

Vote by Mail Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

For the November 3, 2020 General Elections

On August 14, 2020, Governor Murphy signed **Executive Order No. 177** stating that the November 3, 2020 General Election will be **primarily a Vote by Mail (VBM) election**, with limited in-person polling locations open on Election Day. The process itself is being adapted in light of the continuing health crisis. It is important for our voters to understand how the new process will work to ensure your vote counts!

Is there any difference between, “Absentee, Mail-in and VBM ballots?”

NO, they are one and the same. Many years ago, government did away with having to provide a ‘reason’ for requesting the mail-in or “absentee” ballot.

Who is going to automatically receive a VBM Ballot?

ALL ‘Active’ registered Salem County voters will automatically be mailed a VBM Ballot. Voters who are “Inactive” in the State system will **NOT** automatically receive a ballot in the mail and must contact the County Clerk to request one.

Are BOTH parties represented during the collection and counting of ALL ballots?

YES. The Board of Elections consists of equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans to ensure the sanctity of the Election process, whether it be the collection or counting of ballots.

Will I be able to vote at the Polls using a voting machine?

NO, unless you fall under specific ADA guidelines. If you choose to go to the polls, you will cast your ballot on a paper Provisional ballot that looks exactly like the VBM ballot.

When is the deadline to register to vote?

The deadline to register to vote is October 13, 2020. If mailing your registration, it must be postmarked by October 13, 2020. If delivering your registration to the Salem County Board of Elections, it must be received by 9 pm, October 13, 2020 at 110 Fifth Street, Suite 1000, Salem, NJ.

Is there a deadline to submit a VBM Application to receive a VBM Ballot in time for the 2020 General Election?

YES, the deadline for the Salem County Clerk’s Office to receive a VBM Application by USPS mail is **October 23, 2020**.

Is there a deadline to request an In-Person VBM Application?

NO, the statute has been suspended. However, if you will appear in-person, the deadline is 7pm, the day of election, November 3, 2020. This is to facilitate gathering your information, allowing you proper time to cast your ballot, and returning your voted ballot to the Board of Elections office. Your drivers license will be required as ID.

What will the VBM Ballot look like?

Sample Ballots will be posted on the Salem County Clerk website at: www.salemcountyclerk.org <click> **Services → Election Services**

When will the ballots be mailed?

The New Jersey Secretary of State has designated October 5, 2020 to commence mailing of VBM Ballots. You can expect to receive your ballot shortly thereafter.

Will the Ballot Mailing label have a visible “D” or “R” designation?

NO, that only takes place during a Primary Election and that comes from the State. We have provided feedback to have that removed, if possible.

What should I do if I lose my VBM Ballot, it is destroyed, or I do not believe I received it?

If your VBM Ballot is lost, damaged or you believe you did not receive it, call the County Clerk’s Office: **856-935-7510 X8454** for instruction.

Do I have to provide postage to return the VBM Ballot?

NO, all VBM ballots will have prepaid First-Class return postage.

What is the deadline for returning your VBM Ballot?

Every ballot that is postmarked on or before November 3, 2020 and received by November 10, 2010 at 8:00PM shall be considered VALID if all other information is in order.

If you are using one of the secure Drop Boxes, the deadline for depositing your ballot is: **8:00 pm November 3, 2020**. Please contact the Board of Elections at: 856-935-7510 for Drop Box locations.

If you are delivering your ballot in-person, you may deliver it to the Board of Elections Office until 8:00 pm on November 3, 2020, please **bring Driver’s License** with you. If someone other than the voter is delivering the ballot to the Board of Elections, make sure that they complete and sign the Bearer Section on the back side of the return envelope. A Bearer may return a maximum of three (3) ballots, **five (5) if ALL are in the same household**.

How do I return my VBM Ballot?

1. You may mail your ballot through the US Postal Service.
2. You may deposit your ballot in any one of the secure Drop Boxes located throughout the county. **Check with your Board of Elections for Drop Box locations.**
3. You may deliver your ballot directly to the Board of Elections. If personally delivering to the Board of Elections, **YOU MUST SHOW YOUR DRIVER’S LICENSE.**
4. A voter may return the mail-in ballot (in the envelopes) that they personally voted to their designated polling place.

