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October 20, 2010

New York Military and Overseas Voters Can Get Ballots, Online, Right Now

All military and overseas New York can get their ballots online, today, through a new New York [website](#),¹ or through the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website (www.FVAP.gov). These are full ballots with all federal, State and local races, and can be downloaded directly from this system.

Despite being granted an additional 13 days to send those ballots due to New York's September 14th primary election, ballots from at least 13 New York counties (including all five boroughs of New York City) were sent out anywhere from four to nine days late, with some not being sent until October 10th. The Department of Justice sued New York in federal court over this violation of federal law, and reached an agreement where ballots from military and overseas voters now have until November 24th, 2010 to arrive at the local election jurisdiction and be counted for the November 2, 2010 election. Ballots must still be postmarked by November 1, 2010 (or witnessed as having been voted by November 1st for those military voters without access to a postmark).

The vast majority of New York military and overseas voters whose ballots were sent late are registered to vote in New York City's five boroughs – the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. Each borough has a Board of Elections office, but all of New York's military and overseas voters can use the New York State Board of Elections' web site to access electronic alternatives for requesting, returning and tracking voted ballots.

Receive Your Ballot

If you are already registered and in the voter registration system as a military or overseas voter (which happens automatically if you used the Federal Post Card Application), you can get your ballot, online, right now at https://www.secureballotusa.com/diaspora_ny/NY_login.action. If that's too long to remember, you can also be directly linked to that website through the Federal Voting Assistance Program's website, www.FVAP.gov. You may also receive your ballot by postal mail, email, or fax (if that's what you requested), but you can get your ballot online today, at these websites.

Request Your Ballot

You must have been registered to vote in New York by October 8, 2010 to vote in the November 2, 2010 election; but if you submitted the Federal Post Card Application before that, you are already registered and have already requested an absentee ballot. However, if you only registered before and didn't request an absentee ballot, or if your absentee ballot delivery address has changed (such as moving from one overseas location to another, being transferred between units, or deploying to or redeploying from overseas military assignment) you should submit a new absentee ballot request, which has to be If you do not have one on file, you need to fill out an absentee ballot request as soon as possible. The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) ballot application and instructions are available at www.fvap.gov.

¹ https://www.secureballotusa.com/diaspora_ny/NY_login.action

Absentee ballot applications have to be to your local board of elections by October 22nd, which means you need to submit that application NOW, and you need to email or fax it to your local board of elections NOW. Make sure you ask for your ballot by email or fax, so that you maximize your chance to receive the ballot if you can't download it from the New York website (https://www.secureballotusa.com/diaspora_ny/NY_login.action).

Online absentee ballot request wizards are available both at the New York State Board of Elections website (<http://newyork.OverseasVoteFoundation.org>) and the Federal Voting Assistance Program website (<http://www.fvap.gov/registration/reg-ballot-request-ny.html>), where complete return instructions, including email addresses, postal addresses, phone and fax numbers, for your local board of elections, are all provided.

Ballot Request by Proxy

If you are outside the U.S., and didn't request your absentee ballot yet, your spouse, parent, adult child, brother, sister or duly authorized agent may apply to the local board of elections for an absentee ballot on your behalf. You, as the registered voter, however, must vote and return the ballot; there is no voting by proxy in New York.

Use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

If you can't use one of the ballot access methods described above, all is not lost: the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) guarantees your vote will be counted in at least the federal elections. You can get a hard-copy of a FWAB from your unit or installation voting assistance officer, from every U.S. embassy and consulate, and online at www.FVAP.gov. Follow the same ballot return instructions as given above in the second paragraph of this voter alert.

Voting Your Ballot

No witness or notary is required on voted ballots. The voted ballot's mailing envelope may be witnessed, if no postmark is available, to show that the ballot was mailed no later than the day before the election (November 1st, 2010). This ensures that ballots received with no postmarks or other date/time markings or indicia, will be counted.

For overseas military voters, free Express Mail return is available through your military post office or unit mail clerk. Use the DoD-11 form, for which you will also get a tracking number where you can track the mail progress of your ballot online (at www.USPS.com) back to your local board of election.

Tracking Your Ballot

Finally, you can track when your ballot is actually received by your local board of elections through New York's online tracking system: https://www.secureballotusa.com/diaspora_ny/NY_login.action.

We Want Your Feedback! If this document was helpful to you or if you ran into problems or have questions, please contact FVAP at 1-800-438-8683, DSN (312) 425-1584, or at vote@fvap.gov. With your feedback, we can make this even more helpful for the next election.

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