

53.40 Request requirements — transmission of ballot.

1. *a.* A request in writing for a ballot may be made by any member of the armed forces of the United States who is or will be a qualified voter on the day of the election at which the ballot is to be cast, at any time before the election. Any member of the armed forces of the United States may request ballots for all elections to be held during a calendar year. The request may be made by using the federal postcard application form and indicating that the applicant wishes to receive ballots for all elections as permitted by state law. If the applicant does not specify which elections the request is for, the county commissioner shall send the applicant a ballot for each federal election held after the application is received until the end of the calendar year in which the request is received. If the applicant requests ballots for all elections to be held in a calendar year, the commissioner, if necessary, shall forward a copy of the absentee ballot request to other commissioners who are responsible under [section 47.2, subsection 2](#), for conducting elections in which the applicant is eligible to vote.

b. Unless the request specifies otherwise, a request for the primary election shall also be considered a request for the general election. In the case of the general election, request may be made not more than seventy days before the election, for and on behalf of a voter in the armed forces of the United States by a spouse, parent, parent-in-law, adult brother, adult sister, or adult child of the voter, residing in the county of the voter's residence. However, a request made by other than the voter may be required to be made on forms prescribed by the state commissioner.

c. A request shall show the residence, including street address, if any, of the voter and the age of the voter and shall designate the address to which the ballot is to be sent. In the case of the primary election, the request shall also show the party affiliation of the voter. The request shall be made to the commissioner of the county of the voter's residence. However, if the request is made by the voter to any elective state, city, or county official, the official shall forward it to the commissioner of the county of the voter's residence, and such request so forwarded shall have the same force and effect as if made directly to the commissioner by the voter.

2. The commissioner shall immediately on the forty-fifth day prior to the particular election transmit ballots to the voter by mail or otherwise, postage prepaid, as directed by the state commissioner, requests for which are in the commissioner's hands at that time, and thereafter so transmit ballots immediately upon receipt of requests. A request for ballot for the primary election which does not state the party affiliation of the voter making the request is void and of no effect. A request which does not show that the person for whom a ballot is requested will be a qualified voter in the precinct in which the ballot is to be cast on the day of the election for which the ballot is requested, shall not be honored. However, a request which states the age and the city, including street address, and county where the voter resides is sufficient to show that the person is a qualified voter. A request by the voter containing substantially the information required is sufficient.

3. If the affidavit on the envelope marked with the affidavit shows that the affiant is not a qualified voter on the day of the election at which the ballot is offered for voting, the envelope shall not be opened, but the envelope and ballot contained in the envelope shall be preserved and returned by the precinct election officials to the commissioner, who shall preserve them for the period of time and under the conditions provided for in [sections 50.12, 50.13, 50.15, and 50.19](#).

[C54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §53.40]

84 Acts, ch 1219, §3; 87 Acts, ch 221, §18; 89 Acts, ch 136, §55; 94 Acts, ch 1180, §27; 2002 Acts, ch 1134, §71, 115; 2004 Acts, ch 1083, §35, 37; 2007 Acts, ch 215, §238; 2009 Acts, ch 57, §71; 2010 Acts, ch 1033, §31, 32, 56; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §8; 2014 Acts, ch 1101, §29, 32

Referred to in §48A.5, 53.45

For future amendment to subsection 1, paragraph a, effective July 1, 2019, see 2017 Acts, ch 155, §31, 44