

Message from the U.S. Embassy, Paris

VOTING IN 2014

Your vote counts! Did you know that many recent U.S. elections have been decided by a margin smaller than the number of ballots cast by military and overseas voters. All states are required to count every absentee ballot as long as it is valid and reaches local election officials by the absentee ballot receipt deadline.

Follow a few simple steps to make sure that you can vote in the 2014 U.S. elections:

Registering to Vote: Complete a new [Federal Post Card Application \(FPCA\)](#). *Even if you have voted by absentee ballot in the past, you must complete a new [Federal Post Card Application \(FPCA\)](#) to vote in the 2014 elections.* The [FPCA](#) is accepted by all local election officials in all U.S. states and territories. It allows you to register to vote and to request absentee ballots for all regular, primary, run-off, and special elections for federal offices (President, U.S. Senate, and U.S. House of Representatives) during the course of the year it is submitted in.

You can complete the FPCA **online** at [FVAP.gov](#). The online voting assistant will ask you questions specific to your state. It will tell you if your state allows the [FPCA](#) to be returned electronically or if you must submit a paper copy with original signature.

Receiving Your Ballot: Request Electronic Delivery! States are now required to send out ballots 45 days before a regular election for federal office (President, U.S. Senate or U.S. House of Representatives) and states generally send out ballots at least 30 days before primary elections. No matter which state you vote in, we encourage you to ask your local election officials to deliver your blank ballots to you electronically (by email, internet download, or fax, depending on your state). Be sure to include your email address on your FPCA to take advantage of the electronic ballot delivery option. You can now also confirm your [registration and ballot delivery online](#) for most states.

Researching the Candidates and Issues: Online Resources. Check out the [FVAP links page](#) for helpful resources that will aid your research of candidates and issues. Non-partisan information about candidates, their voting records, and their positions on issues are widely available and easy to obtain via numerous websites such as [Project Smart Voter](#). You can also read national and hometown newspapers on-line, or search the Internet to locate articles and information. For information about election dates and deadlines, subscribe to FVAP's Voting Alerts (vote@fvap.gov). FVAP also shares Voting Alerts via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Returning Your Completed Ballot: Other Options. If your state requires you to return paper voting forms or ballots to local election officials, you can do so free of charge at the nearest embassy or consulate. They must be in either [U.S. postage paid return envelopes](#) or in envelopes bearing sufficient domestic U.S. postage, and must also be addressed to the relevant local election officials.

- a. **Embassy Paris drop box:** You may drop your signed, sealed, dated FPCA registration, or your sealed voted ballot in person at the Embassy in Paris. **FPCA's and voted ballots must be addressed to the appropriate county board of elections in the United States.**

We can accept FPCAs and voted ballots:

1. Go to the Consular Section entrance of the Embassy with your FPCA or voted ballot, weekdays between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm;
 2. announce you would like to drop off voting materials;
 3. present suitable ID (preferably a U.S. passport);
 4. present the sealed registration or ballot;
 5. the ballot will be screened (but not opened) by security;
 6. after the security check, place the ballot in the ballot box.
- b. **French Postal System:** Place French postage on your completed, signed, dated, FPCA or voted ballot, and mail it directly to the local election officials in the state where you vote. Make sure **USA** or **Etats-Unis** is indicated at the end of the address of your U.S. board of elections. Then just mail it from any French post office box. **Please do not send any voting materials to the Embassy by mail, they will be returned to you.**
 - c. **Fax, E-mail, or Internet:** Some states now allow these options, however, **they may also require you to still mail in the signed paper ballot.**
 - d. **Returning ballots via express courier service:** Voters can hire express courier companies such as UPS, DHL, and FedEx to return voted ballots. Ballots sent to local election officials via express courier service do not receive standard postmarks, so voters using this method should confirm delivery on or before Election Day prior to payment and shipment.

Learn more at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website

[FVAP.gov](#). If you have any questions about registering to vote overseas, please contact the Paris Voting Assistance Officer at 04.91.54.96. 10, or by email at: (VoteParis@state.gov).

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