



# Absentee Voting

In South Carolina

**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
ELECTION COMMISSION

every vote matters.  
every vote counts.



## Who can Vote Absentee?

- > Persons with physical disabilities.
- > Persons 65 years of age or older.
- > Members of the Armed Forces and Merchant Marines of the United States, their spouses, and dependents residing with them.
- > Persons admitted to a hospital as an emergency patient on the day of the election or within a four-day period before the election.
- > Persons with employment obligations which prevent them from voting during early voting hours for the duration of the early voting period, and during the hours the polls are open on election day.
- > Persons attending a sick or physically disabled person which prevents them from voting during early voting hours for the duration of the early voting period, and during the hours the polls are open on election day.
- > Persons confined to a jail or pretrial facility pending disposition of arrest or trial which prevents them from voting during early voting hours for the duration of the early voting period, and during the hours the polls are open on election day.
- > Persons who will be absent from their county of residence during early voting hours for the duration of the early voting period, and during the hours the polls are open on election day.

**Absentee voting allows qualified voters to cast a ballot by mail, fax, email or in person prior to election day.**

## How can you Vote Absentee?

- > **Step 1: Get your application.**
  - You can submit your request for an application as early as January 1 of the election year.
  - Call, visit or send your request by U.S. mail to your **county voter registration office**.
  - You must provide your name, date of birth and last four digits of your Social Security Number with your request.
- > **Step 2: Complete, sign and return the application.**
  - Return the application by U.S. mail or personal delivery to your **county voter registration office** as soon as possible.
  - The deadline to return your application is 5:00 p.m. on the 11th day prior to the election. (cont. on next page)



## How can you Vote Absentee? (cont.)

- > **Step 3: Receive an absentee ballot in the mail.**
  - Voters who have applied early will be mailed their absentee ballot approximately 30 days before the election.
  - You can track your ballot at [scVOTES.gov](https://scvotes.gov).
- > **Step 4: Vote, sign and return the ballot.**
  - Be sure to sign the voter's oath and have your signature witnessed. Anyone age 18 or older can witness your signature. A notary is not necessary.
  - Return your ballot to your county voter registration office or an early voting center either by mail or personal delivery no later than 7:00 p.m. on election day.
  - You must present **Photo ID** if returning the ballot in person.

Visit [scVOTES.gov](https://scvotes.gov) to find information about how Immediate Family Members and Authorized Representatives can make an absentee request or return a ballot for another person. All requestors are limited to five requests in addition to their own per election.

## Military and Overseas Citizens

Special provisions are available to make voting easier for military and overseas citizens.

- > Start by getting a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) at [FVAP.gov](https://fvap.gov) and submitting it to your **county voter registration office**.
- > After applying, your military and overseas voter status will remain in effect through December 31st of the year following the date you apply, unless you want it to end sooner.
- > 45 days prior to every election, your county voter registration office will send you your ballot.
- > Military and overseas voters can receive and return ballots by mail, fax or email.
- > Ballots that are faxed, emailed or delivered in person must be received by the office no later than 7:00 p.m. on election day. Mailed ballots must be mailed no later than 7:00 p.m. on election day and received no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day before certification (one or two days after election day depending on the type of election).

## For More Information

Visit [scVOTES.gov](https://scvotes.gov), [FVAP.gov](https://fvap.gov) or contact your county voter registration office for more information.

**See our other voter education brochures:**

- > [Voter Registration in South Carolina](#)
- > [Access for All Voters in South Carolina](#)
- > [South Carolina's Paper-Based Voting System](#)
- > [Voting in South Carolina](#)
- > [Photo ID Requirements](#)

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**South Carolina Election Commission**

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