

# FACT SHEET FOR MN LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENTS AND PROVIDERS

## Voting During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Resident's Right to Vote in 2020 General Election – Nov. 3



Voting is a basic resident right under both federal and state regulations. With visitation restrictions due to COVID-19, residents may need additional support to vote. This year, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) both encourage voting by mail with absentee voting. The Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care has compiled this Fact Sheet to help guide you and your voting-eligible residents through the option to vote by mail using the Minnesota absentee ballot process.

### Staff May Help Residents Exercise Their Right To Vote With Absentee Ballot

- ✓ Staff may print blank absentee ballot request forms to provide to residents or leave forms in a common area.
- ✓ Blank absentee ballot request form: <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/media/2688/large-print-english-regular-absentee-ballot-application.pdf>
- ✓ Staff may **not** assist the resident in completing the form but can encourage residents to follow directions carefully.
- ✓ **By Friday, October 2, 2020:** Recommended to apply for absentee ballot by this date.
- ✓ Staff or resident may return completed absentee ballot requests by mail, fax, or as a scanned attachment to an email.
- ✓ Reach out to your County Election Office for support or to agencies listed on other side.
- ✓ Thank you for ensuring that your voting-eligible residents can exercise their right to vote.

### Guidance When Resident Receives Their Absentee Ballot

- ✓ Read the instructions that come with your ballot carefully.
- ✓ Your ballot will not count if you do not complete all the forms.
- ✓ Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is **no witness requirement** for registered voters for the November 3, 2020, election.
- ✓ Non-registered voters will still need a witness to indicate their proof of residence. If you are not registered to vote, you will get a registration application in your absentee ballot materials. To register, show your witness one of the identification options listed in the instructions. Your witness must mark which proof of identification was shown to them on your signature envelope. Additional information available at [mnvotes.org](http://mnvotes.org).

## Guidance When Resident Marks Their Absentee Ballot

- ✓ Once the ballot is marked, the voter or a person assisting the voter must:
  - seal the ballot in the secrecy envelope and place in certified mail-in envelope.
  - complete the voter section including signature and ID on certified mail-in envelope.
- ✓ The certified envelope may be mailed or delivered in person to the County Election Office or to an open early voting site during the early voting period.
  - Only the voter or 'agent delivery' (defined as voter's near relative or anyone other than voter) may return ballot to County Election Office. Anyone other than voter returning ballot needs to sign 'ballot agent delivery record' to complete County Election process.
- **By Tuesday, November 3, 2020:** Absentee ballot needs to be returned.

## Tips for Staff and Residents

- **Don't wait** to get started on the absentee ballot process. Start now!
- Family members will **not likely** be available to assist their loved ones in voting in person.
- **Track Your Ballot:** All absentee ballots that are received on time and had the forms filled out correctly will be counted. Visit [mnvotes.org](https://mnvotes.org) to track the status of your ballot and confirm that it was received and counted.

## Important Dates and Deadlines

- **Friday, September 18, 2020:** General election ballots start mailing.
- **By Friday, October 2, 2020:** Recommended to apply for absentee ballot by this date.
- **By Tuesday, November 3, 2020:** Absentee ballot needs to be returned.
- **Election Day - November 3, 2020:** Your ballot must be postmarked **on or before** Election Day and received by your County Election Office by the seventh day after Election Day.

## What If We Have Problems or Residents Can't Cast Their Vote?

- Contact the Minnesota Disability Law Center: 1-800-292-4150
- Contact the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office: 1-877-600-VOTE (8683)  
<https://www.sos.state.mn.us/election-administration-campaigns/elections-calendar/2020-elections-and-covid-19/>
- Contact Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care: 1-800-657-3591 or 651-431-2555
- Contact your County Election Office

