



Absentee and Early Voting

What is Early Voting?

All states have established some form of process for voters to be able to cast a ballot prior to Election Day. In many instances, however, the process is restricted to special circumstances. Some states require registered voters to present an acceptable reason that will prevent them from casting a ballot in-person, on Election Day. The voter should contact the county clerk or registrar of voters in their county of residence to determine eligibility if Early Voting is restricted. There are two ways a voter may cast an early vote:

- In-person early voting allows registered voters to cast a ballot in-person at an early voting center designated by local elections officials. In general, early voting centers are placed in a different location from your Election Day polling place.
- Another form of early voting is casting a ballot by mail which is often referred to as Absentee voting (vote by mail).

Early Voting

The following states permit either unrestricted open absentee voting or in-person early voting:

States with Open Absentee Voting	
Alaska	Nevada
Arizona	New Jersey
Arkansas	New Mexico
California	North Carolina
Colorado	North Dakota
Florida	Ohio
Georgia	Oklahoma
Hawaii	Oregon*
Idaho	South Dakota
Iowa	Utah
Kansas	Vermont
Maine	Washington
Montana	Wisconsin
Nebraska	Wyoming

States with In-Person Early Voting	
Alaska	Nebraska
Arizona	Nevada
Arkansas	New Mexico
California	North Carolina
Colorado	North Dakota*
Florida	Ohio
Georgia	Oklahoma
Hawaii	South Dakota
Idaho	Tennessee
Illinois	Texas
Indiana	Utah
Iowa	Vermont
Kansas	West Virginia
Louisiana	Wisconsin
Maine	Wyoming
Montana	

*Oregon conducts elections solely by mail.

In-Person Early Voting

In-Person Early Voting is an additional option for registered voters to cast a ballot in-person at early voting centers designated by local elections officials. In general, early voting centers are placed at a different location from the Election Day polling place. 23 of the 50 states currently offer some form of early voting to registered voters. The following information indicate states which states have In-Person Early Voting, restriction status (restricted vs. unrestricted in-person early voting), and early voting dates. Voters should contact their local election officials for early voting sites.

EARLY VOTING DATES PER STATES	
State	Early Voting Dates
Alaska	10/20/2008 - 11/4/2008
Arizona	10/02/2008-11/04/2008
Arkansas	10/20/2008 - 11/3/2008
California	Please visit your local county clerk for early voting dates
Colorado	10/20/2008 - 10/31/2008
Florida	10/20/2008 - 11/2/2008
Georgia	10/27/2008 - 10/31/2008
Hawaii	10/21/2008 - 11/1/2008
Idaho	Ends 11/3/2008 (contact local county clerk for start dates)
Illinois	10/14/2008 - 10/30/2008
Indiana	10/6/2008 - 11/3/2008
Iowa	Contact local elections official for exact dates
Kansas	10/15/2008 - 11/4/2008
Louisiana	10/21/2008 - 10/28/2008
Nebraska	10/27/2008
Nevada	10/18/2008-10/31/2008
New Mexico	10/7/2008 - 11/1/2008
North Carolina	10/16/2008 - 11/1/2008
North Dakota*	10/20/2008 - 11/3/2008
Ohio	9/30/2008 - 11/3/2008
Oklahoma	10/31/2008 & 11/3/2008
Tennessee	10/15/2008 - 10/30/2008
Texas	10/20/2008 - 10/31/2008
Utah	10/21/2008 - 10/31/2008

EARLY VOTING DATES PER STATES	
State	Early Voting Dates
Vermont	Starting 10/6/2008-
Virginia*	9/20/2008 - 11/1/2008
Washington, DC*	10/21/2008 - 11/3/2008
West Virginia	10/15/2008 - 11/1/2008
Wisconsin	10/14/2008 - 11/4/2008

*States with restricted early voting, contact Local Election Official to determine In-Person Early Voting eligibility.

Absentee Voting/Vote by Mail

Who can apply to vote by Absentee Ballot/Vote by Mail?

States vary in determining who is eligible to vote by absentee ballot/vote by mail. Some states require registered voters to present an acceptable reason that will prevent them from casting a ballot in-person on Election Day. Whereas others states allow any qualified registered voter to vote by absentee ballot/ vote by mail without providing an excuse. The state of Oregon conducts its election solely by mail.

How to Apply for an Absentee Ballot?

The process and method of requesting an Absentee Ballot varies by state. The process might require the voter to request the absentee ballot at their local elections office in person, through their election official's website, through email, fax or mail. The voter should contact their local elections official for the process of requesting an Absentee Ballot in their state.

When to apply for an absentee ballot?

Deadlines for requesting an absentee ballot vary per state. Some states have set dates for when their absentee ballots are available and set dates for when the request must be submitted. Others allow their voters to request an absentee ballot up to the day before the election. The voter should contact their local election official for the starting date when absentee ballots become available and deadline for submission.

When to return an absentee ballot?

Deadlines for returning an absentee ballot vary per state. States may have varying dates and times of when their absentee ballots must be returned whether in person or by mail. The voter should contact their local election official for the date and time when the absentee ballots must be returned in order to have their vote counted.

