

## ABSENTEE OR MAIL-IN VOTING



### TO VOTE IN VERMONT

Vermont residents must be registered with their Town Clerk's office to be eligible to vote. Registration can be done in person at your Town Clerk's office or online with the Vermont Secretary of State at <https://olvr.vermont.gov/>. You are not considered registered to vote until your application is approved by the Town Clerk, which can take two to four weeks.

To have an Absentee Ballot mailed to your home, your address must be correct. Check your voter registration status for accuracy at your Town Clerk's office or [MyVoterPage, https://mvp.vermont.gov/](https://mvp.vermont.gov/). Login to the page using your personal information and, once there, you may update your registration information, request and track the status of an absentee ballot, locate your polling place, view a sample ballot, listing of candidates for upcoming elections, and more.

**Early voting begins at the time the ballots are sent to registered voters.**

## **ABOUT EARLY & ABSENTEE OR MAIL-IN VOTING**

### **How do I request an early or absentee ballot?**

You may request an early or absentee ballot by telephone, fax, email, mail, or in person. You may also request and track the status of your absentee ballot online using [My Voter Page](#).

When you use the *My Voter Page*, your request will be instantly sent to the Town Clerk, who will need to approve it before issuing you a ballot. Using this resource may significantly reduce the time it takes for your Town Clerk to receive and process your request.

If you have the ballot and certificate sent by email or fax, the clerk will include instructions for you to print and return the ballot and envelopes. However, under Vermont law, ballot(s) must be physically returned to the Town Clerk sealed inside the Absentee Certificate Envelope (with voter's original signature).

You can use a single form to request early voter absentee ballots for local, primary, and general elections during a single calendar year, if the "mail to" address is the same for both elections. Please note that a request for an early voter absentee ballot must be made every election year.

### **What if I did not receive my ballot?**

If you do not receive your early voter absentee ballot within a reasonable time after your request, you may apply to the Town Clerk for a duplicate ballot. A sworn statement affirming that you have not received the original ballot or that the ballot was lost must accompany the application.

If a duplicate early voter absentee ballot is issued and both the duplicate and original early voter absentee ballots are received before the close of polls on Election Day, the ballot with the earlier postmark or received first shall be counted.

### **What if I lose my ballot or make a mistake?**

If you lose your early voter absentee ballot after you receive it or if you did not receive an early voter absentee ballot that was mailed to you, you can sign an affidavit for lost or undelivered early voter absentee ballot and the Town Clerk will provide you a replacement ballot. You may receive up to a total of three absentee ballots.

### **Can a voter change his or her mind and vote in person?**

A voter who received an early voter absentee ballot can change his or her mind and vote at the polls on Election Day. To be eligible to do this, the voter must bring in the early voter absentee ballot as well as the envelope and any other voting materials received. The presiding officer will return the unused early voter absentee ballots and envelope to the Town Clerk, who will make a record of their return on the list of early or absentee voters and treat them as spoiled or unused ballots.

A voter who returned their voted early voter absentee ballot cannot change his or her mind and vote at the polls, even if that ballot has not yet been counted, it is considered a voted ballot and cannot be retracted.

### **What are the deadlines for requesting and returning Absentee Ballots?**

Requests for early voter absentee ballots must be submitted by 5 p.m. or close of the Town Clerk's office the day before the election.

In order to be counted, you must return your early voter absentee ballot to the Town Clerk's office before the close of office the day before the election or to the polling place before 7 p.m. Election Day.

### **Are individuals removed from the Voter Checklist after a set period of time?**

Per the purging process set up by federal law, voters who do not vote in two elections (held every two years) and do not respond to a notice sent by the local Board of Civil Authority via first-class mail, may be removed from the Voter Checklist. However, [17 V.S.A § 2147](#) provides that a voter removed from the Voter Checklist in error can be added back to the checklist. Once a voter has registered in Vermont, there is no need to re-take the Voter's Oath, but the registrant will need to indicate where he or she was registered in Vermont previously.

### **Why would my ballot be marked defective?**

When an early or absentee voter is not legally qualified to vote or has voted in person or if the affidavit on any envelope is insufficient, the certificate not signed or the voted ballot not in the voted ballot envelope, or, in the case of a primary vote, the early or absentee voter has failed to return the

unvoted primary ballots, the envelope must be marked "defective" and the ballots inside may not be counted.

### **Who can transport ballots?**

#### **In-home Ballot Delivery**

If you cannot go to the polls because of sickness or disability, an absentee ballot can be delivered to your home on Election Day. You may request an early voter absentee ballot up until 5 p.m. the day before the election. Two justices of the peace (of different parties when possible) will deliver a ballot to you and will bring the ballot back to the polling place so it can be placed in the ballot box and counted.

### **What happens if there are not enough justices of the peace of different parties to deliver early voter absentee ballots to voters who are sick or disabled on Election Day?**

If there are not enough justices of the peace from different parties to make up the required number of pairs, the remaining pairs may be selected by the Board of Civil Authority from lists of registered voters submitted by chairs of the town committees of political parties and from among registered voters who, in written application to the board, state they are not affiliated with any political party. *See [17 V.S.A. § 2538](#).*

## **ADDITIONAL APPLICATION INFORMATION**

An early or absentee voter, or an authorized family member or health care provider acting in the voter's behalf, may apply for an early voter absentee ballot by telephone, in person, or in writing. "Family member" means a person's spouse, children, brothers, sisters, parents, spouse's parents, grandparents, and spouse's grandparents.

Any other authorized person may apply in writing or in person; provided, however, that voter authorization to such a person shall not be given by response to a robotic phone call. An authorized person must identify the organization they work with, if applicable.

**For Election Updates and Info: [SOS.Vermont.Gov/Elections](https://www.sos.vermont.gov/elections)**

## **MILITARY AND OVERSEAS VOTER ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUESTS**

For uniformed service members and US citizens living abroad, the [Federal Voting Assistance Program](#) (FVAP) established by the Department of Defense, ensures you have the tools and resources to vote from anywhere in the world. Fill out the [Federal Post Card Application](#) (FPCA) which serves as, both, a voter registration application and absentee ballot request. It is available through various branches of the military and U.S. embassies and consulates, or online, [www.FVAP.gov/election-materials](http://www.FVAP.gov/election-materials). If requested, absentee ballots may also be sent by email. We strongly recommend that military or overseas voters request an early or absentee ballot at least 45 days prior to the election.

## **VOTING FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS**

**I am attending college in Vermont but want to vote a ballot from my home state. How do I do this?**

Go to the League of Women Voters Voter Guide website, [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org), enter your state to obtain voting requirements.

**Or.** Check with the Secretary of State or Elections Board in your home state to find out how to register to vote and/or request an absentee ballot. Most states have this information online. Your College Registrar should also have information for you on registering and voting in your home state.

**Can college students who would like to vote in Vermont instead of their home state register on Election Day and vote?**

Yes. As long as you consider Vermont your primary residence. Register online at [My Voter Page](#).

**My son or daughter is away at college, can I request an absentee ballot for them?**

Yes. A voter's near relative may request an absentee ballot if their child is a registered voter. The request form must include all required information, including the voter's driver's license or state identification number or last four of their Social Security number.