

ABSENTEE I: BY-MAIL

Participant Guide



Wisconsin Elections Commission
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Welcome!

Thank you for attending today's training about absentee voting. This training may be a refresher for some and brand new for others. Instructors will start with the basics and the concepts will get more complicated as we progress. Feel free to ask questions along the way.

This training is designed to be conversational and interactive so the more you put in, the more you will get out of it. The participant guide provides resources for you to reference that are relevant to the content in the presentation.

We hope you find this training beneficial and we appreciate the opportunity to share our expertise!

About WEC

The Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) was established in 2016 by the Wisconsin Legislature to carry out a wide range of functions related to statewide elections administration.

The WEC serves as a resource for local clerks by providing them with education, training, and support materials. The agency also fulfills several statewide election responsibilities, such as helping ensure compliance with federal and state election laws, ensuring election accuracy, and maintaining the statewide voter registration database.

The WEC is governed by six Commissioners, with three Commissioners representing the Democratic Party and three representing the Republican Party. Two of the Democrats and two of the Republicans are selected by their respective Legislative leadership. One Democrat and one Republican must be former municipal or county clerks and are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate.

Absentee Terms

- **Absentee ballot** – ballot not issued at a polling place on Election Day
- **Curing a ballot** – fixing the mistakes on a ballot so it can be legally counted
- **Elector** – a US citizen who is at least 18 years of age, has resided at their voting address for at least 28 days, and is not disqualified from voting
- **Indefinitely confined** – a voter who has difficulty getting to the polls due to illness, age, disability, or any other circumstance that would prevent in-person voting
- **Military Voters** – absentee voters who are Members of a uniformed service or the U.S. Merchant Marine, Civilian employees of the United States and civilians officially attached to a uniformed service who are serving outside the United States, Peace Corps volunteers, spouses and dependents of those listed in the above categories residing with or accompanying them
- **Overseas Voter** – an absentee voter who is overseas temporarily or permanently
- **Proof of Residence** – a document that establishes a registrant's connection to a particular location
- **Provider** – Usually a county that does WisVote entry for relier municipalities
- **Relier** – Municipality that relies on a provider to do WisVote entry
- **Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)** – 1986 Act that protects the voting rights of members of uniformed and overseas U.S. citizens
- **Witness** – a US citizen (unless voter is overseas) who is at least 18 years of age who witnesses you signing your absentee ballot

Are there other terms you have heard that you would like to have defined?

Absentee Elector; definition. Wis. Stat. §6.85(1)

An absent elector is any otherwise qualified elector who for any reason is unable or unwilling to appear at the polling place in his or her ward or election district.

Wis. Stat. §6.20

Any qualified elector of this state who registers* may vote by absentee ballot.

** Military voters do not have to register to vote absentee.*

Timeline and Deadlines

Absentee before IPAV begins:

- Clerks cannot accept absentee ballot requests in person before IPAV begins!
- State law requires a ballot be sent by mail to each voter with an active absentee request on file 47 days prior to the Presidential Preference Primary (overseas and military voters only), partisan primary, and general election and 21 days before all other elections
- Federal law requires a ballot be sent by mail to each military and overseas voter with an active absentee request on file 45 days prior to any elections with federal contests
- Municipal clerk must send absent elector a ballot within 1 business day of receiving the request

