

How to Vote By Mail - Absentee Voting

Voting by mail is easy. Any voter may use this method. It's called "Absentee Voting" but you don't need a special reason or to be out of town on Election Day to use it.

4 steps, 4 Rs: (1) Register to vote. (2) Request a ballot. (3) Receive the ballot and vote. (4) Return the ballot.

See below for deadlines and where to get forms.

1 Register to Vote: If you are not registered at your current address, fill out and send a voter registration form to your county board of elections by 25 days before the election in which you wish to vote. To see if you are registered, go to www.demnc.co/myreg. You may send the registration form with the absentee ballot request form, or use that request form to update your address if you're already registered in the county.

2 Request a Ballot: An *Absentee Ballot Request Form* asks for your birth date, "home address" (the address where you are registered), and an ID number or copy of an identifying document, such as a utility bill. Be sure to sign the paper form. It also asks for a "Voter Registration Number" but you may leave that blank.

Anyone may give you a form and help you submit it – *BUT special rules apply for voters in nursing homes or health facilities. They are written on the back of the form.* The completed form may be faxed, mailed, scanned and sent by e-mail, or delivered by hand to your county board of elections. It's okay for someone else to pay for postage.

3 Receive the Ballot: The county board of elections will review your request form and then mail you a ballot and a return envelope. Mark your ballot secretly, but in the presence of two witnesses or one notary public (or instruct someone how to mark the ballot if you have a disability). A candidate may not serve as a witness.

4 Return the Ballot: Put the marked ballot inside the return envelope and complete the form on the back of the envelope. Witnesses must sign and put their addresses on this form. Seal and mail or deliver the envelope to your county elections board or to an Early Voting site during Early Voting. Follow instructions carefully. If a signature is missing, the ballot won't count. Confirm it was received at demnc.co/myreg or call your county board of elections.

Dates & Locations for Voting by Mail

25 days before the election: Last day to register to vote or postmark and send in the registration form.

7 days before the election: Your county elections board must receive your absentee ballot request by 5 PM a week before the election. *If you're confined to bed on this date, ask a family member to call the county elections board for your options.*

Election Day: Last day to deliver or postmark the envelope with your ballot. If it's close to this deadline, take the envelope inside the post office to get it hand postmarked. Some mail does not routinely get a postmark.

Where to Get Forms

- ▶ Get a voter registration form from a library or download at: www.demnc.co/rform
- ▶ Download an absentee ballot request form: www.demnc.co/absform. Or in Spanish: demnc.co/abs spanish

Where to Send Forms: Your County Board of Elections

- ▶ Find the address, phone, fax and email of your county board of elections at www.demnc.co/myboard

Group/Family Absentee Voting: A group may duplicate absentee request forms, pass them out to members, and submit them in a bundle. Members may all write in one address for where to receive the ballots. When the ballots arrive, members may get together, vote in secret, and witness each other's ballots. But ballots must be submitted individually. A group may pay the postage and be reimbursed, or someone may donate stamps but they must not offer free postage in exchange for how the person votes.

For Questions, go to (1) www.demnc.co/mail or (2) www.NCVoter.org or (3) call the nonpartisan resource Democracy North Carolina at 919-286-6000 or 888-OUR-VOTE.