



# Wisconsin Elections Commission

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**DATE:** October 10, 2020

**TO:** Wisconsin Municipal Clerks  
Wisconsin County Clerks  
City of Milwaukee Elections Commission  
Milwaukee County Elections Commission

**FROM:** Meagan Wolfe  
Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Presidential-only Ballots

In preparation of the upcoming General Election, Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) staff have prepared a brief guide to provide additional information on Presidential-only ballots, including who is eligible to receive this type of ballot, the necessary steps a voter must complete to receive one, and general information on how to process them. Additionally, the ballot templates prepared earlier in the year have been updated to include the names of Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates. The updated templates, including a hand-count ballot and two types of optical scan ballots, are available on the WEC website here: <https://elections.wi.gov/forms/el-207>

There are two primary scenarios in which a voter may receive a Presidential-only ballot, and both are predicated on the voter's inability to sufficiently establish residency in either Wisconsin or their new state of residence prior to the General Election.

## New Residents:

Any resident that moves to Wisconsin after October 6, 2020 will not be able to meet the 28-day residency requirement and, as such, would not be able to register and vote a full ballot. Voters in this situation should first check with their former state of residency to see what options are available for them there. If they are unable to vote in their previous state of residency, they may still cast a Presidential-only ballot in Wisconsin if they are otherwise qualified to vote here.

To be issued a Presidential-only ballot, new residents must:

- Complete an Application for Presidential Ballot – New Wisconsin Resident ([EL-141](#))
- Provide proof of residence and proof of identification
- Complete an Authorization to Cancel Registration ([EL-139](#)), which is sent to the proper election official for the voter's former state or county of residence

Note: these voters are **not** required to complete and provide an EL-131, as they have not met the residency requirement and are not registering to vote in Wisconsin. If the voter would like to register, they will have to submit a registration form and proof of residence to the clerk after election day.

*Wisconsin Elections Commissioners*

Ann S. Jacobs, chair | Marge Bostelmann | Julie M. Glancey | Dean Knudson | Robert Spindell | Mark L. Thomsen

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Administrator  
Meagan Wolfe

Voters in this scenario may submit the required documentation to the clerk in the 27 days prior to Election Day or at the polling place on Election Day.

- If the new resident votes their Presidential-only ballot in the clerk's office during in-person absentee voting, the clerk will record the voter's name and "President Only" on the absentee ballot log. The EL-141 will be entered into WisVote using the application type "presidential only" and the ballot will be delivered to the polling place or central count site like any other ballot.
- If the new resident votes at the polling place on Election Day, the election inspectors will record the voter's name and the "President Only" notation on the supplemental poll list. Please make sure that your polling places have an adequate supply of the ballots and forms required for this process.

### **Former Residents:**

Former residents of Wisconsin who are unable to meet the eligibility requirements to register in their new state of residence may request and vote a Presidential-only absentee ballot in their former municipality and ward of residence in Wisconsin. Former residents may apply for a ballot up to 24 months after leaving Wisconsin.

To be issued a Presidential-only absentee ballot, former residents must:

- Complete an Application for Presidential Ballot – Former Wisconsin Resident ([EL-140](#))
  - The EL-140 must be notarized to be considered a valid request
- Provide proof of identification

Note: as with new residents, these voters are not required to complete and provide an EL-131. While proof of identification is required for former residents, proof of residence is not.

There is no fixed deadline by which a former resident must provide a complete EL-140 and proof of identification. The required documentation must be received with sufficient time for a ballot to be mailed and returned prior to the election.

### **Processing Presidential-only Ballots:**

If you receive a complete request from a voter eligible to be issued a Presidential-only ballot you should use the appropriate ballot template from the agency website that was referenced previously in this communication. If you are a municipality that uses hand-count paper ballots, the ballots posted to the WEC website will look very similar to the ballots already in use in your polling place. These ballots will be hand counted on election day along with the rest of your hand count ballots. If you are a municipality that uses optical scan tabulators, you have a few options available. You may use the hand-count version of the Presidential-only ballot or you can use the versions that more closely resemble the ballots in use in your polling place (either arrows or ovals).

There are versions of the template that use ovals and another version that uses arrows to match the different ballot formats used across the state. These ballots are designed to resemble optical scan ballots, but the voting equipment cannot read these ballots and they will need to be remade onto regular optical scan ballots for processing on the voting equipment. It is important to note the optical scan versions of these templates contain an endorsement section that is required when these ballots are remade on election day so that the appropriate serial number can be added to both the original and remade version of the ballot. Poll workers should be trained on or reminded of the remaking procedures outlined in the Election Day Manual and that the original ballot should be retained with the other election materials.

**Examples of Voters Not Eligible for a Presidential-only Ballot:**

- Residents of other states who are only here temporarily or are passing through (e.g. over the road truckers passing through WI, people in the state temporarily for work): They would have to vote in their home state.
- Military voters: Military voters should be issued the full ballot with all contests included.
- Permanent overseas voters: Permanent overseas voters receive the federal-only ballot with only contests for federal office included (President and Representative to Congress for 2020 General Election).
- Temporary overseas voters: Temporary overseas voters are issued the full ballot with all contests included.
- Voters who do not have proof of residence or voters who do not meet residency requirements at a new address: These voters will have to find an acceptable proof of residence document in order to get registered and receive a ballot. Voters who have moved within the State but have not achieved residency at their new address are allowed under state law to vote from their former address. These voters are not eligible to be issued a Presidential-only ballot.

If you have questions, please contact the Elections Help Desk at 608-261-2028 or at [elections@wi.gov](mailto:elections@wi.gov).