



2026 NC Election

Vote By Mail Overview

WELCOME TO YOU CAN VOTE!



- ★ **EDUCATE, REGISTER, and EMPOWER** voters across North Carolina to know their voting rights.
- ★ **REMAIN NONPARTISAN** presenting information to anyone, sharing fact-checked messages to increase turnout, and never discussing candidates, parties, or endorsements.
- ★ **SHARE MATERIALS AND TRAINING:** Suite of printable and shareable bilingual materials. Offer training to any nonpartisan audience, including specialized training on voter registration, know your rights, and what's on the ballot.

Request your ballot NOW!

You can do it! Any registered voter in NC can vote by mail using an absentee ballot – no reason needed!

Request your ballot online
votebymail.ncsbe.gov

Absentee ballot request deadline
Tuesday, October 20 @ 5:00

 **NORTH CAROLINA**
STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Home Contact

North Carolina Absentee Ballot Portal

Welcome to the North Carolina Absentee Portal. There are several options within the portal. Not all options are available to every voter. The following are descriptions of the different options and eligibility.

Option 1 – Request an Absentee Ballot.

All registered North Carolina Voters may use this option to request an absentee by mail ballot. Your request is sent to your county board of elections office and when ballots are available for the election, they will mail your ballot to the address you have provided. The deadline to request an absentee ballot is 5:00 PM the second Tuesday before Election Day. Visually impaired voters who would like to request an accessible ballot will also use Option 1 to submit their request.

Continue to Request an Absentee Ballot

Who can request/return ballot for a voter?

A near relative is a voter's:

- Spouse
- Brother or sister
- Parent or stepparent
- Mother/father-in-law
- Child or stepchild
- Son/daughter-in-law
- Grandparent/Grandchild

Anyone can help a voter with a disability request and return their absentee ballot.

- Complete the assistance section on the request form.
- Sign that you are returning for a voter with a disability when returning ballot.

Paper absentee request form

Required sections are in red.		2026 GENERAL ELECTION NORTH CAROLINA ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORM		2026.02
Election date Select <i>only one</i> election date per form. Otherwise, you will not be sent a ballot. Required.	1	11/03/2026 Absentee Ballot Request		☐ Due to continued or expected illness or disability, I am <i>also</i> requesting absentee ballots for all elections this year.
Print voter name Any name change you give on this form will update your registration. Required.	2	Last name	Suffix (Jr, Sr., III, IV, if applicable)	
		First name	Middle name	
		Former name (<i>if</i> your name has changed)		
Identification information Required.	3	Date of birth (<i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>) 	AND	N.C. driver's license/DMV ID number
			OR	Last four digits of your Social Security number

Provide the address of registration and where to send the ballot

Home address

Provide your **residential** address (where you live).

Required.

4

Street Unit #
City NC ZIP County
Have you moved in the last 30 days? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, date moved? (mm/dd/yyyy)

Mailing address (if different from above)

Street Unit #
City State ZIP

Where should we send your ballot?

Select one.

Required.

5

☒ Your home address in section 4 ☐ Your mailing address in section 4
☒ The address below
Street Unit #
City State ZIP
☐ Due to visual impairment, I require an accessible electronic ballot (**provide your email address in section 6**).

Voter contact information

6

Phone Email

Request and assistance

Requesting ballot on behalf of voter by near relative, legal guardian, or person the voter asks to help due to disability?

The **requester** must complete and sign in this section. See instructions about who can request for a voter.

7

Requester's full name

State your relationship to voter, or status as legal guardian or disability requester

Street

Unit #

City

State

ZIP

Phone

Relative Requester's city **dian/disability requester, sign and date here** *(required if requesting on behalf of a voter)*

Fraudulently or falsely completing this form is a Class I felony under Chapter 163 of the N.C. General Statutes.

X

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Assisting a voter to fill out or return this request?

If yes, complete this section. See instructions about who can assist a voter. **Voter must sign in section 10.**

8

Assistant's full name

Assistant's full address

If the voter is in a care facility and needs assistance in voting and returning the ballot, enter the facility name below.

Facility name

Signature of voter or assistant

Are you a military member on active duty (including spouse/dependents) or a U.S. citizen outside the U.S.?

Only the voter may complete this section. Voter must already be registered in North Carolina.

9

☐ Uniformed Services or Merchant Marines on active duty

☐ U.S. citizen outside the U.S. (*overseas address required*)

Overseas full address

I want my ballot delivered to my:

☐ Email

☐ Fax

☐ Address indicated in section 5

☐ Overseas address provided in this section

☐ Check this box if you are outside the U.S. and have **never** resided in N.C. (your county board will contact you)

Voter's signature

Use a pen. No electronic signatures allowed.

