



The Minnesota Participation Project: Nonpartisan Nonprofit Voter Mobilization

Absentee Voting in Minnesota

If you or someone you know will be unable to make it to the polls for either the primary election or the general election, you can still make your voice heard. This can be done in one of two ways: 1) by requesting and returning your absentee ballot in the mail, or 2) going in person to your county's polling place on one of their absentee voting days.

Requirements for absentee voting

In Minnesota, citizens are allowed to vote absentee ***only*** for the following reasons:

- Absent from your precinct on Election Day
- Illness or disability
- Serving as an election judge in another precinct
- Religious discipline or religious holiday or observance
- Eligible emergency declared by the governor or quarantine declared by the federal or state government

Identification requirements

Absentee ballot applications must include one of the following forms of identification:

- Applicant's driver's license or identification card number
- Last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number
- A statement that the applicant has none of the above

This identification requirement, effective 2010, will replace the signature match process.

In-person absentee voting

You may cast an absentee ballot in person, at your county auditor's office and in many cases your city or township clerk's office, starting 46 days prior to Election Day. This option is available on weekdays during business hours. In addition, the county auditor's office must be open for absentee balloting from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the Saturday before the election and until 5 p.m. on the day before the election. Contact your county auditor for more information-- find contact information at: <https://minnesota.overseasvotefoundation.org/overseas/eod.htm>.

Mail-in absentee voting

Step One: Request Your Absentee Ballot

You may have an absentee ballot sent to you by completing [an Absentee Ballot Application](#) which can be found on the Secretary of State's website, and sending it to your county auditor by mail, fax, or email (print off the application, sign it, scan it, and attach to an email as a PDF). Your ballot will be sent to you when it is ready - at least 46 days prior to the election if you applied for an absentee ballot in advance. If you apply for an absentee ballot within 46 days of the election, your ballot will arrive within a day or two of your application being received.

A single application may be used to request a ballot for both the primary election and the general election. You may also request in your application to be placed on a permanent absentee voter list. If you elect to do so, each year your ballot will be mailed to the address you provided until you request to be removed from this list. Your request should be sent to the Elections Office in your county.

Step Two: Review your ballot and accompanying materials

Once your application has been processed, you will receive a packet of materials which will include: an unmarked absentee ballot, a tan secrecy envelope for your ballot, and a white return envelope for your ballot.

Step Three: Vote!

Once you have received your ballot, you can cast your vote. **Your completed absentee ballot must be received by your county auditor by Election Day, or it will not be counted.**

There are four ways you can return your absentee ballot:

1. Mail back ballot in the pre-paid envelope provided by county auditor; must arrive by 3 p.m. on Election Day
2. Deliver ballot in person to your county auditor until 5 p.m. the day before the election
3. Have someone else return your completed ballot, sealed in its envelope, to your county auditor until 3 p.m. on Election Day (persons delivering ballots may not do so for more than three voters)*
4. Pay for package delivery service to return ballot to county auditor by 3 p.m. on Election Day

*Only the following voters may authorize an agent to pick up and return an absentee ballot for them: Patients in hospitals, residential treatment centers, and nursing homes, residents of battered women's shelters, assisted living facilities, voters who are disabled, or voters who would have difficulty getting to the polls because of health reasons. See the [Secretary of State's website](#) for more information.

Important Dates for Absentee Voters

Friday, June 25 Absentee ballots available for the state primary election.

Friday, September 17 Absentee ballots available for the general election.

August 7, from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

August 9, until 5 p.m.

October 30, from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

November 1, until 5 p.m.

} Counties and designated municipalities must be open for absentee voting

November 1, 5 p.m. Deadline for to turn in absentee ballot in-person.

November 2, 3 p.m. Deadline for an individual delivering an absentee ballot on behalf of an absentee voter or mailed-in ballots