

# Transcript: Requesting a Mail-in Ballot: An Overview

[Title: Requesting a Mail-in Ballot: An Overview]

[A mail-in ballot request application is displayed with the label 2020 Presidential General Election above it. The application is not filled out.]

Narrator: Requesting a Mail-in Ballot: An Overview. Did you know that any registered voter can request a mail-in ballot? This year, we are encouraging voters to request a mail-in ballot, also known as an absentee ballot. So in order to vote by mail, you must request a mail-in ballot. There is no need wait. Request your mail-in ballot today to make sure your request is received by the October 20<sup>th</sup> deadline. We'll send you a ballot as soon as they are ready!

[Text appears on the application to show it has been filled out by an example voter named Jennifer Voter. The application moves into an icon labeled 'Local Election Office'.]

Narrator: When you request your mail-in ballot, you can vote safely, help keep others safe, and avoid lines.

[A mail-in ballot envelope and an icon of a house labeled 'Vote Safe' appear. The ballot envelope moves into the house icon.]

Narrator: You can mail your ballot back in a postage-paid return envelope, return it to your local election board, or drop it in a secure drop box that will be available statewide.

[Three icons appear as each method of voting is listed: a mail box icon, the Local Election Office icon, and a ballot drop box icon. All three icons fade.]

Narrator: Please note, if you request a ballot, but then decide to vote in person, you will have to vote a provisional ballot when you get to the vote center, because records will indicate you've already requested a ballot.

So, if you have a few minutes, we'll show you how to request your ballot.

Let's get started.

First, you will not automatically be sent a ballot for the upcoming 2020 general election in November. You must request one.

[A mail-in ballot envelope appears and a green arrow moves towards it]

Narrator: Only registered voters can receive a ballot.

[The mail-in ballot envelope fades and an image of the State Board of Elections website home page appears.]

Narrator: If you're not registered, you can register and request a ballot by using our online application. To start your application, go to our website: [elections.maryland.gov](https://elections.maryland.gov) and click on 'Register to Vote'

[The image of the website is enlarged to zoom in on the blue button labeled 'Register to Vote' A mouse icon clicks on the button to navigate to the Voter Registration and Mail-in Ballot request page. The image of the page moves off screen.]

Narrator: If you're already registered, you'll still need submit an application to get a mail-in ballot.

[An application to request a mail-in ballot along with a mail-in ballot envelope appear. A green arrow moves from the application to the mail-in ballot envelope.]

Narrator: If you do not submit an application, you won't receive a ballot, and will have to vote in person during the upcoming election.

[A red circle with a line through it appears on the application and then also appears on the mail-in ballot envelope. The mail-in ballot envelope fades.]

Narrator: You can fill out and submit the online application or download and print the application on our website.

[An image of the State Board of Elections home page appears. The label 'Submit the Online Application' appears below the image of the home page and the label 'Download and Print the Application' appears below the image of the mail-in ballot PDF application. The mail-in ballot application fades and the State Board of Elections home page becomes larger.]

Narrator: We encourage you to submit an online application, if possible, to help reduce the number of paper applications election staff need to process. So how do you apply online?

Here's how:

To fill out the application online, you'll need to have an MVA-issued driver's license or ID. Go to [elections.maryland.gov](https://elections.maryland.gov). Select 'Request A Ballot' to access our online Request system.

[An example driver's license appears belonging to Jennifer Voter. The driver's license moves off the page. The home page is zoomed in to feature the 'Request A Ballot'

button. A red square appears around the 'Request A Ballot' button and a mouse icon clicks on it to navigate to the Mail-in Ballot Request page on the website to start the online application.]

Narrator: Make sure to review the information on each page. On the Voter Type page, select your voter type, and then select the 'Next' button to proceed to the application.

[The mouse clicks the green 'Next' button to navigate to the next page which features information about the website's usage. The mouse clicks 'Next' again to navigate to the Privacy of Your Information Page and then to the Voter Type page. A red square appears around the section of the page where the voter would select their voter type. The 'Next' button is selected.]

Narrator: You will need to complete each step of the application.

