Additional Requirements to Return Absentee Ballots

No updates required since December 4, 2023

Background
In most states, when a voter casts their absentee ballot, they can simply return the ballot through the mail or in person at a drop box or election office. However, some steps impose additional required steps that can create barriers to voters casting their ballot. These additional steps usually consist of requiring a notary or witness signature or requiring a photocopy of acceptable identification.

Scoring
- State requires photocopy of ID or notary signature to return mail ballot, -1/2 point
- State requires witness signature(s) to return mail ballot, -1/4 point
- State does not require photocopy of ID, notary or witness signature to return mail ballot, 0 points

Summary Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>List</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State requires photocopy of ID or notary signature</td>
<td>6 states</td>
<td>Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to return mail ballot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State requires witness signature(s) to return mail</td>
<td>5 states</td>
<td>Louisiana, Minnesota, North Carolina, South Carolina, Wisconsin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ballot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State does not impose additional requirements</td>
<td>39 states &amp; D.C.</td>
<td>Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, D.C., Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to return mail ballot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Montana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>Vermont</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
State-by-State Sources and More Detail

Alabama (-1/2)

- State requires a notary signature or signature of two witnesses to return mail ballot (Ala. Code § 17-11-9).

Alaska (-1/2)

- State requires the signature of a notary or other official authorized to administer oaths to return mail ballot, unless one is not reasonably accessible, then a witness signature is required (Alaska Stat. § 15.20.081).

Arizona (0)

- State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Arkansas (-1/2)

- State requires photocopy of acceptable ID to return mail ballot (Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 51, § 13).

California (0)

- State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Colorado (0)

- State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Connecticut (0)

- State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Delaware (0)

- State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

D.C. (0)

- Does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Florida (0)

- State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Georgia (0)

- State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Hawaii (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Idaho (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Illinois (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Indiana (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Iowa (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Kansas (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Kentucky (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Louisiana (-1/4)
  • State requires a witness signature to return mail ballot (La. Rev. Stat. § 18:1306).
Maine (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Maryland (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Massachusetts (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Michigan (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Minnesota (-1/4)
  • State requires a witness signature to return mail ballot (Minn. Stat. § 203B.121).
Mississippi (-1/2)
  • State requires a notary signature to return mail ballot (Miss. Code § 23-15-631).

Missouri (-1/2)
  • State requires a notary signature to return mail ballot (Mo. Rev. Stat. § 115.291).

Montana (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Nebraska (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Nevada (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

New Hampshire (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

New Jersey (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

New Mexico (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

New York (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

North Carolina (-1/4)
  • State requires the signature of two witnesses or a notary to return mail ballot (N.C. Gen. Stat. § 163-231).

North Dakota (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Ohio (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.

Oklahoma (-1/2)
  • State requires a notary signature to return mail ballot (26 OS §14-107; §14-108).
Oregon (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Pennsylvania (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Rhode Island (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
South Carolina (-1/4)
  • State requires a witness signature to return mail ballot (S.C. Code § 7-15-385).
South Dakota (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Tennessee (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Texas (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Utah (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Vermont (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Virginia (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Washington (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
West Virginia (0)
  • State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.
Wisconsin (-1/4)
  • State requires a witness signature to return mail ballot (Wis. Stat. § 6.87).
Wyoming (0)

- State does not require photocopy of ID, notary, or witness signature to return mail ballot.