

OVERSEAS VOTING

During the 2012 election cycle, a number of important offices will be decided by voters, including:

- ✓ The offices of U.S. President and Vice President
- ✓ 33 seats in the U.S. Senate
- ✓ 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives
- ✓ Governorships in 11 States and 2 U.S. territories
- ✓ State and local offices
- ✓ Ballot questions and referenda



MYTH: Absentee ballots are not counted unless it is a close race.

FACT: All valid absentee ballots are counted regardless of the closeness of the race.

States differ as to when they count absentee ballots. Many States require absentee ballots to be received by Election Day so that they can be counted along with the in-person votes.

Some States accept absentee ballots after Election Day. In these cases, the final outcome of the election would not be certified until all absentee ballots received by the State's deadline are counted.



It is important that you to exercise your right to vote, because every vote counts. Several recent elections have been decided by a margin of victory of less than 0.1%.

Election	Margin of Victory
2008 – Minnesota U.S. Senate	312 votes
2005 – Virginia Attorney General	323 votes
2004 – Washington Governor	133 votes
2000 – Florida Electoral Votes (U.S. Presidential election)	537 votes
2000 – New Mexico Electoral Votes (U.S. Presidential election)	366 votes

The *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act* of 1986, or *UOCAVA*, requires U.S. States and territories to allow certain U.S. citizens to apply to register and vote absentee in elections for Federal office. Citizens covered under *UOCAVA* include:

1. Members of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine who are absent from their voting jurisdiction due to their service.
2. Dependents of members of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine who are absent from their voting jurisdiction with the member.
3. **U.S. citizens residing outside the United States and its territories.**

UOCAVA covers over 6 million potential voters worldwide.

The Federal Voting Assistance Program, or FVAP, is charged with providing assistance and outreach to U.S. citizens covered under *UOCAVA*.

FVAP's **purpose** is to:

1. Inform and educate U.S. citizens worldwide of their right to vote.
2. Protect and enhance the integrity of the electoral process at the Federal, State, and local levels.
3. Promote efficiency and effectiveness in administering *UOCAVA*.

The Absentee Voting Process

How Do Overseas Citizens Vote?

Step 1: A UOCAVA citizen completes the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to apply to register to vote and request an absentee ballot. The completed FPCA is submitted to the applicant's local election official.



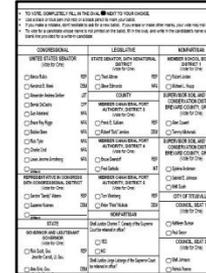
FPCA



Step 2: The local election official reviews the submitted FPCA. After verifying eligibility, the local election official sends the applicant an absentee ballot.



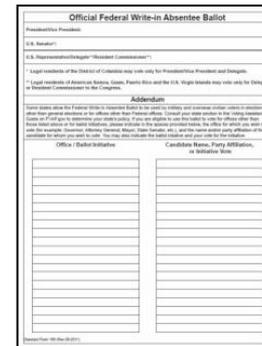
BALLOT



Step 3: The applicant receives the absentee ballot, votes the ballot, and returns it to the local election official to be counted.

Note: If applicants have not received an absentee ballot by 30 days before the election, they should complete and submit the **Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)** to ensure that their vote is received in time to be counted.

FWAB




Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

By filling out the FPCA, *UOCAVA* voters can:

1. Apply to register to vote.
2. Request an absentee ballot.
3. Update a mailing address and/or other contact information.

You should submit an FPCA:

1. Once a year.
2. Anytime they need to update their contact information.

Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)
Voter Registration and Absentee Ballot Request

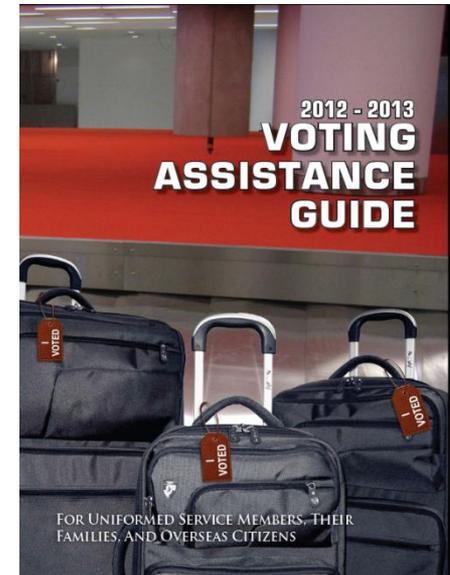
A quicker, easier to complete, electronic version of this form is also available on FVAP.gov. For any questions about this form, consult your Voting Assistance Officer or the Voting Assistance Guide available in hard copy or on FVAP.gov. Please print in black ink.

