

**721—21.300(53) Satellite absentee voting stations.**

**21.300(1) Establishment of stations.** Satellite absentee voting stations may be established by a petition of eligible electors of the jurisdiction conducting the election.

*a. Satellite absentee voting stations established after receipt of a valid petition.* A petition requesting a satellite absentee voting station shall be substantially in the form titled “Petition Requesting Satellite Absentee Voting Station” available on the state commissioner’s website. If the commissioner receives a petition requesting a satellite absentee voting station on or before the petition deadline set forth in Iowa Code section 53.11, the commissioner shall determine the validity of the petition within 24 hours. A petition requesting a satellite absentee voting station is valid if it contains signatures of not less than 100 eligible electors of the county conducting the election who are eligible to vote in the election that is the subject of the petition. Electors signing the petition must include their signature, house number, street, and date the petition was signed. Signatures on lines not containing all of the required information shall not be counted. The heading on each page of the petition shall include the satellite location requested and the election name or date for which the location is requested. Signatures on petition pages without the required heading shall not be counted.

*b. Mandatory rejection of certain satellite absentee voting stations.* Otherwise valid petitions for satellite absentee voting stations shall be rejected within four days of the commissioner’s receipt of the petition if:

- (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 on the petition, unless the site is required to serve as a polling place pursuant to Iowa Code section 49.21(2), or
- (4) After reasonable efforts, the commissioner is unable to sufficiently staff the satellite absentee voting station to ensure compliance with the laws of this state.

*c. Discretionary rejection of certain satellite absentee voting stations.* Otherwise valid petitions for satellite absentee voting stations may be rejected within four days of the commissioner’s receipt of the petition if:

- (1) A petition is received requesting satellite voting for a city runoff election and a special election is scheduled to be held between the regular city election and a city runoff election, or
- (2) The owner of the site demands payment for its use, unless the site is required to serve as a polling place pursuant to Iowa Code section 49.21(2).

*d. Two or more satellite absentee voting petitions.* 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.

*e. Provision of ballots.* Only ballots from the county in which the site is located may be provided at the satellite absentee voting station. Ballots must be provided for the precinct in which the satellite absentee voting station is located; however, it is not necessary to provide ballots from all of the precincts in the political subdivision for which the election is being conducted.

**21.300(2) Notice provided.** Notice shall be published at least seven days before the opening of any satellite absentee voting station. If more than one satellite absentee voting station will be provided, a single publication may be used to notify the public of their availability. If it is not possible to publish the notice at least seven days before the station opens due to the receipt of a petition, the notice shall be published as soon as possible.

A notice shall also be posted at each satellite absentee voting station at least seven days before the opening of the satellite absentee voting station. The notice shall remain posted as long as the satellite absentee voting station is scheduled for service. If it is not possible to post the notice at least seven days before the station opens due to the receipt of a petition, the notice shall be posted as soon as possible.

Both the published and posted notices shall include the following information:

- a.* The name and date of the election for which ballots will be available.
- b.* The location(s) of the satellite absentee voting station(s).

- c. The dates and times that the station(s) will be open.
- d. The precincts for which ballots will be available.
- e. An announcement that voter registration forms will be available for new registrations in the county and that changes in the registration records of people who are currently registered within the county may be made at any time.

If the satellite absentee voting station is located in a building with more than one public entrance, brief notices of the location of the satellite absentee voting station shall be posted on building directories, bulletin boards, or doors. These notices shall be posted no later than the time the station opens and shall be removed immediately after the satellite absentee voting station has ceased operation for an election.

**21.300(3) Staff.** Satellite absentee voting station workers may be selected from among the staff members of the commissioner's office, from the election board panel drawn up pursuant to Iowa Code sections 49.15 and 49.16, or a combination of these two sources. Compensation of workers selected from the election board panel shall be at the rate provided in Iowa Code section 49.20.

At least three people shall be assigned to work at each satellite absentee voting station; more workers may be added at the commissioner's discretion. All workers must be registered voters of the county, and for primary and general elections the workers must be registered with a political party; however, workers not affiliated with any party may be assigned to work at a satellite absentee voting station as long as not more than one-third of the workers assigned to a particular satellite absentee voting station are not affiliated with a political party. For all elections, no more than a simple majority of the workers shall be members of the same political party.

