

Vote By Mail Application Instructions

Updated June 2, 2010

INTRODUCTION

In New Jersey the Absentee Ballot is now known as a Mail-In Ballot. Any registered voter can apply for one for any reason. To receive a Mail In-Ballot, you must first fill out a Vote By Mail Application and have it processed by the County Clerk's election staff. Applications are available at the County Clerk's office, your municipal clerk's office, or at the County Clerk's website: www.co.bergen.nj.us/countyclerk

The Vote By Mail Application contains 12 sections. You only need to fill out the sections that apply to you; in most cases, this will be sections 1 through 9. They can be filled out by you, or by a person helping you, known as an Assistor.

Sometimes, Vote By Mail Applications are rejected, and it's very important that you understand the main reasons why this happens. Most of the time, applications are rejected due to illegible handwriting. **This is why it is very important that you either type the information, or print very clearly.**

Another common reason why applications are rejected is because they arrive too late for processing. Vote By Mail Applications must be received at the County Clerk's office – NOT POSTMARKED – received, no later than 7 days prior to any election day.

TO FILL OUT A VOTE BY MAIL APPLICATION

Section 1

Check the box for the election in which you wish to vote (The November General, the June Primary, the May Municipal, the Annual School in April, or one of the Special Elections). For Special Elections, write down the corresponding municipality and date.

Please note that if you check the box for the Annual April School election, you will automatically receive a Mail-In Ballot for all special school elections held in your town until the next annual school election.

If you are an active duty military voter or an overseas voter, check the corresponding Special Status box to the right of section 1.

Section 2

Fill in your last name, first name, and middle initial. A suffix, such as MD, Jr. or Sr. may be included as well.

Section 3

Fill in the address at which you are registered to vote. Note that if you have moved since the last time you voted, you must contact the Bergen County Superintendent of Elections to change your address. **If the address you provide in this section is different from the address on record in voter registration, your application will be rejected.**

Section 4

Fill in the address where you would like your ballot mailed. Please include any special mailing information, such as apartment or dorm room numbers. If you would like your ballot mailed to the address in section 3, just check the box marked "same address as section 3."

Sections 5, 6, and 7

Fill in your birth date, and a phone number where you can be reached during the day. You may also include an email address.

Section 8

Sign your name on the line provided **as it appears in the Voter Registration Poll Book. This is essential. A non-matching signature will cause your application to be rejected.**

Section 9

Fill in the date on which you are completing this application.

If you checked a box in Section 1 for an upcoming election, and only want to receive a ballot for that election, you may not need to fill out any further sections. In that case, your application is now ready to be mailed to the Bergen County Clerk's office. However, you may wish to take advantage of some additional options available to you in sections 10, 11 and 12.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

Section 10

Check Box A or B to receive Mail-In Ballots in certain future elections automatically. Please note that your ballot can only be sent to the mailing address printed on this application. If your address changes, you must notify the County Clerk's office in writing.

Box A – Check this box to receive Mail-In Ballots for all elections to be held during the remainder of the calendar year. This option must be renewed each year in January by submitting a new Mail In Ballot application. If you have chosen this option in the past, you should receive a new application from the County Clerk's office sometime in January each year.

Box B – Check this box to receive a Mail-In Ballot for all future November General elections only. This option does not need to be renewed each year. You will continue to receive Mail-In Ballots for November General elections until you request otherwise in writing.

Section 11

This section must be completed only if another person (an Assistor) helped you to fill out any part of this application. Provide the Assistor's name and full address. Your assistor must then sign and date the application on the line provided in this section.

Section 12

This section must be completed only if another person (an Authorized Messenger) will deliver your application to the County Clerk's office. An Authorized Messenger can be a family member or any registered voter in Bergen County, but CANNOT be a candidate in the election for which you are requesting a Mail-in ballot.

Provide the Authorized Messenger's name, full address and date of birth. Sign your name on the "signature of voter" line and date the application.

Your Authorized Messenger must bring your application to the Bergen County Clerk's Election Division in Room 130, One Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack, New Jersey. He or she must sign the application in front of a County Clerk Election official. The Authorized Messenger will also be required to show a photo ID.

By signing the application, your Authorized Messenger is certifying that he or she will deliver the ballot directly to you, the voter, and to no one else, under penalty of law. No one may act as an Authorized Messenger for more than 10 voters per election.

If you have any questions, please call us at 201-336-7020. Thank you.