



City of Marlborough

Office of the City Clerk

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Absentee Ballot FAQs

When should I submit my application for an absentee ballot?

If you wish to vote by absentee ballot for more than one election in a year you may make one application and request that ballots for all elections during that calendar year be sent to you. If you vote by mail, make certain the application arrives at your local election office early. Remember, the ballot will be mailed to you. You may mail or hand-deliver it back to the election office but must arrive before the close of the polls on election day (8:00 P M).

If you cast your ballot at the Clerk's office before election day, plan to visit the office two or three weeks before the election. You can make your application and cast your vote in one visit. Call the Clerk's office to make certain that the absentee ballots are available. Absentee ballots should be available three weeks before an election.

Must I be a registered voter in order to vote by absentee ballot?

Yes, unless you are a "specially qualified voter". A specially qualified voter is a person:

- who is otherwise eligible to register as a voter and
- whose present domicile is outside the United States and whose last domicile in the United States was Massachusetts or whose present domicile is Massachusetts and who is:
 1. absent from the city or residence and in the active service of the armed forces or in the merchant marine of the United States or a spouse or dependent of such person;
 2. absent from the commonwealth; or
 3. confined in a correctional facility or a jail, except if by reason of felony conviction.

Must my ballot be witnessed?

No.

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What if I'm not able to mark my absentee ballot?

You may ask any person to help you. The helper must print his or her name and your name on the brown envelope, write the reason you needed help and then sign his or her name as the assisting person.

Are polling places accessible to elderly and disabled voters?

Yes. Federal law required polling places be accessible by 1986.

I'm permanently disabled. May I vote from home?

Yes. You must apply to your local election office to do so. File a letter from your doctor with the City Clerk. The doctor must state that you are permanently unable to cast your ballot at the polling place due to a physical disability. The local election official will automatically mail you an application for an absentee ballot for all elections in a calendar year. You must sign the application and send it back to your local election official. Call your local election official for information about how to register to vote at home or to request that a mail-in registration form be sent to you.

My mother is in a nursing home. Can she vote by absentee ballot?

Yes, as long as she is not under a court ordered guardianship which specifically prohibits voting. Any patient in a nursing home must be a registered voter in order to vote by absentee ballot and must fill out an absentee ballot application.

If the City Clerk designates a health care facility in writing 28 days before the election, the ballot must be hand-delivered to such facility by a Registrar. If the patient states that he/she has entered a hospital after noon of the fifth day before the election, the ballot may be hand-delivered to the voter; otherwise, the ballot should be mailed to the voter at the facility. Consult the administration of the nursing home for further instructions.

You CANNOT deliver an absentee ballot directly to the polling place on Election Day