

## **Military and Overseas Voting Procedures**

Following a September 2012 trip to the Middle East to visit armed services members and observe firsthand military voting procedures, Secretary of State Alison Grimes recommended to the Kentucky General Assembly several changes to Kentucky law that would help ensure that Kentucky's military and overseas voters have a meaningful opportunity to participate in elections at home. Her proposals formed the basis for Senate Bill 1, which was enacted by the General Assembly in 2013 and became effective July 1, 2014.

Some of the most notable improvements Senate Bill 1 makes are:

- Members of the **National Guard** may be eligible for military and overseas voting procedures.
- Military and overseas voting procedures can now be used in **all elections** in Kentucky.
- Covered voters may register to vote and update their voter registration information **online**.
- Covered voters may use the **Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot** to register to vote and request an absentee ballot.
- Covered voters may submit and receive voter registration and absentee voting materials via an **Electronic Transmission System**.

### **Who is a Covered Voter?**

- Uniformed-Service Voters
  - Members of the **Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard** on active duty who are either registered to vote or whose voting residence is in Kentucky and otherwise satisfy eligibility requirements
  - Registered Kentucky voters who are members of the:
    - **Merchant Marine**
    - Commissioned corps of the **Public Health Service**
    - Commissioned corps of the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**
  - Registered Kentucky voters who are activated-status members of the **National Guard**
  - Registered Kentucky voters who are either the **spouse or dependent** of one of these Uniformed-Service members
- United States citizens who live outside the United States and either:
  - Are **registered** to vote in Kentucky
  - Before leaving the United States, **were last eligible to vote in Kentucky** and, except for being absent from Kentucky, otherwise satisfy eligibility requirements

- Before leaving the United States, would have last been eligible to vote in Kentucky except that they **were not of voting age**, and except for being absent from Kentucky, otherwise satisfy eligibility requirements
- Were **born outside the United States**, the last place where their parent/legal guardian was registered or would have been eligible to vote is Kentucky, have not previously registered to vote in any other state, and except for being absent from Kentucky, otherwise satisfy eligibility requirements.

### **How can a Covered Voter register to vote or update their registration information?**

*Any registration materials must be received by your county clerk at least **29 days before the election**.*

You should first check the [Voter Information Center](#) to see if you're registered and determine whether the information there is correct. If you need to register or change any of your information, you have several options.

- Complete and submit a Federal Post Card Application using the Kentucky Federal Post Card Application online form wizard.
  - Can be submitted electronically or printed and mailed, emailed, or faxed to your [county clerk](#).
  - Can also be used to request an absentee ballot.
- Complete and submit the declaration accompanying a [Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot](#).
  - Must be printed and mailed to your [county clerk](#).
  - Can also be used to request an absentee ballot.
  - Can also be used to cast your vote by writing in your choices on the absentee ballot portion of the form.
- Follow the [registration procedures](#) available to all voters.

### **How can a Covered Voter apply for an absentee ballot?**

*Absentee ballot applications must be received by the county clerk no later than close of business **seven days before the election**.*

- Complete and submit a Federal Post Card Application using the Kentucky Federal Post Card Application online form wizard.
  - Can be submitted electronically or printed and mailed, emailed, or faxed to your [county clerk](#).
  - You can request to receive your absentee ballot via email/online, mail or fax.
  - Your request is valid for all elections through the next general election or December 31 of the current year, whichever is later (unless you specify a shorter time period).

- Complete and submit a fillable or hard copy of the Federal Post Card Application, which you can obtain [online](#) or by contacting your [county clerk](#), a United States [Consulate or Embassy](#), or a Military Branch Voting Assistance Officer.
- Complete and submit the declaration accompanying a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot, which you can obtain [online](#) or by contacting your [county clerk](#), a United States [Consulate or Embassy](#), or a Military Branch Voting Assistance Officer
  - Must be printed and mailed to your [county clerk](#).
  - Can also be used to cast your vote by writing in your choices on the absentee ballot portion of the form.
- Follow the [absentee voting procedures](#) available to all voters.