[The online application screen displays the main part of the application. On the left is a menu with tabs labeled with each step of the application. As the mouse clicks on each tab of the menu, each step and its corresponding page of the application is briefly displayed, starting with Step 1 - 'Name, Birthdate and SSN'. Then to Step 2 - 'MVA Information', Step 3 - 'Current Residential Address', Step 4 - 'Political Party', Step 5 - 'Additional Contact Information' and then to Step 6: 'Mail-in Ballot Request']

Narrator: When you get to Step 6: Mail-in Ballot Request, select 'I would like a mail-in ballot for the 2020 Presidential General Election.'

[At the bottom of the Step 6: Mail-in Ballot request page, the image zooms in to show that the mouse clicks on the box next to the text 'I would like a mail-in ballot for the 2020 Presidential General Election.' The box turns blue and a check mark appears in it. The page extends to show text asking how the voter would like to receive their mail-in ballot. Beneath the text is a tab labeled 'Delivery Method (Required)'. The mouse icon selects the Delivery Method tab and a menu is displayed, listing three options: 'In the Mail', 'Through Email', and 'As a fax']

Narrator: Next, you'll choose whether you would like to receive your ballot in the mail, through email, or by fax. Select the 'Delivery Method' tab. If you'd like your ballot mailed to you, select 'In the mail.'

[The mouse icon selects 'In the mail' which becomes highlighted in blue. The screen extends to show more options, starting with a tab labeled 'Is this Address in the US?' which provides the option to select 'Yes' or 'No'. The mouse clicks 'Yes' as an example to show that the menu further extends once this option is selected. More fields appear labeled 'Delivery Address' (Required), 'City (Required)', 'State (Required)', and 'Zip Code (Required)' where the voter can enter the information.]

Narrator: We recommend this option since it helps us speed up the vote count and keeps election workers safe during the pandemic.

Narrator: If you would like to receive a ballot electronically, also known as internet delivery, select 'Through Email'. Make sure to enter the correct email address. We recommend that you use an email address you do not share with another person, if possible.

[The mouse icon moves back up to select 'Through email' on the Delivery Method tab. The page updates to display a field labeled 'Email Address (Required)']

Narrator: When ballots are ready, you will be emailed a link to access and download your blank ballot using our online ballot delivery system. This system features an accessible online ballot marking tool that allows you to mark your ballot privately and secretly.

[A desktop computer with the word 'Email' on its screen appears along with a printer and a green envelope icon labeled 'Link to Access Unvoted Ballot.' The envelope icon moves into the computer screen.]

Narrator: However, a ballot received by internet delivery will still need to be printed and mailed or dropped off at your local election office or drop box location.

[A printed ballot emerges from the printer. The computer leaves the screen and is replaced by a purple envelope icon labeled 'Emailed or faxed voted ballot.']

Narrator: You cannot return your ballot by email or fax. If you return your voted ballot by email or fax, it will not count!

[The printed ballot moves into the envelope titled 'Emailed or faxed voted ballot'. A red circle with a line through it appears in front of the envelope and flashes a few times]

Narrator: Lastly, if you would like your ballot faxed to you, select 'As a fax' and make sure to review your fax number for accuracy.

[On the mail-in ballot request page, the mouse moves back to the 'Delivery Method' tab and selects 'As a fax' on the drop-down menu. The page updates to display a field labeled 'Fax Number (Required)']

Narrator: Once you're done with this step, push the 'Next' button and proceed through the remaining steps to complete the application.

[The page updates to briefly display the next step, which is labeled 'Step 7: Signature' and then to the step labeled 'Step 8: Preview and Submit Application.']

Narrator: You will receive a confirmation number that your application was successful.

[An image of an example confirmation page appears with the sample confirmation number: Example-2020-AUG-21-0413. The confirmation page moves off screen.]

Narrator: So that's how you apply online.

Narrator: If you do not have an MVA-issued driver's license or ID, or if you prefer to download and print your application to request a ballot, you can download a PDF application from our website.

[A blank mail-in ballot request application moves on screen. Above the application is the label: 'PDF Application for Mail-in Ballot'. The application fades.]

Narrator: Go to our Mail-in Voting Information and Instructions page by selecting the Mail-in voting link under 'Quick Links.'

[An image of the State Board of Elections home page appears. The image zooms in to the section displaying the menu titled 'Quick Links'. The mouse icon selects the 'Mail-in Voting' link.]

