within three days. The final day to complete an absentee ballot application is Friday, October 23.

What options do I have to return my ballot?

You may return your completed absentee ballot to your general registrar's office by mail or personally deliver it to your general registrar. Additionally, you may drop-off your completed, sealed ballot at any drop-off location in your county or city. A list of drop-off locations is available on your county or city's official website. You may also drop off your voted ballot at any polling place within your county or city on Election Day.

When is the last day to return my by-mail ballot?

We encourage you to return your ballot at your earliest convenience. Your ballot will be counted if it is postmarked by Election Day and received by your local registrar by noon on Friday, November 6. If you are worried that you do not have time to return your ballot by-mail, we encourage you to personally deliver your ballot to your local registrar's office, to vote in-person, or to take advantage of a ballot drop-off location. If you personally deliver your ballot, it must be returned to your registrar or drop-off location by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.

Can I track my mailed absentee ballot?

You can track your absentee ballot using our absentee ballot look-up tool at the link [here](#).

What if I applied for an absentee ballot by-mail but have not received it?

To check the status of your ballot, go to our Citizen Portal website found [here](#). Click "Apply to Vote Absentee by Mail" enter your information and submit the form. Scroll down on the next page to the section titled "Vote Absentee by Mail." There, you will see whether your absentee application was approved, the date your application was received, and if applicable, the date your ballot was issued.

If you are still concerned about the status of your ballot, contact your local registrar using our registrar look-up tool found [here](#). If your ballot is lost or you do not receive it, you are still able to vote early in-person at your local registrar's office or you may be eligible to have another ballot sent to you. You may also cast a provisional ballot at your regular polling place on Election Day.

What if I change my mind and would rather vote in person?

If you have not returned your ballot yet, you may vote in person either during early voting or at your polling place on Election Day. If you have requested or received an absentee by mail ballot but would rather vote in person, please bring your unopened ballot with you when you go to vote. If you have lost or did not receive your ballot, you may either vote early in person at your registrar's office or cast a provisional ballot at your polling place on Election Day.

What is a ballot drop-off location?

For the November Election, you are able to drop-off your ballot at a number of locations including your local registrar's office. Your county or city may have other locations, which you can find on your county or city's website. On Election Day, you can also drop off your voted absentee ballot at any polling place in the county or city in which you are registered to vote.

Where can I drop-off my ballot?

You can return your ballot to a drop-off location at your local registrar's office, found [here](#), or at any satellite location in your city or county. Additionally, your county or city may have other locations, which you can find on your county or city's website.

On Election Day, you can also drop off your voted absentee ballot at any polling place in the county or city in which you are registered to vote. You can look up your polling place [here](#).

What if I have an emergency and need to vote absentee by mail?

You can apply to vote absentee by mail any time through October 23, 2020. If you have an emergency after that date and need to vote absentee by mail, contact your registrar as soon as possible. You can use our registrar look-up tool found [here](#) to find your registrar's contact information.

I would like to vote absentee by-mail, but I require assistance. What are my options?

Indicate on your absentee ballot application that you will require assistance in voting. When you receive your absentee ballot, it will include a form for your assistant to sign. If you do not have someone who can assist you, then you may bring your absentee ballot to your local registrar's office and receive assistance there. If you are a print disabled voter, you have the option in the November election of using a ballot marking tool. Please contact your registrar for more information on utilizing this tool. You can use our registrar look-up tool found [here](#) to find your registrar's contact information.

VOTING ABSENTEE IN-PERSON

What is absentee in-person?

"Absentee in-person" refers to the process of voting in-person any time during the 45 days before Election Day. It is commonly referred to as "early voting."

When can I vote absentee in-person/vote early?

The early voting period begins on Friday, September 18 and continues through Saturday, October 31. Early voting is available during regular business hours and on Saturdays, October 24th and 31st.

Where can I vote early?

You can vote early at your local general registrar's office. You can find your registrar's office online [here](#) using the Department of Election's registrar look-up tool. Your county or city may also have additional locations where you can vote early. Check your city or county's website for information about these additional locations.

Do I need to complete an absentee ballot application to vote early?

No application is required to vote early. You will simply need to go to your local registrar's office or a voter satellite office during the early voting period, and provide a form of identification or sign an ID Confirmation Statement.

What are acceptable forms of identification for voting absentee in-person?

Acceptable forms of identification (ID) include but are not limited to a valid Virginia driver's license, a valid United States passport, a college ID, a Virginia high school ID, a valid employee ID containing a photograph of the voter, or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, or government check. You can find a full list [here](#).

Additionally, any voter who does not show one of the forms of identification listed above may vote after signing an ID Confirmation Statement.

I would like to vote early, but I require assistance. What are my options?

A voter who requires assistance in voting by reason of physical disability, inability to read or write, or who is over age sixty-five may receive assistance from an officer of election. Any individual who requires assistance if he is blind may designate an officer of election or any other person to assist him other than the voter's employer.

MILITARY AND OVERSEAS VOTERS

I am in the military and/or will be overseas on Election Day. What are my absentee voting options?

Members of the military and overseas citizens who are registered to vote in Virginia may apply for an absentee ballot using either the regular absentee ballot application found [here](#) or the federal postcard application (FPCA) which is available through the Federal Voting Assistance Program at www.fvap.gov.

I just moved out of the country. Can I still vote in the November Election?

Yes. As long as you are still a citizen of the United States and you either still claim a residence in Virginia or your last residence in the United States was in Virginia, you may vote in the General Election in November.

I am in the military and/or will be overseas on Election Day. What is my deadline to request an absentee ballot?

October 23, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. Because of the time it takes to mail a ballot to an overseas location and mail it back, you may want to consider taking advantage of the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot. The form and instructions are available at www.fvap.gov.

I am in the military and/or will be overseas on Election Day. What is my deadline to return my absentee ballot?

Absentee ballots have to be postmarked by Election Day and received by your local registrar by noon on Friday, November 6.

I am in the military and/or will be overseas on Election Day. May I receive my ballot electronically?

Yes. Military and overseas voters are entitled to receive their unvoted ballots electronically. However, you will still need to return your voted ballot by-mail.

I am in the military and/or will be overseas on Election Day. May I submit a federal write-in absentee ballot (FWAB) for the November Election?

Yes. The federal write-in absentee ballot is a back-up option for military and overseas voters who are unable to meet the deadline to apply for or submit an absentee ballot. For more information on the federal write-in absentee ballot (FWAB), see the Federal Voting Assistance program website at www.fvap.gov.

I am in the military and/or overseas. How can I guarantee my voted ballot will make it back on time?

We encourage you to apply for and return your ballot as soon as possible to give your ballot time to make its way to your registrar's office. Additionally, the federal write-in absentee ballot is a back-up option for military and overseas voters who are unable to meet the deadline to apply for or submit an absentee ballot. For more information on the federal write-in absentee ballot (FWAB), see the Federal Voting Assistance program website at www.fvap.gov.

Am I able to track my ballot?

If you requested to receive your absentee ballot by mail, then you can track it using our absentee ballot look-up tool at the link [here](#).

If you requested to receive your ballot by e-mail, check the status of your ballot to see if it has been sent. To check the status of your ballot, go to our Citizen Portal website found [here](#).