

Voting in 2020

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Sources:

Union County Clerk and Board of Elections (ucnj.org)

Action Together NJ

Vote By Mail Basics for 2020 General Election

- Every registered voter in Union County will automatically receive a Vote-by-Mail ballot for the November General Election as ordered by the Governor.
- **You do not need to apply** for a vote-by-mail application for the November 3rd General Election.
- Voters should receive their Mail-in Ballots by October 5.
- Limited in-person voting options will be available:
 - Voters at polling places will use a provisional paper ballot to vote.
 - Voters with disabilities may vote on an ADA-accessible voting machine.
 - These voters will need to sign a certification that they are unable to vote on paper.
 - The pollworker will check with the Board of Elections to verify that a vote has not been received before allowing a machine vote.

Benefits of Vote By Mail

- **Convenient:** Voters can vote by simply dropping it off in their mailbox or at a secure ballot drop box.
- **Know Your Ballot:** Ballots will start going out on October 5. That's 29 days to discover all the candidates and research about Ballot Questions and to vote when you're ready.
 - **We recommend that you send it in as soon as you can**
- **Secure:** Because it's a paper ballot, there's a record of the county receiving your vote.
- **Cheap:** Mail-in ballots will have prepaid postage just like the Primary Election (no cost to voters.)
- **Contactless:** Helps with shelter-in-place orders to stop the spread of coronavirus

2020 General Election – Key Dates

September 14 (week of) – Ballots start to go out to voters

October 5 – Ballots should all be received by voters

October 13 – Last day to register for the general election

October 23 – Last day to apply for VBM ballot (for new voters)

November 3 – ELECTION DAY

November 5 – Last day to receive VBM ballots without postmarks

November 10 – Last day to receive VBM ballots with postmarks

IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED A VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT, BE SURE TO FOLLOW THE SIMPLE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW TO ENSURE YOUR VOTE COUNTS!


1. Make your selections on the ballot using a **black pen**
2. Enclose the ballot in the envelope with the certificate
3. Seal the envelope
4. Complete the certificate by filling in your name, address, town, and party affiliation (in a primary election)
5. Sign the certificate envelope – DO NOT DETACH
6. Put the certificate envelope in the outer envelope
7. Write your return address
8. Return your ballot to the union county board of elections.

MAKING SURE YOUR VOTE COUNTS – AVOID THESE COMMON MISTAKES

- **Be sure to sign the certificate envelope**
 - The voter must sign or make their mark on the certificate envelope. If the certificate envelope is not signed by the voter, it will not be counted.
- **Do not detach the certificate from the envelope**
 - The certificate on the outside of the envelope, in which the ballot will be placed, must remain on the envelope. The certificate cannot be detached from the envelope. If the certificate is missing, your vote will not be counted.
- **Be sure to include the ballot**
 - After the voter has voted the ballot, the ballot is folded and placed in the certificate envelope. Seal and complete the certificate envelope. If you have not included your ballot, your vote will not be counted.
- **Secure the ballot in the certificate envelope**
 - Your ballot must be sealed inside the certificate envelope. The certificate envelope is placed in the outer envelope for mailing. If your ballot is not sealed in the certificate envelope, it will not be counted.
- **Do not sign or initial the ballot**
 - Voters are entitled to the right of a secret ballot. By signing or placing a self-identifying mark on the ballot, the voter is voiding their right to a secret ballot. If your ballot has a self-identifying mark on the ballot, your vote will not be counted.
- **Be sure the assistor identifies themselves**
 - If a voter has been assisted, the person providing assistance must sign in the appropriate location on the certificate of the certificate envelope. The assistor may complete the certificate envelope, but the voter must sign their name or make their mark where indicated. If it is clear that a person other than the voter completed the certificate, but did not complete the assistor portion, your vote will not be counted.

What about signature mismatch?

- The signature on your Certificate of Mail-in Voter will be compared to your Voter Registration signature that is digitized in the State Voter Registration system.
- If, **FOR ANY REASON**, you are unsure what your “official” signature looks like, you can send in a new Voter Registration application to update your signature on file. **Must be received by Board of elections by October 13.**



New Jersey **Sample**
Voter Registration Application

Please print clearly in ink. All information is required unless marked optional.

