

# HOW YOU CAN VOTE BY MAIL IN 2020

Voting by mail is a safe and secure way to vote early in North Carolina. Now's the time to learn this year's rules.

## TOP THINGS TO KNOW & SHARE

### No excuse is needed to vote by mail.

Any registered NC voter can vote by mail. Make sure you're registered or learn how to register online or by filling out a voter registration form at [demnc.co/register](https://demnc.co/register).

✉ **PRO-TIP:** Voters can submit a voter registration form with their absentee ballot request form only if it can be received before the regular registration deadline (Oct. 9).



Voting by mail is convenient, secure, and takes three basic steps:

- 1** Return your absentee ballot request. It must be received by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 27.\*
- 2** Vote the absentee ballot that is mailed to you in the presence of one witness.
- 3** Return your absentee ballot by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020.\*

Step-by-step instructions for requesting and voting by mail can be found at [demnc.co/absentee](https://demnc.co/absentee).

✉ **PRO-TIP:** Play it safe: don't wait until the deadline to request or return your ballot. Request your ballot now, and vote and return your ballot as soon as you receive it.

You can submit your absentee ballot request form many ways – including online.

Print and complete a request form at [demnc.co/absentee](https://demnc.co/absentee) and return it to your county board of elections office by mail, email, fax, or in-person. You can also make the request via an online portal at [demnc.co/portal](https://demnc.co/portal). If you are unable to download and print an absentee ballot request form, you can request your county board mail a blank form to you. Contact your county at [demnc.co/yourboe](https://demnc.co/yourboe).

✉ **PRO-TIP:** Include a phone number on the request form in case something you write is hard to read.

### You do not need an ID to vote by mail.

You do not need to include a copy of a photo ID when you submit your absentee ballot request form. But, the request form will ask you to verify your identity by listing your NC driver's license or DMV identity card ID number or, in the alternative, the last four digits of your Social Security number.

### You can get help requesting an absentee ballot.

A legal guardian or near relative can help you complete and sign an absentee ballot request form. If a near relative or legal guardian is not available and you need help due to blindness, disability, or inability to read or write, another person can help, but they must list their name/address on the form.

✉ **PRO-TIP:** "Near relative" is defined as your spouse, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, stepparent, or stepchild.

*\*Rules and deadlines are subject to change. Go to [ncvoter.org](https://ncvoter.org) for the latest.*

Any voter – including voters living in hospitals, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities – can request help from your county's Multipartisan Assistance Team (MAT) to complete a request form. Contact your county board of elections to request MAT help at [demnc.co/boe](https://demnc.co/boe). If a near relative, legal guardian or MAT is NOT available within seven days of a request for assistance by telephone, you can get help from almost anyone. For exceptions to who can help, visit [demnc.co/absentee](https://demnc.co/absentee).

## You are not required to vote by mail (even if you request an absentee ballot).

If you have not returned your absentee ballot, you can still vote in person during Early Voting (Oct. 15-31) or on Election Day (Nov. 3). Just tear up your absentee ballot at home and vote in-person. For Early Voting options, visit [demnc.co/voteearly](https://demnc.co/voteearly). For your Election Day precinct, visit [demnc.co/lookup](https://demnc.co/lookup).

## You can expect your absentee ballot to arrive in the mail beginning in September.

Absentee ballots for the 2020 General Election will be mailed to voters beginning September 4, 2020.

✉ **PRO-TIP:** Check the status of your absentee ballot request by contacting your county board at [demnc.co/yourboe](https://demnc.co/yourboe).

## You only need a few things to vote your ballot by mail.

Read the directions for completing your ballot carefully. Before returning your completed absentee ballot make sure to:

- 1 Seal the ballot as directed in the container-return envelope.
- 2 Complete and sign the Absentee Application and Certificate on the ballot container-return envelope.
- 3 Have a witness complete and sign the envelope in the space designated as Witnesses' Certification.

In 2020, only one witness is required to observe you marking your absentee ballot and complete and sign the envelope. To learn what it takes to qualify as a witness, visit [demnc.co/absentee](https://demnc.co/absentee).

## Return your absentee ballot by the deadline.

Once secured in the envelope, your ballot may be mailed or delivered in person to your county board of elections office or an open early voting site during the early voting period (Oct. 15-31). If mailing your ballot, make sure to include enough postage (one 55 cent first-class stamp or Forever Stamp). Only the voter, or a voter's near relative or legal guardian, may help return the ballot.

✉ **PRO-TIP:** Return your ballot as soon as you've finished voting – but no later than 5 p.m. on Nov. 3, 2020. If you wait until Nov. 3 to mail your ballot, you must take it to a mail carrier to have it postmarked by 5 p.m. or, to avoid problems, hand deliver your sealed ballot to county BOE office staff before 5 p.m.

For more on how to vote early in 2020, visit [ncvoter.org](https://ncvoter.org) or call Democracy NC's nonpartisan voter hotline at **888-687-8683 (888-OUR-VOTE)**.

*(Last updated September 2020 – information subject to change.)*

## Helping Someone Else Request an Absentee Ballot

In 2020, anyone can show a voter how to request an absentee ballot. But there are important rules that limit that assistance, like:

- ✓ Unless qualified to assist a voter (see other side for details), the helper must not fill out the absentee ballot request form or press "Send" on an online or email request.
- ✓ The helper may photograph the completed absentee ballot request form, upload the photo to an email, type in the election board's email address, and set up the request submission, or help the voter open the State Board's portal to make a request, BUT the voter must hit "Send" or otherwise submit the online request. If the request is submitted through an email that does not plainly belong to the voter, include a message in the body of the email that says, "I affirm that this request is for me and I am personally submitting it by email, Sincerely, [name of voter]."
- ✓ Anyone can distribute BLANK request forms through snail mailings, emails, etc. with links to the request form or with an attachment, but mass distributed forms cannot be partially filled out, for example, with a voter's name and address.

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