Absentee Ballot FAQs

Office of the Secretary of the State of Connecticut

Legislation and Elections Administration Division

October 2026

Elector Eligibility

1. **Who is eligible to vote by absentee ballot?**

   Any registered elector who has applied to vote by absentee ballot and been issued an absentee ballot is eligible to vote by absentee ballot. The recent change in law allows an eligible elector to apply without providing a reason or excuse to vote by absentee ballot. The elector must properly complete and submit their application for an absentee ballot to their municipal clerk.

2. **May an unregistered elector participate in absentee voting if they register during the early voting period?**

   Yes, the unregistered elector can register and apply for an absentee ballot. Unregistered voters must complete and have their ED-671 Voter Registration processed by the Registrar of Voters before an absentee ballot can be issued. If the Registrars are not in the office when the individual is at your counter, you must either mail the absentee ballot to the individual after their registration has been processed in CVRS, or arrange for them to return once the registration is completed. The absentee ballot must be received and accepted by the municipal clerk before polls close on the day of the election or primary.

3. **May 17-year-old who will be 18 on the day of the election vote by absentee ballot?**

   Yes, an otherwise eligible elector who will be 18 years old on or before the day of the election may participate in early or absentee voting.

Absentee Ballots Materials

4. **What changes can the municipal clerk expect from the new absentee ballot materials?**

   The absentee ballot sets will no longer include an inner envelope. Instead, the absentee ballots are placed directly inside the return envelope. The voter is also provided with an optional privacy sleeve that may be used to conceal the ballot before sealing the return envelope. The return envelope must include a voter affirmation for the absentee elector to date, sign, and print their name upon.

5. **What information must be included on the return envelope label?**

The return envelope label contains the following information: the applicant's name, address, and voting district; the ballot type; a unique ballot identification number; the date of the election, primary, or referendum; and a scannable barcode. In the event of a primary, the political party is included on the label. The envelope includes a warning about the restrictions and penalties associated with the absentee ballot.

6. **What must be provided to asterisk indicated electors?**

   Municipal clerks must provide "asterisk electors" (those indicated under federal law as requiring further identification) with an additional pre-addressed envelope. The envelope allows the asterisk voter to place a copy of their identification, in the provided pre-addressed envelope to send separately from their return envelope containing their absentee ballot. Accepted forms of identification include a current and valid photo D, utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that show the individual's name and address.

7. **Are there any additional protections to prevent the absentee ballot from being mistakenly viewed?**

   The absentee ballot sets issued to electors include a privacy sleeve. The elector may place their ballot into the privacy sleeve; then, put the sleeve and ballot into the return envelope. The use of the privacy sleeve is optional and not a reason for rejection by absentee ballot counters on the day of the election.

Applications

8. **Can electors applying for absentee ballots receive assistance completing their application?**

   Yes, any elector may receive assistance to complete their application. Any person who assists an elector in the completion of an application must sign the application and print their name, address, and telephone number in Section VI – Declaration of person providing assistance.

9. **Are the assistance requirements the same for Department of Corrections employees?**

   Yes. The Department of Corrections employees must use the employing facility's contact information as opposed to their own personal contact information. These employees are still required to sign their name as having assisted the elector with the application.

10. **If an absentee elector is unable to write, how should they sign the application?**

An elector who is unable to write may have an authorized agent sign on their behalf. In the space provided, the authorized agent must write the date and name of the elector followed by the word "by" and the authorized agent's signature.

11. How can a municipal clerk issue an application for an absentee ballot?

The municipal clerk may issue the application in person at the clerk's office or via mail. Alternatively, the application may be transmitted by fax or sent electronically, if requested by the applicant. Municipal clerks may direct voters to Secretary's online absentee ballot portal

12. How can the absentee ballot application be returned by the applicant?

The applicant can return the application in person or by mail. The applicant may send the application by fax or electronically, so long as the applicant also mails the original completed application. The mailed original may be sent separately or with the completed absentee ballot. The mailed original application must arrive before the close of polls on the subject election, primary, or referendum.

13. The polls have closed on the election, and the municipal clerk has not received the voter's mailed original absentee ballot application. Can the absentee ballot be counted?

No, the absentee ballot must be rejected if the original application is not received by the close of polls on the day of the subject election, primary, or referendum.