Required.

10

Voter, sign and date here (*required unless ballot is requested by a near relative, legal guardian, or disability requester*)

Fraudulently or falsely completing this form is a Class I felony under Chapter 163 of the N.C. General Statutes.

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Return form to the County Board of Elections by 5 p.m. on the second Tuesday before the election. Do not email or fax.

Your ballot package

Keep the ballot and the return envelope together, don't mix them up with other ballots and envelopes.

YOUR BALLOT PACKAGE INCLUDES:

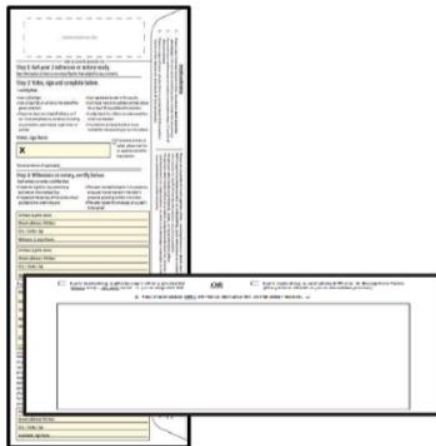


NORTH CAROLINA FAVORITE THINGS
Voting System Demonstration Ballot

BALLOT INSTRUCTIONS
1. Fill in the voting area provided at the top of the ballot and complete the rest of the ballot by marking the number of your choice in the box.
2. When finished, the top of the ballot is a card that will be used to separate the ballot from the return envelope.
3. Place the ballot in the return envelope and seal it.

Preferred NC Favorite Things (You may vote for TWO)	Favorite NC State Fair Foods (You may vote for TWO)	Favorite Favorite North Carolina (You may vote for ONE)
☐ 1. Grapes	☐ 1. BBQ	☐ 1. Charlotte Indians
☐ 2. Lard	☐ 2. Cherry Apple	☐ 2. New England
☐ 3. Mountains	☐ 3. Chicken Fried	☐ 3. I prefer
	☐ 4. CORN-CRUST	☐ 4. Apple Syrup
	☐ 5. Sweet Corn	☐ 5. Mountain Jamboree
	☐ 6. Fiddlehead	☐ 6. Charlotte Kebab
	☐ 7. Fiddlehead	☐ 7. Smoky Mountain
	☐ 8. Applesauce	☐ 8. Applesauce
	☐ 9. State University	☐ 9. State University
	☐ 10. East Carolina University	☐ 10. East Carolina University
	☐ 11. NC & T State University	☐ 11. James Taylor
	☐ 12. NC State University	☐ 12. NC State University
	☐ 13. UNC-Chapel Hill	☐ 13. UNC-Chapel Hill
	☐ 14. UNC-Chapel Hill	☐ 14. UNC-Chapel Hill
	☐ 15. UNC-Chapel Hill	☐ 15. UNC-Chapel Hill
	☐ 16. UNC-Chapel Hill	☐ 16. UNC-Chapel Hill
	☐ 17. UNC-Chapel Hill	☐ 17. UNC-Chapel Hill
	☐ 18. UNC-Chapel Hill	☐ 18. UNC-Chapel Hill
	☐ 19. UNC-Chapel Hill	☐ 19. UNC-Chapel Hill
	☐ 20. UNC-Chapel Hill	☐ 20. UNC-Chapel Hill

Your ballot



Ballot container envelope with form on one side and clear sleeve on opposite side.

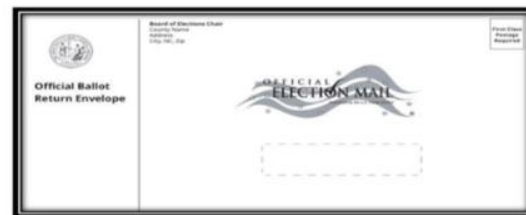
Your ballot container envelope with form on one side and clear sleeve on opposite side



Yellow Photo ID Exception Form (only use if you are unable to provide a copy of an acceptable photo ID).

A yellow Photo ID Exception Form (only use if you are unable to provide a copy of an acceptable photo ID)

Return postage is \$1.98. (You may apply multiple stamps such as Forever stamps and post-card stamps or have the envelope metered with exact postage).



Official Ballot Return Envelope with postage meter stamp area.

Your return envelope



Read the instructions carefully



(1) One side has a clear sleeve for you to provide a copy of your Photo ID (DO NOT SEND THE ORIGINAL ID) or your Photo ID Exception Form, which you will complete if you are not able to provide a copy of an acceptable Photo ID.