Classification Make only 1 selection. <small>(In most States, you must be absent from your voting district to use this form.)</small>	1	<input type="checkbox"/> I am a member of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active duty OR <input type="checkbox"/> I am their spouse or dependent. <input type="checkbox"/> I am a U.S. citizen residing outside the U.S., and I intend to return. <input type="checkbox"/> I am a U.S. citizen residing outside the U.S., and I do not intend to return. <input type="checkbox"/> I am a U.S. citizen otherwise granted military/overseas voting rights under State law (check the Voting Assistance Guide).
Political Party	2	To vote in primary elections, your State may require you to specify a political party.
Your legal name	3	Last name _____ Suffix _____ First name _____ Middle name _____ Previous name (if applicable) _____
Identification <small>Some States require your full SSN. Check your State's pages in the Voting Assistance Guide on FVAP.gov.</small>	4	Sex <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F Race See instructions on back Birth date M M D / Y Y Y Y State Driver's License or ID _____ OR Social Security Number _____
Contact information <small>Include international prefixes. No DSN number.</small>	5	Telephone _____ Fax _____ Email _____ Alternate Email _____
Ballot receipt	6	I prefer to receive my ballot, as permitted by my State, by: <input type="checkbox"/> Email/Online <input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Fax <small>(rank from 1-3 in order of preference; be sure appropriate contact information is provided above)</small>
U.S. address for voting purposes <small>Usually your last U.S. residence or your legal U.S. residence. See instructions.</small>	7	Street Address (not P.O. Box) _____ Apt. # _____ City/Town/Village _____ County _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Address where you live now <small>This is different from above. Your voting materials will be sent here, unless you specify a forwarding address in Box 9.</small>	8	_____
Additional requirements for your State <small>Such as: mail forwarding address, additional phone, or other State required information. See your State's pages in the Voting Assistance Guide on FVAP.gov.</small>	9	_____
Affirmation (REQUIRED): I swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury, that:		Signature _____ Print this form, sign, and send in.
<small>* I am a member of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active duty or an eligible spouse or dependent of such a member, or a U.S. citizen temporarily residing outside the U.S., or other U.S. citizen residing outside the U.S. * I am a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age or will be by the day of the election, eligible to vote in the requested jurisdiction. * I have not been convicted of a felony or other disqualifying offense or been adjudicated mentally incompetent, or if so, my voting rights have been reinstated. * I am not registering, requesting a ballot, or voting in any other jurisdiction in the U.S. * My signature and date herein indicate when I completed this document. * The information on this form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a material misstatement of fact in completion of this document may constitute grounds for conviction of perjury.</small>		Today's date M M D D / Y Y Y Y Witness signature (date if required by your State. See the Voting Assistance Guide on FVAP.gov.) Signature _____ Date _____

This information is for official use only. Any unauthorized release may be punishable by law. Standard Form 76 (Rev. 08-2011)

The instructions for completing the FPCA and FWAB differ across States, so it is important to refer applicants to the most up-to-date *Voting Assistance Guide* to ensure that they complete and submit the form correctly.

