



CHRIS HOLLINS

COUNTY CLERK

Recording the Major Events of Your Life and Protecting Your Right to Vote



Who can Vote by Mail?

You are [eligible to Vote by Mail](#) in Texas if:

- (1) You are age 65 or older by Election Day, November 3, 2020;
- (2) You will be outside of Harris County for all of the Early Voting period (October 13th - October 30th) and on Election Day (November 3rd);
- (3) You are confined in jail but otherwise eligible to vote; or
- (4) You have a disability.

What qualifies as having a disability, and what does that mean in the age of coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Under Texas law, you qualify as having a disability if you are sick, pregnant, or if voting in person will create a likelihood of injury to your health.

The Texas Supreme Court has ruled that lack of immunity to COVID-19 can be considered as a factor in your decision as to whether voting in person will create a likelihood of injury to your health, but it cannot be the only factor. **You do not qualify to vote by mail as “disabled” if you have a fear of contracting COVID-19 but are otherwise healthy. To qualify, you must have an accompanying physical condition.** If you do not qualify as “disabled,” you may still qualify in one of the other categories (1-3 above).

When can I apply to Vote by Mail? Is there a deadline?

You can [apply to Vote by Mail](#) at any time, but our office must receive (not just postmarked) your application by October 23 in order to send you a mail ballot for the November General Election. You can also drop off your application in-person to any of our [County Clerk office locations](#) across Harris County.

Due to potential delays with the postal service, **PLEASE DO NOT WAIT – [APPLY NOW!](#)**

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Mail delivery in Texas is currently experiencing delays. Please take this into consideration when planning to send your Vote by Mail application or ballot so that it arrives in time to be processed and counted.

Where can I get an application to Vote by Mail?

[Registered voters](#) may obtain an application by:

- Downloading it from [HarrisVotes.com/VoteByMail](https://www.harrisvotes.com/votebymail)
- Calling 713.755.6965, or
- Sending an email to bbm@cco.hctx.net

What if I'm not registered to vote?

You can check your voting status at [Vote411.org](https://www.vote411.org).

To register to vote, there are currently two Texas organizations that will assist you with your registration remotely, [Register2Vote.org](https://www.register2vote.org) and [The League of Women Voters - Houston](https://www.theleagueofwomen.org). Both of these organizations will supply you with a no contact, postage-paid voter registration card.

Do I have to apply to Vote by Mail for each election?

If you are 65 years of age or older, or have a disability, you can apply for an annual ballot – this means that your Vote by Mail option will be registered for that entire calendar year. For example, if you apply now your option will be registered for the November 2020 Election and any additional election through December 31, 2020. You will need to [reapply each calendar year](#) for an annual Vote by Mail ballot.

Can I receive assistance with filling out the Vote by Mail application?

Yes, [you may receive assistance](#) in completing and submitting your application from a friend or a relative. Your assistant MUST carefully review the instructions and complete the additional WITNESS/ASSISTANT section of the application.

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How do I submit my application to Vote by Mail?

An application to Vote by Mail can be submitted in any of the following manners:

- (5) Regular residential mail via United States Postal Service;
- (6) In-person drop off at any of the [Harris County Clerk Annex locations](#) during regular business hours through October 12, 2020;
- (7) Common or contract carrier (e.g., personal courier, FedEx, UPS, or other contracted mail service); or
- (8) Fax machine or e-mail. **If you choose this option, the Harris County Clerk's office MUST receive your original, completed paper application by one of the above methods (1-3) within four (4) business days of your email or fax.**

When will I get my Vote by Mail ballot?

Domestic ballots will begin to be mailed out in mid-September for those who have submitted applications by that time. If you submit an application after mid-September, your ballot will be mailed out within seven (7) days of your application being received.

Voters outside the United States: Your ballots will be mailed on or before September 26 (the 45th day before Election Day), or within seven (7) days of your application being received.

How do I return my completed ballot to the Election office? Is there a deadline?

A completed mail ballot MUST be returned to the Harris County Clerk's Office in the Official Carrier Envelope provided to you. It may be returned in any of the following manners:

- (1) Regular residential mail via United States Postal Service;
 - a. Ballot must be postmarked by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day and must be received by 5:00 p.m. on November 4 (the day after Election Day)
- (2) In-person drop off at any of the [Harris County Clerk Annex locations](#) during regular business hours through Election Day, November 3, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.;
 - a. You must present an acceptable form of [photo identification](#)
 - b. If a voter does not possess and cannot reasonably obtain an acceptable form of photo identification, the voter [may show a List B identification](#) and complete a reasonable impediment declaration (RID)
 - c. Only the voter may deliver their ballot in person



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- (3) Common or contract carrier; such as personal courier, or FedEx or UPS, or other contracted mail service
- Ballot must be received by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day
 - If the carrier provides receipt mark indicating a time before 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, it may be received by 5:00 p.m. on November 4 (the day after Election Day)

Are there different deadlines if I am overseas or serving in the military?

All ballots being **returned in person** must be received by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. If you are **overseas** and returning your ballot through the mail or a common or contract carrier, our office must receive it by 5 P.M. on November 8 (five days after Election Day). If you are **serving in the military** and returning your ballot through the mail or a common or contract carrier, our office must receive it by 5 P.M. on November 9 (six days after Election Day).

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Will my Vote by Mail ballot count if I choose not to vote on certain issues or candidates?

Yes. All the votes you cast will be counted. You have the right to skip any measure or contest.

How does the Harris County Clerk's Office process my Vote by Mail ballot securely?

When your completed Vote by Mail ballot is received at our office, it goes through a rigorous validation system.

The Carrier Envelope is verified for signature authentication, logged, and securely stored. Your Vote by Mail ballot is not counted until voting centers close at 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. At that time, all Vote by Mail ballots will be tabulated and submitted into the official record.



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How is my signature verified?

The voter's signature on the Vote by Mail ballot return envelope is compared to the signature from your Vote by Mail application and/or your voter registration application to maintain voter integrity.

When is my Vote by Mail ballot counted?

Your Vote by Mail ballot is counted when voting centers close at 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. At that time, all Vote by Mail ballots will be tabulated and submitted into the official record. The total number of votes cast by mail are included in the final tally.

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Can I vote in person if I received a Vote by Mail ballot? What about if I submitted a Vote by Mail application and never received a ballot?

You may vote in person even if you applied for a Vote by Mail ballot, but you can only vote once. To vote in person, take your Vote by Mail ballot to a voting center to surrender it and receive a regular ballot. If you do not have the mail ballot with you, you may still vote in person using a provisional ballot.

Can I change my vote after I Vote by Mail?

If you have returned your completed Vote by Mail Ballot, you cannot vote in person to change your vote.

Does my Vote by Mail ballot need stamps?

Yes, you will need two standard stamps when mailing your ballot (\$1.10 total postage). If you do not have stamps, you may place your ballot in the mail without postage, and it will still be delivered to our office and counted.

How can I check to see if my Vote by Mail ballot has been mailed or received?

Please call our Election Help Line at 713.755.6965 in order to check the status of your application or ballot.



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