

# SECURE THE VOTE

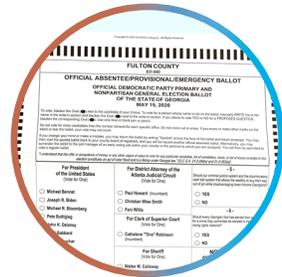
## GEORGIA ABSENTEE VOTING FACT SHEET

Due to the health concerns caused by the COVID-19 virus, Georgia has seen a huge increase in the number of absentee ballot requests. This fact sheet is meant to give Georgia voters important information about the absentee voting process in Georgia.

### Voting Absentee by Mail

After your county elections officials verify your signature on your absentee ballot application, you will receive your absentee ballot package in the mail. The absentee ballot package you receive will contain:

#### ✓ Official Absentee Ballot



#### ✓ Ballot Envelope



#### ✓ Absentee Ballot Instructions



#### ✓ Return Envelope



Once you receive your absentee ballot package, fill out your ballot according to the instructions provided. Then insert your completed ballot in the ballot envelope and place them both in the return envelope. Seal the return envelope and complete the oath on the back by signing your name.

### Returning Your Absentee Ballot

There are **three ways** to return your absentee ballot. No matter which way you choose to return your ballot, it must be **received** by your county elections office **no later than 7:00 p.m. on Election Day**.

- 1 Mail your ballot after applying sufficient postage.
  - One \$0.55 stamp is sufficient for all ballot packages except in Gwinnett County, which requires \$0.70.
  - Allow at least 5 days for mailing to ensure that your ballot is received by your county elections office no later than 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.
- 2 Return your ballot to your county elections office.
- 3 Drop it in a secure drop box that your county elections office set up.
  - For the elections, the State Election Board has allowed counties to set up secure drop boxes to facilitate the return of absentee ballots.
  - Not all counties have secure drop boxes, so check your county elections website or call your county elections office to check.



## Who Can Return Your Ballot?

You! The best course of action is to personally mail or personally deliver your ballot yourself. However, Georgia law allows the below individuals to mail or deliver your ballot for you with your authorization:

- ✓ Your mother, father, grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, spouse, son, daughter, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law;
- ✓ An individual residing in the same household as the voter; or
- ✓ The caretaker of a voter with disabilities.

You should not give your ballot to anyone else. Third-party groups, candidates, campaigns or anybody other than the people listed above are not allowed to collect your ballot (a practice known as “ballot harvesting”). It’s against the law in Georgia. If an unknown person attempts to collect your ballot, even if they say they are from the Secretary of State’s office or your county elections office, please report the person to the Secretary of State’s office.

## What Happens Once Your Ballot is Returned?

Once your county elections office receives your absentee ballot, they will first verify that your signature on the back of the absentee ballot envelope matches your signature on file with your county elections office. Then, your county elections office will accept your absentee ballot. Once your absentee ballot has been accepted, you have voted. You will not be able to cast another ballot in person.

If you forget to sign the oath on the back of the absentee ballot envelope or if your signature does not match your signature on file, then your county elections office will send you a notice and opportunity to cure your ballot. You can cure your ballot by completing the affidavit swearing that it was in fact you who voted the ballot and submitting a copy of your photo ID. If you receive a cure notice, but you did not request or complete an absentee ballot, alert the Secretary of State’s office immediately.

## Voting in Person After Requesting an Absentee Ballot

If you requested and received an absentee ballot by mail, you should make every effort to vote and return that ballot. However, if a voter has requested an absentee ballot but shows up to vote in person, there are procedures to cancel the absentee ballot IF the ballot has not already been received by the county elections office. Each of these procedures takes time for both you and everyone else who is at the precinct so if you requested an absentee ballot, you should make every effort to vote that ballot instead of voting in person. Absentee ballots that have been requested but not yet received by the county elections office can be cancelled, allowing you to vote in person, in the following ways:

- ✓ By bringing and turning over the blank, unvoted absentee ballot to the poll manager at your polling place; or
- ✓ By going to your polling place and requesting in writing that the previously issued absentee ballot be cancelled. The poll worker will have to call and confirm with the county election office that the absentee ballot has not been returned. This process will take time and cause delays for others attempting to vote. If the requested absentee ballot has not yet been returned to the county elections office, the county elections office will cancel the absentee ballot and you will be allowed to vote in person.

