

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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Absentee Ballot by Mail Request Deadline One Week Away

MADISON, WI – Wisconsin’s deadline for most voters to request an absentee ballot by mail is one week away, according to a reminder from the Government Accountability Board.

“Most people who are planning to vote absentee by mail should act now because their request for a ballot must be received in the clerk’s office by 5 p.m. Thursday, October 30,” said Kevin J. Kennedy, Wisconsin’s chief election official.

Kennedy noted that there are later deadlines for other groups of absentee voters:

- **5 p.m. Friday, October 31** is the deadline for indefinitely confined voters and military voters who are NOT on active duty away from their residence to request absentee ballots by mail.
- **5 p.m. Tuesday, November 4** is the deadline for sequestered jurors to apply for an absentee ballot and for hospitalized voters to make application by agent for an absentee ballot.
- **5 p.m. Tuesday, November 4** is the deadline for military voters who are on active duty away from their voting residence to request absentee ballots by mail. Military voters should request their ballot electronically through the MyVote Wisconsin website: MyVote.Wisconsin.gov.

“We are hearing from clerks that absentee voting by mail and in clerks’ offices is steady and it is strong in some areas,” Kennedy said. The G.A.B. is unable to provide total numbers for absentee voting before the election because only 320 of Wisconsin’s 1,852 municipal clerks use the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) to track absentee ballots.

As of midday Thursday, a total of 109,275 absentee ballots have been submitted by voters, according to clerks who track them in SVRS. Of those, 59,015 were completed in-person in a clerk’s office. Early voting in the clerk’s office began Monday and runs through Friday, October 31.

Kennedy offered these tips for voters who are still planning to vote absentee by mail:

- Fill out an absentee ballot request form to get an absentee ballot.
- Copies of the form in English, Spanish and Hmong languages are available on the G.A.B. website:

- <http://gab.wi.gov/forms/gab-121-english>
- <http://gab.wi.gov/forms/gab-121-spanish>
- <http://gab.wi.gov/forms/gab-121-hmong>
- Follow the instructions on the second page of the form.
- Send the form to your municipal clerk's office. You can find your clerk's contact information at MyVote Wisconsin: <http://myvote.wi.gov>.
- Wisconsin's voter photo ID law is not in effect for this election due to a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling, so absentee voters do not have to send a copy of their photo ID to receive their ballots.

When voting absentee, be sure to follow these tips:

- Mark the ballot in the presence of the witness.
- Have the witness sign the certificate envelope and provide his or her address.
- Make sure to sign the envelope.
- If you are assisted, the person assisting must sign the ballot and the envelope.

Elections Division Administrator Michael Haas reminded voters that the deadline for voters to have their mail-in absentee ballots postmarked is Election Day, November 4. The deadline for clerks to receive absentee ballots that are mailed is 4 p.m. the Friday after the election.

Haas also noted that clerks are reporting a few early voters are concerned when they learn that their ballots go into absentee envelopes and will not be counted until Election Day.

“Wisconsin law does not allow true ‘early voting’ in which votes are tabulated as ballots are cast,” Haas explained. “All absentee ballots, whether submitted by mail or in person, are securely stored and transmitted to the polling location or other designated location where they are counted on Election Day.”

The Government Accountability Board (G.A.B.) is responsible for administration and enforcement of campaign finance, elections, ethics and lobbying laws in Wisconsin. The G.A.B. is made up of six non-partisan, former judges and is supported by an agency of non-partisan staff members.