

FAQs: Special Election Topics: Situations and Troubleshooting

Q: How do you handle an absentee request that is sent to someone's home address and you find out later they are actually in the nursing home and their relative is taking it to the home to vote?

A: There is really nothing you can do about it because the request on file is for the home address and not the nursing home.

Q: Does an emailed absentee ballot request require a signature?

A: a wet signature is not required, just a written request

Q: Do you continue processing ballots after 8 pm if needed and continue to put those ballots into the ballot box for counting? Then run your tender card when finished with absentee ballots?

A: yes, you continue processing absentees after 8pm until all of them have been placed in the tabulator

Q: On the FPCA, there is the option for how the voter wants the ballot sent and the first option is 1) Email/Online. If we get one of these, are we supposed to e-mail the ballot or assume that the voter will download the ballot from My Vote or are we required to try and contact them and figure out which they want?

A: you can check with the voter to see if they would prefer to use My Vote Wisconsin (most will), but if they don't respond within 24 hours, you should send the ballot as requested.

Q: Can a court order, say for child support or restraining order, be used as POR since it is issued by a court?

A: yes, courts are units of government

Q: Can a military voter register for an absentee ballot and vote all through MyVote?

A: yes.

Q: I was asking about a court order, does it have to be within a time period like 90 days or 1 year?

A: there is no deadline or time period specified for documents from a unit of government

Q: What if an in-person absentee doesn't want to lick the envelope? Can it be taped closed? Can it be initialed that it was sealed at City Hall?

A: it can be sealed by alternate means, the clerk can seal it if the voter does not wish to lick the envelope, but the voter should still be present. If you find an unsealed envelope in your office after the voter has left, that situation should be documented for Election Day and the inspectors can decide based on the facts to either count the ballot or reject it as "potentially tampered with"

Q: If voter says did not return or mail ballot and votes on election day and then the clerk gets the ballot in the mail the day after the election. What do you do?

A: Contact the District Attorney's office.

Q: If an absentee ballot was sent in the mail to the address the voter had indicated on the absentee ballot request form and the parent dropped the ballot off at the Clerk's office when the Clerk was not in the office, with a note for a new address where her son or daughter is staying. Does the voter need to submit a new request with the new address? What should the clerk do with the ballot that was dropped off at the office? Please advise.

A: This is a situation that can be complicated depending on the specifics. If the move was within the municipality and is permanent, the clerk could just update the voter's registration and send them a letter

indicating the updated information and requesting the voter to contact the clerk if anything is incorrect. The absentee ballot could still be counted at that point. If the move isn't permanent, it could just be a mailing address update, which again could be done with just a notification to the voter while still counting the ballot. If the move is outside the municipality and is permanent, then we may have a problem where the ballot would be rejected because this person is no longer a resident of the municipality and therefore not qualified. If this is a real situation, I would recommend contacting us with the relevant details via email so we can provide proper advice depending on the circumstances.

Q: True....But if you can figure it out, you won't get calls from so many of us with the same question.... but of course it is always nice chatting with you folks.

A: we typically don't see multiples of most of these and I'd encourage people to call when they aren't sure, even if it means more calls for us to handle

Q: Can we use machines during in person if they aren't "counted" until Election Day?

A: Sending to staff attorney to see if there is a way to offer some sort of option.

Q: Thanks for the beautiful envelope Diane! We like the portrait format very much.... :)

A: Thanks for the input!

Q: As you check those documents for one Clerk can you post it on a listing that we all could access? Sometimes it is difficult getting a hold of someone when we need it. I was just thinking a listing that keeps growing would be very useful for this type of thing.

A: the problem is that the list is pretty big already and it becomes problematic to administer such a list, but again, we can look into it and see what sort of repository we might be able to build

Q: The lag time between binking in Election Day votes and late arriving ballots is bad when you have over 25,000 voters who voted and then you get a significant return of ballots late. Are we working on a quicker method for getting votes binked in? IE.... reverse engineering for large turn out or technology other than single voter binking?

A: this is definitely something we can look at as part of the SVRS modernization process, thanks for the feedback

Q: Can a voter living in a facility served by SVD's have a relative take them to a poll site on Election Day or to City Hall to vote in person. This comes up when residents have not registered during open registration.

A: Yes, they can still vote at the polls.

Q: When a person votes in person and they screw up the first ballot and ask for another. Do we have to keep and record these as spoiled as well?

A: yes

Q: I was hoping for more information on the information from Electioneering to the end of packet. Will there be a future webinar on these subjects? Thank you all for the time and energy that you put into helping us understand elections.

A: We have covered this topic extensively in past webinars. Check out the Election Day Officials: Special Topics posted on our website.

Q: Please repeat the web address for ineligible voter list. Thank you

A: electiondata.gab.wi.gov

Q: I must have missed it but what is the definition of separation date?