(2) The other side has the form printed on the envelope that must be completed by you, your witnesses or notary, and your assistant (if needed).

*Remember that your ballot will be placed inside the ballot container envelope and sealed. **DO NOT** place your photo ID or Photo ID Exception Form inside the sealed envelope with your ballot.*

Your ballot, ballot container envelope, and return envelope are specific to you. Do not mix up your materials with those of anyone else.

If you damage or make a mistake on your ballot, do not try to fix it. Contact your county board of elections.

You need two witnesses or a notary

Either two witnesses or a notary need to sign your ballot envelope.

- A notary cannot charge you for this service.
- Anyone 18+ can be a witness except a candidate for office, unless the candidate is a near relative. Missing or incomplete witness or assistant information may spoil your ballot.

The voter must sign or mark the ballot. For those physically unable to mark due to disability, the person assisting with the ballot should write in the signature line, “Disabled -cannot sign” and must complete the Voter Assistant Certification located on the ballot envelope.

Voter, sign here:

X

Jane Doe

☐ If a second primary is called, please mail me an absentee ballot for that election.

Name correction (if applicable) _____

Individuals prohibited from witnessing an absentee ballot include:

- A person who is **younger than 18**.
- A **candidate for election**, unless the candidate is the voter's near relative.
- If the voter is **a patient or resident at a hospital, clinic, nursing home, or adult care home**, the following individuals are prohibited from assisting:
 - an owner, manager, director, or employee of that facility; an individual who holds any elected federal, state, or local office or precinct political party or organization office; or a campaign manager or treasurer for any candidate or political party.

Voters who need assistance due to disability may ask anyone 18+ and is not a candidate to witness your ballot, regardless of the above restrictions. For voters in a hospital, clinic, nursing home, or adult care home only: a candidate may witness your ballot if you requested their assistance due to a disability.

Witnesses or notary complete information

Witness 1 **print** name: John Doe
Street Address / PO Box: 123 Main Street
City / State / Zip: Sanford, NC 27330
Witness 1, **sign** here: John Doe

Witness 2 **print** name: Danielle Doe
Street Address / PO Box: PO Box 1331
City / State / Zip: Sanford, NC 27330
Witness 2, **sign** here: Danielle Doe

If using a notary instead of 2 witnesses, the notary also certifies that:

State of _____
County of _____
The voter, _____
Voter name
appeared in person and was positively
identified on _____
Date
Notary Public _____
Commission Expiration Date _____

seal

If using two witnesses:

Each witness must provide their

- Printed name
- **Full** address (either a complete street address with unit number or a PO Box)
- City, state, zip code
- Signature

OR if using a Notary:

A notary must complete the notarial certificate on the ballot envelope and place their seal.

They cannot charge you a fee for this service.

Assistant information if applicable

Assistant Print Name:	Danielle Doe
Street Address/ PO Box:	PO Box 1331
City / State / Zip:	Sanford, NC 27330
Assistant, sign here:	Danielle Doe

A person assisting you in completing this form, marking your ballot, or mailing or returning your ballot must complete the Voter Assistant Certification by printing their name and address, and signing their name.

The ballot container envelope has additional information on who is allowed to assist you and what kind of assistance they can provide.

PHOTO ID

Voter must provide either:

- A copy of an acceptable photo ID, or
- A completed Photo ID Exception Form.



WHAT TO BRING?

The address on your voter registration **does NOT** have to match the one on your ID.

Unexpired or expired for one year or less:

- NC driver license or DMV issued ID
- US passport or passport card
- NC student ID* or NC government ID*
- FREE ID from county board of elections
- Out-of-state driver license only if voter registers within 90 days of the election

***Some restrictions apply**

Regardless of expiration:

- US military or veteran ID
- Tribal ID
- ID card from a US or NC government public assistance program

Over 65? ID is valid if it was unexpired on the voter's 65th birthday.

NO ID? Ask for the Exception Form

NORTH CAROLINA
[County] COUNTY

PHOTO ID EXCEPTION FORM FOR ABSENTEE VOTING

ELECTION DATE
XX/XX/XXXX

Voter, please complete this form to explain why you cannot include a photocopy of your photo ID with your ballot.

You must write your name below, check a box for at least one exception, and sign the form.

You will meet the photo ID requirement if you truthfully complete and sign this form.

