



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

November 4, 2024

On Sunday, November 3, 2024, an image was posted and quickly recirculated on social media that purported to show a paper ballot for the 2024 general election with a plainly visible pre-printed dot in the box a voter is to fill if they desire to vote for Kamala Harris.

The image was accompanied by a statement suggesting that because of the presence of the pre-printed dot, if a box was filled-in for a presidential candidate other than Harris, the paper ballot would be “void” since marks would exist for more than one candidate.

For this election, County Clerks have mailed out over 130,000 mail-in absentee ballots. As of today, the State Board of Elections, nor the Attorney General’s office, has been made aware of any complaints from Kentucky voters regarding mail-in absentee ballots having pre-printed marks in candidate selection fields.

During the recent three-day no-excuse in-person absentee voting period, over 656,000 Kentuckians cast their paper ballots in person. As of today, the State Board of Elections, nor the Attorney General’s office, has been made aware of any complaints from Kentucky voters regarding their in-person absentee ballots having pre-printed marks in candidate selection fields.

The viral social media post that alleges a pre-printed dot on a Kentucky ballot shows an image of a mail-in absentee ballot as evidenced by a straight crease through the middle of the paper ballot. Every mail-in absentee ballot is sent to a voter with an accompanying instruction sheet that informs voters that if more than one candidate choice is marked in ink, the ballot will be counted if the voter circles their preferred choice.

If a voter were to get a paper ballot with a pre-printed mark inside of a candidate selection field during any day of in-person voting, whether before or on election day, the voter would be entitled to spoil the pre-marked ballot and receive another “clean” ballot. A voter can do this before making any candidate selections or if their ballot is read by the ballot scanner to contain selections for more candidates than allowed, known as an “over vote.”

Whether they are using a paper mail-in absentee ballot or an in-person paper ballot, Kentucky law allows voters to register their vote should a situation like the one alleged on social media involving a pre-marked ballot actually exist.

As no one has presented a pre-marked ballot to election administrators or law enforcement, the claim that at least one ballot may have had a pre-printed mark in Kentucky, currently only exists in the vacuum of social media.

Should a Kentucky voter discover their ballot does, in-fact, actually have a pre-printed mark in a candidate selection field, the State Board of Elections urges the voter to immediately contact their local county clerk and the office of the Attorney General at 1-800-328-VOTE so that the ballot may be examined in further detail.