

Treatment of Absentee Ballot Request on FPCA from Military and Overseas Electors

There have been a number of questions and concerns about the procedures for handling absentee ballot requests from military and overseas electors received on the Federal Post Card Application form (FPCA). The federal form has been revised. The form now provides that the voter is requesting a ballot for all elections for which the voter is eligible to vote. This is a change from earlier forms, when a voter could specify the election for which he wanted an absentee ballot. Treat the FPCA as an absentee ballot request.

Based on the information completed by the applicant:

Military electors (Section **1 a** on FPCA) receive a full ballot, including the write-in ballot. The military voter receives a ballot, including the write-in ballot, for as long as they are in military service. §§6.22 (4), 6.25 Wis. Stats.

Overseas electors – U.S. Citizens Temporarily Overseas (Section **1 b** on FPCA) receive a full ballot, but no write-in ballot. The FPCA instructions suggest that this voter has an intent to return to Wisconsin. The voter is treated as a regular absentee voter. §6.86 (1), Wis. Stats. The voter may receive an absentee ballot for all elections in the calendar year for which the request is made.

The voter receives the ballot for the applicable primary and general election. The voter does not receive a write-in ballot. There is no need to send the elector a state absentee ballot request, GAB-121. The instructions to the voter should remind them that because they are temporarily absent with an intent to return to Wisconsin, they must reapply for any election in following years.

Overseas electors - U.S. citizens overseas indefinitely (Section **1 c** on FPCA) receive a federal-only ballot, including the federal write-in ballot. The FPCA instructions suggest that this voter has no intent to return to Wisconsin. The voter is treated as an "overseas elector" under Wisconsin law. §6.24 (1), Wis. Stats.

The voter receives a federal-only ballot, including the federal write-in ballot, for two general election cycles per §6.865, Wis Stats. The instructions to the voter should remind them that because they are an "overseas elector," the request is in effect for two General elections, or effective for applicable elections through 2012. §6.865 (3) Wis Stats.

Reminder: See the instructions for faxing or emailing absentee ballots available from the Government Accountability Board..