I *(print your name)* _____ **AFFIRM** that I am the voter casting
the absentee ballot, and that: *(choose from the exceptions below)*

EXCEPTION 1: REASONABLE IMPEDIMENT

I suffer from one or more of the following reasonable impediments that prevent me from including a copy of photo ID:

(TO CHOOSE THIS EXCEPTION, YOU MUST CHECK THE BOX FOR ONE OR MORE REASONS BELOW)

1. ☐ I am unable to include a photocopy of my photo ID with this absentee ballot envelope

*(If choosing this option, you **must write one** of the following numbers):*

North Carolina Drivers License/DMV ID number: _____

Last four digits of Social Security Number: _____

2. I cannot get photo ID due to:

☐ Lack of transportation

☐ Disability or illness

☐ Lack of birth certificate or other documents needed to get photo ID

☐ Work or school schedule

☐ Family responsibilities

3. ☐ My photo ID is lost, stolen, or misplaced

4. ☐ I applied for photo ID but have not received it

5. ☐ Other reasonable impediment *(if choosing this option, you **must write why** you can't provide photo ID):*

6. ☐ State or federal law prohibits me from listing my reason

EXCEPTION 2: RELIGIOUS OBJECTION TO BEING PHOTOGRAPHED

☐ I have a religious objection to being photographed.

EXCEPTION 3: VICTIM OF A NATURAL DISASTER

☐ I was a victim of a natural disaster occurring within 100 days before election day that resulted in a disaster declaration by the President of the United States or the Governor of North Carolina.

VOTER, SIGN BELOW

FRAUDULENTLY OR FALSELY COMPLETING THIS FORM IS A CLASS I FELONY UNDER CHAPTER 163 OF THE NC GENERAL STATUTES.

X

VOTER'S SIGNATURE (**REQUIRED**)

Be sure to sign the exception form!

Place a copy of an acceptable photo ID or a completed Photo ID Exception Form in the clear sleeve on the opposite side of the ballot container envelope.



OR

A completed Photo ID Exception Form is shown. The form is yellow and contains various fields for personal information, a declaration of the voter's inability to provide a photo ID, and a signature line. The title at the top reads "PHOTO ID EXCEPTION FORM" and "Vote Absentee Without Photo ID".

Seal your ballot

Place the SEALED ballot container envelope into the Official Ballot Return Envelope that came with your ballot.



Return your ballot (by mail)

If you mail your ballot, do it right away. There is no grace period!

- In NC, your ballot must be **received** by your county board of elections by 7:30 PM on Election Day. The postmark date no longer matters!
- **You will need \$1.98 in postage or three Forever stamps**
- Be sure to track your ballot using BallotTrax to ensure it arrives on time. If it doesn't, you still have the option to vote in person.

Return your ballot (in person)

- At any Early Voting site in your county during early voting, Oct 15-31. (Note: you will need to stand in line.)
- To your County Board of Elections Office during regular office hours and until 7:30 p.m. on Election Day.
- Do not leave your absentee ballot in an unattended drop box or other unattended location.
- On Election Day: Absentee ballots cannot be returned to polling places. If you can't make it to your CBOE but **can** make it to your polling place, just trash your absentee ballot and vote in person.
- **Only vote once!** If you request an absentee ballot but decide to vote in person, that's fine! Just throw out your absentee ballot.

Be sure to

- ☑ Sign your absentee ballot application.
- ☑ Place your voted ballot in the correct envelope.
- ☑ Seal the container-return envelope.
- ☑ Include the required photo ID documentation or Photo ID Exception Form.
- ☑ Return your ballot to an authorized location.
- ☑ Follow any instructions you receive from the Board of Elections.

“Curing” and “Spoiling”

CURING

If your ballot has a problem, it may be returned to you with an explanation of how to “cure” (fix) it. Don’t trash it or assume it can’t be counted!

Common curable problems:

- Voter signature missing or in the wrong place
 - Photo ID missing, unreadable, or doesn’t meet requirements
 - Problems with Photo ID Exception Form or ballot envelope
-

SPOILING/REISSUE

Some problems can’t be cured. If so, the ballot is “spoiled,” meaning it can no longer be used. Time permitting, the ballot may be reissued.

DO NOT

- X Give your ballot to someone who is not legally permitted to return it.
- X Unseal and reseal the container-return envelope.
- X Let someone else seal your ballot envelope for you.
- X Leave your ballot unattended.
- X Return your absentee ballot to an Election Day polling place.
- X Throw away your ballot if it is returned to you with a problem.



RESOURCES

Visit youcanvote.org/mail

County Board of Elections Directory youcanvote.org/boe

NC State Board of Elections ncsbe.gov



[@youcanvotenc](https://www.instagram.com/youcanvotenc)