### How do I cast my voted absentee ballot?

*Your absentee ballot must be returned by **mail** and received by your county clerk no later than **6 p.m., local time, on Election Day.***

- Carefully follow the instructions you received with your absentee ballot.
  - Copies of instructions and all necessary forms are available online.
  - Your ballot *will not be counted* if you do not complete and return the Voter Verification and Declaration.
- Remember you will need **two envelopes** to return your voted ballot.
  - If your county clerk mailed your absentee ballot to you, the envelopes will be provided to you.
  - If your county clerk sent your absentee ballot to you via email/online or fax, you will need to provide your own envelopes, or you can make envelopes using the template provided on the Kentucky State Board of Elections website.
    - If you are mailing your ballot from any U.S. Post Office, U.S. Embassy or Consulate, or APO/FPO mail facility, you can use the Federal Voting Assistance Program's [postage-paid envelope template](#) to print on your outer envelope.
    - If you are mailing your ballot from a non-U.S. postal facility, you must pay postage.
- You must return your absentee ballot by mail, and it must be received by your county clerk no later than 6 p.m., local time, on Election Day.

### How do I use the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot?

- The Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) is a back-up ballot you can use if your absentee ballot did not arrive in time. In Kentucky, you can use the FWAB to vote in any election and for any office (*i.e.*, not just for federal elections); you can also use the FWAB to register to vote and request an absentee ballot.
- The deadline for receipt of the FWAB depends on its purpose:

- To register to vote: must be received by the county clerk at least 29 days before the election.
- To request an absentee ballot: must be received by the county clerk at least 7 days before the election.
- To vote in an election: must be received by the county clerk no later than 6 p.m., local time, on Election Day.
- To vote in an election using the FWAB:
  - You will need **two envelopes** to submit an FWAB. You will need to provide your own envelopes, or you can make envelopes using the template provided on the Kentucky State Board of Elections website.
    - If you are mailing your ballot from any U.S. Post Office, U.S. Embassy or Consulate, or APO/FPO mail facility, you can use the Federal Voting Assistance Program's [postage-paid envelope template](#) to print on your outer envelope.
    - If you are mailing your ballot from a non-U.S. postal facility, you must pay postage.
  - Carefully follow the instructions provided with the FWAB.
  - You must mail your FWAB to your [county clerk](#), and it must be received by your county clerk no later than 6 p.m., local time, on Election Day.
- If you receive your absentee ballot after you submitted your FWAB, you should still fill it out and return it to your county clerk. If both are received by 6 p.m., local time, on Election Day, only the absentee ballot (and not the FWAB) will be counted.

### **How long is my Federal Post Card Application valid?**

A Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) is valid through the next general election or December 31 of the year it was received, whichever is later, unless you specify a shorter time period. Your county clerk will automatically send you an absentee ballot for all elections in which you are eligible to vote during the time period your FPCA is valid. You must re-apply each time your mailing address changes or after your FPCA expires.

### **How can I determine the status of my application?**

To find out whether your application for an absentee ballot has been received and accepted and whether your absentee ballot has been received, you can call your [county clerk](#) or check [online](#).

### **Where can I get a Federal Post Card Application or Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot?**

To obtain copies of military and overseas voting materials, please visit one of these websites:

[Kentucky State Board of Elections](#)

[Federal Voting Assistance Program](#)

## [Overseas Vote Foundation](#)

Or contact a United States [Consulate or Embassy](#) or a Military Branch Voting Assistance Officer.

### **What if I will be confined to a military base in Kentucky on Election Day?**

Any military personnel who will be confined to a base on Election Day can apply for a mail-in absentee ballot at least 7 days before the election. If you learn of your confinement less than 7 days before the election, you may vote on the absentee voting machine in your county clerk's office.

### **Where can I view a sample ballot?**

Sample ballots are available on the Secretary of State's [website](#).

### **Where can I find additional information?**

If you have any questions about military-overseas voter registration and absentee voting procedures, please contact:

- Kentucky [State Board of Elections](#)
  - Phone: (502) 573-7100
  - Toll-Free: (800) 246-1399
  - Email: [sbe.webmaster@ky.gov](mailto:sbe.webmaster@ky.gov)
- Your [county clerk](#)