

# ELECTION 2020

## VOTING QUESTIONS:

### What is the difference between voting absentee and mail-in voting?

To vote **absentee** in Missouri, you have to check off one of seven excuses — including being away from the place where you vote on Election Day or religious belief. Two of the excuses, incapacity or confinement due to illness or physical disability and having contracted or being at risk to COVID-19, do not require a notary. The other five excuses do need a notary if you're going to mail your absentee ballot back to your county clerk or board of elections.

The **mail-in option**, which was created earlier this year, doesn't require an excuse. But it does require a notary. And it must be mailed back through the U.S. Mail to an election authority.

### Explain the new COVID-19-related excuse for absentee balloting?

If you contracted COVID-19 or are at risk to contract it, you can check off the seventh item on the absentee ballot application and return the absentee ballot without a notary. "At-risk" is defined as meeting any of these conditions:

- Being 65 or older.
- Living in a long-term care facility.
- Having a serious heart condition.
- Having asthma or chronic lung disease.
- Being immunocompromised.
- Having chronic kidney or liver disease.
- Having diabetes.

If you check this box, you *do not* have to get your ballot notarized, and you can *return it to your county clerk or board of elections either through the mail or in person.*

### Do you have to provide proof that you either got COVID-19 or are at-risk of getting COVID-19?

No.

### Do you have to use the Postal Service to drop off your absentee or mail-in ballots?

St. Louis County hired 30 bipartisan teams to tally a record amount of absentee and mail-in ballots at the St. Louis County Board of Elections warehouse on July 30.

If you receive your **absentee ballot** at your house, you can fill it out and drop it off in person at your county clerk or board of elections. In fact, state law allows a relative to drop the absentee ballot off for you. You can also send it to the election authority of your county through the mail.

But if you request a **mail-in ballot**, you must send it back through the mail. You cannot drop these types of ballots off in person!

### What about in-person absentee?

Missouri allows people to go to their county clerk or board of elections facilities and vote absentee in person. When you vote absentee in person, you don't show up and take your ballot home. You vote at the board of elections or county clerk's office. **This process will start on Sept. 22.** You should check with your county clerk or board of elections about what time they'll be open to handle this process.

You *do not* need to get your ballot notarized to vote **in-person absentee**, which runs until **Nov. 2**. Some places, like St. Louis County, have satellite offices where you can vote in-person absentee.

But to be extra clear: **You cannot use the in-person absentee process to cast a mail-in ballot. That can only be done by sending your mail-in ballot back through the mail.**



RIGHT TO VOTE 2020

## How can you apply for an absentee ballot or a mail-in ballot?

You can apply for an absentee ballot either in person or through the mail, e-mail or fax. The St. Louis County Board of Elections has a website detailing the different ways of applying for an absentee ballot. It also includes a form that you can fill out on your computer before you download or print.

You can apply for the mail-in option either by sending the application through the mail or dropping it off in person at your election authority.

## When can you apply for an absentee ballot or a mail-in ballot?

Right now. In fact, election officials are highly encouraging people who want to send either absentee ballot or mail-in ballots through the mail to apply as early as possible and send the ballot back as soon as they can.

“If they give us the application form, we’ll go ahead and put it in the system,” said St. Charles County Elections Director Kurt Bahr. “We cannot mail the ballots out until Sept. 22. But on that day and the subsequent days thereafter, we’ll be mailing out hundreds if not thousands of absentee ballots or early vote-by mail ballots those first couple of days that absentee voting starts.”

## I applied for a ballot and haven’t received it before Election Day — what should I do?

You can go to your county clerk or board of elections office and fill out a form attesting that you did not receive your ballot. Once an elections official makes sure they didn’t receive your ballot, then the ballot you cast at the election authority office will be counted.

## When is the deadline to apply for an absentee or mail-in ballot?

To apply for either an absentee or mail-in ballot, the deadline is 5 p.m. Oct. 21.

As mentioned earlier, you have until Nov. 2 to vote in-person absentee.

## Received your absentee or mail-in ballot later than Oct. 27 and don’t have confidence that it will make it through the mail in time?... What should you do?

In St. Louis County, if someone brings an absentee to a polling location, that ballot will be surrendered and the individual can then vote in person. Completed **absentee ballots** can be dropped off at the Board of Elections headquarters on Election Day. In St. Louis County, a notary will be on site at the Board of Election headquarters in St. Ann in case that absentee ballot needs to be notarized.

If you receive a **mail-in ballot** and don’t feel like you’re going to have enough time to send it to your board of elections or county clerk’s office, here’s what you should do: *Bring your unfilled ballot to your polling place on Election Day, surrender it to the elections official, and you will get a new ballot that can be turned in at that time.*

If you request an early vote-by-mail ballot and for whatever reason you’re still in town and you didn’t get it in the mail in time, then you can still vote on Election Day as long as you bring that ballot with you because you have to prove that you’re not voting twice.

## Still have more questions?

### CONTACT:

### St. Louis County Board of Elections

The **St. Louis County Board of Elections** is a bipartisan independent body established by the **State of Missouri** to protect the integrity of the voting process by accurately, securely, and efficiently conducting all **elections** in **St. Louis County**.

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