

# Uniform Instructions for Wisconsin Absentee Voters

Wisconsin Statute § 6.869 requires the development of uniform instruction for absentee voters, including information concerning the proof of identification requirement, means for correcting errors in marking an absentee ballot, and obtaining a replacement ballot.

## **Voter Photo Identification**

### *Regular Voters (including Temporary Overseas Voters)*

Regular absentee voters, including those temporarily overseas, are required to provide a copy of acceptable photo ID before being sent an absentee ballot. However, once photo ID is provided, an absentee voter does not need to resubmit photo ID when requesting an absentee ballot by mail for future elections, as long as they have not moved or changed their name. If you have received this ballot without providing photo ID with a prior absentee application, please contact your municipal clerk at the contact information below to confirm your status.

### *Military and Permanent Overseas Voters*

Military and permanent overseas voters are exempt from the photo ID requirement. If you are a military voter or are registered to vote as a permanent overseas voter, you are not required to provide photo ID.

### *Indefinitely Confined Voters*

Indefinitely confined voters are persons who, because of age, physical illness, infirmity, or disability, are eligible to receive ballots automatically for all future elections. If you requested absentee ballots as an indefinitely confined voter, you are not required to provide photo ID.

### *Confidential Voters*

Confidential Voters are exempt from the photo ID requirement. If you are currently registered as a confidential voter, you are not required to provide photo ID.

## **Uniform Instructions for Absentee Voters**

If your ballot has been mailed to you, be sure the carrier envelope contains the ballot and an absentee certificate envelope. If you have received your absentee ballot by fax or email, please be sure you have received and printed (if emailed) your ballot and your absentee certificate. Please refer to the special fax and email notations within the instructions.

1. Carefully read and follow the instructions for completing the ballot. Mistakes may prevent your votes from being counted.
2. Vote the ballot in the presence of one adult witness. The witness cannot be a candidate for the election. The witness must verify that the individual completed the absentee ballot but should not view the voter's choices. The witness must sign the certificate and provide his/her address. If the signature of the voter and the signature and address of a witness are not provided, the ballot will not be counted. If you are a military or permanent overseas voter, you must provide your birthdate.
  - **Witness information:** The witness for a military, temporarily overseas or permanently overseas voter does not have to be a U.S. citizen, but must be at least 18 years of age and must sign the certificate and provide his/her address. The witness for regular absentee voters must be a U.S. citizen and at least 18 years of age.
3. Refold the voted ballot and place it inside the certificate envelope.
  - **Fax/email instruction:** If your ballot was faxed or emailed to you, fold the ballot and place it inside a regular, non-window envelope. *Return the entire ballot. If the ballot was sent as two pages, return both pages including the page containing the municipal clerk's initials.* NOTE: If you received your ballot by fax or email, you will only have an absentee certificate, not an envelope.
  - **Fax/email instruction:** Complete and sign the certificate, have a witness sign and provide his or her address. Provide your birthdate if you are a military or permanent overseas voter. Affix the certificate (with

glue or tape) to the envelope containing the voted ballot. Place the envelope with the certification attached into another, larger, envelope. Seal the envelope and address it to your municipal clerk.

4. Seal the envelope.
5. Complete (or verify, if clerk has provided) the elector information section on the absentee certificate envelope. If you have moved from the address listed on the certificate envelope, contact your municipal clerk. *Do not cross out the address.* Sign the certificate and ensure that your witness has provided all their required information (see step 2 for more details).
6. The ballot must be returned so it can be delivered to the polling place no later than 8 p.m. on Election Day. If the ballot is received by the municipal clerk on Election Day, it must be received in time for the clerk to deliver the ballot to the polling place before 8:00 p.m. *If you are a permanent or temporarily overseas voter or you received your ballot by electronic means, please provide adequate postage.* Allow adequate time for delivery. The United States Postal Service recommends a delivery time of one week. If you are mailing your ballot from overseas, delivery time may be longer.

Absentee ballots may not be returned to the clerk by fax or email.

**Correcting Ballot Errors**

If you make an error while marking your ballot or otherwise require a replacement ballot, contact your municipal clerk immediately. In most cases you must return your original ballot and certificate envelope before a replacement ballot will be issued. A voter may request that a replacement ballot be faxed or emailed to him or her. The ballot must be returned to the municipal clerk no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. The ballot may not be returned to the municipal clerk by fax or email.

*Regular, Permanent Overseas and Temporarily Overseas Absentee Voters*

A request for a replacement ballot must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on the 5<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day. If you require a replacement ballot after the 5<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day and reside locally, you must return the original ballot and certificate envelope in person to the municipal clerk before 5:00 p.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> day before the election. You will be required to vote your replacement absentee ballot in the municipal clerk’s office. Alternatively, you may vote at the polling place on Election Day.

*Indefinitely-Confined Voters*

A request for a replacement ballot must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day.

*Military Absentee Voters*

A request for a replacement ballot must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day. If the election contains federal offices, a request for a replacement ballot must be received no later 5:00 p.m. on Election Day.

State Election Official Contact Information

Wisconsin Elections Commission

**Fax:** 608-267-0500 **Email:** [elections@wi.gov](mailto:elections@wi.gov)

Local Election Official Contact Information

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Municipal Clerk)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Municipality)

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_: Email: \_\_\_\_\_