

# Absentee Voting Guide



Voting is one of the fundamental rights we have as citizens of this state and country. Everyone should make an effort to cast a ballot at each election.

Maine law makes it easy to cast an absentee ballot. You don't have to be out-of-town or have any other reason to take advantage of this easy way to vote at a time that is most convenient for you.

If you would like to vote by absentee ballot, please take a few moments to review the information below.

Make sure you have a voice in your future - cast a ballot.

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## What is absentee voting and how does it work?

Absentee voting allows you to cast a ballot without going to a voting place on Election Day.

## Who may vote absentee?

Any registered voter may cast an absentee ballot instead of voting in person at a voting place on Election Day.

You don't need to have a specific reason or be unable to vote at the voting place on Election Day to receive an absentee ballot.

## What are the steps to voting by absentee ballot?

1. Complete an absentee ballot application to get a ballot; then,
2. Fill out and deliver the ballot back to the municipal clerk, or to the Secretary of State, Division of Elections (if you are a [Uniformed Service or Overseas voter](#)).

## When can I request a ballot?

Absentee ballots may be requested beginning 3 months before Election Day, and until the 3rd business day prior to the election, unless special circumstances exist. Make your request early to allow enough time for the ballot to be mailed to you.

## Is there a deadline to request an absentee ballot?

The deadline to request an absentee ballot, including a ballot voted in the presence of the clerk, is the Thursday, before the election, unless the voter completes a special circumstances application, stating one of four allowable reasons for requesting an absentee ballot after this deadline. The four reasons are:

- An unexpected absence from the municipality during the entire time the polls are open on election day;
- A physical disability,
- An inability to travel to the polls because the voter is a resident of a coastal island ward or precinct; or
- An incapacity or illness that has resulted in the voter being unable to leave home or a treatment facility.

This special circumstances application must be signed **by the voter**. This application can be obtained from your municipal clerk or from the Secretary of State.

## **How do I apply for and receive an absentee ballot?**

Contact the municipal clerk in the town or city where you are registered to vote, UOCAVA voters will request an absentee ballot directly from the Secretary of State at [www.maine.gov](http://www.maine.gov)

Do not contact the Secretary of State, Division of Elections if you are requesting a ballot for a Municipal Election. Contact the Town of Falmouth.

You can make a telephone request for your own ballot, which will be mailed to the address you provide to the clerk.

You can request your own ballot electronically using the Secretary of State's online absentee ballot request service. The approved online form can be found at the following web site: <http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/AbsenteeBallot/index.pl>

The electronic service is **NOT** available for municipal elections.

You can make a written request by completing an absentee ballot application in person. Additionally, you can obtain a ballot for an immediate family member in this same way. A ballot will be mailed to the voter directly or to an immediate family member making the request. Your municipal clerk can tell you who is considered an immediate family member under the law.

**NOTE:** Ballots obtained by the voter or an immediate family member do not require witnesses, unless the voter receives assistance from another person in reading or marking the ballot. Applications are available starting 3 months before the election from the municipal clerk or online at: <http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/AbsenteeBallot/index.pl>

## **Can I vote by absentee ballot in person somewhere?**

Yes. You may vote absentee at the clerk's office as soon as absentee ballots are available. Absentee ballots are available at least 30 days before the election at the municipal clerk's office. You don't need to complete an application if you vote in person at the clerk's office.

## **When must my voted ballot be returned to my municipal clerk?**

To be counted, voted absentee ballots must be received by the municipal clerk by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

## **Are there any other ways to receive an absentee ballot?**

You may make a written request for a third person? ( someone other than the voter or the voter's immediate family member) to obtain and hand-deliver an absentee ballot.

You must designate, in a written request or application, the specific third person who will handle and deliver the ballot. Only this designated third person may handle the absentee ballot.

Ballots cast in this way must be witnessed by either a notary public, a municipal clerk, a clerk of courts, or 2 other witnesses.

## **What if I still have questions? For more information please contact:**

Town of Falmouth, Town Clerk's Department	(207) 699-5320 Registrar
271 Falmouth Road	(207) 699-5305 Clerk
Falmouth, Maine 04105	(207) 699-5308 Deputy Clerk

<http://www.falmouthme.org/town-clerk/pages/election-information>

Office of the Secretary of State  
Division of Elections  
101 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0101  
(207) 624-7650  
[cec.elections@maine.gov](mailto:cec.elections@maine.gov)  
[www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/](http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/)