Sussex County Clerk's Office
Vote by Mail Frequently Asked Questions
For the July 7, 2020 Primary Elections

Introduction

Due to COVID-19, New Jersey Elections are pushed to July 7th, and now will be ***Primarily Vote-By-Mail.***

On May 15, 2020, Governor Murphy signed Executive Order #144 (www.state.nj.us/state) stating that the July 7th Primary Election will be conducted ***primarily by Vote by Mail*** *("VBM")*, with limited in person polling locations open on Primary Election Day. VBM will be new to many Sussex County residents; and the process itself is being adapted for activation at scale in light of the health crisis. It is important for our voters to understand how the new process will work so we can be sure our votes are valid under the new rules. Make sure your vote counts.

Who is going to automatically receive a VBM Ballot?

All *active registered Republicans and Democrats* will automatically be mailed a VBM Ballot.

For purposes of the Certification that you must sign stating that you applied for the VBM Ballot, please be advised that Governor Murphy's Executive Order No. 144 acts as your certification.

Who is going to automatically receive a VBM Application?

All *Unaffiliated voters and inactive Republican or Democrat* voters will automatically receive a VBM Ballot Application. The VBM Application will be specifically designed by the Secretary of State for the July 7th Primary Election. The VBM Application will require you to declare your affiliation with either the Republican or Democrat Party. Once the completed VBM Application is received by the Sussex County Clerk's Office, you will receive a ballot based upon your party selection or affiliation on the VBM Application.

Is there a deadline to submit a VBM Application to receive a mailed VBM Ballot in time for the Primary Election?

Yes, the deadline for the Sussex County Clerk's Office to receive a VBM Application in time to provide a VBM Ballot to the Voter by mail is June 30, 2020.

Is there a deadline to request an In-Person VBM Application?

The 3 PM July 6th deadline to submit a VBM Application in-person has been suspended. In-person VBM Applications will be accepted by the County Clerk's Election Office until 8:00 pm on July 7, 2020.

Do I have to apply a stamp to return the VBM Ballot and VBM Application?

NO. All VBM Ballots and VBM Applications will have prepaid return postage.

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How do I return my VBM Ballot?

Your ballot will include a return postage-paid envelope, (no stamp necessary) which will be included in the VBM Ballot packet that you receive. You may mail your ballot through the US Postal Service. You also may deposit your ballot in one of 5 secure drop boxes located throughout the county that has daily pick-up, or you may deliver your ballot directly to the Board of Elections.

What will the VBM Ballot look like?

The sample ballots are posted on the Sussex County Clerk's Website. (www.sussexcountyclerk.org)

When will the ballots be mailed?

Sussex County will be mailing VBM Ballots on or around June 12, 2020.

What is the deadline for returning your VBM Ballot?

If you are using the US Postal Service, the ballot must be postmarked on or before July 7, 2020 and received by the Board of Elections by 8 pm on July 14, 2020 to be considered valid and to be canvassed.

If you are using one of the 5 secure drop boxes, the deadline for delivering your ballot is 8:00 pm on July 7, 2020. Please contact the Board of Elections at 973-579-0950 for drop box locations.

If you are delivering your ballot in-person, you may deliver it and submit your completed ballot to the Board of Elections Office up until 8 pm on July 7th; the night of the Primary Election.

If someone other than the voter is delivering the ballot to the Board of Elections make sure that they fill out and sign the Bearer Section on the return envelope.

Does the Board of Elections require identification if I choose to deliver my VBM Ballot directly to them?

YES. A voter delivering their own ballot is required to produce identification. If a Bearer is delivering the voter's ballot, they too must produce identification. Contact the Board of Elections at 973-579-0950 to find out what identification is acceptable.

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What should I do if I lose my VBM Ballot, it is destroyed, or I do not believe I received it?

If your VBM Ballot is lost, damaged, or you do not believe you received it, you may request a duplicate from the County Clerk's Office. You may also visit the County Clerk's Office up until 8 pm on Election night to request a duplicate ballot.

