

53.11 Satellite absentee voting stations.

1. *a.* Not more than twenty days before the date of an election, satellite absentee voting stations shall be established upon receipt of a petition signed by not less than one hundred eligible electors requesting that a satellite absentee voting station be established at a location to be described on the petition. However, if a special election is scheduled in the county on a date that falls between the date of the regular city election and the date of the city runoff election, the commissioner is not required to establish a satellite absentee voting station for the city runoff election.

b. A satellite absentee voting station established by petition must be open at least one day for a minimum of six hours and may remain open until 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election.

c. An otherwise valid petition for a satellite absentee voting station shall be rejected within four days of the commissioner's receipt of the petition if any of the following circumstances apply:

(1) The site requested is not accessible to elderly and disabled voters.

(2) The site requested has other physical limitations that make it impossible to meet the requirements for ballot security and secret voting.

(3) The owner of the site refuses permission to locate the satellite absentee voting station at the site requested by the petition, unless the site is required to serve as a polling place pursuant to [section 49.21, subsection 2](#).

(4) After reasonable efforts, the commissioner is unable to sufficiently staff the satellite absentee voting station to ensure compliance with the law of this state.

d. An otherwise valid petition for a satellite absentee voting station may be rejected within four days of the commissioner's receipt of the petition if any of the following circumstances apply:

(1) The petition requests a satellite absentee voting station for a city runoff election and a special election is scheduled to be held between the date of the regular city election and the city runoff election.

(2) The owner of the site demands payment for the site's use, unless the site is required to serve as a polling place pursuant to [section 49.21, subsection 2](#).

2. A petition requesting a satellite absentee voting station must be filed by the following deadlines:

a. For a primary or general election, no later than 5:00 p.m. on the forty-seventh day before the election.

b. For the regular city election or a city primary election, no later than 5:00 p.m. on the thirtieth day before the election.

c. For a city runoff election, no later than 5:00 p.m. on the twenty-first day before the election.

d. For the regular school election, no later than 5:00 p.m. on the thirtieth day before the election.

e. For a special election, no later than thirty-two days before the special election.

3. Procedures for absentee voting at satellite absentee voting stations shall be the same as specified in [section 53.10](#) for voting at the commissioner's office. Additional procedures shall be prescribed by rule by the state commissioner.

4. During the hours when absentee ballots are available at a satellite absentee voting station, the satellite absentee voting station is a polling place for purposes of [section 39A.4, subsection 1, paragraph "a"](#).

5. At least seven days before the date that absentee ballots will be available at a satellite absentee voting station, the commissioner shall notify the county chairperson of each political party of the date, time, and place that the satellite absentee voting station will be in operation in the county, so that the chairpersons may appoint observers to be present at the station during the hours absentee ballots are available. No more than two observers from each political party shall be present at any one satellite absentee voting station.

6. The commissioner shall remove or obscure from the view of voters any published

material displaying the name of a candidate or elected official other than a ballot or sample ballot or envelope.

7. Notwithstanding [subsection 1](#), if the commissioner receives valid petitions to establish two or more satellite absentee voting stations located within the same precinct, the commissioner may choose to establish a satellite absentee voting station at only one of the locations.

[SS15, §1137-e; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §937; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §53.11]

84 Acts, ch 1291, §13; 91 Acts, ch 129, §19; 93 Acts, ch 143, §32; 94 Acts, ch 1169, §65; 97 Acts, ch 170, §70, 71; 2002 Acts, ch 1134, §64 – 66, 115; 2005 Acts, ch 72, §2; 2007 Acts, ch 112, §1 – 3; 2008 Acts, ch 1191, §115; 2009 Acts, ch 131, §1; 2016 Acts, ch 1121, §6; 2017 Acts, ch 110, §53, 54; 2019 Acts, ch 148, §45; 2021 Acts, ch 12, §51, 73; 2021 Acts, ch 147, §40, 41, 54

Referred to in §49.63, 53.7, 53.8, 53.22, 53.49, 68A.406