

FAQs: Voting by Mail

Voting by mail is convenient and safe.

Find additional resources at www.georgiademocrat.org/absentee

The Basics

Who is eligible to vote by mail?

All registered Georgia voters are eligible to vote by mail. You do not need a reason.

What's the difference between absentee voting and voting by mail?

Nothing! Voting by mail and absentee voting are the same thing.

How do I vote by mail?

Here are the five easy steps.

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| REQUEST YOUR BALLOT | COMPLETE YOUR BALLOT | RETURN YOUR BALLOT | CHECK YOUR BALLOT STATUS | CURE YOUR BALLOT <i>(if necessary)</i> |
| <small>WHEN?</small> | <small>WHEN?</small> | <small>WHEN?</small> | <small>WHEN?</small> | <small>WHEN?</small> |
| NOW! | Earliest ballots will go out around September 15. | Ballot must be with the county by 7 pm on November 3. | Within a few days of returning your ballot. | Before 5 pm on Friday, November 6. |
| | After that date, ballots should be received within a few days of requesting them. | | | |

Step 1: Request Your Ballot

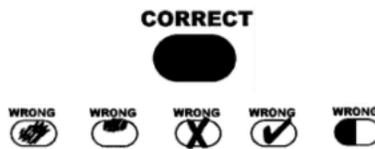
- If you have a Georgia Driver's License, apply online at ballotrequest.sos.ga.gov.
- You can still apply online if you don't have a Georgia Driver's License by visiting iwillvote.com/ga.
- You can also apply by submitting a paper request form. Instructions [here](#).

Request your ballot RIGHT AWAY. You need to allow enough time to receive your ballot and return it before the deadline.

Then, sign up to receive status alerts to your phone or email at ballottrax, <https://georgia.ballottrax.net>.

Step 2: Complete Your Ballot

Use a black pen to mark your ballot. Fill in the oval completely next to the names of the candidates you are voting for.



Carefully tear the perforated tab off the top of your ballot. Place your ballot into the white envelope marked "Official Absentee Ballot." Seal the white envelope. Then place the white envelope into the yellow envelope. Seal the yellow envelope.

Sign the envelope! [Click here](#) for information on where to sign.

Here's [a video](#) with instructions.

Step 3: Return Your Ballot

Where? You can return your ballot 1) by mail 2) by drop box in *your* county, 3) in person to your county Registrar's office.

Note: You CANNOT drop off your absentee ballot at an in-person polling place on election day.

Drop box locations: <https://georgiademocrat.org/Dropbox>

When? If you return your ballot by mail, we recommend you mail it by October 20, 2020. If you use a drop box or return your ballot in person, the deadline is 7:00 pm on Election Day, November 3.

Who? The only people allowed to return an absentee ballot are the voter, a family member of the voter, someone who lives in the residence of the voter, or the caretaker of a disabled voter.

More details at <https://georgiademocrat.org/vbmBallotSubmit>.

Step 4: Check your Ballot Status

If you signed up for alerts with [ballottrax](#), you'll automatically receive an alert to your phone or email once your ballot is received by your county.

You can also track your ballot status on My Voter Page: <https://georgiademocrat.org/vbmStatus>

Step 5: Cure your Ballot (if necessary)

If your Ballot Status says something other than "accepted," call the Voter Protection Hotline immediately. 888-730-5816. You'll need to take an additional step so that your ballot will be counted. We will assist you with this process. The deadline for completion is Friday, November 6.

More information on Ballot curing: <https://georgiademocrat.org/vbmCure>

Can I really trust voting by mail?

Millions of Americans do their taxes by mail, and receive checks, passports, and medication by mail — voting by mail is just as safe. As a voter, you can track your vote by mail ballot online and through BallotTrax throughout the process, and you can choose to submit your ballot through a drop box if you prefer.

More on Requesting your Ballot

When is the deadline for applying for an absentee ballot?

Apply as early as possible- you can apply up to 180 days before an election. DPG recommends applying to vote by mail no later than October 20, 2020, but USPS mail times and your county's processing speed impact how quickly you will receive your ballot.

