

Absentee voter ballots are available for all elections.

They provide voters with a convenient method for casting a ballot when they are unable to attend the polls on election day.

As a registered voter, you may obtain an absentee voter ballot if you are:

- age 60 years old or older
- unable to vote without assistance at the polls
- expecting to be out of town on election day
- in jail awaiting arraignment or trial
- unable to attend the polls due to religious reasons
- appointed to work as an election inspector in a precinct outside of your precinct of residence.

A person who registers to vote by mail must vote in person in the first election in which he or she participates. The restriction does not apply to overseas voters, voters who are handicapped or voters who are 60 years of age or older. (Voting in person on one governmental level clears the restriction on the other levels. For example, if a voter subject to the restriction votes in person at a school election, the voter would be free to obtain an absentee ballot for the first state election in which he or she wishes to participate.)

Requesting an Absentee Voter Ballot

Your request for an absentee voter ballot must be in writing and can be submitted to your city or township clerk. (For assistance in obtaining the address of your city or township clerk, see www.Michigan.gov/vote) Your request must include one of the six statutory reasons stated above and your signature. You must request an absentee voter ballot by mailing the online application, a letter, a postcard, or a pre-printed application form obtained from your local clerk's office. Requests to have an absentee voter ballot mailed to you must be received by your clerk no later than 2 p.m. the Saturday before the election.

Once your request is received by the local clerk, your signature on the request will be checked against your voter registration record before a ballot is issued. You must be a registered voter to receive an absentee ballot. Requests for absentee voter ballots are processed immediately. Absentee voter ballots may be issued to you at your home address or any address outside of your city or township of residence.

After receiving your absentee voter ballot, you have until 8 p.m. on election day to complete the ballot and return it to the clerk's office. Your ballot will not be counted unless your signature is on the return envelope and matches your signature on file. If you received assistance voting the ballot, then the signature of the person who helped you must also be on the return envelope. Only you, a family member or person residing in your household, a mail carrier, or election official is authorized to deliver your signed absentee voter ballot to your clerk's office.

If an emergency, such as a sudden illness or family death prevents you from reaching the polls on election day, you may request an emergency absentee voter ballot. Requests for an emergency ballot must be submitted after the deadline for regular absentee voter ballots has passed but before 4 p.m. on election day. The emergency must have occurred at a time which made it impossible for you to apply for a regular absentee voter ballot. Your local clerk will have more information about emergency absentee voter ballots.

Voting is one of the most cherished and fundamental rights in our country. If you are eligible to obtain an absentee voter ballot and cannot attend the polls on election day, use of the absentee voter ballot is strongly encouraged.