May I return my VBM Ballot to the polling location on General Election Day?

YES. VBM Ballots will be accepted at your designated polling location as part of the

Governor's Executive Order #177. **Please be sure to utilize ALL of the return envelopes provided** when returning your ballot to your designated Polling place.

IMPORTANT – Place your voted ballot inside and **SIGN** the Certification Envelope and then insert Certification envelope into the larger envelope addressed to: **Salem County Elections**

IF YOU DO NOT INCLUDE THE PROVIDED ENVELOPES AT THE POLLS, YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO CAST A PROVISIONAL BALLOT.

How will I know where to find the secure Drop Box locations?

Contact the Board of Elections at 856-935-7510. The County Clerk's office will also post the locations once the locations have been certified and installed.

Please visit: www.salemcountyclerk.org <click> **Election Services**

These locked boxes are emptied by **Board of Elections staff** and always with an **equal number of Democrats and Republicans present.**

Am I committing Voter Fraud if I sign the Certification envelope?

For the purposes of the Certification Envelope that you must sign stating that you *applied* for the VBM Ballot, please be advised that Governor Murphy's Executive Order No. 177 will also be reflected on the enclosed envelope and **must** be signed in order to be VALID.

Does the Board of Elections require identification if you deliver your VBM Ballot directly to them?

YES, a voter delivering their own ballot is required to produce their driver's license. If a Bearer (someone other than the voter) is delivering the voter's ballot, they too must produce their driver's license.

How will I know my Polling location?

Prior to the election, you will receive a Notice identifying your polling location and other useful Election information.

Will I be receiving a Sample Ballot?

NO, because you will be receiving an actual ballot by mail. If you would like to view the ballot before receiving it in the mail, go to: salemcountyclerk.org <click> **Services** → <click> **Election Services.**

Provisional Ballots *ONLY* if I go to my designated polling place?

YES. The only difference between a Mail-In Ballot and a Provisional Ballot are the words "Mail-In" and "Provisional" at the top. Please understand that "*voting by machine*" is reserved for specific ADA voters **ONLY.**

Note: Provisional Ballots are counted after VBM, but they **WILL** be counted. They must also be checked against the Mail-In (VBM) Ballots that have already been cast before they are accepted and canvassed.

How will I vote if I am Disabled and require an Accessible ballot?

If you require assistance and need an accessible ballot, please contact the Salem County Board of Elections at 856-935-7510.

Do all Mail-In (VBM) Ballots get counted?

Ballots that are properly cast are canvassed and counted. Two common errors causing ballots to be rejected are:

1 – Neglecting to sign the Certification Envelope

2 – The tampering of the Certification Envelope

Note: Do Not Detach the Certificate and attempt to tape it.

If your Certificate is detached or damaged, request a new Certification Envelope from the **County Clerk’s Office: 856-935-7510 x8454 or x8208**

Will I be notified if my Mail-In Ballot is rejected?

YES, the Board of Elections will notify you, following the election, with the reason your ballot was not counted.

When will we know the Official results of the November 3, 2020 General Election?

Due to the Executive Order and the additional time it allows to receive and count ballots, the results may not be available prior to November 23, 2020, and that may be extended. Every effort will be made to provide results as quickly as possible, however, the goal is to be accurate while meeting the prescribed deadline(s).

Will I continue to get VBM Ballots for “All Future Elections” after this General Election?

Voters that have previously requested VBM for “All Future Elections” will continue to do so when the State returns all voters to their original selections *post-election*.

Voters who enjoyed voting at their polling location will be removed from VBM **AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION** is completed and certified.

How do I contact the Board of Elections and/or the County Clerk’s Office?

Salem County Board of Elections

110 Fifth Street, Suite 1000

Salem, NJ 08079

856-935-7510 x8328, 8329, 8330 and 8331

Salem County Clerk’s Office

110 Fifth Street, Suite 200

Salem, NJ 08079

856-935-7510 x8454 or x8208