I can't remember if I've applied to vote by mail. Can I check somewhere?

Yes. You can track your application status, including whether you have applied, on [My Voter Page](#). Learn how here: <https://georgiademocrat.org/vbmStatus>.

There is no penalty for submitting more than one application, but because processing multiple applications takes county time and resources, we recommend you only submit one. There are two exceptions to this general rule: if your application is not shown as "received" within 10 days of mailing a request or 5 days of submitting an online request, or if you need to update the information on your application. If the latter, call your county registrar and let them know you are making a change.

I applied to vote by mail. Why do I keep getting applications in the mail?

Many groups are sending applications to vote by mail to voters right now, and they don't necessarily know whether you've already applied. If you've already applied, you can ignore subsequent applications and correspondence telling you to apply.

Will I automatically receive a ballot for this election if I applied in the past?

Most voters have to apply to vote by mail before every single election.

However, if you are 65 or older, physically disabled, or live abroad, you can OPT IN to receive ballots for an entire election cycle. The current election cycle lasts through January 2021. Voters who opt in to this program are said to be on the "rollover list." You can opt in to the rollover list by completing Section 10 of the [Official Absentee Ballot Application](#), or checking the correct box on the [absentee ballot portal](#).

If I'm on the rollover list and I go vote in person, will I be kicked off the roll over list?

It's possible. Everyone should confirm their absentee ballot application status, even if you think you are on the rollover list. You can track your application status, including whether you have applied, on My Voter Page: <https://georgiademocrat.org/vbmStatus>.

More on Completing your Ballot

How long should it take my absentee ballot to arrive?

Before October 16, allow 8-14 days to receive your ballot. After October 16, allow four business days.

Remember, apply early so you have plenty of time to vote!

Oops! I was filling out my ballot and I accidentally voted for the wrong person/spilled coffee on it/my dog ate it. What do I do?

You have a few options based on how close it is to Election Day. You can:

- With time- Call your [county registrar](#) and ask them to send you a new absentee ballot. We recommend you do this by October 20 to ensure you get your new ballot on time!
- With less time- Vote in person, preferably during early vote, and ask the poll worker to cancel your absentee ballot.
- With no time- Submit the ballot as is at a drop box or your registrar's office.

Oops! I forgot to tear off the perforated tab at the top of my ballot. Will my ballot count?

Yes.

Oops! I signed my ballot envelope on the wrong spot.

[Click here](#) for information on where to sign. If you accidentally signed in the wrong spot, cleanly strike through the wrong signature and sign in the correct spot. Check mvp.sos.ga.gov soon after submitting your ballot to confirm it was accepted.

Oops! I signed my name on my family member's ballot envelope by mistake.

Cleanly strike through the wrong signature and sign in the correct spot. Check mvp.sos.ga.gov soon after submitting your ballot to confirm it was accepted.

I hear the county election office will review my signature on the absentee ballot envelope to make sure it "matches." How can I make sure my vote is not rejected because of a signature match issue?

If you have a Georgia driver's license, the signature on your license is likely the signature against which the county will be comparing your absentee ballot envelope signature—make sure these match. If you don't have a Georgia driver's license, use your typical signature to sign the envelope.

Check mvp.sos.ga.gov soon after submitting your ballot to confirm it was accepted.

What if my ballot is rejected? Will my vote count?

If you [check your ballot status](#) on mvp.sos.ga.gov and your ballot has been rejected, you can take an additional step to make your vote count. This is called curing your ballot. Call the Voter Protection Hotline for help. 888-730-5816.

When is the deadline to cure my rejected absentee ballot?

Friday, November 6, 2020. Don't delay in contacting the Voter Protection Hotline for help. 888-730-5816.

More on Returning your Ballot

Can I return my ballot to an early voting location? Can I return it to my polling place on Election Day?

Your county MAY choose to accept vote-by-mail ballots at some early voting locations. Call the voter protection hotline to check. 888-730-5816.

Counties do NOT permit ballots to be returned at polling places on Election Day.

You CAN ALWAYS return your ballot by mail (add stamps!), to a drop box, or in person to your county election office.

