

# Civilian Absentee Voting by Mail

**Requesting a Ballot:** Any registered North Carolina voter can request an absentee ballot by mail. The request must be received by the appropriate county board of elections no later than 5:00 p.m. on the last Tuesday before the election. To request an absentee ballot, a voter or a near relative\* may send a letter or note to the county board of elections with the following information:

1. A Request Statement:

Example: "I am requesting an absentee ballot for the \_\_\_\_\_ Election on [insert date]."

2. Name of voter
3. Residential address of voter
4. Address where ballot should be mailed (if different from residential address)
5. Voter's date of birth
6. Contact phone number
7. Requestor's name, address, and relationship to the voter (if making the request on behalf of the voter)
8. Signature of voter or near relative\*

*\*A near relative is a: spouse, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, stepparent, or stepchild. The Relative Request should also include the relative's name, address, phone number, and relationship to the voter.*

A voter may also request an absentee ballot by requesting an official absentee ballot request form from their county board of elections. A form may only be issued to the voter. It is not permissible to make copies of the form for multiple requests. North Carolina law also does not allow any person, entity or organization to create request forms to be used for purposes of requesting a ballot in North Carolina. If a county board of elections receives an unauthorized request form on behalf of a voter, the county board of elections will promptly issue an official county absentee ballot request form to that voter.

The signed request may be delivered in person, mailed, faxed, or scanned and emailed to the county board of elections.

## Receiving and Returning Absentee Ballots:

If the request is complete and the voter is eligible to vote in the election, the absentee balloting materials will be mailed to the voter. The materials are not available for in-person pick up. Absentee ballots are available 30 days prior to municipal elections for those

municipalities that permit absentee voting, 50 days prior to statewide primaries, and 60 days prior to general elections. For any other type of election, ballots will be available 50 days prior to the election.

Upon receiving the balloting materials, the voter must follow the ballot marking and return instructions. Both the voter and a witness over the age of 18 must sign the back of the ballot's container-return envelope. Absentee voters must return their voted ballot to the board of elections in enough time for the ballot to be received by 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election. If mailed, the ballot is timely as long as the container-return envelope is postmarked by election day and received no later than three days after the election, by 5:00 p.m. If balloting materials are returned in person, only the voter or a near relative may deliver the ballot.

At any time, registered voters may check the status of their absentee ballot request online:

[What is the Status of My Absentee Ballot?](#)

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