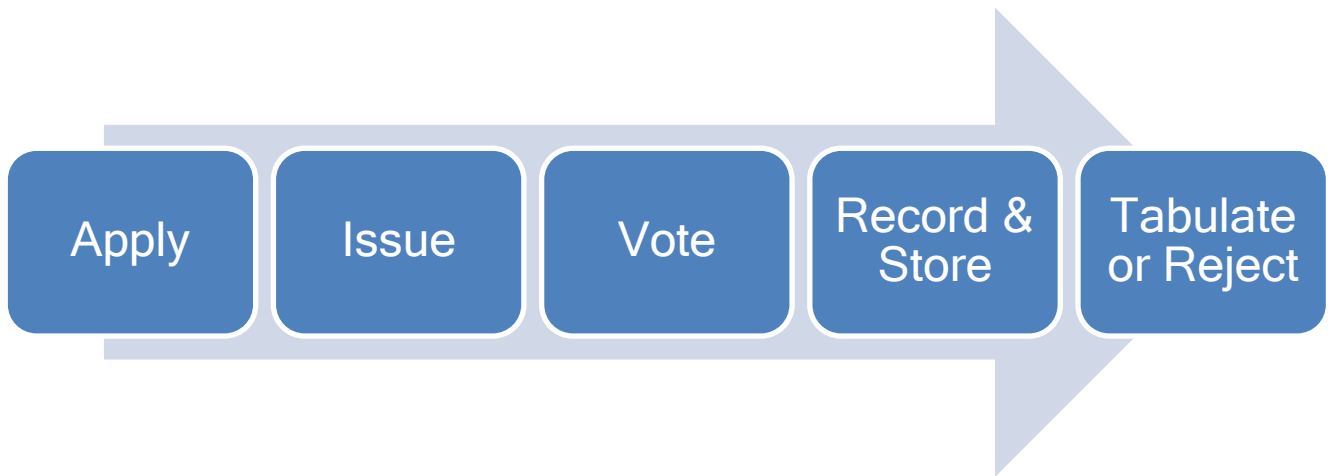
Deadlines for electors to make an absentee ballot request:

- Regular and overseas electors:
 - Online and by mail: Thursday before an election (single election) or Friday before an election (calendar-year)
 - In-person: the last day the clerk is offering IPAV.
- Military electors not away: Friday before the election.
- Hospitalized voters may request that a ballot be brought to them by an appointed agent any time in the 7 days preceding the election.
- Sequestered jurors and military away from home may request ballots on Election Day

Deadline to return or cure an absentee ballot:

- 8pm on Election Day

Absentee Process



Application Types

- Single election – voters select the election they want a ballot
- Calendar Year – voters choose to have all ballots in the year sent to them
- All future elections – only indefinitely confined voters may request this and the application is deactivated when they request, or if they vote in person or don't return a ballot

Application Requirements

	Regular/ Temporary O/S*	Military*/ Permanently O/S*	Indefinitely Confined
Request in writing	✓	✓	✓
Election(s) they want ballot(s) for	✓	✓	
Voter name	✓	✓	✓
Address/electronic delivery point*	✓	✓	✓
Photo ID (on file or attached)	✓		

Returned Absentee Ballots

Reviewing Certificates

Look for:

- Voter Signature
- Vote date of birth if military or Permanently Overseas
- Witness Signature
- Witness Address
- Witness Printed Name

SUFFICIENT OR INSUFFICIENT?

STEP 2 VOTER must complete this part

I certify, subject to the penalties for false statements of Wis. Stat. § 12.60(1)(b), that:

- I am a resident of the ward or of the aldermanic district of the municipality in the county of the state of Wisconsin indicated hereon OR I am entitled to vote in the ward or aldermanic district at the election indicated hereon
- I am not voting at any other location in this election
- I am unable or unwilling to appear at the polling place in the ward on Election Day, or I have changed my residence within the state from one ward to another less than 28 days before the election
- I displayed the ballot unmarked to the witness and in the presence of no other person marked the ballot and enclosed and sealed it in this envelope in a manner that no one but myself and an assistant under s. 6.87 (5), if I requested assistance, could know how I voted
- I requested this ballot and this is the original or a copy of that request

X *Annie Hog*


Voter Signature

Certification of Assistant (if applicable)
I certify that the voter is unable to sign their name due to a disability and that I signed the voter's name at the direction and request of the voter

Assistant Signature

STEP 3 WITNESS must complete this part

I the undersigned witness, subject to the penalties for false statements of Wis. Stat. § 12.60(1)(b), certify that:


WITNESS REQUIRED

- I am an adult U.S. citizen
- The above statements are true and the voting procedure was executed as stated
- I am not a candidate for any office on the enclosed ballot (except in the case of an incumbent municipal clerk).
- I did not solicit or advise the elector to vote for or against any candidate or measure

X *Angelica Fairbanks*

Witness Signature

Angelica Fairbanks


Witness Printed Name

Witness Address (Number, Street Name, City)

STEP 2 VOTER must complete this part

I certify, subject to the penalties for false statements of Wis. Stat. § 12.60(1)(b), that:

