

# Absentee Voting Eligibility

A voter may cast an absentee ballot if he or she

- **EXPECTS TO BE ABSENT FROM THE COUNTY on election day**
- **IS ILL OR HAS A PHYSICAL DISABILITY that prevents a trip to the polling place**
- **IS PHYSICALLY INCAPACITATED AND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO VOTE IN PERSON BECAUSE THEY CANNOT ACCESS THEIR ASSIGNED POLLING PLACE DUE TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING DISABILITIES (neurological, musculoskeletal, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, or other life-altering disorder that affects his or her ability to perform manual tasks, stand for any length of time, walk unassisted, see, hear or speak) AND: A) HE OR SHE IS AN ELDERLY VOTER AGED 65 OR OLDER; OR B) HE OR SHE IS A VOTER WITH A DISABILITY**
- **IS A REGISTERED ALABAMA VOTER LIVING OUTSIDE THE COUNTY, such as a member of the armed forces, a voter employed outside the United States, a college student, or a spouse or child of such a person**
- **IS AN APPOINTED ELECTION OFFICER OR POLL WATCHER at a polling place other than his or her regular polling place**
- **EXPECTS TO WORK A REQUIRED SHIFT, 10-HOURS OR MORE, that coincides with polling hours**
- **IS A CAREGIVER for a family member to the second degree of kinship by affinity or consanguinity and the family member is confined to his or her home**
- **IS CURRENTLY INCARCERATED in prison or jail and has not been convicted of a felony involving moral turpitude**

**The absentee ballot application must be received by the Absentee Election Manager by the 7th day prior to the election if delivered by mail and the 5th day prior to the election if delivered by hand.**

**EMERGENCY ABSENTEE VOTING applications can be made after the absentee deadline but no later than 5 PM on the day before the election, if the voter:**

- **is required by an employer under unforeseen circumstances to be unavailable at the polls on the day of the election**
- **is a caregiver of a person who requires emergency treatment by licensed physician within five days before an election**
- **has a family member to the second degree of kinship by affinity or consanguinity die within five days before an election**

**MEDICAL EMERGENCY ABSENTEE VOTING applications can be made by a voter who has a medical emergency requiring treatment from a licensed physician within 5 days of an election. During that 5 day period, the medical emergency absentee ballot application and the voted absentee ballot must be returned no later than noon on the day the election is held. The medical emergency absentee ballot application requires that the attending physician describe and certify the circumstances as constituting an emergency. The voter may designate someone to turn in the medical emergency absentee ballot application, receive the absentee ballot on behalf of the voter, and return the voted absentee ballot to the Absentee Election Manager on behalf of the voter.**

## **Absentee ballot application**

**To obtain an absentee ballot, write or visit the local Absentee Election Manager (usually the Circuit Clerk), request an absentee ballot, and provide the following:**

- **name and residential address (or other such information in order to verify voter registration)**
- **a copy of your valid photo identification**
- **election for which the ballot is requested**
- **reason for absence from polls on election day**

- party choice, if the election is a party primary. (It is not necessary to give a party choice for a general election; however, in a party primary a voter may participate in only one political party's primary; thus a choice must be designated so that the appropriate ballot can be provided. If the voter declines or fails to designate a choice for a primary or primary runoff ballot, the absentee election manager may send only the ballot for constitutional amendments.)
- address to which the ballot should be mailed
- voter signature. (Signature must be original, electronic signatures will not be accepted. If a mark is made in place of a signature, it must be witnessed.)

The absentee ballot application must be returned to the Absentee Election Manager by the voter in person (or by the voter's designee in the case of medical emergency voting), by U.S. Mail, or by commercial carrier. No absentee ballot application may be mailed in the same envelope as another voter's absentee ballot application.

Upon receiving the absentee ballot application, the Absentee Election Manager may request additional evidence on the reason for voting absentee if the voter has a history of absentee voting. Absentee ballot applications returned by mail must be received no later than 7 days before the election. Absentee ballot applications returned by hand must be received no later than 5 days before the election.

#### **BALLOT RECEIPT/RETURN**

If the absentee ballot application is approved, the Absentee Election Manager

- forwards the absentee ballot by U.S. Mail, or
- personally hands the absentee ballot to the voter (or to a designee in the case of medical emergency absentee voting)

#### **Ballot Procedure**

**The absentee ballot comes with 3 envelopes -- one plain (the secrecy envelope), one with an affidavit, or oath, printed on the outside, and one plain pre-addressed envelope, (the outer envelope). Once the voter casts the ballot, the procedure is as follows:**

- **Seal the ballot in the plain envelope**
- **Place the plain envelope inside the accompanying affidavit envelope**
- **Seal the affidavit envelope and complete the affidavit that is on the outside of the envelope**
- **Sign the affidavit and have the signature witnessed by either a notary public or two witnesses 18 years of age or older**

#### **WITNESSES OR NOTARIZATION**

**An absentee ballot cannot be counted unless the affidavit is notarized or has the signatures of two witnesses. Electronic or remote notarization is not permitted.**

**The voter has only the following legal ways to return the absentee ballot:**

- **forwards the absentee ballot by U.S. Mail**
- **forwards the absentee ballot by commercial carrier**
- **personally hands their own absentee ballot to the absentee election manager (or delivers by a designee in the case of emergency absentee voting)**

#### **VOTING DEADLINE**

**An absentee ballot returned by mail must be received by the Absentee Election Manager no later than noon on election day. If hand-delivered, the ballot must be in the office of the Absentee Election Manager by the close of business (but no later than 5 p.m.) on the day prior to the election.**