A: When the person's sentence is scheduled to be successfully completed.

Q: If military voters need to be tracked in SVRS then do reliers contact their providers?

A: Yes, reliers should notify their providers of any military/overseas absentee ballot requests they receive

Q: If the clerk that has the care facility in its municipality does not have a SVD that goes there does the clerk that the person in the care facility then take the ballot to the care facility?

A: The clerk must send two special voting deputies to certain care facilities, such as nursing homes. The clerk can appoint his or herself as one of the two SVDs if desired.

Q: Hi, Please mention the update date for the material in this training packet if the material has been updated since the last printing. Just trying to track NEW information. BTW - I really appreciate the webinars!

A: The only thing that changed between Monday and today is the order on the agenda; two topics were switched.

Q: Can I put up my own yard signs in my yard if I have people absentee vote in my home?

A: No, it's electioneering.

Q: Does this webinar count as training hours?

A: Yes, for both clerks and chief inspectors.

Q: What happens if the original witness cannot absolutely be present (out of town, in hospital, etc.)?

A: there is no solution to this problem; unfortunately they are locked into the defective absentee

Q: When does the year begin? January to December?

A: Yes, the calendar year.

Q: as of 1/1/13 there are no military or overseas voters unless they reapplied for an absentee. Do we change their status in SVRS?

A: No you should not change their voter uocva status or their voter record. You may cancel their absentee application. If the absentee application has an end date of 12/31/2012 they will not be issued an absentee ballot for the 2013 elections so you don't need to cancel those applications but you may cancel the application if you wish, and certainly cancel any outstanding or unreturned absentee ballots.

Q: I don't believe we can send the small pencils in the mail anymore.

A: I know City of Madison still is, but you'd have to ask them. There's no legal barrier I'm aware of.

Q: Can an 18 year high school student use name, address issued by the high school?

A: if you mean a document from the school as POR? Yes, a public school is a unit of government

Q: If a home is in lock down and an absentee is mailed who signs as the witness?

A: Someone in the nursing home, similar to any absentee ballot by mail.

Q: Suggestion for future update: Could the GAB-124 Absentee Ballot Log have area to auto populate when a first ballot was cancelled & second ballot issued. Thanks.

A: I'll pass your suggestion along to Diane.

Q: We need to find a way to notify/alert temporary overseas they are not allowed to use a FWAB for Wisconsin. We received so many of them for the Nov. 2012 Election that caused issues.

A: thanks for the feedback; we continue to try to better educate these voters and organizations that promote the use of the FWAB

Q: Isn't a "wet" signature required even if the absentee ballot request is emailed or faxed?

A: not anymore, the law changed in the 2011-2012 session

Q: How are email requests for an absentee ballot handled? Is the email without a signature a valid request?

A: an email request is a written request; you do not need a wet signature

Q: We registered a person who wasn't on the ineligible voter list. When we went to enter his voter registration, SVRS said he was an inactive felon. What should we do with these?

A: Call G.A.B. We will confirm the person's status. Usually the person has completed their sentence. SVRS does not automatically update inactive voters when they complete their sentence and become eligible. Match and link the voter and process the application. Then call us.

Q: Is an email request considered a written request for an absentee ballot?

A: Yes.

Q: GAB-155 Oath of Special Voting Deputy. Is this a 2 year appointment?

A: yes, a two-year term

Q: Is signature required on a faxed or emailed request?

A: not a wet signature, no

Q: Indefinitely confined request is permanent?

A: Until they don't return a ballot after an "election cycle" consisting of a primary and an election.

Q: Do they need to fill out a request for each election?

A: They can request for each election or up to a calendar year unless they are indefinitely confined.

Q: To clarify the registration process at the care facilities during open registration. The manual states that SVD's trained to register can register at facilities as SVD's. It appears in this training material that SVD's must also be SRD's, correct?

A: correct, they are appointed as both SVDs and SRDs

Q: Are absentee voters in a care facility considered a mail in vote? We are confused how you can issue an absentee ballot before the third Wednesday when in-person is not until two weeks before.

A: Yes, they are considered an absentee by mail. Absentee voting in certain care facilities by SVDs are governed by different rules than regular absentee voting.

Q: If an absentee ballot envelope is incomplete and the elector comes in on Election Day to correct, why can't they just vote 'at the polling place' rather than completing a new absentee return envelope?

A: To maintain consistency, all corrections are done on a new absentee certificate envelope.

Q: The Tax Bill is not a good POR because people can have their Tax Bills mailed anywhere, not just where they reside.

A: the law allows it, but I understand your point. The same could be said for many types of POR.

Q: If they cannot produce their witness, can they just vote in person on reject the absentee ballot?

A: No.