- I am a resident of the ward or of the aldermanic district of the municipality in the county of the state of Wisconsin indicated hereon OR I am entitled to vote in the ward or aldermanic district at the election indicated hereon
- I am not voting at any other location in this election
- I am unable or unwilling to appear at the polling place in the ward on Election Day, or I have changed my residence within the state from one ward to another less than 28 days before the election
- I displayed the ballot unmarked to the witness and in the presence of no other person marked the ballot and enclosed and sealed it in this envelope in a manner that no one but myself and an assistant under s. 6.87 (5), if I requested assistance, could know how I voted
- I requested this ballot and this is the original or a copy of that request

X 

Voter Signature

Date of Birth 4 / 1 / 1980
(mm/dd/yyyy)


Certification of Assistant (if applicable)
I certify that the voter is unable to sign their name due to a disability and that I signed the voter's name at the direction and request of the voter

Adae Ann Long

Assistant signature

STEP 3 WITNESS must complete this part

I the undersigned witness, subject to the penalties for false statements of Wis. Stat. § 12.60(1)(b), certify that:


WITNESS REQUIRED

- I am at least 18 years old
- The above statements are true and the voting procedure was executed as stated
- I am not a candidate for any office on the enclosed ballot (except in the case of an incumbent municipal clerk).
- I did not solicit or advise the elector to vote for or against any candidate or measure

X *Aurora Goodrich*

Witness Signature

Aurora Goodrich

Witness Printed Name

Piazza del Cobosco, 1, 00184 Roma RM, Italy

Witness Address (Number, Street Name, City)

Voter Information

Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

Print clearly in blue or black ink, please see back for instructions.

Have you already registered and requested an absentee ballot?

Some states allow you to use this form to register and request ballots for future elections. Visit FVAP.gov for more details.

1. Who are you? Pick one.

For absent Uniformed Service members, their families, and citizens residing outside the United States. I am on active duty in the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine **-OR-** I am an eligible spouse or dependent. I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and I intend to return. I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and my intent to return is uncertain. I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, I have never lived in the United States.

Last name Thurible Suffix (Jr., II) Mr. Miss Mrs. Ms.
 First name Bletch Previous names (if applicable) _____
 Middle name _____ Birth date (MM/DD/YYYY) 12/20/2002
 Social Security Number 1234 Driver's license or State ID# _____

2. What is your U.S. voting residence address?

Your voting materials will not be sent to this address. See instructions on the other side of form.
 Street address 1340 2nd St Apt # _____
 City, town, village Village of Example State WI
 County Bartlett ZIP 54444

3. Where are you now? You MUST give your CURRENT address to receive your voting materials.

Your mailing address. (Different from above) 1 Chome -12-9 Yokoami
Sumida City, Tokyo 130-0015, Japan
 Your mail forwarding address. (If different from mailing address) _____

4. What is your contact information? This is so election officials can reach you about your request.

Provide the country code and area code with your phone and fax number. Do not use a Defense Switched Network (DSN) number.
 Email: _____ Phone: _____
 Alternate email: _____ Fax: _____

5. What are your preferences for future elections?

A. Do you want to register and request a ballot for all elections you are eligible to vote in? Yes No
 B. How do you want to receive voting materials from your election office? Mail Email or online Fax
 C. What is your political party for primary elections? _____

6. What additional information must you provide?

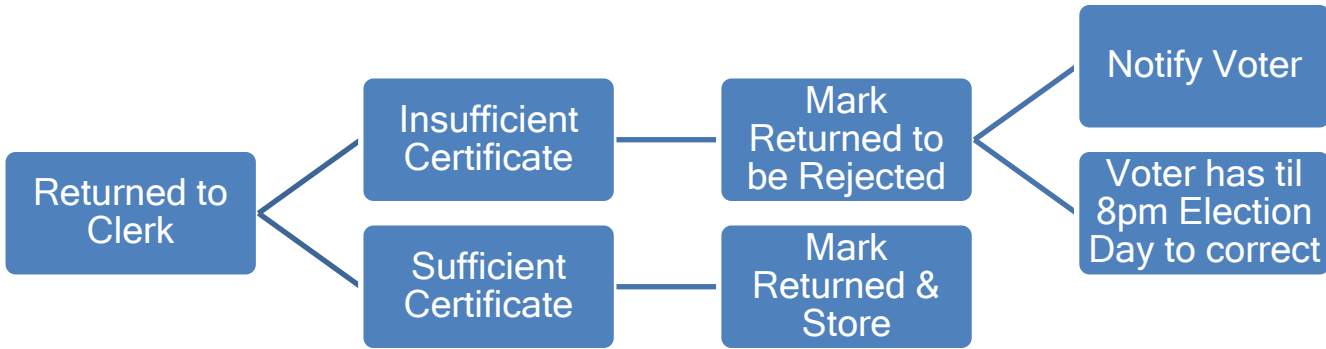
Alabama requires two witness signatures; Alaska, Virginia and Wisconsin, require one witness signature. Puerto Rico and Vermont need more information, see back for instructions. Additional state guidelines can be found at FVAP.gov.
Kendall Benton 1 Chome-12-9 Yokoami
Kendall Benton Sumida City, Tokyo 130-0015, Japan

