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Absentee voting

Is absentee voting allowed in every election?

Voting by absentee ballot is possible in almost every election conducted by county election boards in Oklahoma. The only exceptions may be in municipalities organized under home rule charters. With the exception of some home rule charter cities, you may cast an absentee ballot in federal, state, county, school district and municipal elections.

Who is eligible to vote absentee?

Absent and Hardship Voters — A registered voter who swears or affirms that he will be absent from the county on election day or that he must travel more than 10 miles from the address at which he is registered to the polling place in his precinct may vote by absentee ballot. Absent and hardship voters may apply either by mail or in person at the county election board office.

Incapacitated Voters — A registered voter who is unable to vote in person at the polling place in his precinct because of a physical incapacity may vote by absentee ballot. In addition, a registered voter who is charged with the care of a physically incapacitated person who cannot be left unattended may vote by absentee ballot. These voters must apply by mail for absentee ballots.

Voters Confined to Nursing Homes — A registered voter who is confined to a nursing home may vote by absentee ballot. These voters will vote in the nursing home under the direction of an Absentee Voting Board. These voters must apply for absentee ballots by mail.

Emergency Incapacitated — If a registered voter becomes physically incapacitated after 5 p.m. on Tuesday preceding an election, he may make a request for an emergency incapacitation absentee ballot. The written request, signed by the voter, must be accompanied by a sworn statement by a licensed physician. If the voter is unable to sign his name, the request may be signed by a witness at the voter's direction.

Military and Overseas Voters — Military personnel and their spouses and dependents are entitled to vote by absentee ballot, whether they are registered or not.



Military personnel may obtain application forms by contacting the Voting Service Officer in their unit. Residents of Oklahoma residing overseas may vote as if they were part of the military. Information can be obtained at military installations, American Embassies and United States Consulates.

When should I apply for absentee ballots?

If you are eligible to vote by absentee ballot in an election, it is important that you begin the absentee voting process early to be certain that your ballot is counted. Application for absentee ballots, except for emergency incapacitation requests, may be made several weeks or even months before the election. No applications, except emergency incapacitation requests, will be accepted by the county election board after 5 p.m. Wednesday preceding the election. The county election board is required to mail absentee ballots to the voter, and the voter is required to return voted ballots to the county election board by mail. Absentee ballots must be back in the hands of the county election board personnel no later than 7 p.m. on election day in order to be counted.

Where are application forms available?

Forms for absentee voting are available from the county election board. If you do not know how to contact your county election board, call the State Election Board at (405) 521-2391, or write State Election Board, P.O. Box 53156, State Capitol, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73152. In all cases, a letter requesting absentee ballots and containing essential information about your registration is a sufficient application. The information that must be included in the letter is your name, the address at which you are registered, the election or elections for which you are requesting ballots, the address to which the ballots should be sent and the reason you are qualified to vote by absentee ballot.

Who can answer my questions?

If you have questions about absentee voting in Oklahoma, contact your county election board. And remember, to insure that your absentee ballot is counted, apply early and return your ballot promptly. Time is crucial.

Voter Information From The State Election Board

text by Suzanne Cox