



# General Election FAQ

## How do we know only those who are eligible are voting?

- Voters must be registered to vote.
- In the registration process, voters must swear under oath they are eligible to vote;
- OSS receives data, which is sent to counties through the Statewide Voter Registration System.
  - ✓ Information is verified against Driver and Vehicle Services, Social Security Administration, Department of Health and court records;
  - ✓ Voter addresses are additionally verified through the sending of Postal Verification Cards – if the postcard is non-deliverable the voter's record is challenged.
- The Statewide Voter Registration Database goes through a continuous and rigorous maintenance data-matching process in partnership with a wide array of offices and agencies at the county, state, and federal levels.

## How do we know people are only voting once?

- Voters must be registered to vote.
- If registering on election day, voters provide documentation to confirm identity and address.
- Absentee ballots for state primaries and general elections are required to be tracked in the Statewide Voter Registration System, which will indicate if someone has already voted absentee.
- After Election Day, the Statewide Voter Registration System is updated to indicate which voters cast ballots. The database is checked again to ensure voters only cast one ballot.
- In the unlikely instance of a discrepancy – incidents are then turned over to the county attorney for investigation and possible prosecution.

## How are mail and absentee ballots securely processed and counted?

After your absentee ballot is received at the elections office, it is reviewed by an absentee ballot board. This board checks that the signature envelope was filled out correctly. Each envelope is reviewed by at least two members of the board.

## How does the ballot board decide if a ballot is accepted?

They look at these things on the signature envelope:

- Ensure the name and address match what was on the absentee application;
- Ensure the ID matches what was on the absentee application;
- Ensure the voter has signed the envelope; and,
- Ensure a witness has completed the witness portion.

The board will also:

- Ensure the voter is registered, or has included a properly completed voter registration application; and,
- Ensure the voter has not already voted in the election.

## What happens if my absentee ballot is rejected?

- If a regular absentee ballot or is rejected **more than five days before the election**, a replacement ballot is issued to the voter.
  - ✓ A replacement ballot, envelope, and instructions are sent to the voter, in addition to a letter that informs the voter why their original ballot was rejected.
- If an envelope is rejected **within five days of the election**, a replacement ballot is not sent. The official in charge of the absentee ballot board must attempt to contact the voter by telephone or via email to notify the voter of the rejection of their ballot and their options for casting a replacement. The Office of the Secretary of State recommends if contact cannot be made that a replacement ballot is issued and mailed.

## What happens after my absentee ballot is accepted?

- Accepted ballots are stored in a secure area until one week before the election, separated by precinct.
- Starting seven days before the election, the signature envelopes are opened and the ballot envelopes are removed and set aside so that no one knows whose ballot is whose.
- Once the ballot envelopes are separated, they are opened, reviewed by election judges, duplicated if necessary, and inserted in the ballot counter. Examples where judges would need to duplicate a ballot include if a ballot was damaged, unreadable by the tabulator, or on the incorrect ballot style for that precinct.
- No vote totals or results are produced until polling places close at 8 p.m. on election night.

## If I suspect someone has broken laws related to voting or an election, what do I do?

- You can start by calling your [county election office](#).
- You should also contact local law enforcement.
- If you'd prefer to submit a written complaint, use the [State Election Law Complaint Form](#) and return it to your county attorney.