7. You must read and sign this statement.

I swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury, that:
 ■ The information on this form is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a material misstatement of fact in completion of this document may constitute grounds for conviction of perjury.
 ■ I am a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age (or will be by the day of election), eligible to vote in the requested jurisdiction, and
 ■ I am not disqualified to vote due to having been convicted of a felony or other disqualifying offense, nor have I been adjudicated mentally incompetent; or if so, my voting rights have been reinstated; and
 ■ I am not registering, requesting a ballot, or voting in any other jurisdiction in the United States, except the jurisdiction cited in this voting form.
 ■ In voting, I have marked and sealed this ballot in private and have not allowed any person to observe the marking of this ballot, except those authorized to assist voters under State and Federal law.

Sign here **X** Bletch Thurible Today's date (MM/DD/YYYY) 01/01/2025

WHAT DO I DO WITH RETURNED BALLOTS?



WisVote Absentee Ballot Status Reasons

Active:

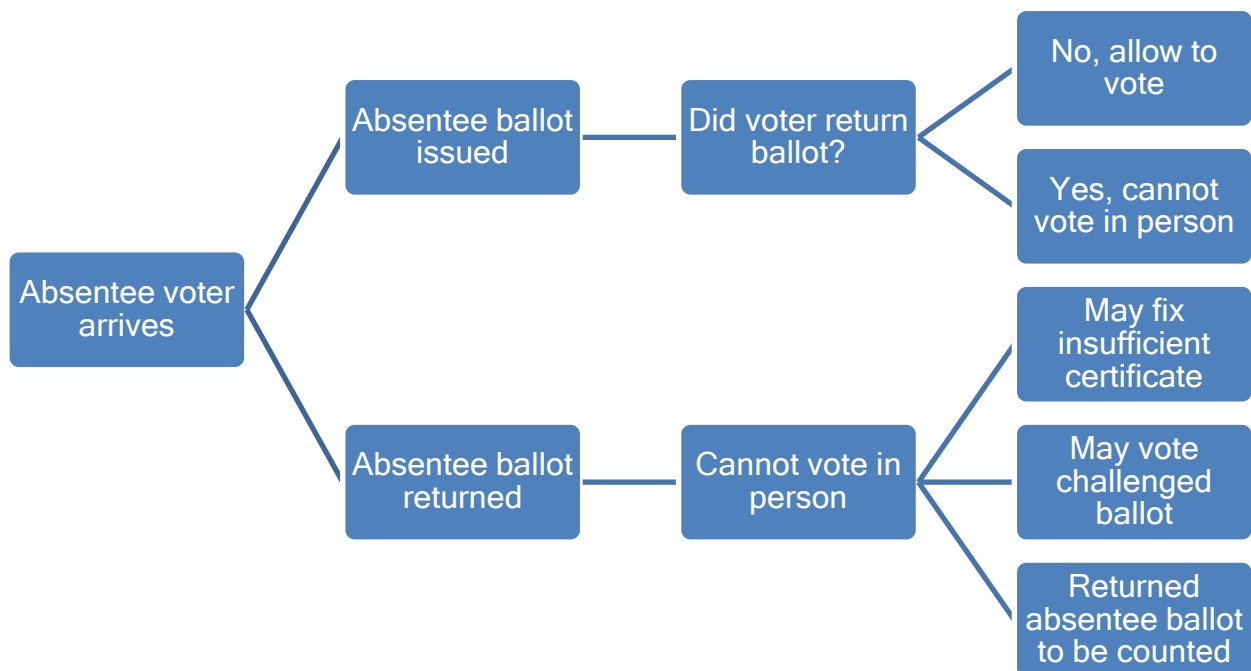
- returned
- not returned – not properly returned
- returned to be rejected – something is wrong with the certificate, the voter has been disqualified, the voter died before election day
- voter refused – care facility voter declined to vote
- sent to voter for resolution – certificate was insufficient and was mailed back to voter for correction

