Military & Overseas

Active duty uniformed-service (and qualifying spouse or dependents) and overseas citizens are permitted to receive the ballot via email upon request. For more information, view our [Guidelines for Voters that Request E-mail Ballots](http://elections.virginia.gov/Files/CastYourBallot/MilitaryAndOverseas/GuidelinesForVotersThatRequestEmailBallots.pdf) (.pdf) or contact your local elections office.

If you are a legal Virginia resident but are not yet registered to vote, or need to change your voter registration, you may use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to register to vote and apply for your absentee ballot at the same time. After you complete the FPCA, sign it and then you may either mail it to your local voter registration office, e-mail or fax it to your local voter registration office. You should complete this application (FPCA) before you complete any other forms or applications relating to voter registration and/or absentee voting. You may also register and request absentee ballots using the Virginia voter registration application and absentee ballot application linked on this page. However, using the FPCA is recommended for the convenience of a single form allowing electronic submission of registration by fax or email. Applicants with a Virginia DMV driver’s license or identification card may also be able to apply to register online through the Department of Elections website.

The [Federal Voting Assistance Program](http://www.fvap.gov/) (FVAP) website provides a [Virginia Voting Assistance Guide](http://elections.virginia.gov/Files/CastYourBallot/MilitaryAndOverseas/vagVA.pdf) explaining how to complete your Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). This guide provides dates for federal elections only. By submitting a complete Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) in Virginia, you will be sent ballots for all elections in which you are eligible to vote through the end of the next calendar year. Federal forms and envelopes are available on the Election Materials page on [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/materials/forms).

Please note that any registered Virginia voter may visit the Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT) [voter registration website](https://www.vote.virginia.gov/) to review his or her voter registration status, the status of his or her absentee ballot application, information on their elected representatives, and contact information for local elections office at any time.

2015 -2016 Elections Notice – Absent Uniformed-Service and Overseas Citizens Eligible to Use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

This Elections Notice explains how you can identify all of the federal, state, local offices and, if applicable, ballot measures your locality expects to be on the ballot for upcoming elections.  For most elections, the ballot choices will be known at least 45 days before the election.  For nonfederal special elections, the choices may not be known until several weeks before the election.

The ELECT website has the following calendars and candidate lists posted as the information is made available:

* [Regularly scheduled primary and general elections calendar](http://elections.virginia.gov/Files/Media/Calendar/2013_2017_Calendar.pdf) (.pdf)
* [Special elections calendar](http://elections.virginia.gov/index.php/media/calendars-schedules/)
* [Candidates and any questions on the ballot for your locality in upcoming elections](https://voterinfo.sbe.virginia.gov/PublicSite/Public/FT2/PublicElections.aspx) (Choose your locality or [Statewide] and click “Search” and then select the election of interest.)
* [Registered voter information](https://voterinfo.sbe.virginia.gov/PublicSite/Public/FT2/PublicLookup.aspx?Link=Registration&Req=GR)

Virginia law requires the Department of Elections (ELECT) to publish an Election Notice not later than 100 days before a regularly scheduled election that permits absentee voting, and as soon as practicable in the case of a not regularly scheduled Special Election. As soon as ballot styles are approved, ELECT will update its website with the certified candidates for each office and ballot measures (questions) that will be on the ballot. For most elections, ballots will be sent at least 45 days before the election to voters that have requested them.

**If you are an absent uniformed-service or overseas citizen eligible to vote in Virginia, you may register to vote and request a regular absentee ballot for upcoming elections by using the federal postcard application (FPCA), available at** [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov/). You can electronically apply for ballots by submitting your **FPCA to the general registrar of the Virginia city or county of residence for voting purposes.** Detailed instructions and contact information are provided in the [Virginia Voting Assistance Guide](http://www.fvap.gov/vao/vag/chapter2/virginia). If you have a Virginia DMV issued driver license or identification card, you can also register to vote or renew your voter registration online using the [Department of Elections voter registration portal.](https://www.vote.virginia.gov/) Please note if you use the portal you must also submit separately a new FPCA to receive ballots for future elections through the end of the next calendar year; you can also submit a Virginia absentee ballot application for a specific election once scheduled.

**If you do not receive your state ballot in time, you may vote using a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB), available at** [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov/). This notice enables you to identify all of the federal, state, local offices and, if applicable, ballot measures (questions) your Virginia city/county expects, as of this date, to be on the ballot. For more information go to our [Ballot Information](https://voterinfo.sbe.virginia.gov/PublicSite/Public/FT2/PublicElections.aspx) page.

