



U.S. Election Assistance Commission

Scripts for the **Be Election Ready: Video Guides for Voters Series**

Video 3: Voting by Mail

Voting by mail, also known as absentee voting in some communities, is one way that eligible voters can cast their ballot safely and securely.

The rules for voting by mail vary state-by-state.

In some states, you must provide a reason when you make your request. Acceptable reasons might include because you're sick, attending college, serving in the military, have a disability, or are simply going to be out of town on Election Day.

While in many states, you can request a ballot by mail for any or no reason at all.

And in several states, all registered voters are automatically sent a ballot by mail before Election Day.

It's best to check with your state or local election office to ensure that you are eligible and learn how to request a ballot.

Once you've received and filled out your ballot remember to add postage to the return envelope (where required) and mail your ballot to the election office early enough to meet your state's ballot return deadline.

To be sure it arrives on time, consider dropping your ballot in the mail at least one week before the deadline.

You may also be able to return your ballot in person to your election office, at a secure drop box, or at your voting location. Check with your local election office for information on how and when to return your ballot in person.

Most states allow voters to track the status of their ballot online. Follow the link on the screen to see if you can track your mailed ballot this upcoming election.

If election officials identify any problems while verifying your mailed ballot you may be contacted to resolve the issue in time for it to be counted.

For more information contact your state or local election office or visit [EAC.gov](https://www.eac.gov).