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1 Check all boxes that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> New Registration <input type="checkbox"/> Name Change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political Party Affiliation <input type="checkbox"/> Address Change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Signature Update <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vote By Mail				FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY	
2 Are you a U.S. Citizen? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>(If No, DO NOT complete this form)</i>		3 Are you at least 17 years of age? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>(If No, DO NOT complete this form)</i>			Clerk
4 Last Name Smith		First Name Jane	Middle Name or Initial J		Registration #
				Office Time Stamp	

Returning Your Ballot

The deadline to return ballots to the drop box or in person to the Board of Elections is **8pm on Election Day, November 3**

- **Return your ballot to a Secure Ballot Drop Box - RECOMMENDED**

- There will be 13 ballot drop boxes located throughout Union county. Ballot drop boxes are ADA compliant, under camera surveillance 24/7 and all ballots are picked up by a bi-partisan team of UCBOE employees every day. The deadline to return your ballot to a secure ballot drop box is 8:00pm on Election Day.
- **Summit will have a Ballot Drop Box located at the Chestnut Street parking lot (need to verify location)**

- **Return your ballot in person (requires a NJ Driver's License or NJ Issued ID)**

- Union County Board of Elections, 271 No. Broad Street, Elizabeth (8am – 4pm)
- Union County Clerk's Office, 2 Broad Street, Room 113, Elizabeth (8:30am – 4:30pm)
- Union County Clerk's Annex Office, 300 North Avenue East, Westfield (M/W/F: 8am – 4pm; Tu/Th: 8am – 7:30pm; and Sat., 9am – 1pm)
- The deadline to return your ballot to the Union County Board of Elections is 8:00pm on Election Day.

- **Return your ballot via the United States Postal Service**

- Postage for returning your Vote by Mail Ballot has been prepaid. Your ballot must be postmarked on or before Election Day and received by the Union County Election Board by November 10, 2020. If your ballot is mailed, but not postmarked by the USPS, it must be received by the Union County Election Board by November 5.

- **Return your ballot to your designated polling location on Election Day**

- If you choose to return your ballot to your designated polling location on Election Day, **you will be required to stand in line, sign the poll book and hand your ballot to the poll worker.** You may not return a ballot at a polling location for anyone else except yourself. The deadline to return your ballot to your designated polling location is 8:00pm on Election Day.

Using a Bearer to Return Your Ballot

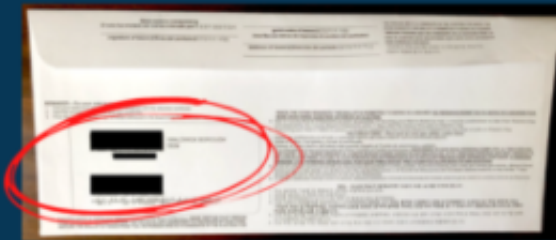
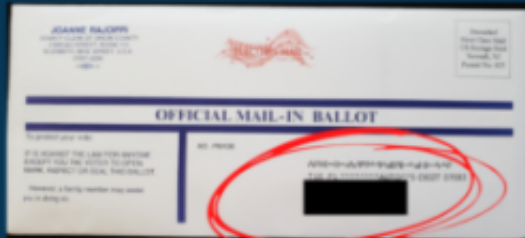
- The law allow voters to designate a Bearer, someone to take your ballot and deliver it to the Board of Elections.
- However, the Bearer portion must be filled out by the Bearer. **The Bearer portion appears on the outer return envelope.**
- Voters must ensure that the Bearer they use is **not transporting more than 3 ballots per each election.**
- If you are NOT using a Bearer to transport/deliver your ballot, **DO NOT** fill this out. **Only fill out this portion if you designate someone to transport this ballot for you.**

Is Your VBM ballot Secure?

The Security Features of Mail-in Ballots

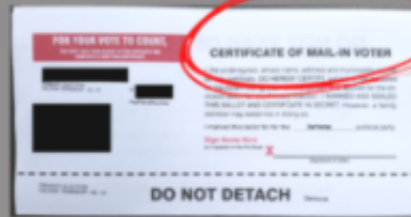


Barcode and Voter ID



Both are unique to each voter and track when the ballot is mailed to the voter and received back at the Board of Elections. They are on the original ballot and on the return envelope.

Certificate of Mail-in Voter



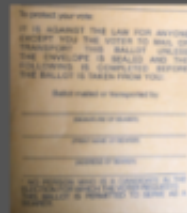
Voter self-certifies by signature, which is compared to their signature on file.

Security at Ballot Drops



Ballot drop box pick ups are logged in. Deliveries to the Board of Elections must be signed in.