Narrator: Then select, 'How Do I Request a Mail-in Ballot?' You'll find links to download and print an application.

[The page updates to display the 'Mail-in Voting: Information and Instructions for the 2020 Elections' page, which features a list of gray tabs that when selected will display more information about how to request, receive and return a mail-in ballot. The mouse icon selects the second tab labeled 'How Do I Request a Mail-in Ballot?'. The page expands downward to display information about the three ways to request a mail-in ballot. The mouse moves down to the link labeled 'Mail-in Ballot Application for 2020 Elections (PDF)\*' where a voter can download the PDF application in English. The mouse then moves to the link below it labeled 'Solicitud de Papeleta de Votante Ausente para las Elecciones del 2020 (PDF)' where a voter can download the PDF application in Spanish. The image of the website fades and is replaced by an image of the mail-in ballot request application.]

Narrator: While filling out your application, include your name, date of birth, address, contact information.

[A red square appears around the top section of the application that provides spaces for the voter to fill in their name, date of birth, address and contact information.]

Narrator: You'll then choose if you'd like to receive your ballot by mail, by fax, or by internet delivery. Make sure to fill in the appropriate details for your choice so we know where to send your ballot documents. And then, sign the application.

[The red square moves down to highlight the middle section of the application that provides spaces for a voter to choose one of the three ballot delivery methods (US Mail,

Internet Delivery, or Fax. Each ballot delivery method has a section where the voter can fill in the requested details – such as the address where they want their ballot mailed, the email address where they want to receive the link to download their ballot, or the fax number where they want their ballot sent. The square moves down to highlight the area where the voter must sign and date the application.]

Narrator: Your completed application must be **received** by your local election office by Tuesday, October 20th.

[The example voter, Jennifer Voter's, information is displayed on the application. She has filled out and signed her application. The 'Local Election Office' icon appears and the completed application moves into the icon.]

Narrator: After your application is submitted, it may take time for your application to be processed. Around the busy election time, it may take longer, so we strongly recommend that you submit your application as soon as you can.

[The Local Election Office icon moves to the center of the screen and a large volume of applications begin to move into the icon. The Local Election Office icon moves offscreen and the State Board of Elections home page appears.]

Narrator: You can check if your application was received by logging in to our Voter Lookup page at [voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/VoterSearch](http://voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/VoterSearch).

[The home page zooms in to emphasize the blue button labeled 'Look up your voter information' and the mouse icon selects it to navigate to the Voter Lookup page. The Voter Lookup page has fields labeled 'First Name', 'Last Name', Date of Birth with the fields to enter the month, day and year, and a field labeled 'Zip Code'.]

Narrator: Once you log in, select 'Status of My Mail-in or Provisional Ballot.'

[The page navigates to display Jennifer Voter's example voter registration record on the Voter Lookup page, which displays information such as her name, residential address, mailing address, party affiliation and registration date. Beneath it are gray tabs labeled 'Polling Place Address and Directions', 'My Voting Districts', 'Local Boards of Elections Information', and 'Status of My Mailed-in or Provisional ballots.' A red square appears around the 'Status of My Mail-in or Provisional ballots' tab. The mouse icon selects the tab.]

Narrator: Once your application has been received and processed, you'll see a status of 'Application Received.'

[The 'Status of my Mailed-in or Provisional ballots' tab expands to display a section labeled 'Election date Election Type Ballot Type Status'. Beneath this text, there is a status of 'Application Received.' A red square appears around the words 'Application Received' The Voter Lookup page fades.]

Narrator: And as a reminder, if you request a ballot and try to vote at a vote center during early voting or on election day, you will have to vote a provisional ballot.

[An icon labeled 'Vote Center' appears and then fades and an image of the State Board of Elections home page moves onscreen. The State Board of Elections contact information appears]

So that's a general overview of how to request a ballot. For more information, visit our website [elections.maryland.gov](https://elections.maryland.gov)

Please be sure to review the video on how to return your ballot which can also be found on our website.

If you have any questions, please give us a call at 1 800 222 8683 or email us at [info.sbe@maryland.gov](mailto:info.sbe@maryland.gov)

Thank you!

[The text: 'Maryland State Board of Elections 2020' appears at the bottom of the screen and then fades.]