

Absentee Voting Information

In West Virginia, certain registered voters may receive and vote an absentee ballot by mail. This page provides information regarding absentee voting eligibility, process and required forms.

Eligibility

Eligibility to vote absentee in West Virginia requires two basic criteria: (1) confinement or not being present in the county during in-person voting, and (2) a permitted reason/excuse.

A registered voter may vote an absentee ballot by mail if the voter is “confined,” or not in their home county, for the entire duration of in-person voting (both the early voting period and on Election Day), for one of the many reasons and excuses allowed by law.

Permitted Reasons and Excuses to Vote Absentee by Mail

Voters not able to vote in person during Early Voting or Election Day due to one of the following circumstances may vote an absentee ballot by mail:

- Illness, injury or other medical reason (**includes confinement due to COVID-19***)
- Immobility due to a disability or “extreme advanced age” (this term is undefined in law; immobilized voters must self-identify)
- Incarceration or home detention (does not include individuals serving a sentence following conviction of a felony, treason, or election bribery)
- Work hours and distance from county seat
- Inaccessible early voting site and polling place
- Personal or business travel**
- Attendance at college or other place of education or training**
- Temporary residence outside of the county**
- Service as an elected or appointed state or federal official**

* For voters who take precautions due to COVID-19, the term “confinement” does not require strict, uninterrupted isolation for determining eligibility. Voters with certain medical conditions at high risk of suffering severe illness from COVID-19, and their caregivers, who are taking good-faith precautions to limit exposure to other individuals by following official guidance from state and federal health officials are eligible to vote absentee. See Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance for more details: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html> (Last updated May 2, 2022).

** indicates that the voter must receive ballot at an address outside of the county.

Electronic Absentee for Voters with Certain Physical Disabilities

- Voters with physical disabilities that prevent them from voting in person and from voting paper ballots without assistance may request to receive and return their ballots electronically. View our [Electronic Absentee Informational Flyer](#).

Military and Overseas (UOCAVA) Voters Eligibility for Mail and Electronic Ballot Delivery and Return

The following voters are covered by the [Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act \(UOCAVA\)](#):

- Members of the United States uniformed services and Merchant Marines on active duty
- Their spouses and dependents

- United States citizens temporarily or permanently residing outside the country

Electronic Absentee for First Responders Called Away on Duty

Voters who are qualified first responders called away to respond to an emergency outside of their county of residence during early voting and election day may request to vote electronic absentee. A qualified first responder includes individuals with specialized training who arrive and provide aid at the scene of an emergency, accident, or disaster. Qualified first responders may apply for an electronic ballot between the 13th day before the election and 5:00 PM the day before the election.

Special Absentee Voting List Eligibility

Voters may apply and receive a ballot in every election for one of the reasons below:

- Participation in the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP)
- A permanent, physical disability prevents voter from going to the polling place

Emergency Absentee Voting Eligibility

Voters admitted to a hospital during the 7 days leading up to Election Day may vote an “emergency” absentee ballot. Eligible voters must call the County Clerk to have an application and ballot delivered to them personally according to the County policy.

Note that county commissions may adopt different policies before each election for emergency absentee voting. Voters must check with their county clerk directly to determine the local options. The maximum options available for voluntary adoption are:

- Voters who reside in a nursing home within the county for less than thirty days
- Voters in a hospital or other licensed health care facility within an adjacent county or within thirty-five miles of the county seat; and
- Voters who become confined, on or after the seventh day preceding an election, to a specific location within the county because of illness, injury, physical disability, immobility due to advanced age, or another medical reason.