Military and Overseas Absentee Voting:

States have varying special provisions for US citizens who are overseas or in the military who wish to vote absentee, which allow for these voters to register and receive an overseas absentee ballot. These special provisions and deadlines may vary from other absentee voters. Voters should contact their local election official for specific guidelines and deadlines.

Important Dates for requesting and returning an absentee ballot:

Deadlines for requesting and submitting an Absentee Ballot vary by state. In the table below you will find important dates to request and turn in a completed absentee ballot, based on the state's restricted status. Registered voters should contact their local election officials, if the state in which they intend to vote has Restricted Absentee Voting to determine eligibility.

DEADLINES FOR STATES WITH OPEN ABSENTEE		
State	Requests Are Due By	Complete Ballots Are Due
Alaska	10/25/2008	11/4/2008
Arizona	10/24/2008	7 pm on 11/4/2008
California	10/28/2008	8 pm on 11/4/2008
Florida	5 pm on 10/29/2008	7 pm on 11/4/2008
Georgia	11/2/2008	7 pm on 11/4/2008
Hawaii	10/28/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Idaho	10/29/2008	Close of polls (8 pm) on 11/4/2008
Iowa	5 pm on 10/31/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008 (in-person) or 11/10/2008 if postmarked by 11/4/2008
Kansas	10/31/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Maine	9/1/2008	8 pm on 11/4/2008
Maryland	4:30 pm on 10/28/2008(by mail) or 11:59 pm on 10/28/2008(by fax)	Received by the local board of elections by 8:00 pm on 11/4/2008 or postmarked on or before 11/4/2008 and received by 10:00 am on 11/14/2008
Montana	12 pm (noon) on 11/3/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Nebraska	4 pm on 10/29/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Nevada	10/28/2008	7 pm on 11/4/2008
New Jersey	10/28/2008 (by mail); 11/3/2008 (in-person)	8 pm on 11/4/2008
New Mexico	10/31/2008	7 pm on 11/4/2008
North Carolina	10/28/2008	5 pm on 11/3/2008
North Dakota	Absentee Ballots are available starting 9/25/2008	11/3/2008 (in-person or postmarked)
Ohio	5 pm on 11/3/2008	11/4/2008
Oklahoma	5 pm on 10/29/2008	7 pm on 11/4/2008 (by mail only)
Oregon*	Absentee Ballots are available from 10/17/2008 - 10/21/2008	8 pm on 11/4/2008
South Dakota	3 pm 11/4/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/008
Utah	10/31/2008	Postmarked before 11/4/2008 and received before 12 pm (noon) on 11/4/2008
Vermont	Absentee Ballots are available starting 10/6/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Washington	5 pm on 10/31/2008	Postmarked on or before 11/4/2008
West Virginia	10/29/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Wisconsin	5 pm on 10/31/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Wyoming	Absentee Ballots are available starting 9/25/2008	7 pm on 11/4/2008

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DEADLINES FOR STATES WITH RESTRICTED ABSENTEE VOTING

State	Absentee Ballot Requests Are Due By	Complete Absentee Ballots Are Due
Alabama	10/30/2008	Postmarked by 11/3/2008 (by mail); 5 pm on 11/3/2008 (in-person)
Arkansas	10/28/2008 (by mail); 11/3/2008 (in-person)	Received at clerk's office by close of business on 11/3/2008; by 7:30 pm on 11/4/2008 (by mail)
Colorado	10/28/2008(by mail) ; 10/31/2008(in-person)	7pm on 11/4/2008
Connecticut	Absentee Ballots are available starting 10/4/2008	11/3/2008
Delaware	Contact local elections official. Absentee Ballots are available starting 9/20/2008	12 pm (noon) on 11/3/2008
Illinois	10/30/2008 (by mail); 11/03/2008 (in person)	close of polls on 11/4/2008
Indiana	10/27/2008	6 pm on 11/4/2008
Kentucky	10/28/2008	6 pm on 11/4/2008
Louisiana	10/31/2008	11/3/2008
Massachusetts	12 pm (noon) on 11/3/2008	Close of polls (8 pm) on 11/4/2008
Michigan	2 pm 11/1/2008	8 pm on 11/4/2008
Minnesota	Absentee Ballots are available starting 10/5/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Mississippi	Contact local elections official two weeks before Election Day	
Missouri	5 pm on 10/29/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
New Hampshire	Starting 10/5/2008	5 pm the day prior to 11/3/2008 (in-person); 5 pm on 11/4/2008 (by mail)
New York	10/28/2008	Postmarked by 11/3/2008
Pennsylvania	5 pm on 10/28/2008	5 pm on 10/31/2008
Rhode Island	4 pm on 10/14/2008	9 pm on 11/4/2008
South Carolina	5 pm on 11/3/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Tennessee	10/28/2008	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Texas	5 pm on 10/28/2008	Before close of polls 11/4/2008
Virginia	10/28/2008 (by mail); 11/1/2008 (in-person)	Close of polls on 11/4/2008
Washington, DC	10/28/2008	4:45 pm on 11/3/2008