If I cannot do it myself, who can return my ballot for me—by putting it in the mail or in a drop box or by returning it in person to the elections office?

- Someone who lives in the same home with you can return it for you.
- A close family member. This includes your mother, father, grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, spouse, son, daughter, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law.
- If you have a physical disability, your caregiver—in addition to those listed above—is another person who can return your ballot for you.

When is the deadline for returning our ballot?

Return your ballot as soon as you complete it. Your county must receive your absentee ballot by 7 pm on Election Day, November 3. Your ballot is considered “received” if it is in a dropbox by 7 pm on Election Day. There are special rules if you are returning a ballot from overseas.

Voting in Person When You Requested an Absentee Ballot

Can I vote in person even if I requested an absentee ballot?

So long as your ballot has not yet been received by your county, yes, you can vote in person at the polls. If in doubt, [contact your county registrar](#).

Should I vote in person even if I requested an absentee ballot?

It depends. If you’ve received your absentee ballot and can return it before the deadline, we recommend you do that. Canceling your ballot at the polls takes time and imposes an administrative burden on the county. If you vote by mail, you free up the polls for those who must vote in person.

However, if your ballot went missing, or you can’t return your absentee ballot by the deadline, we recommend voting in person during early vote, October 12-30. [Early vote locations](#).

I requested an absentee ballot. Do I have to surrender my absentee ballot to a poll worker in order to vote in person?

If you have it, we recommend you do. But this is not required.

I'm still waiting on my ballot to arrive by mail, but it's close to Election Day and it hasn't arrived. I'm willing to go vote in person. Should I go vote in person?

As a general matter, if your ballot has not arrived by **October 26** and you are comfortable with voting in person, we recommend you vote in person during the last week of early vote, October 26-30. [Early vote locations.](#)

I'm still waiting on my ballot to arrive by mail, but it's close to Election Day and it hasn't arrived. I'm NOT willing to go vote in person. What should I do?

Contact your [county registrar](#) and/or call the Voter Protection Hotline (888-730-5816) immediately if

- it's been more than 14 days since you applied for your absentee ballot
- it's after October 12 and it's been more than 4 days since you applied for your ballot
- it's after October 26.

I returned my ballot to my county by mail or by drop box, and I do not know whether it has been received and accepted. Should I go vote in person?

You can't vote again if your ballot has been received. You can [check your ballot status](#) on [mvp.sos.ga.gov](#).

If the status field says anything other than accepted, call the Voter Protection Hotline. 888-730-5816.



Absentee Ballot Status

Election Date : 11/03/2020

Election Name : NOVEMBER 11, 2020 GEN. ELECTION

Election Type : GENERAL ELECTION

Absentee App request received : 10/20/2020

Absentee Ballot issued : 10/21/2020

Absentee Ballot received : 10/27/2020

Status : **ACCEPTED**

Reason :

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Your [county registrar](#) should be able to confirm your ballot status if the MVP status field is blank.

What if my absentee ballot is rejected? Can I go vote in person?

If you [check your ballot status](#) on mvp.sos.ga.gov and your ballot has been rejected, you can cure your absentee ballot OR you can go vote in person. Call the Voter Protection Hotline for help. 888-730-5816.

About Drop Boxes

Where are the drop boxes located?

You can find your County's Ballot Drop Box locations [here](#).

Can I use any drop box?

No, the drop box you use must be located in the county where you are registered to vote.

What are the benefits to using a drop box?

Drop boxes allow you to return your ballot without relying on the mail and with little-to-no human interaction. Postage is NOT required.

Within days of returning your ballot to a drop box, your absentee ballot "received" date should appear on mvp.sos.ga.gov, and you can feel confident your county has your ballot.

Are drop boxes safe?

Drop boxes are located on county or municipal property, secured to the ground or an immovable object and subject to 24-hour video surveillance. They are emptied regularly by a team of two elections workers who take the ballots directly back to the elections office for processing. Ballot drop boxes are a safe and reliable alternative to the mail, especially as we get closer to Election Day.

**For additional information, call the Democratic Party of Georgia's
Voter Protection Hotline: (888) 730-5816**