Deactivate:

- undeliverable – ballot came back via post office because it couldn't be delivered
- voter spoiled – voter decided not to vote the ballot and spoiled it
- admin action – the clerk or staff did something wrong in issuing the ballot
- voter requested – the voter decided not to vote absentee
- ballot not received – the ballot never arrived with the voter
- returned after deadline – ballot gets to clerk after election day

Absentee on Election Day

Absentee Voters at the Polls



Absentee Ballot Rejection Reasons and Codes

	Rejected Absentee Ballots—<i>Absentee ballots are rejected if:</i>	
RO	The certificate envelope is open or appears to have been opened and resealed.	1) List voter's name and reason ballot was rejected.
RS	The elector did not sign the certificate envelope.	2) Indicate the reason for rejection on the certificate envelope
RWS	There is no signature and/or address of a witness.	3) Mark the certificate envelope " <i>Rejected # (serial number).</i> "
RD	The inspectors have reliable proof that the elector has died before election day.	4) Place the envelope containing the ballot in the Rejected Absentee Ballot envelope.
RB	Elector has voted more than one ballot of the same type.	5) The elector's name is not entered on the poll list.
RV	Elector has already voted in this election.	6) Do not count the ballot.
RWA	There is no address of a witness.	

Additional Resources

Manuals

Election Administration Manual

<https://elections.wi.gov/resources/manuals/election-administration-manual>

MyVote Wisconsin Manual

<https://elections.wi.gov/resources/manuals/myvote-wisconsin-manual>

WisVote Manual, Chapter 3

<https://electiontraining.wi.gov/group/10476> (must be logged in to ElectEd)

Military and Overseas Voting (UOCAVA) Manual

<https://elections.wi.gov/resources/manuals/military-and-overseas-voter-manual>

Absentee Voting in Care Facilities Manual

<https://elections.wi.gov/resources/manuals/absentee-voting-residential-care-facilities-and-retirement-homes-svd-voting>

Webpages

Voting by Mail

<https://elections.wi.gov/voters/voting-mail>

Voting from Care Facilities

<https://elections.wi.gov/what-voters-residential-care-facilities-need-know>

Clerk Communications

2/9/2024, WEC Communications Relating to Absentee Ballot Certificate Witness Addresses

<https://elections.wi.gov/memo/wec-clerk-communications-relating-absentee-ballot-certificate-witness-addresses>

10/28/2023, Kormanik v. WEC

<https://elections.wi.gov/memo/temporary-injunction-wec-concerning-spoiling-absentee-ballots-kormanik-v-wisconsin-elections>

9/7/2022, Guidance on Absentee Ballot Return Options Under the Federal Voting Rights Act

<https://elections.wi.gov/memo/guidance-absentee-ballot-return-options-under-federal-voting-rights-act>

2/16/2022, Teigen, et al. v. WEC and DSCC

<https://elections.wi.gov/memo/statement-clerks-notification-wecs-interpretation-wis-stat-ssss-687-and-6855-contained>

Trainings (in ElectEd)

Special Voting Deputies: <https://electiontraining.wi.gov/group/10531>

Overseas & Military Voting 2024:

<https://electiontraining.wi.gov/group/10336>

Central Count Absentee: <https://electiontraining.wi.gov/group/416>

WisVote Absentee Definitive Pre-Election Guide:

<https://electiontraining.wi.gov/group/231>

WisVote Absentee Definitive Post-Election Guide:

<https://electiontraining.wi.gov/group/216>

New Absentee Certificate Envelopes:

<https://electiontraining.wi.gov/group/191>

WisVote Absentee Voting: <https://electiontraining.wi.gov/group/71>