Will I be notified if my VBM Application is rejected?

YES. Should your Application be rejected, the Sussex County Clerk's Office will notify you of the reason(s) and you will be given an opportunity to cure the defect. Once the defect is cured, you will be issued a VBM Ballot. Be advised that if a VBM Application is received too close to Election Day, time may not permit the application to be cured to allow the voter to receive a VBM Ballot.

How will I know where my polling place will be located?

The Board of Elections will be choosing a limited number of Polling Places available for voters on Election Day, *where only Provisional Paper Ballots will be available* to cast your vote. *A Provisional Paper Ballot is similar to voting on your VBM Ballot.* You will be receiving a post card notifying you of the polling location in your municipality.

When is the deadline to register to vote?

The deadline to register to vote is June 16, 2020. Registration must be mailed and postmarked by June 16, 2020. You may also deliver your Registration to your Municipal Clerk or to the Sussex County Board of Elections by 9 pm on June 16, 2020. (www.sussex,nj.us/elections)

Will I be receiving a Sample Ballot?

NO, because you will be receiving a VBM ballot, which will be the ballot that you will use to cast your vote. Sample Ballots will be available at the polling location and on the County Clerk's Website. (www.sussexcountyclerk.org)

How will I be notified of the location of the 5 secure drop boxes?

Please contact the Board of Elections at 973-579-0950 for convenient locations. The County Clerk's office also posted the locations on its website www.sussexcountyclerk.org/elections.

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Will I be permitted to vote in-person on the voting machine if I go to my polling place?

NO. You will not be permitted to vote on the machine if you go to your polling place. Voters who appear at the polling location will be permitted to vote *Only* on a *Provisional Paper Ballot.*

A Provisional Paper Ballot is similar to voting on your VBM Ballot

We urge you to use your VBM Ballot, as Provisional Ballots are counted last and must be checked against the VBM Ballots that have already been cast before they are accepted and canvassed.

How will I vote if I am disabled and require an accessible ballot?

If you have a disability and need an accessible ballot, please contact the Sussex County Clerk's Office at 973-579-0900 or you may go to your assigned polling place, which will provide access to an in-person accessible voting device on Primary Election Day.

May I return my VBM Ballot to the polling location on Primary Election Day?

NO. VBM Ballots *will not be accepted at the polling location.*

Do all VBM Ballots get counted?

Ballots that are properly cast are canvassed and counted. Two common errors causing ballots to be rejected are: 1. neglecting to sign the Certification, and 2. the tampering of the Certificate of Election. *Do Not Detach the Certificate and attempt to tape it. If* your Certificate is *detached or damaged, request a new Certificate* by contacting the County Clerk's Election Office (973-579-0900).

Will I be notified if my VBM ballot is rejected?

YES. The Board of Elections will notify you following the Election with the reason why your ballot was not counted.

When will we know the results of the July 7, 2020 Primary Election?

Due to the challenges of this election and the time allotted to receive and count ballots by the Board of Elections, the results may not be available until the end of July. Every effort will be made to provide results as quickly as possible. The goal is to be accurate.

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Will I continue to get VBM Ballots for all future elections after this Primary?

Only voters who were already on a list to automatically receive mail-in-ballots BEFORE the State's Public Health Emergency will continue to receive mail-in-ballots for future elections. Voters who are being asked to vote by mail in the July 7th Primary, as a result of Executive Order #144, will **not** automatically receive mail-in-ballots in the future (unless another such order is put in place for the November General Election).

How do I contact the Board of Elections and/or the County Clerk's Office?

Sussex County Board of Elections
83 Spring Street, Suite 305
Newton, NJ 07860
973-579-0950
www.sussex.nj.us/elections

Sussex County Clerk's Office
83 Spring Street, Suite 304
Newton, NJ 07860
973-579-0900
www.sussexcountyclerk.org

Thank you for your time and understanding.

Jeffrey M. Parrott
Sussex County Clerk

APPROVED
DROP BOX LOCATIONS.
SUSSEX COUNTY.