

PRESS RELEASE

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R.I. Board of Elections Releases Frequently Asked Mail Ballot Questions Document

CRANSTON, R.I. – The Rhode Island Board of Elections has released a [Frequently Asked Questions document](#) addressing common questions Rhode Island voters may have about mail ballots. The mail ballot FAQ document can be found on the [Board’s website](#) and below:

Q: I submitted an application for a mail ballot and haven’t received it. How do I check the status?

A: Visit vote.ri.gov to verify the status of your application. It can take up to 5 days for a ballot to be mailed after an application is received. Ballots are typically sent about 1 month before an election if an application has already been received. You can check the status of your application and ballot at vote.ri.gov. If the system indicates no application has been received, please contact your Board of Canvassers in your City/Town Hall. They are responsible for approving your application.

Q: Can I check the status of my mail ballot directly with the Board of Elections?

A: Yes, you can visit the [Voter Portal](#) to obtain a status on whether it is in Processing, Accepted, or Disqualified.

- Processing means your signature/identity is being verified.
- Accepted means your signature/identity has been verified and your ballot has been approved to be counted. It will be opened and placed through our high-speed counter.
- Deficiency means there was an issue verifying your signature or identity and you will need to correct the issue. You will be mailed a notice.
- Disqualified means your ballot was received late or there was an issue verifying your signature/identity and you did not correct it by Nov. 10.

Q: My Ballot says “Pending Certification” within my voter record on the Secretary of State Voter Information Portal at vote.ri.gov. What does that mean?

A: This means your signature is at the Board of Elections and is in the process of being compared to the signature on your voter registration record.

Q: What if my signature doesn’t match?

A: The Board of Elections employs bipartisan teams to compare signatures. They attend a training conducted by a former FBI forensic signature analyst. We understand that voters’ handwriting may change due to normal variations or injury or disability. If your signature doesn’t match we will attempt to verify the driver’s license/state-issued ID or last 4 digits of your SSN that you can optionally provide. If we are unable to verify this information with DMV or the Social Security Administration or you don’t provide it, we will lastly attempt to compare the signature on your mail ballot application to the

signature on your voter registration record. If it doesn't match, your ballot will be disqualified per state law.

Q: If my signature or information cannot be verified and my mail ballot is disqualified, will I be notified?

A: Yes, you will receive a notice in the mail and still have time to have your ballot counted. Please sign the notice and have it signed by 2 witnesses or notarized and return it to our office in the postage prepaid return envelope by 4pm on Nov. 10. You may also return it to the Board of Elections Drop Box at 2000 Plainfield Pike in Cranston.

Q: I dropped my ballot off at a drop box when will it be marked as received?

A: Mail ballots within drop boxes are collected by Board of Election teams each day and brought to our secure facility where the mailing envelopes are opened. The interior envelopes containing the voter's signature and barcode are then scanned as received. This process can take several days depending on the volume. If your ballot is placed in one of our authorized drop boxes by 8 p.m. on Nov. 3, it will be eligible to be counted.

Q: I requested a mail ballot but no longer want to vote by mail. Can I to vote an in-person emergency ballot at my city/town hall?

A: Unfortunately, you cannot vote an in-person emergency ballot once you have requested a mail ballot. You should deposit your mail ballot in any authorized drop box or deliver it to the Board of Elections.

Q: When does my mail ballot need to be at the Board of Elections?

A: We must receive your ballot at our facility at 2000 Plainfield Pike in Cranston (parking lot drop box) or in one of our authorized drop boxes around the state by 8 p.m. on Nov. 3 in order to be eligible to be counted. Military and Overseas ballots receive an additional week to return their ballots.

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