



## 2020 PRIMARY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

On March 25, 2020, the Ohio General Assembly passed H.B. 197, a sweeping piece of legislation aimed at dealing with the state's response to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic. Among other items, the bill sets April 28, 2020 as the final day of Ohio's primary election.

One of my highest commitments is to prevent voter confusion and provide Ohio voters with timely, accurate information. With that in mind, I wanted to clear up a few questions Ohio voters may have.

If you have any questions that aren't addressed here, please call my office at 877-767-6446 or email my staff at [info@ohiosos.gov](mailto:info@ohiosos.gov). Thank you for helping to keep our fellow Ohioans safe as we grapple with this pandemic and helping keep our state and our democracy strong.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank LaRose".

Frank LaRose  
Ohio Secretary of State

## 2020 PRIMARY ELECTION

---

### **I VOTED BY MAIL OR IN PERSON BEFORE MARCH 17, 2020, DO I NEED TO VOTE AGAIN?**

No, all ballots already submitted by mail or in-person will count, so long as they were otherwise valid. If you voted prior to March 17th your ballot is secured behind double locks at your county board of elections and will be counted on April 28th. Please encourage friends and family who haven't already voted to request an absentee ballot from your local board of elections.

## **WILL THERE BE IN-PERSON VOTING ON APRIL 28, 2020?**

Yes, but since most Ohioans are being advised to stay home right now, the new law only allows for limited in-person voting on April 28th. In-person voting will only occur on April 28 and only at boards of elections early vote centers, not at precinct polling locations. And in-person voting will only be available for individuals with disabilities who require in-person voting and those who do not have a home mailing address.

## **WHAT IS THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE IN THE 2020 PRIMARY?**

The deadline to register for the 2020 primary election was February 18, 2020. Anyone who is eligible to vote, but has not yet registered, can do so for the November 3, 2020 General Election, at [VoteOhio.gov](http://VoteOhio.gov).

## **WHAT SHOULD DISABLED OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED VOTERS DO IF THEY RELY ON ACCESSIBLE VOTING MACHINES?**

A remote ballot marking system is available through each county board of elections for use by an absentee voter with a qualifying disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The remote ballot marking system allows a qualifying voter to mark their ballot privately and independently. You can contact your county board of elections or [fill out the Form 11-G online form](#).

Disabled and visually-impaired voters may also vote at the board of elections early vote center on April 28, 2020.

## **I HAVE SINCE MOVED. DO I NEED TO UPDATE MY REGISTRATION BEFORE REQUESTING MY BALLOT?**

A voter must be properly registered by February 18, 2020. If a voter has moved but did not update their address, the voter may apply for a ballot and will receive a provisional ballot by mail from the board of elections. State law requires registration and address changes for the 2020 primary to be completed by February 18th 2020, so no new address changes or registrations are being accepted for the 2020 primary.

## **WHEN WILL THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION BE ANNOUNCED?**

Tabulation of votes will begin on April 28, 2020 after 7:30 p.m. It's important to note that ballots postmarked by April 27, 2020 will all be counted, so final unofficial results won't be available until May 8, 2020. (This is standard for every election.)

## ABSENTEE VOTING

---

### I DON'T HAVE A PRINTER. CAN I REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT?

Yes. You can call your county board of elections and a request can be sent to you. [A directory of all boards can be found here: OhioSoS.gov/boards.](#)

Voters who can't print their own form may also simply write the following information on a blank sheet of paper and mail it to their board of elections;

- full name
- date of birth
- full registration address including county
- address where ballot should be mailed if different from your registration address
- one of the these: Ohio driver's license number, last four of your Social Security number or [include a copy of an acceptable form of ID](#)
- state that "I'm a qualified elector and I'm requesting an absentee ballot for the March 17th Ohio Primary"
- indicate if you want a: Democratic, Republican, Libertarian or Issues only ballot (choose only one)
- sign it
- today's date
- phone number (optional, but suggested)
- email address (optional but suggested)

### WHEN DOES MY BALLOT NEED TO BE POSTMARKED?

Unless you are a member of the U.S. military currently deployed overseas or an American living abroad, ballots must be postmarked by April 27, 2020 and received by the board of elections by May 8, 2020 to be counted in the primary election if the proper information was provided on the identification envelope.

### I'M REGISTERED TO VOTE BUT HAVE CHANGED MY NAME. CAN I STILL VOTE?

Yes. If you are able to [provide a signed Form 10-L and a proof of the name change](#), a regular ballot may be provided. However, if you request a ballot under a former name and request to receive an absentee ballot by mail, a provisional ballot will be provided to you by your local board of elections.

## **WHAT DATE DO I PUT ON THE ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION UNDER “DATE OF ELECTION?”**

Please write March 17, 2020 (or 03/17/2020) as the election date has not changed, only extended for mail-in voting. However, anyone who writes another date will still have their absentee application processed if the remainder of the required information is included on the request.

## **CAN CORONAVIRUS BE SPREAD OVER THE HANDLING OF PAPER?**

The experts at the Ohio Department of Health have said that COVID-19 doesn't spread by penetrating the skin on your hands, but only leads to infection when it is transferred from your hand to places like your mouth, nose, or eyes. Given that, the best measure you can take to prevent the spread of germs is washing your hands after handling mail and even cash.

## **IS VOTING BY MAIL SECURE?**

Yes. From the moment you request your ballot to the moment it is received at the board of election to be counted, the [ballot may be tracked at VoteOhio.gov](https://www.voteohio.gov). Ballots are stored securely in rooms requiring both a Democrat and Republican staff member to gain access.

## **POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS AND CANDIDATES**

---

### **HAS THE DEADLINE FOR INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES BEEN CHANGED? (THE DEADLINE SAYS “DAY BEFORE THE DAY OF THE PRIMARY ELECTION” IN THE ORC)**

No. As the election has not been rescheduled, only extended, all of the deadlines stay in place except for absentee mail-in ballot submissions.

### **MY BALLOT ISSUE COMMITTEE, FOR A SCHOOL LEVY, WANTS TO FILE FOR THE AUGUST SPECIAL ELECTION IF IT FAILS IN THE PRIMARY. CAN I STILL DO THAT?**

Yes, as this extended election ends on April 28, 2020, the deadline to file for the August special election is May 6, 2020. A question or issue that is approved by the voters in the Primary may be withdrawn before the August special election.

## **I'M A CANDIDATE, CAMPAIGN OR COMMITTEE. CAN I SEND ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUESTS TO MY SUPPORTERS?**

Yes, you can send the [absentee ballot request form to any Ohio voter who hasn't already voted](#). You can find and print that form here. Make sure to let them know the address of their county board of elections which can be found here. You may also include a [pre-addressed envelope with the board of elections address on it](#) but state law says that you may not provide them postage.

[You can also help spread the word using the social media toolkit](#). Feel free to download the images and share them on your own social media to help voters make their voices heard!