Voting

14. An absentee ballot has been returned to the municipal clerk's office via mail by the applicant's immediate family member. Is this allowed?

Yes, the absentee ballot may be mailed by the applicant, the applicant's designee in the case of illness or physical disability, or a member of the applicant's immediate family if the applicant is a student. The municipal clerk must receive the absentee ballot before the polls close on the day of the election, primary, or referendum.

15. When can the applicant return an absentee ballot in person?

An absentee ballot may be returned in person by the applicant to the clerk any time after issuance until the day **before** the election, primary, or prior to the polls opening on the day of the referendum. Applicants who return their ballots on Election Day must be directed to place their ballots in the absentee ballot drop box.

16. When can the absentee ballot be returned in person on behalf of the applicant?

An absentee ballot may be returned in person by a member of the immediate family of the applicant no later than the close of polls on the day of the election, primary, or referendum. Similarly, an absentee ballot may be returned by the designee of an ill or physically disabled applicant in person no later than the close of polls on the day of the primary, election, or referendum.

17. **If an absentee ballot is returned in person by a designee, must the designee provide identification?**

    Yes, if the absentee ballot is returned by an immediate family member of the elector or the designee of an elector who has physical disability or illness, the family member or designee must show identification and sign the return envelope in the presence of the municipal clerk. In addition to the signature, the designee or family member must provide their address, relationship to the voter, the date, and the time of the return.

18. **May an individual complete an absentee ballot on behalf of their immediate family member?**

    No, the actual absentee voter must fill in their ballot and sign the return envelope. (See question 20 for voters requiring assistance,)

19. **An individual claims to have power of attorney over an elector. May this individual complete the elector's absentee ballot?**

    No, a power of attorney does not grant the ability to complete or cast another person's ballot.

20. **An absentee voter needs assistance to complete their ballot, including signing the envelope. How should this be handled?**

    Any elector voting by any method who requires assistance is allowed to receive assistance. If an absentee voter has received assistance, the authorized agent who assisted shall print the absentee voter's name, write "assisted by", and then sign their own name.

21. **The applicant is returning their own absentee ballot. What identification must be provided?**

    The applicant is not required to provide any identification to return an absentee ballot. The absentee ballot can be returned in person, by mail, or in a drop box.

22. **May an elector who voted by absentee ballot withdraw their ballot?**

    No, absentee ballots must not be withdrawn.

Curing an Absentee Ballot

23. What are the reasons for which an elector may cure an absentee ballot?

The law permits electors to cure an absentee ballot if the elector has not signed the return envelope. There are no other reasons for which electors may be eligible to cure their absentee ballot.

24. The municipal clerk has received an absentee ballot, and the return envelope is not signed. How should the municipal clerk proceed?

A return envelope unsigned by the applicant is eligible for the cure process. The municipal clerk should make a record of this cure-eligible ballot in the curing log. The clerk must mark this elector as CE or cure-eligible on the official voter list in CVRS. Then, the municipal clerk must use best efforts to contact the affected elector within 24 hours to notify them of their cure-eligible ballot.

25. What are considered best efforts?

By law, best efforts include but are not limited to, the municipal clerk calling the telephone number or numbers provided in the elector's absentee ballot application and voter registration, or sending an email to the address provided on the elector's absentee ballot application or registration. While not required by statute, municipal clerks are strongly encouraged to send a letter to the elector's address if time permits. If none of these options are possible, then the municipal clerk must exercise their discretion in attempting to contact the affected elector.

26. What is the time frame for contacting an affected elector?

The municipal clerk must use best efforts to contact the affected voter as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after receiving the unsigned return envelope. In the event an unsigned return envelope is received in the final 24 hours before the close of polls, the clerk must contact the affected voter immediately.

27. The municipal clerk has received a return envelope which is signed but not dated. Can this absentee ballot be cured?

The only element that can be cured is the absence of the applicant's signature. The law prohibits rejection of an absentee ballot for the absence of a date or the incorrect date.

28. What is the deadline for curing an absentee ballot?

The affected elector can cure their absentee ballot until the close of polls on the day of the election, primary, or referendum. If the cure-eligible absentee ballot is not cured by the

close of the polls, then the municipal clerk marks the absentee ballot as rejected with a statement of the reason for the rejection.

