

NOVEMBER 8, 2016 GENERAL ELECTION



January 2016 –
Newsletter



U.S. EMBASSY, SANTIAGO - AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

January 2016—SPECIAL EDITION

Living overseas is not an impediment for any U.S. Citizen to exercise his or her right to vote.

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) is an online tool any U.S. citizen can use to obtain information and help in this process.

Read the following information to learn about the process of voting overseas.



Are you a U.S. Citizen living in Chile who would like to vote, but thinks that the process must be completely overwhelming? You may be surprised to learn that Voting Overseas is a lot simpler than what you might think.

In a nutshell, the Absentee Voting process consists of two main steps:

1. Begin the process by **Registering**. FVAP encourages the use of the FEDERAL POST CARD APPLICATION (FPCA), which acts as both a registration and absentee ballot request form.

Even if you have registered before, you must do this in January of every year or at least 90 days prior to an election

To do this,

- Go to www.fvap.gov and use the online assistant tool.
- Select the option “Overseas Citizen Voter.”
- Select your State or territory of legal residence on the map to get started. Follow the steps, and request your absentee ballot.

There are some States that allow electronic registration. We encourage you to use this option, if available.

If your State requires you to send your FPCA through regular mail, you can send it through the Embassy’s Diplomatic Post Office (DPO). You can use the postage-paid envelopes on the FVAP website and drop off the sealed envelope at the Embassy.

Keep in mind that the DPO can take up to 4 weeks to reach the U.S., plus a additional week to reach your specific county.

2. **Send your Absentee ballot.** You will receive your absentee ballot at least 45 days prior to the Election.

Again, if your State has an option to send the vote electronically via email, we encourage you to use that option. As with the FPCA, you can also send your ballot through the Diplomatic Post Office.

That’s it! As you can see, the process is fast, simple and free!

What if I requested my ballot and it hasn’t arrived?

If you haven’t received your ballot at least 30 days before the election, find your State on FVAP.gov and complete a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

What if I am a U.S. Citizen born abroad and have never resided in the U.S.?

You may still be eligible to vote depending on the state in which your parents or legal guardians resided. Check the www.fvap.gov, option Overseas Citizen Voter to see if this case may be applied to you.

States govern elections, so it’s important to follow the laws of the State where you’re registered to vote.

Select your State at FVAP.gov for specific election deadlines and instructions on how to register and vote.

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VOTING RESIDENCY GUIDELINES

Citizens residing outside the U.S. may not arbitrarily choose which State to declare as their legal voting residence without meeting the State's residency requirement. The following are basic guidelines to determine your voting residency.

- You need a voting residence to vote via absentee ballot, even if you are only voting in the Federal Election. Your local election official needs your exact voting residence address to determine which offices and candidates you are eligible to vote for, and to send you the appropriate ballot for your voting precinct.
- Your voting residence is the address in the State in which you were last domiciled immediately prior to leaving the U.S.
- This residence may remain valid even if:
 - You no longer own property or have other ties to that State.
 - Your intent to return to that State is uncertain.
 - Your previous address is no longer a recognized residential address.
- If you cannot remember the address where you last physically resided, FVAP recommends checking old tax records, passports or family correspondence. Sometimes local election officials can help identify your address if you were previously registered.

Voting and Tax Implications

In general terms, voting in an election for Federal Offices may not be used as the sole basis of determining residency for the purpose of imposing State and local taxes.

When claiming a new legal residence or domicile, legal counsel should be consulted because there may be other factors to consider, such as tax implications.

Voting Residence and the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

Your voting residence address listed on the FPCA must be an address in the United States. Placing an overseas address in block 7 of the form may automatically disqualify you.



U.S. citizens born outside of the United States

Voting rights vary by State for U.S. citizens born overseas who have never established residence in the U.S. In some States, U.S. citizens born abroad who are 18 years or older but have never resided in the U.S. are eligible to vote absentee. A listing can be found at FVAP.gov.

If neither parent is from one of those States, it is possible that a U.S. citizen born abroad does not currently have voting rights. However, additional states are working on passing legislation that would allow them to vote in the State in which their parents are eligible.

U.S. EMBASSY SANTIAGO AND VOTING

*Below is what we can and cannot do
in the voting process*



The Embassy:

- Provides non-partisan voting information for U.S. citizens on Voting.
- May send your Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and /or your ballot or Federal Write -in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) to the U.S. through the Diplomatic Post Office. You may bring them to the Embassy on its sealed envelope Mon-Fri from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and drop them off in our secure voting box located at the main entrance.

You may be able to send your FPCA and ballot electronically. Check to see what your State allows.

If eligible, you can send your FPCA or ballot with the help of the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) by emailing it to: ets@fvap.gov

The Embassy is not:

- A voting registration office. You cannot register to vote at the Embassy. You must register directly with the local election officials of your state of residence in the U.S. Use the online fvap.gov tool to register.
- A voting center. You cannot cast your ballot in our Consular Section the day of the election. You must send your ballot 45 days before the election to the state where you are registered to vote.

An Overseas voter cannot register or vote in person at the U.S. Embassy.

UOCAVA



DID YOU KNOW.....?

THE UNIFORMED AND OVERSEAS CITIZENS ABSENTEE VOTING ACT OF 1986 (UOCAVA) PROVIDES THE LEGAL BASIS FOR ABSENTEE VOTING REQUIREMENTS. CITIZENS WHO ARE PROTECTED BY THIS LAW ARE, AMONG OTHERS, ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES, THE MERCHANT MARINE, THEIR ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS AND U.S. CITIZENS RESIDING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES .

RECOMMENDED MAILING DATES FOR THE

NOVEMBER 8, 2016

GENERAL ELECTION

| DO THIS | BY THIS DATE |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Register and request an absentee ballot using the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). | August 1, 2016 |
| Receive your absentee ballot. <i>If you don't receive your requested ballot, use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB).</i> | No later than October 8, 2016 |
| Return your completed ballot to your local election office in time for it to arrive by Election Day. | |
| If you are outside the U.S. | October 15, 2016 |
| If you are stateside | November 1, 2016 |
| If you are on a ship at sea | October 10, 2016 |

Where can I get more help?

FVAP offers information and tools for absentee voters at FVAP.gov, where you can also subscribe for voter alerts.

You can also call 800-438-VOTE (8683) or email:

vote@fvap.gov for further assistance.



Voting Overseas....

- **Is Fast**—For fastest delivery, choose electronic delivery of your absentee ballot from your home state, and include an email address on your FPCA.
- **Is Free**— Return your FPCA and/or Ballot at the U.S. Embassy for mail delivery to the United States free of charge via the Diplomatic Post Office. Use postage paid return envelopes on FVAP.GOV website and drop off your sealed envelope at the Embassy main entrance.
- **Is Accessible**— U.S. Citizens can drop off an FPCA or completed ballot at the Embassy Mon -Fri from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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