

## Absentee Ballot Organization and Processing Tips

**(Please note these instructions were updated on 4/9/2020 in response to the U.S. Supreme Court Ruling on 4/6/2020)**

When a ballot is received from a voter, examine the certificate envelope for sufficiency. The envelope must contain:

- ✓ the signature of the voter
- ✓ the signature of a witness
- ✓ the address of the witness

If the certificate envelope is missing any of these components, contact the voter to advise them of their options to remedy the problem on or before election day.

UOCAVA voters may return:

- ✓ only the 'A' ballot (Presidential Preference-only)
- ✓ only the 'B' ballot (Full Official Ballot)
- ✓ the 'A' and the 'B' ballots

### Preparing Ballots for Delivery to the Polling Place

Ballots should be organized to assist with more efficient processing on election day at the polling place or central count location. Certificate envelopes should be reviewed to ensure all required information is present on each envelope and envelopes with missing information can be organized into separate stacks so that they can be held until after 8 pm for processing. Ballots envelopes with complete information that are ready for processing can be organized alphabetically and sorted by ward, if applicable.

### Ballots of Regular (Non-UOCAVA) Voters

1. Separate Ballots of Regular Voters into 2 stacks.
  - A. Sufficient Certificate Envelopes (Regular—Sufficient)
  - B. Insufficient Certificate Envelopes (Regular—Insufficient)
  - C. Label each stack appropriately

### Ballots of UOCAVA Voters

Please consider the following steps when organizing military and overseas absentee ballots prior to election day:

1. Separate the 'A' ballots from the 'B' ballots
2. Separate the 'A' ballots into 2 stacks.
  - A. Ballots of military and temporary overseas voters
  - B. Ballots of permanent overseas voters

3. Separate each of these stacks into 2 more stacks

- A. Sufficient certificate envelopes
- B. Insufficient certificate envelopes

You should now have four stacks of UOCAVA envelopes:

- 1. 'A' ballots of military and temporary overseas voters—*sufficient certificate envelopes* (A--Military/Temp Ov--Sufficient)
- 2. 'A' ballots of military and temporary overseas voters—*insufficient certificate envelopes* (A--Military/Temp OV--Insufficient)
- 3. 'A' ballots of permanent overseas voters—*sufficient certificate envelopes* (A--Perm OV--Sufficient)
- 4. 'A' ballots of permanent overseas voters—*insufficient certificate envelopes* (A--Perm OV--Insufficient)

C. Alphabetize each stack, band each stack together and label each stack appropriately.

4. Separate the 'B' ballots into 2 stacks

- A. 'B' ballots of military and temporary overseas voters—*sufficient certificate envelopes* (B--Military/Temp Ov--Sufficient)
- B. 'B' ballots of military and temporary overseas voters—*insufficient certificate envelopes* (B--Military/Temp Ov--Insufficient)

C. Alphabetize each stack, band each stack and label appropriately.

5. Provide instructions to the election inspectors as to each of the 8 stacks you have prepared.

A. Process the following absentee ballots during the day:

- 1. 'A' ballots of permanent overseas voters—*sufficient certificate envelopes*
- 2. 'B' ballots from military and temporary overseas voters—*sufficient certificate envelopes*
- 3. Official ballots from 'regular' absentee by mail or in-person absentee voters – *sufficient certificate envelopes*

**B. Hold these ballots until after 4:00 p.m. on April 13, 2020 – New deadline for receiving ballots in certificate envelopes created by federal court order was issued on 4/2/2020.**

- 1. 'A' ballots of military and temporary overseas voters who have not returned a sufficient 'B' ballot.

Why should these be held?

- a. If the 'A' ballot envelope is insufficient,
  - i. The voter may repair an insufficient 'A' certificate envelope on election day.
  - ii. The 'B' ballot may be received by mail by 4:00 PM **on April 13, 2020 (if postmarked by 4/7/2020)** or voted at the polling place.
- b. If the 'A' ballot is sufficient,
  - i. The 'B' ballot may be received by mail by 4:00 PM **on April 13, 2020 (if postmarked by 4/7/2020)** or voted at the polling place
  - ii. If the 'B' ballot is submitted but insufficient, the 'A' ballot may be counted.

2. 'A' ballots of permanent overseas voters—*insufficient certificate envelopes*

Why should these be held?

- a. Voters had to repair the certificate envelope by election day.

3. 'B' ballots of military and temporary overseas voters—*insufficient certificate envelopes*

Why should these be held?

- a. Voters had to repair the certificate envelope by election day.

4. Official ballots from 'regular' absentee by mail or in-person absentee voters – *insufficient certificate envelopes*

Why should these be held?

- a. Voters had to repair the certificate envelope by election day.

C. **After 4:00 p.m. on April 13, 2020** process all remaining ballots

1. **After 4:00 p.m. on April 13, 2020**, the 'B' (official) ballots with insufficient certificate envelopes that were not remediated by the voter on election day are rejected.
2. **After 4:00 p.m. on April 13, 2020**, the 'A' ballots are checked against the poll list and only processed if there is no voter number next to the voter's name.
  - a. When marking the absentee ballot log that the 'A' ballot was processed, you may find that the voter's 'B' ballot was rejected. If the 'B' ballot was rejected, the 'A' ballot is still processed.
4. 'A' ballots received from voters who have a voter number next to their name on the poll list are rejected.
5. 'A' ballots tabulated by optical scan equipment first must be remade.
6. Official ballots from 'regular' absentee by mail or in-person absentee voters with insufficient sufficient certificate envelopes are rejected.