**Eligibility to Vote in State and Local Elections**

**Please note that Virginia limits eligibility to vote in state and local elections.  If you are residing overseas, you may not vote in state and local elections unless your application indicates at least one of these conditions applies to you:**

* **You retain a place of abode in Virginia available to you ; or**
* **You are employed overseas, civilian or uniformed service; or**
* **You are a qualifying spouse or dependent of either a person employed overseas or a member of the uniformed services.**

Please contact your local voter registration office or the Department of Elections Absentee Voting Coordinator should you have any questions.  Telephone:  (800) 552-9745 (ext. 8937).  Email:  terry.wagoner@elections.virginia.gov.  It is a felony in Virginia to knowingly vote in an election when you are not eligible to do so.

Using a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot:

Before using a FWAB, you should first request a regular absentee ballot by using the federal postcard application (FPCA), available at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov/). You can electronically submit your FPCA to your [local Voter Registration Office](https://voterinfo.sbe.virginia.gov/PublicSite/Public/FT2/PublicContactLookup.aspx). Detailed instructions are provided in the [Virginia Voting Assistance Guide](http://www.fvap.gov/vao/vag/chapter2/virginia).

Covered uniformed-service and overseas citizens who have not timely received a regular absentee ballot may use the FWAB to register to vote, request an absentee ballot, and vote using the FWAB you download, complete and mail. Your completed FWAB--signed by you and your witness--must be received no later than the close of polls on Election Day. If received later than this day and time, your FWAB ballot normally will not be counted. Federal write-in absentee ballots are available at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov/). A FWAB ballot or a regular ballot can only be returned by mail addressed to the [voting official for your city or county of voting residence](https://voterinfo.sbe.virginia.gov/PublicSite/Public/FT2/PublicContactLookup.aspx). **Virginia does not allow return of any voted ballot electronically, by email or fax.**

**Marking a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot:**

When marking a FWAB, for each office for which you wish to vote, write in either a candidate’s name or political party designation. For ballot measures or referenda questions, write either “YES” you are for the ballot measure or referendum) or “NO” (you are against the ballot measure or referendum). If you indicated you wish to participate in a party primary, you may only vote for the candidates of the party you indicated.   You may check your Voter Registration and Absentee Voting status online at our [“View Your Info”](http://elections.virginia.gov/index.php/registration/view-your-info/) page.  You may also contact your local voter registration office to confirm your absentee or voter registration status.

Deadlines Applicable to Virginia Voters

1. An applicant not currently registered in Virginia but eligible under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) may submit his or her Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) by mail, e-mail or fax. Overseas citizens’ completed FPCAs must be received by the local election office before the close of business on the final day of registration for the election, generally 22 days before most elections.  Non-military overseas voters who no longer have a Virginia place of abode, will receive ballots for federal offices only, unless overseas employment information is provided (a qualifying spouse or dependent would provide that employment information). Active duty uniformed-service voters and qualifying family members are eligible for late registration, but must comply with the deadline for requesting ballots, normally seven days before the election with limited exceptions for emergencies. See Va. Code [24.2-419](http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?000+cod+24.2-419), [24.2-420.1](http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?000+cod+24.2-420.1), [24.2-705](http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?000+cod+24.2-705) and [24.2-705.1](http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?000+cod+24.2-705.1).

*NOTE: In Virginia, active-duty uniformed-service voters (including qualifying spouses and dependents) may register to vote by mail until Election Day, but are still subject to the absentee application deadline to request a ballot sent to them by mail, email or fax.   A Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) for an uniformed-service voter eligible for late registration, must be received at least seven days before the election in order for an official ballot to be sent by mail, email or fax. The FWAB may be used as backup if time may be insufficient to receive and return an official ballot.*

1. [Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)](http://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/materials/forms) for applicants eligible under UOCAVA who are already registered in Virginia, or who are active-duty uniformed-service eligible for late registration, must be received by the local election office no later than 5:00 p.m. seven (7) days before the election (unless there is a qualifying emergency). FPCAs can be submitted by mail, e-mail or fax.
2. In-person absentee voters have until the Saturday immediately before the election to vote an absentee ballot in-person at your local election office. Qualifying emergencies (e.g., hospitalization) allow applying to vote absentee through 5:00 p.m. the day before the election.

Important Notice to Virginia Users of the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

You may use the [Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB)](http://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/materials/forms) to register and vote absentee in all elections in which you are eligible to vote, subject to applicable deadlines. Please note that if you have applied by [Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)](http://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/materials/forms) and both your state absentee ballot and completed FWAB are received on time, only your state ballot will be counted. You may use the FWAB to vote at any time before the deadline for returning your ballot.  However, please remember that that the FWAB is an emergency backup ballot and will not result in ballots being sent to you for future elections.

Citizens residing overseas indefinitely (“my return is not certain”) may only be eligible to vote for federal offices (President, Vice President, U.S. Senate and U.S. House of  Representatives).  **See bulleted list of conditions above under Eligibility to Vote in State and Local Elections**.