People who are prohibited from working at the polls pursuant to Iowa Code section 49.16 may not work at satellite absentee voting stations.

**21.300(4) Oath required.** Before the first day of service at a satellite absentee voting station, each worker shall take an oath substantially in the form titled "Election Official/Clerk Oath" available on the state commissioner's website. The oath must be taken before each election.

**21.300(5) Suggested supplies for each satellite absentee voting station.** A list of supplies suggested for each satellite absentee voting station is available on the state commissioner's website.

**21.300(6) Ballot transport and storage.** At the commissioner's discretion the ballots may be transported between the commissioner's office and the satellite absentee voting station by the workers who will be on duty that day, or by two people of different political parties who have been designated as couriers by the commissioner. It is not necessary for the same people to transport the ballots in both directions.

If the ballots are transported by the satellite absentee voting station workers, two workers who are members of different political parties and the ballots must travel together in the same vehicle.

Ballots may be stored at the satellite absentee voting station during hours when the station is closed only if they are kept in a locked cabinet or container. The cabinet must be located in a room which is kept locked when not in use. Voted absentee ballots must be delivered to the commissioner's office at least once each week.

**21.300(7) Ballot receipts.** Satellite absentee voting station workers shall sign receipts for the ballots taken to the satellite absentee voting site. The receipt shall be substantially in the form titled "Satellite Absentee Voting Station Ballot Record and Receipt" available on the state commissioner's website. A copy of the ballot record and receipt shall be retained in the commissioner's office. The original shall be sent with the ballots to the satellite absentee voting station.

**21.300(8) Arrangement of the satellite absentee voting station.** Protection of the security of the ballots (both voted and unvoted) and the secrecy of each person's vote shall be considered in the arranging of the satellite absentee voting station.

a. *Security.* The satellite absentee voting station shall be arranged so that ballots are protected against removal from the station by unauthorized persons.

b. *Voting area.* Voting booths without curtains shall be placed so that passersby and other voters may not walk directly behind a person using the booth. At least one voting booth must be accessible to the disabled. The booth must be designed to accommodate a person seated in a chair or wheelchair. A chair must be provided for voters who wish to sit down while voting or waiting in line.

*c. Campaign signs and electioneering.* No signs supporting or opposing any candidate or question on the ballot shall be posted on the premises of or within 300 feet of any outside door of any building affording access to a satellite absentee voting station during the hours when absentee ballots are available at the satellite absentee voting station. No electioneering shall be allowed within the sight or hearing of voters while they are at the satellite absentee voting station.

**21.300(9)** *Operation of the satellite absentee voting station.* At all times the satellite absentee voting station shall have at least two workers present to preserve the security of the ballots, both voted and unvoted.

**21.300(10)** *Voter registration at the satellite absentee voting station.* Each satellite absentee voting station shall provide forms necessary to register voters, including the oaths necessary to process voters registering pursuant to Iowa Code section 48A.7A, and to record changes in voter registration records. Workers shall also be provided with a method of verifying whether people applying for absentee ballots are registered voters.

The commissioner may provide a list of registered voters in the precincts served by the station. The list may be on paper or contained in a computerized data file. As an alternative, the commissioner may provide a computer connection with the commissioner's office.

**21.300(11)** *Procedure for issuing absentee ballot.* The instructions for absentee voting are available on the state commissioner's website and shall be provided to satellite absentee voting station workers unless the commissioner prepares instructions containing substantially the same information as the instructions available on the state commissioner's website.

**21.300(12)** *Closing a station.* The instructions for closing a satellite absentee voting station are available on the state commissioner's website and shall be provided to satellite absentee voting station workers unless the commissioner prepares instructions containing substantially the same information as the instructions available on the state commissioner's website.

**21.300(13)** *Use of I-Voters at satellite absentee voting stations.*

*a.* The statewide voter registration database (I-Voters) shall not be used or accessed at a satellite absentee voting station.

*b.* This rule does not prevent the use of an electronic poll book to process voters at a satellite absentee voting station if the electronic poll book does not connect to or access the statewide voter registration database (I-Voters).

**21.300(14)** *Provisional voting at satellite absentee voting stations.* If it is necessary for a voter to cast a provisional ballot at a satellite absentee voting station, the voter shall receive the same ballot style as the majority of the voters would receive in the precinct in which the satellite absentee voting station is located.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 53.11.

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