

Summary

Table 2: Excuses to Vote Absentee

Updated October 07, 2024

Related Topic: Elections



Voting Outside the Polling Place Report

This table is part of NCSL's Voting Outside the Polling Place report.

All states, by federal law, are required to send absentee ballots to military and overseas voters for federal elections. See the [1986 Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act \(UOCAVA\)](#).

Aside from military and overseas voters, some states have “no-excuse absentee” voting, which means any voter can request a mail ballot without providing an excuse, and a few send all voters ballots by mail. Fifteen states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands only permit certain voters to request an absentee ballot by mail, based on an “excuse” of why that voter can’t make it to the polls on Election Day.

All states permit voters who will be outside of their home county to vote absentee, as well as voters with an illness or disability who know ahead of time that they won’t be able to make it to the polls. Many other states allow elderly voters to vote absentee or allow voters to request an absentee ballot in case of an emergency—such as an unforeseen illness, confinement to a medical facility or an accident resulting in injury.

The table below summarizes and compares other acceptable excuses in the states that require one.

Note: This table is meant to summarize the acceptable excuses for states that require an excuse to vote absentee. Since it is comparative, it is not necessarily comprehensive of all excuses in a given state. Visit state election webpages for additional information on each state’s requirements.

*ACP stands for [Address Confidentiality Program](#), which protects the information of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking.

State	Out of County on Election Day	Illness or Disability	Persons Over a Certain Age	Work Shift is During all Voting Hours	Student Living Outside of County	Election Worker or Poll Worker	Religious Belief or Practice	ACP* Participant	Incarcerated (but Still Qualified to Vote)	Jurors
Alabama Ala. Code § 17-11-3	•	•		•	•	•			•	
Arkansas Ark. Stat. Ann. § 7-5-402	•	•					•			
Connecticut Conn. Gen. Stat. § 9-135	•	•				•	•			
Delaware Del. Code Ann. tit. 15, § 5502	•	•		•			•			
Indiana Ind. Code § 3-11-10-24	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		
Kentucky Ky. Rev. Stat.	•	•	•		•			•	•	

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§117.085(1) (a), §117.077										
Louisiana La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 18:1303	•	•	65-plus		•	•		•	•	•
Mississippi Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-715	•	•	65-plus							
Missouri Mo Rev. Stat. § 115.277	•	•				•	•	•	•	
New Hampshire N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 657:1	•	•		•			•			
Puerto Rico P.R. Code Ann. tit. 16-§ 9,34.-	•	•		•	•				•	
South Carolina S.C. Code Ann. § 7-15-320	•	•	65-plus	•					•	
Tennessee Tenn. Code-Ann. § 2-6-201	•	•	60-plus	•	•	•	•			•
Texas Tax Election Code Ann. § 82.001 et seq.	•	•	65-plus					•	•	
Virgin Islands V.I. Code Ann. tit. 18 § 661	•	•			•		•		•	
West Virginia	•	•	"Advanced Age"	•	•			•	•	

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W. Va. Code, § 3-3-1										

Note: This page should be used for general informational purposes only.

Our organization does not run elections and cannot provide legal advice. If you are a voter looking for assistance, please contact your local election official. You can find your local election official's website and contact information by using this database from the [US Vote Foundation](#).

Related Resources

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NCSL Election Resources

The NCSL elections team provides a variety of resources on election issues, including but not limited to 50-state surveys on state laws, legislation databases, a monthly elections newsletter, enactment summaries and other publications.

[Elections](#)

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Table 5: Applying for an Absentee Ballot, Including Third-Party Registration Drives

This table is a part of the Voting Outside the Polling Place report. It summarizes how to apply for an absentee ballot in each state.

[Elections](#)

[Table](#)

Updated October 09, 2024

Table 6: States With Online Absentee Ballot Application Portals

Summarizes states who have web-based absentee ballot applications and states with other online options for absentee ballot applications.

[Elections](#)

[Table](#)