

Connecticut's Absentee Ballot Process

Connecticut's elections, including the absentee ballots for each election/referendum, are administered locally by our hard-working local election officials. The Town Clerk in each town is one of those election officials, and they manage the absentee ballot process.

Absentee Ballot Applications

Under Connecticut law, in order to vote by absentee ballot, a voter must be an active, registered voter (more on Connecticut's voter rolls can be found at myvote.ct.gov/voterrolls) and have filled out an absentee ballot application. Absentee ballot applications are available for download online (at myvote.ct.gov/absentee) and at the office of the Town Clerk in each town.

Absentee ballot applications are returned to the office of the Town Clerk in the voter's town. The Town Clerk processes the returned application, ensures that the voter is eligible to receive an absentee ballot, and enters the voter's information into the Central Voter Registration System.

****Note:** Absentee ballots for Referendum are not available to be mailed since they are noticed in 3 wks. or less. You must appear in person for the ballot. CGS 9-369 (c)

Returning the Absentee Ballot

Once the voter fills out their ballot, carefully following all of the included directions, they can return the ballot via the United States Postal Service, in person in the Town Clerk's office, or via the secure drop box that the Office of the Secretary of the State has provided to each town. The secure drop box will likely be located outside of the town hall.

All ballots must be received by the close of polls, 8:00 p.m. on Election Day/Referendum Day

When the Town Clerk receives the ballot they stamp and time in the ballot, then secure the absentee ballot, still sealed in its envelope, until Election/Referendum Day.

For absentee ballots that are received prior to Election Day, the Town Clerks pre-mark the Election/Referendum Day checklist to indicate that the voter returned an absentee ballot. Voters who return their absentee ballot prior to Election/Referendum Day will not be allowed to vote in a polling place on Election/Referendum Day.

If an absentee ballot arrives on Election/Referendum Day, it is held until after 8:00pm when the absentee ballot is compared to the official Election/Referendum Day checklist. If the voter who returned the absentee ballot on Election/Referendum Day has voted in person in a polling place, the absentee ballot is not opened and is rejected. This procedure ensures that no voter can vote twice, even by mistake.

When the polls close on Election/Referendum Day, the Registrars feed the ballots into the tabulators to be counted. Each town is able to report their results in separate totals for absentee ballots and for polling places.

Questions About Absentee Ballots

If you have further questions about the laws surrounding absentee ballots in Connecticut and how state and local election officials are working together to ensure than no voter is forced to choose between risking their health and exercising their right to vote, please contact us at LEAD@ct.gov or at (860) 509-6100.