Please contact your  local voter registration office or the Department of Elections Absentee Voting Coordinator should you have any questions.  Telephone:  (800) 552-9745 (ext. 8937).  Email:  terry.wagoner@elections.virginia.gov.  It is a felony in Virginia to knowingly vote in an election when you are not eligible to do so.

**Once you are finished voting your FWAB, the package you return will consist of:**

1. Your voted ballot which will be inside of
2. A blank, sealed security envelope (which you supply) containing only your voted ballot and nothing else.
3. The form titled “Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation” which has been completed, signed and dated by you and a witness.
4. A return mailing envelope (which you supply) addressed to General Registrar, Attention Absentee Voting Officer, [LOCALITY ADDRESS]. Please include your current mailing address in the return address area in the upper left corner. The mailing envelope should contain both your sealed ballot security envelope and your completed Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation signed by you and a witness. For your own privacy, please remember not to place anything other than your voted ballot in the security envelope.

You can [check the status of your absentee ballot](https://www.vote.virginia.gov/) through our website. Detailed Virginia instructions for using the FWAB are available in [FVAP’s Virginia Voting Assistance Guide](http://www.fvap.gov/vao/vag/chapter2/virginia) (.pdf).

Step-by-Step Instructions for Using the FWAB

Please be sure to complete the Voter Affirmation/Declaration page of your [Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB)](http://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/materials/forms) and include a witness signature. In the presence of your witness, you will mark the ballot by writing in the names of your chosen candidates and choices on ballots issues (e.g., constitutional amendments). Both you and the witness must sign and date the Voter Affirmation/Declaration page. Please remember no ballots can be sent to you unless you have  completed a [Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)](http://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/materials/forms).

FVAP offers a postage paid [return envelope template](http://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/fwab_envelope.pdf) (.pdf) that the voter addresses to the appropriate election official to receive your ballot. (Certain restrictions apply to postage rates. See Step 9.) FVAP also offers a [security envelope template](http://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/EO/fwabsecenv.pdf) (.pdf) that the voter uses to seal the marked ballot for return. (See Step 4.)

1. Any adult 18 or older is permitted to act as your witness.
2. Mark your ballot in the presence of your witness (but not in a way that the witness can see your vote). Carefully follow the instructions on the ballot to make sure that your vote will count.
3. Once you have finished voting, fold your ballot in thirds (so that it will fit in a standard size envelope).
4. Place your voted ballot into the blank, sealable security envelope that you provide. You may, but are not required to, use the FVAP security envelope template.
5. In the presence of your witness, complete, sign and date the “Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation.”
6. Have your witness sign the “Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation” at the space provided for the witness.
7. Put the “Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation” in the return mailing envelope outside of the sealed security envelope. Please do not include anything other than your ballot in the sealed security envelope. The “Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation” must be completed, dated and **signed (by both you** **and your witness**).
8. Seal and address the mailing envelope using the address for your Locality Voter Registration Office for the city or county of voting residence. Please be sure to write your name and return address in the upper left hand corner of the envelope so that we can identify your ballot as belonging to you. Address your mailing envelope to: General Registrar, Attention Absentee Voting Officer, [LOCALITY ADDRESS].
9. Return your ballot using U.S. Postal Service mail or a commercial delivery service (such as UPS or Federal Express). You may, but are not required, to use the FVAP [return envelope template](http://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Forms/fwab_envelope.pdf) (.pdf) to create an envelope that can be mailed free of postage only when deposited at a U.S. Post Office, an overseas U.S. military Post Office, or an American Embassy or American Consulate using either the U.S. Postal Service or FPO/APO mail system. Otherwise, you will have to pay the proper amount of postage. If used, the return envelope template must be printed (not stapled, taped or glued) onto your mailing envelope. Please verify acceptance of your mail with proper postage or prepayment marking to avoid delays that could prevent timely receipt of your voted ballot.

A complete list of the templates FVAP provides in different size options is available here at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/materials/forms).   **Please note that the FVAP instructions are written to accommodate different state rules and Virginia does not allow return of any voted ballot electronically, by email or fax.**

Important – Virginia Law Requires That:

* You fill out the “Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation,” sign and date it, and have your signature witnessed. If you have not filled out the “Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation” completely, or if you have forgotten to sign or date it or you have no witness, your vote may not count.
* To receive future ballots, you must also complete a [Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)](http://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/materials/forms) . You can complete and submit a FPCA along with a [Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)](http://www.fvap.gov/eo/overview/materials/forms).
* The “Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation” should be OUTSIDE of the sealed Security Envelope containing your ballot. If the “Voter’s Declaration/Affirmation” cannot be found, your vote may not count.
* Your voted ballot must be received by the close of polls on Election Day. If you requested, and we failed to send you an official state ballot on time, you may be eligible for extended time. Please return your voted ballot as soon as possible.