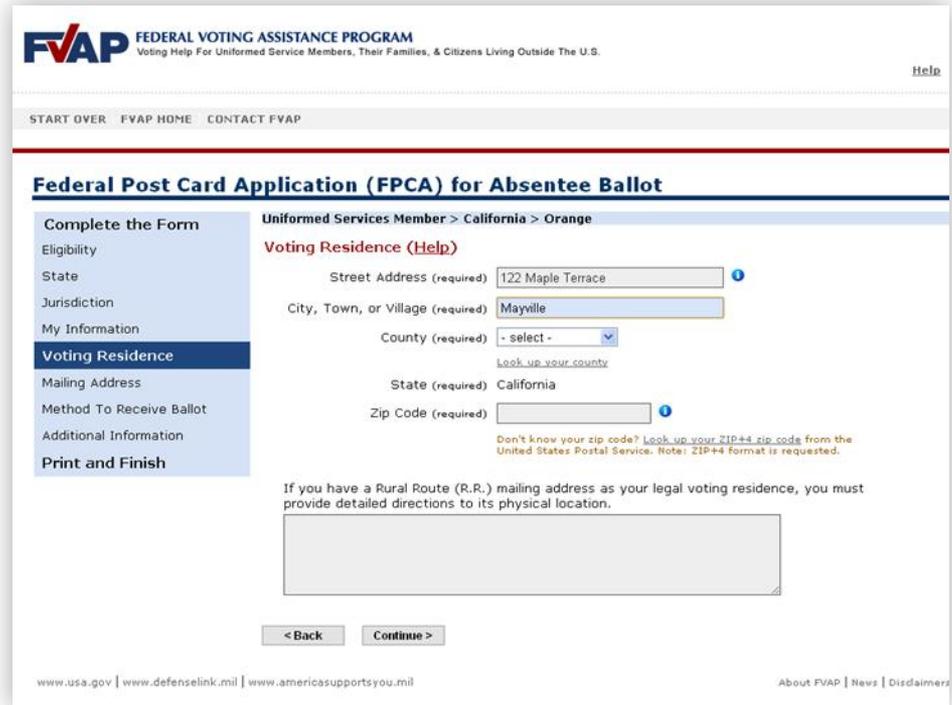
- ✓ For example, some States may require the applicant to provide a full Social Security Number, while other States may require a driver's license or State identification number.
- ✓ The *Voting Assistance Guide* also includes State-specific deadlines for voter registration, absentee ballot requests, and ballot returns.



FVAP recommends you use the online Voting Assistance Guide available at <http://www.fvap.gov/vao/guide.html>.

FVAP has created Online Assistants that automate and simplify the process of filling out the FPCA and FWAB.

- ✓ The Online Assistants offer point-and-click assistance and produce printable forms that eliminate legibility errors.
- ✓ The Online Assistants also produce a postage-paid template that then may be printed onto an envelope and mailed.



The screenshot shows the FVAP website interface for the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) for Absentee Ballot. The page title is "Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) for Absentee Ballot". The user is logged in as a "Uniformed Services Member > California > Orange". The "Voting Residence" section is active, showing the following information:

- Street Address (required): 122 Maple Terrace
- City, Town, or Village (required): Mayville
- County (required): - select -
- State (required): California
- Zip Code (required):

There are links for "Look up your county" and "Don't know your zip code? Look up your ZIP+4 zip code from the United States Postal Service. Note: ZIP+4 format is requested." Below the form, there is a section for "If you have a Rural Route (R.R.) mailing address as your legal voting residence, you must provide detailed directions to its physical location." with a large text area. At the bottom, there are "< Back" and "Continue >" buttons. The footer includes "www.usa.gov | www.defenselink.mil | www.americasupportsyou.mil" and "About FVAP | News | Disclaimers".

Completing the FPCA: Submission Methods

All States and territories accept the FPCA via mail.

- ✓ Mailing addresses for local election officials are available in the *Voting Assistance Guide*.
- ✓ The FPCA can be mailed postage paid through the U.S. Postal Service, Military Postal Service, or State Department pouch mail. The postage-paid envelope template is produced by the Online Assistant and is also available at <http://www.fvap.gov/resources/media/returnenvelope.pdf>.

NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS <u>James Larry Jones</u> <u>USS FVAP</u> <u>FPO AE 54321</u> _____ _____		US POSTAGE PAID 39 USC 3406 PAR AVION
OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOTING MATERIAL - FIRST-CLASS MAIL		
NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IN THE U.S. MAIL - DMM 703.8.0		
TO: <u>Orange Registrar of Voters</u> <u>1300 S. Grande Ave Bldg. C</u> <u>Santa Ana, CA 92705-4434</u>		

Completing the FPCA: Submission Methods

Some States and territories will accept the FPCA via email and/or fax.

- ✓ Check the *Voting Assistance Guide* to see if the applicant's State will accept the form by email or fax.
- ✓ The Online Assistant will produce an email and/or fax cover sheet if online or faxed submissions are allowed by the applicant's State.

Email FPCA to this address

Fax FPCA to this number



FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Voting Help For Unaffiliated Service Members, Their Families, & Citizens Living Outside The U.S.

