



Voting by Mail



1) We send your ballot

Your ballot is mailed about three weeks prior to Election Day, earlier if you are an overseas or service voter



2) You vote and return your ballot

Mark your selections by filling in the ovals. Insert your ballot into the security sleeve, the return envelope, and seal it. Then be sure to sign on the line!



3) We receive your ballot

Once we receive your ballot, the signature on your return envelope is scanned by our mail sorting machine, which can sort up to 12,000 ballot envelopes per hour! After sorting, the machine sends the scanned image of your signature to our signature verification team.



4) We verify your signature

The signature on your return envelope is then compared to your signature on file. If your signatures match, the ballot is approved and moves on to opening. If the signatures don't match, the ballot is "challenged" and we will contact you by mail, phone and/or email to resolve the issue so we can count your ballot. About 1% of ballots returned each election are challenged.



5) We open your ballot

Once your signature is verified, the security envelope with your ballot is removed from the return envelope. Next, the ballot is removed from the security envelope. Finally, we visually inspect the ballot to determine if the votes marked can be read by the scanning equipment.



6) We scan your ballot

After your ballot has been inspected, a machine will scan the ballot and store the image on a secure and closed system.



7) We review your ballot

Once ballots are scanned, staff works in teams of two to ensure votes are counted as the voter intended. Teams use the Voter Intent Manual produced by the Office of the Secretary of State to consistently determine voter intent.



8) We count your ballot

Results are produced and made public after 8 p.m. on Election Day. No results are known to anyone, even Elections staff, prior to 8 p.m. on Election Day.