

Step-by-Step Instructions for Voting Absentee-by-Mail

The preferred method of voting in Virginia for the 2020 Election

1. Check your [voter registration status](#).
2. Request an application for Early Absentee Vote-by-Mail.*
 - Contact the [Roanoke County Office of Elections](#) to request an application, **OR**
 - [Apply online](#) through the Virginia Department of Elections, **OR**
 - Download, complete, sign, and return the [Vote by Mail Application Form](#).
 - **Mailing Address:** Voter Registration & Elections, PO Box 20884, Roanoke, VA 24018
 - **Email:** elections@roanokecountyva.gov or acloeter@roanokecountyva.gov
3. After the registrar processes your application, you will receive your ballot in the mail. Early Absentee Vote-by-Mail ballots will not be mailed until **after** September 18, 2020.
4. When you receive your ballot in the mail, open immediately.
5. Mark your ballot.
6. Place your ballot in **Envelope B**.
7. Seal your envelope.
8. Write your full legal name and address (as they appear on your voter registration card or on the envelope in which you received your ballot), In the space provided on the **back of Envelope B**,
9. Sign the **back of Envelope B** in the space provided.
10. Have a witness sign the back of Envelope B in the space provided.
 - A witness signature was not required for the June Primary but we can't be sure if it has been waived for the 2020 General Election until after the August Special Legislative Session (better safe than sorry).
 - The witness does not need to see how you mark your ballot, they are only confirming that they saw you place and seal your ballot inside the envelope.
11. Return Envelope B to the Roanoke County Office of Elections **immediately**.
 - You may mail Envelope B using the USPS, UPS, FedEx, or any commercial mail service, **OR**

- You may deliver your ballot to the Office of Elections in person.
 - **Physical Address:** Craig Center, 900 Chestnut Street, Vinton, VA 24179
 - When delivering Envelope B in-person, it must be delivered by the individual to whom the Vote Early Absentee-by-Mail ballot was sent and whose name and address appear on the back of Envelope B.
 - If you deliver your Absentee Vote-by-Mail ballot in person, you will be required to show **proper ID** such as:
 - ▶ a current and valid photo ID (for example a driver's license); or
 - ▶ a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or paycheck that shows name and address; or
 - ▶ another government document that shows name and address (for example a voter card). If the voter returns an absentee ballot by mail without a copy of one of these forms of ID, the absentee ballot will be treated as a [provisional ballot](#) and counted only if the voter provides a copy of ID to the electoral board by the deadline applicable to all voters.
 - When entering the Office of Elections, please **wear a mask**.
12. Again, if you opt for Early Absentee Vote-by-Mail, follow all directions provided with your ballot, and return it to the Office of Elections **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**.
13. Ballots will be accepted by the Office of Elections as long as Envelope B is postmarked by November 3.

* Some first time voters may not be permitted to vote absentee by mail. If you are a first time voter, check with the [Roanoke County Office of Elections](#) before applying for an absentee vote-by-mail ballot.

Fact Checking Myths About Vote-By-Mail

MYTH: "Mail ballots are very dangerous for this country because of cheaters. They go collect them. They are fraudulent in many cases..." [Donald J. Trump, July 28, 2020](#)

MYTH: "if you were able to get your now dead cat's name on the voter list and it has yet to be removed, a ballot will be sent (that actually happened)." [Roanoke Times Comments, July 14, 2020](#)

FACT: No, a dead cat voting didn't "actually happen". Much like Reagan's 1996 Welfare Queen and Trump's 2018 Caravan of Illegals, the 2020 Democratic Dead Cat is just a wolf call to the Republican base that has never seen a conspiracy theory it didn't like.

FACT: To be placed on a local registrar's official voter list you must be a registered voter. To become a registered voter, you must provide your unique federally issued Social Security Number (SSN) and proof of residence.

FACT: To obtain a federally issued SSN you must provide an official state issued birth certificate. Cats cannot get official state issued live birth certificates.

FACT: When you are handed or mailed a ballot, it is linked to your SSN and will be flagged if another ballot is cast anywhere in the US using the same SSN (a precaution against a voter with multiple identities or addresses voting in multiple jurisdictions).

FACT: When the local Office of Elections mails a ballot to anyone, that ballot is linked to Envelope B by a code that is linked to your unique, federally issued SSN. This code is how your ballot can be tracked on every step of its journey - from the local Office of Elections to delivery at your home and from your home to the post office and then back to the Office of Elections.

FACT: If you requested an Absentee Vote-by-Mail ballot, but show up to vote in person at a precinct on Election Day, you will be flagged as having already been sent a ballot and will not be permitted to vote a second time.

FACT: If you challenge the precinct captain's decision because you say a) you can't remember if you returned your Vote-by-Mail ballot or not, b) you couldn't return that ballot because you lost it, or c) you never received your ballot, then you will be given a provisional ballot. A provisional ballot is not processed until the non-partisan Office of Elections, under the watchful eye of the non-partisan Electoral Board, is able to trace your ballot using the ballot and envelope code that is linked to your unique SSN.

FACT: [All voter fraud is extremely rare](#). Most voter fraud convictions involve the collection of signatures for candidates to get on ballots and not in actual voting.