

All You Need to Know About Absentee Ballots

Information for candidates, party, and campaign workers

Disclaimer: This document is provided for voter education purposes only. Its distribution by any candidate, political party, committee, organization, or individual does not imply the endorsement of the distributor by the Connecticut Secretary of the State or the State Elections Enforcement Commission.



Do

You may help with the absentee ballot **application** or refer individual voters to the Secretary of the State's website.

You **must sign** the application form **if you assist** with an absentee ballot application. CGS Sec. 9-140(a)

You and any person you ask to distribute applications **must register with the Town Clerk** before distributing **5 or more** absentee ballot applications. CGS Sec. 9-140(k)

You **must keep a list** of voters to whom you provide applications and **file it with the Town Clerk** before the election, primary or referendum. CGS Sec. 9-140(k)

You must file any completed applications given to you with the Town Clerk of voter's residence **ASAP**. CGS Sec. 9-140(k)(3)

You may follow up with the applicants, or check with the Town Clerk to see if a person has applied for, or returned, an absentee ballot.

Don't

Don't help with an absentee ballot, or be present when voter completes their ballot.*

Don't take possession of a ballot or deliver a completed ballot. CGS Sec. 9-140b(d)

Don't, as a candidate, party or political committee, or agent thereof, mail unsolicited absentee ballot applications unless you include a written disclaimer identifying that the mailing was paid for by the candidate, party or political committee and, in the case of a candidate committee, that the mailing was approved by the candidate.

Don't provide an absentee ballot application to anyone ineligible to vote.

Don't solicit a false statement on the application form, or make a false statement yourself. CGS Sec. 9-140(j)

Don't give or accept compensation solely for distributing absentee ballot applications. CGS Sec. 9-140(j)

Don't hold onto completed applications.

Helpful Hints

Application is Form ED-3. The forms are available from the Town Clerk for general distribution, or the Secretary of State's website for individual use.

If you assist with the completion of any portion of the Form ED-3 for someone else, sign the form as assister and print/type your name, residential address and phone number.

Applications given to your immediate family do not count toward the "5 or more."

List the names and addresses of all persons who received an absentee ballot application from you.

This is a legal requirement so that people can receive the absentee ballot and complete it on time.

You may call the people to whom you gave absentee ballot applications and remind them about deadlines or encourage them to complete and return the ballot.

Remember

Only the voter's immediate family member, registrars of voters or their designee, police, or health care provider may assist the voter as a "designee."

Only the voter, or their designee, can legally possess or handle a ballot. A designee is a person caring for the applicant due to applicant's illness or disability; or applicant's family member, designated by the applicant, and who agrees to act as designee; or if no such person consents or is available, a police officer, registrar of voters, or assistant or deputy registrar of voters in applicant's town/city of residence.

See the sample explanation and warning statement on the back of this form, and/or consult General Statutes §9-140 (I)

Only registered, active voters may receive absentee ballots.

Don't accept an application that you know contains false information. These are criminal violations.

Compensation is anything of value.

Forward them to Town Clerk of voter's residence **ASAP**.

***This includes being present at supervised absentee voting at a group home or similar facility.** For questions about this form, contact the State Elections Enforcement Commission at 1-866-SEEC INFO or elections@ct.gov, or the Office of the Secretary of the State at (860) 509-6100 or LEAD@ct.gov.

Sample Warning Statement

Include with correspondence containing unsolicited absentee ballot applications



Including this statement with correspondence you send with unsolicited absentee ballot applications constitutes compliance with Conn. Gen. Stats. Sec. 9-140 (I):

“Enclosed please find an absentee ballot application. This application is provided to you and paid for by [NAME OF COMMITTEE OR AGENT].” In the case of a candidate committee, also add “Approved by [NAME OF CANDIDATE].”

Your absentee ballot may be returned to the town clerk’s office by:

1. **U.S. Mail.** Please use the enclosed envelope to return the ballot.
2. **Drop Box.** There are ballot drop boxes available. Contact the town clerk to determine the location of your town’s drop box. Again, please use the enclosed envelope.
3. **Designee.** A designee, if willing, may be used to return a completed absentee ballot. This may be a person caring for the applicant due to applicant’s illness or disability; or applicant’s family member, designated by the applicant, and who agrees to act as designee; or if no such person consents or is available, a police officer, registrar of voters, or assistant or deputy registrar of voters in applicant’s town/city of residence.

Warning: Voting by absentee ballot if you are not a registered voter can subject you to civil and criminal penalties.

Penalties

Civil penalties: The State Elections Enforcement Commission may levy a civil penalty not to exceed \$2,000 per offense against any person the Commission finds to be in violation of any provision of state law regarding absentee voting.

Criminal penalties: A person who willfully violates any provision of Chapter 145 of the Connecticut General Statutes shall be guilty of a class D felony. Conviction of a class D felony shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of not more than five years, or a fine not exceeding \$5,000, or both.

It is a class D felony:

- For any person not authorized by law to possess the official absentee ballot of an applicant to whom it was issued
- For any candidate or agent of a candidate, political party or committee to knowingly be present when absentee ballot applicant executes an absentee ballot
- To commit a false statement in absentee balloting

Sources: Connecticut Constitution, Article VI, Sec. 7, and Connecticut General Statutes, Chapters 145, 151, and 952: Sections 9-135, 9-140, 9-140a, 9-140b, 9-359, 9-359a, 53a-35a, 53a-41 (as amended by P.A. 26-42)