Automated Register, Request and Receive Ballot Process (R3)
Official Election Materials - Electronic Transmission Sheet (FWAB)
Transmission (Cover) Sheet from Absentee Voter to Election Official

To:	
City/County	Morris County Clerk
Board Of Elections	
State	New Jersey
LEO Email	jbramhall@clerk.morris.nj.us
Fax Number	973 285-6136
From:	
Last Name	McDonnell
First Name	Kathleen
Middle Name	
Telephone Number	
Fax Number	
Email Address	

Number of pages being transmitted, including this sheet: _____
Check www.fvap.gov/contact/tollfreefax.html for international fax numbers

Fax/Email Cover Sheet

Completing the FPCA: After Submission

- ✓ After receiving your FPCA, a local election official will process the form and verify your eligibility.
- ✓ You are encouraged to call, fax, or email their local election official to verify that your application has been received.
- ✓ You should receive their regular State absentee ballot from the local election official in time for them to vote and return the ballot by the State's deadline.

Voters who have submitted an FPCA and have not received their absentee ballot by 30 days before the election should submit the FWAB. The following slides will outline uses of the FWAB and how to complete it.

While all States accept the FWAB as an absentee ballot for Federal elections, many States have started moving to allow universal use of the FWAB, including:

- ✓ Accepting the FWAB as an **application for voter registration**, an **absentee ballot request**, and a **write-in ballot**.
- ✓ Accepting the FWAB as an **absentee ballot for all Federal, State, and local elections**.

For each office, voters may write in either a candidate's name or a political party designation.

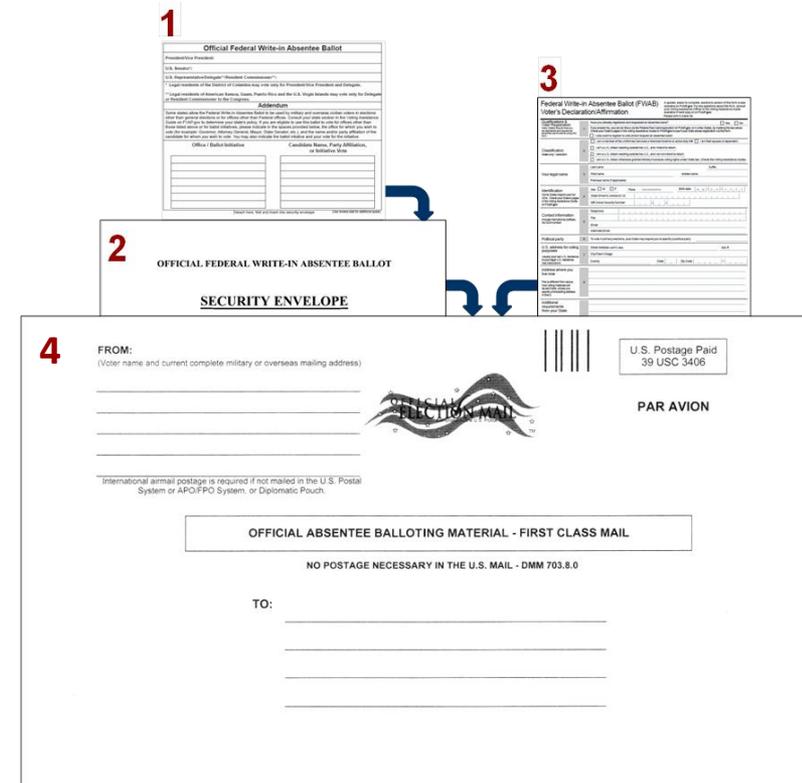
You should check their State's guidelines or the *Voting Assistance Guide* on FVAP.gov for the accepted uses of the FWAB in your State.

Completed FWABs should be submitted to the your local election official for processing. All States and territories will accept the FWAB via mail.

To mail the FWAB, insert the voted ballot (1) into the security envelope (2).

Then, the sealed security envelope (2) and the declaration/affirmation (3) should be placed in the pre-paid mailing envelope (4).

- ✓ Mailing addresses for local election officials are available in the *Voting Assistance Guide*.
- ✓ The FWAB can be mailed postage paid through the U.S. Postal Service, Military Postal Service, or State Department pouch mail. The postage-paid envelope template is produced by the Online Assistant and is also available at www.fvap.gov.



FVAP provides a telephone and email Help Desk to assist with:

- ✓ Providing information on *UOCAVA* and other voting legislation.
- ✓ Understanding uses of the FPCA and FWAB.
- ✓ Connecting voters to their local election official when necessary.

1-800-438-VOTE (8683)

vote@fvap.gov

Also, you can contact the U.S. Consulate Chennai with voting questions!

votechennai@state.gov

QUESTIONS:?