29. Where does the cure process take place?

Cure-eligible absentee ballots are cured in the municipal clerk's office. The municipal clerk must be available for curing such ballots until the close of polls on the day of the election, primary, or referendum. The clerk's office must be open on election day.

30. What should be done when an elector with a cure-eligible ballot wishes to vote in person?

The Registrar of Voters should contact the municipal clerk before issuing an Early Voting or Election Day ballot. The municipal clerk must confirm that the cure-eligible ballot has not already been cured. If it has not been cured, the municipal clerk should reject the ballot in CVRS and the physical envelope, then verbally confirm to the ROV that the voter may vote.

31. The municipal clerk received an elector's absentee ballot, but the clerk is unsure if the signature matches the printed name. How should the clerk proceed?

Municipal clerks are not required or recommended to verify signatures. Generally, the clerk should assume that the signature provided is proper unless there is a reason to believe otherwise.

Automatic Application Status

32. Who is eligible for automatic absentee application status?

Beginning July 1, 2027, any elector may request to automatically receive an application for an absentee ballot for each election, primary, and referendum. If approved, the municipal clerk must issue an application to each such elector at least 90 days prior to the contest or as soon as is practical in advance of any elections, primaries, or referenda in which the elector is eligible to vote.

33. How long is automatic application status effective?

The elector's status remains in effect until the elector is removed from the official registry, the application is returned undelivered, the elector relocates out of state, the elector is placed on the inactive registry list, or the elector requests in writing that the municipal clerk change the status.

Absentee Ballot Rejection Log

34. Explain the absentee ballot rejection log.

The moderator maintains and submits the absentee ballot rejection log. The log includes each absentee ballot that was marked rejected, the reason for the rejection, and the name of the voter.

35. Are there two absentee ballot rejection logs?

The official absentee rejection log is maintained and submitted by the moderator. The municipal clerk also records absentee ballot information, which is provided to the Head Moderator.

36. Who is the rejection log submitted to?

The moderator submits the rejection log to the Office of the Secretary of the State.

37. When is the absentee ballot rejection log submitted?

The moderator must transmit the absentee ballot rejection log in the same manner and at the same time as the duplicate list is transmitted by electronic means as described in C.G.S. Sec. 9-314.

The preliminary list of votes is immediately transmitted, no later than midnight on election day. The duplicate list is submitted electronically no later than 48 hours after the close of polls on election day.

Absentee Ballot Sorting and Counting

38. Absentee ballots are arriving. When can the municipal clerk begin the sorting and checking process?

The day after absentee ballot voting sets become available, the municipal clerk may begin sorting the ballots. The registrars may also start checking the names of the applicants on the official checklist and mark the names with an "A" or absentee. This continues on any weekday until 11:00 a.m. on the day before the election, primary, or referendum.

39. When are the absentee ballots delivered by the municipal clerk to the registrars on election day?

The absentee ballots received prior to 11:00 a.m. on the day before the election, primary, or referendum are delivered by the clerk to the registrars no later than 8:00 a.m. on the day of the election, primary, or referendum. In the case of a special election or referendum, the municipal clerk may deliver the ballots after 8:00a.m., provided the time is mutually agreed upon time and not later than 4:00 p.m. on the day of the special election or referendum.

40. When are absentee ballots received after 11:00a.m. on the day before the election delivered?

Absentee ballots received by the municipal clerk after 11:00 a.m. on the day before the election, primary, or referendum, upon request of the registrar, may be delivered by the municipal clerk at 6:00 p.m. or an agreed upon time no later than 8:00 pm. Any remaining absentee ballots, including any arriving after 6:00 p.m. on the day of the election, must be delivered to the registrars at the close of the polls.

41. When do the absentee ballots counters go to the counting location?

The absentee ballot counters proceed to the counting location 15 minutes prior to delivery of the ballots.

42. If a candidate dies before the polls close on election or primary day, but after absentee voting has commenced, are these ballots counted?

Yes, the absentee ballots are considered cast when they are accepted by the municipal clerk. These votes are counted even if the candidate is unable to take the position.

43. If an elector, who voted by absentee ballot, dies before polls close on election or primary day, is their ballot counted?

Yes, the ballot is considered cast when it is accepted by the municipal clerk. If mailed, the envelope must be postmarked before the elector's date of death.