

53.2 Application for ballot.

1. a. Any registered voter, under the circumstances specified in section 53.1, may on any day, except election day, and not more than seventy days prior to the date of the election, apply in person for an absentee ballot at the commissioner's office or at any location designated by the commissioner. However, for those elections in which the commissioner directs the polls be opened at noon pursuant to section 49.73, a voter may apply in person for an absentee ballot at the commissioner's office from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on election day.

b. A registered voter may make written application to the commissioner for an absentee ballot. A written application for an absentee ballot must be received by the commissioner no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the election. A written application for an absentee ballot delivered to the commissioner and received by the commissioner more than seventy days prior to the date of the election shall be retained by the commissioner and processed in the same manner as a written application received not more than seventy days before the date of the election.

2. a. The state commissioner shall prescribe a form for absentee ballot applications. However, if a registered voter submits an application on a sheet of paper no smaller than three by five inches in size that includes all of the information required in this section, the prescribed form is not required.

b. Absentee ballot applications may include instructions to send the application directly to the county commissioner of elections. However, no absentee ballot application shall be preaddressed or printed with instructions to send the applications to anyone other than the appropriate commissioner.

c. No absentee ballot application shall be preaddressed or printed with instructions to send the ballot to anyone other than the voter.

3. This section does not require that a written communication mailed to the commissioner's office to request an absentee ballot, or any other document be notarized as a prerequisite to receiving or marking an absentee ballot or returning to the commissioner an absentee ballot which has been voted.

4. Each application shall contain the name and signature of the registered voter, the registered voter's date of birth, the address at which the voter is registered to vote, and the name or date of the election for which the absentee ballot is requested, and such other information as may be necessary to determine the correct absentee ballot for the registered voter. If insufficient information has been provided, either on the prescribed form or on an application created by the applicant, the commissioner shall, by the best means available, obtain the additional necessary information.

5. An application for a primary election ballot which specifies a party different from that recorded on the registered voter's voter registration record, or if the voter's voter registration record does not indicate a party affiliation, shall be accepted as a change or declaration of party affiliation. The commissioner shall approve the change or declaration and enter a notation of the change on the registration records at the time the absentee ballot request is noted on the voter's registration record. A notice shall be sent with the ballot requested informing the voter that the voter's registration record will be changed to show that the voter is now affiliated with the party whose ballot the voter requested. If an application for a primary election ballot does not specify a party and the voter registration record of the voter from whom the application is received shows that the voter is affiliated with a party, the voter shall be mailed the ballot of the party indicated on the voter's registration record.

6. If an application for an absentee ballot is received from an eligible elector who is not a registered voter the commissioner shall send the eligible elector a voter registration form and another absentee ballot application form. If the application is received after the time registration closes pursuant to section 48A.9 but by 5:00 p.m. on the Saturday before the election for general and primary elections or by 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the election for all other elections, the commissioner shall notify the applicant by mail of the election day and in-person absentee registration provisions of section 48A.7A. In addition to notification by mail, the commissioner shall also attempt to contact the applicant by any other method available to the commissioner.

7. A registered voter who has not moved from the county in which the elector is registered

to vote may submit a change of name, telephone number, or address on the absentee ballot application form when requesting an absentee ballot. The commissioner may also update a voter's identification number, as described in section 48A.11, subsection 1, paragraph "e", if an identification number is provided on an absentee ballot application. Upon receipt of a properly completed form, the commissioner shall enter a notation of the change on the registration records.

8. An application for an absentee ballot that is returned to the commissioner by a person acting as an actual or implied agent for a political party, candidate, or committee, all as defined by chapter 68A, shall be returned to the commissioner within seventy-two hours of the time the completed application was received from the applicant or no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the election, whichever is earlier.

[SS15, §1137-c, -d; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §928, 930; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §53.2, 53.4; C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §53.2]

83 Acts, ch 176, §6; 84 Acts, ch 1291, §11; 86 Acts, ch 1224, §28; 87 Acts, ch 221, §25; 91 Acts, ch 129, §17; 94 Acts, ch 1169, §54; 95 Acts, ch 189, §15; 97 Acts, ch 170, §68; 2004 Acts, ch 1083, §28, 29, 37; 2007 Acts, ch 59, §23, 38; 2008 Acts, ch 1032, §157; 2008 Acts, ch 1053, §1, 2; 2009 Acts, ch 57, §61; 2010 Acts, ch 1033, §29, 56

Referred to in §53.22, 53.39, 53.45, 53.49