



H Burch <heidilburch@gmail.com>

RE: Questions re: deadline for overseas voters to request their Primary Ballot be sent by Mail

1 message

Sholl, Howard G (Elect_NC) <Howard.Sholl@state.de.us>
To: H Burch <heidilburch@gmail.com>

Tue, Aug 21, 2018 at 8:13 AM

Ms Burch:

The temporary change of the State's Primary to the Thursday after Labor Day created a serious problem regarding mail ballots when you consider the USPS changes in Delivery Standards. Mailing a ballot in response to a request received on Sept 4th is in reality non-sensical. Unfortunately, the Delaware Code forced us to use that date because of the Labor Day Weekend. The August 31st date was originally suggested, but changed after discussion with out AG. Some folks missed that change. Given the realities of mail processing, August 31 doesn't make a lot of sense either. You may not be aware that the USPS recommends that people who mail their voted ballots do so at least 7 days before the day of an election. This refers to domestic voters, overseas voters returning ballots by mail should probably do so earlier than the 7 days depending on their location and experience in corresponding with folks in the continental US.

Also, the mail deadline only applies to mail ballots. We can issue ballots until 12 Noon the day before an election. In the case of the Primary that would be Wednesday, 12 Noon (EST).

All registered voters can submit their absentee application or their FPCA on-line through our <https://ivote.de.gov> system if they can use one of the signature options. Otherwise, they have to print it, sign it and return it. They can return an image (scan, or photo) of the signed application or FPCA via email to their county office.

From a practical point of view, citizens outside the United States should not ask for a ballot by mail starting now. If they request a ballot sent by mail after today and plan to return it by mail, the probability for failure is very high. I suggest that you counsel folks requesting an absentee ballot to request it via email as soon as possible. Once they get the ballot, they have the option of returning the voted ballot by email, mail, fax or an express delivery service. They should consider the method of return depending of their experience. For your information, Delaware now provides those requesting a ballot by email or fax the option of returning the voted ballot via the State's secure email service. In the future we will include instructions for those who request their ballot by mail the same option. We rolled this out after we mailed ballots to our overseas clients who had requested them by mail.

v/r

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From: H Burch [mailto:heidilburch@gmail.com]
Sent: 21 August, 2018 9:25 AM
To: Sholl, Howard G (Elect_NC) <Howard.Sholl@state.de.us>
Subject: Questions re: deadline for overseas voters to request their Primary Ballot be sent by Mail

Hi Mr Sholl,

I'm a volunteer with VoteFromAbroad--we help US citizens and military personnel living overseas when they have questions about voting from abroad. I wanted to verify the deadline for a registered DE voter to request their overseas ballot for the September 6th Primary be sent to them by Mail as we are seeing conflicting information:

- According to FVAP.gov, the deadline to request a ballot be sent by Mail is **August 31st** (www.fvap.gov/guide/chapter2/delaware).
- The Overseas Vote Foundation lists **September 4th** as the deadline to request a Postal Ballot (www.overseasvotefoundation.org/vote/state-elections/state-election-dates-deadlines.htm?uocava=true&stateName=DE)
- The DE elections website for overseas voters doesn't list a date for requesting a ballot by mail, but the Key Dates Calendar lists **September 4th** as the "last day that Department of Elections' Offices must mail Primary Election absentee ballots" <https://elections.delaware.gov/services/voter/absentee/uocava.shtml>

Thank you for your help!

Heidi Burch

Volunteer