

FAQ: Voting Options for 2020 in Jackson County

1. I received or downloaded an application to Vote by Mail in the November 2020 election. When should I complete and return the application to the County Clerk in order to receive a vote by mail ballot?

If you have decided that you **do** want to vote by mail consider returning a completed application to vote by mail now. Although the law provides that vote by mail applications can be requested until the end of October, potential mail delays could mean your ballot might arrive after November 3. Ballots must be post-marked no later than Election Day, November 3 to be counted. Better yet, consider voting and returning your ballot by mid-October so your ballot will be received and your vote **counted** on November 3.

If you have decided that you **might** want to vote by mail, consider returning a completed application to vote by mail any time now until mid-October. You will receive a vote by mail ballot but if you decide to vote in person, you CAN, however, **DO NOT DESTROY THE VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT**. Either bring the ballot to an early voting site at Carbondale Civic Center, SIU Student Center or Jackson County Courthouse or bring the ballot to the polls on November 3.

2. When will I receive my vote by mail ballot?

On September 24, County Clerks will begin mailing ballots to voters who have requested an application. If you requested an application by October 1, a ballot should be received by October 6. After October 1 County Clerks will mail ballots to applicants within two business days of receipt.

3. What should I do if I have applied for a vote by mail ballot and have not received one?

Call your County Clerk. In Jackson County: 684-7366.

4. What should I do upon receiving my vote by mail packet?

The packet will include 4 items: ballot, BALLOT CERTIFICATION sheet, SECRECY BALLOT ENVELOPE and the mailing envelope that is addressed to the County Clerk.

- Vote the ballot; use a black pen to blacken the ovals next to choices.
- Insert the completed ballot into the SECRECY BALLOT ENVELOPE.

- Complete and sign the BALLOT CERTIFICATION sheet. *Call the County Clerk (687-7366) if you have questions about filling in this form. **Note that the line for the required signature is at the bottom of the sheet.***
- Place the SECRECY BALLOT ENVELOPE with ballot inside into the larger mailing envelope. The outside of the mailing envelope will be addressed to the Jackson County Clerk and include your return address.
- Place the completed, signed BALLOT CERTIFICATION sheet into the mailing envelope, keeping it outside and separate from the privacy envelope.
- Seal the mailing envelope.

These are your options for returning the ballot to the County Clerk:

A. Return via U.S. Mail: Place 70 cents postage on the outside envelope. Although legislation allows that ballots postmarked by November 3 will be counted, to avoid mail delays and be sure your vote will be counted, consider mailing no later than October 19.

B. Return via "secure collection site," a dropbox on the west side of the Jackson County Courthouse in Murphysboro. No postage required.

C. Deliver the ballot in person to the Jackson County Clerk's office on or before November 3.

No matter how you return the vote by mail ballot, be sure the ballot certification sheet is signed!!!! The signature line is at the BOTTOM of the Ballot Certification Sheet.

Reminder: If you applied for and received a vote by mail ballot and decide you prefer to vote in person at an early voting site or at the polls on Election Day, you can BUT DO NOT DESTROY (OR LOSE) THE VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT! Take the ballot with you and surrender at the in person voting site. You will be given a new ballot to vote. If your vote by mail ballot is lost, you can vote provisionally.

5. How does the County Clerk ensure a vote by mail ballot was completed by you, the person to whom it was mailed?

Just as with in person voting, election judges will look at your signature to determine whether it matches your signature on file in the County Clerk's office. A pan-

el of three bipartisan judges will verify the signature. Your signature is considered valid unless all three judges determine the signature is NOT a match.

6. Can my ballot be rejected?

Yes, vote by mail ballots can be rejected for these reasons:

- A. Lack of signature.
- B. All three election judges determine signature on ballot does not match your signature on file.
- C. The vote by mail envelope was delivered to the County Clerk opened.
- D. You have already voted in person by the time the vote by mail ballot is received.

7. If my ballot is rejected or spoiled will I have a chance to vote?

If a ballot is rejected the County Clerk must notify you within two days after the rejection or within one day if the rejection occurs after Election Day and in all cases before the close of counting provisional ballots (November 17). You will be notified through mail, email or both as to the reason for rejection.

If the ballot was rejected based on the signature or lack of a signature, the voter will be permitted to submit a statement that the voter cast the ballot and upon receipt, the ballot will be deemed valid and counted.

If the ballot was rejected because the envelope was delivered opened, the voter will be permitted to vote in person or can request another vote by mail ballot, provided the voter submits an application and casts a new ballot prior to the close of polls on Election Day.

If your ballot is spoiled by over voting or spoiled in any way you will be notified and allowed to obtain another ballot.

Note: If voting by mail, it is recommended to return the ballot early, by October 19th, to ensure time to rectify ballot rejection and make your vote count.