Bearer Portion



All Bearers are tracked to ensure no more than 3 ballots are delivered per Bearer.

The Ballot



It is completely anonymous! There are NO traces of who voted and that's how ballot secrecy is maintained.

Security Measures:

Unique Bar Code and Voter ID

- Both the bar code and voter ID that appear on the original Official Mail-in Ballot envelope and the prepaid postage return envelope are tracked in the Statewide Voter Registration System.
- Each voter has a unique bar code and voter ID. The voter keeps that unique voter ID even when they stop voting, pass away, or move out of state.
- That voter ID is not used again for other voters. This feature prevents voters from voting more than once.
- For example, if a voter voted by mail and then votes again at the polling station on Election Day using the Provisional Ballot, the Elections Officials will have a record in the system of the voter having voted. The Provisional Ballot will not be canvassed or tabulated.

Security Measures: Certificate of Mail-in Voter

- The Certificate of Mail-in Voter allows voters to self-certify (or declare) that they voted their ballot in secret by filling out their information – name and address – and signature. This signature is then compared to the voter's digitized signature on file to ensure a signature match. Here's the procedure for signature matching verification:
 - The Board of Election staff – one Republican and one Democrat – does an initial sort, matching the signature on the Certificate of Mail-in Voter against the signature on file.
 - Where the Republican and Democrat disagree whether the signature is valid, it is then sent to the Board of Election for a vote.
- Under the latest settlement, the voter has the right to provide a cure via a Cure Form.

Security Measures:

Bearer Portion

- All voters are permitted to have someone they designate to take their ballot from them and deliver it to the Board of Elections or to drop it off at a Ballot Drop box or at a USPS facility.
- ANY TIME the voter gives their ballot to someone else, this person is called the Bearer, and the Bearer **MUST** fill out the Bearer portion **IN THE PRESENCE OF THE VOTER** for the ballot to count.
- **This Bearer portion must be completed and signed *before* dropping off or delivering if you use a Bearer.**
- If a Bearer comes to the county Board of Elections with a Mail-in Ballot that has not been filled out completely and signed, the ballot will be rejected.
- **DO NOT fill this out if you are dropping off your own ballot or delivering it yourself.**
- The state keeps track of all Bearers. Bearers are only permitted to carry 3 ballots per election. The fourth and additional ballots will be rejected. No candidates in the election can serve as Bearers.

What happens to my ballot once it gets to the Board of Elections?

- Ballots are date-stamped on the day received, whether through a secure drop box, a personal drop-off (at the county clerk's office in Elizabeth or Westfield) or via mail.
- They are then scanned for signature match in batches, based on date, starting immediately as ballots come in
- If there's a problem with the signature, a certified letter is sent to the voter with instructions on how to update signature and resend
- Ballots that are determined to be valid are held in a secure facility until they are counted.

Early Counting

- NJ A4475 (20R) largely codified Murphy's executive order making the Nov. 3 election primarily vote-by-mail, as well as establishing requirements for ballot drop boxes around the state.
- It includes an amendment that says county election officials can "begin opening the inner envelopes and canvassing each mail-in ballot" 10 days before Election Day.
- Both the governor and sponsors of the bill say the goal is to address concerns that county election officials will be overwhelmed by a surge of mail-in ballots and have trouble counting them in time so they can be certified by Dec. 14, when the Electoral College meets to officially choose a new U.S. president.
- It applies only to this year's election and requires that results stay confidential.
- Under the law, anyone who "knowingly discloses to the public the contents of a mail-in ballot" before polls close on Election Day could be charged with a third-degree crime. That means violators could face five years in prison and a maximum fine of \$15,000.

Become a Pollworker

- It is mandatory for all Poll Workers to attend a Training Class at least once every (2) two years.
- The working hours on the Election Day will be 45 minutes before the opening of the poll, which is at 6:00 AM and until 8:00 PM (the closing of the poll).
- The payment will be \$200, and if you do not attend the mandatory Class you will be paid less.
- <http://www.unioncountyvotes.com/apply-to-work-at-a-polling/>

For More Information

- VoteByMailNJ.org
- ucnj.org/county-clerk
- County Clerk: 908-527-4787
 - **Please do not call before October 5**
- www.unioncountyvotes.com
- To find out where your ballot is:
 - <https://voter.svrs.nj.gov/auth/sign-in>
 - Instructions here in case you have trouble with the site:
 - <https://votebymailnj.org/vbm-hub-for-voters/where-is-my-ballot/>