

## Requesting a Mail-In Ballot and Voting by Mail in Texas

**Deadline to Request a Mail-In Ballot:** Received by October 23rd at noon or close of business (whichever is later)

**Deadline to Submit a Mail-In Ballot:** Postmarked by Nov 3rd at 7PM and received no later than 5 pm on Nov 4<sup>th</sup> at 5PM; if delivered in person, election official must receive ballot by 7 pm on Nov 3

### How can voters request a mail-in ballot?

**Online** – Request a ballot online [here](#). For general information, voters can visit: <https://www.votetexas.gov/voting/when.html#helpful-hints-on-voting-early-by-mail>.

OR

**Submit a Ballot Request Form** – They can mail, email, send by common or contract carrier, or fax (if one is available) [this form](#) to their [Early Voting Clerk](#).

OR

**Contact Local or County Office** – They can call or email their local or county [office](#) holding the election and request an application be sent to them.

\* You must meet eligibility requirements to vote by mail, including being 65 or older, disabled, confined in jail, or having an expected absence from your county. Note that anyone may vote early in-person without an excuse.

### Can you assist voters in requesting a ballot?

**Yes, with certain restrictions.** Individuals who assist a voter with filling out or submitting the request must fill out Box 11 on the request form.

If a voter is unable to sign the form (due to a physical disability or illiteracy), the application may be signed at Box #11 by a Witness. Unless the Witness is a close relative (parent, grandparent, spouse, child, or sibling), it is a class B misdemeanor for a person to witness more than one application for ballot by mail.

If a person assists in completing or submitting the application, then that person must complete Box #11 on the form unless they are the voter's close relative (as defined by Texas law) or are registered at the voter's address. Violation of this requirement is a Class A misdemeanor.

### How can voters return a marked ballot?

Voters can submit their marked ballots by:

- Mail; common or contract carrier; or in-person delivery by the voter who voted. A voter may deliver a marked ballot in person to the early voting clerk's office only while the polls are open on election day (until 7 pm).

## Can you assist voters in returning a marked ballot?

**Under certain circumstances, following statutory requirements.** A voter with a disability or who is physically unable to deposit the ballot and carrier envelope in the mail may select a person other than the voter's employer or employer's agent, or an officer or agent of a labor union to which the voter belongs to assist the voter by depositing a sealed carrier envelope in the mail. A person other than the voter who assists a voter by depositing the carrier envelope in the mail or with a common or contract carrier or who obtains the carrier envelope for that purpose must provide the person's signature, printed name, and residence address on the reverse side of the envelope.

An assistor who does not sign the oath is not violating the law if that person is related to the voter within the second degree by affinity or the third-degree by consanguinity; physically living in the same dwelling as the voter; or is a person who possesses a ballot or carrier envelope solely for the purpose of lawfully assisting a voter who was eligible for assistance.

A voter is also eligible to receive assistance in marking the ballot if the voter can't prepare the ballot because of a physical disability that renders the voter unable to write or see; or an inability to read the language in which the ballot is written. On the voter's request, the voter may be assisted by any person other than voter's employer or employer's agent, or an officer or agent of a labor union to which the voter belongs. A person who assists a voter to prepare a ballot to be voted by mail must enter the person's signature, printed name, and residence address on the voter's official carrier envelope.

**Restrictions on partisan/political committee ballot collection:** The delivery of the carrier envelope is prohibited by a common or contract carrier if the delivery originates from the address of: the office of a political party or a candidate in the election; a candidate in the election unless the address is the residence of the early voter; a specific-purpose or general-purpose political committee involved in the election; or an entity that requested the election be held.

**Compensation Restrictions:** Additionally, a person commits an offense if the person compensates another person for either assisting voters or depositing the carrier envelope as part of any performance-based compensation scheme based on the number of voters assisted, or in which another person is presented with a quota of voters to be assisted, or engages in another practice that causes another person's compensation from or employment status with the person to be dependent on the number of voters assisted.

It is also a criminal offense to assist a voter who is not eligible for assistance and the voter's ballot may not be counted.

*Fair Elections Center and Campus Vote Project intend the information contained herein to be used only as a general guide. This document should not be used as a substitute for consultation with a licensed Texas legal professional.*

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For more information, visit  
[www.fairelectionscenter.org](http://www.fairelectionscenter.org)