

Absentee Voting Week is September 26-October 3

Be an Active Voter by taking the necessary steps to vote in the 2016 U.S. elections and participating in Absentee Voting Week!

In many states, the voter registration deadline for the November 2016 elections is October 10. For some voters this might mean their paper voter registration and absentee ballot request must reach their local election officials by October 10. In order to vote in the November 2016 elections, all overseas U.S. citizens need to have completed a [Federal Post Card Application \(FPCA\)](#) in 2016. Whether you are a first-time voter or have already received ballots and voted absentee in past elections, you must complete an FPCA **each year** to ensure you are able to participate in elections as an overseas absentee voter.

If you have already completed a [Federal Post Card Application \(FPCA\)](#) in 2016 and requested electronic delivery of your ballot, you will be receiving your blank ballot or instructions for how to access your ballot soon if you have not already received it. If you are not sure about the status of your absentee ballot request you should contact your [local election officials](#) in the United States or check the status of your registration via your state's [voter registration verification website](#).

You can get voting assistance from the Consular Section inside the U.S. Consulate in St. Petersburg or drop off your completed voting forms and ballots, addressed to your local election officials, for delivery to the United States via diplomatic pouch free of charge, during the following hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Normal transit time from St. Petersburg to the United States is four weeks.

HELP SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT OVERSEAS VOTING

Please help spread the word to your friends, family, and colleagues that now is the time to start thinking about overseas voting. Consider posting to your Twitter, Instagram, Facebook or other social media account that you are an active voter and will be dropping off or mailing your Federal Post Card Application or completed ballot. Use #ProudOverseasVoter to help get the word out about voting.

If you have never voted while overseas before, it's not too late. The process is easy -- just follow these steps:

1. Complete a [Federal Post Card Application \(FPCA\)](#)

Whether you are a first-time voter or have voted absentee in past elections, complete an [FPCA](#) to receive your ballot this fall. It allows you to register to vote and request absentee ballots for all elections for federal offices (presidential and state primaries, run-off, special, and the November general elections) during the course of the year in which you submit the FPCA. Local election officials in all U.S. states and territories accept the [FPCA](#).

The [online voting assistant](#) available at [FVAP.gov](#) is an easy way to complete the [FPCA](#). It will ask you questions specific to your state and tell you if electronic ballot delivery is possible. 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 to take advantage of electronic delivery. The [online voting assistant](#) will generate a printable [FPCA](#), which you can then print and sign.

2. Submit the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

You may drop off an FPCA or ballot in person inside the Consular Section at the U.S. Consulate in St. Petersburg during the following hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00pm to 4:00pm

If it's more convenient for you, you can have a friend or family member drop off your FPCA at the U.S. Consulate in St. Petersburg, on your behalf or you can send your [FPCA](#) or ballot directly to your local election officials via international mail or professional courier service at your own expense.

3. Receive Your Ballot

After submitting your FPCA, most states allow you to confirm online your registration and ballot delivery selection. States are now required to send out ballots 45 days before an election (on or around September 24) for federal office (President, U.S. Senate, or U.S. House of Representatives) to any overseas U.S. citizen who has completed an FPCA.

4. Return Your Ballot

As with the FPCA, you can return your voted ballot to your local election officials free of charge via the nearest embassy or consulate or mail it directly at your own expense.

Your Vote Counts

Many U.S. elections within the past ten years have been decided by a margin of victory of less than 0.1%. 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 (differs by state).

Be an educated voter. Check out the [FVAP links page](#) for helpful resources that will aid your research of candidates and issues. You can also read national and hometown newspapers online, and search the Internet to locate articles and information.

To receive information by email about election dates and deadlines, subscribe to FVAP's Voting Alerts (vote@fvap.gov). FVAP also shares Voting Alerts via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

If you have any questions about registering to vote overseas, please contact St. Petersburg's Voting Assistance Officer at +7 (812) 331-2600, or at votestpetersburg@state.gov.