

# Resolution Board

## Election Day Activities

2021 Municipal Certification Training

Presented by:

Mississippi Secretary of State's Office

Elections Division



**Michael Watson**  
SECRETARY OF STATE

# Resolution Board

- A Resolution Board must be appointed to process and count absentee ballots. A Resolution Board is also necessary if your municipality is utilizing a precinct or central scanner to review ballots rejected by the scanner.
- An odd number of not less than three (3) registered voters of the municipality.
- Members cannot include:
  - Election Commissioners, candidates and parents, siblings or children of candidates,
  - Members of a Municipal Executive Committee, in a Primary Election, and
  - Members of a Municipal Executive Committee, in a General Election unless members of all political parties who have a candidate on the ballot are appointed.
- Must attend a two-hour training specific to the Resolution Board's duties.



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# Purpose of the Resolution Board

- Election Day:
  - Process and count absentee ballots.
- Post-Election Day:
  - Manually review all damaged, defective, blank or over-voted ballots rejected by the tabulating equipment.
  - Determine the intent of the voter and record the vote intended by the voter.
  - Process absentee ballots received by mail within five (5) business days of Election Day.



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# Processing Absentee Ballots

- At the opening of the polls (7:00 a.m.), the Resolution Board will remove the absentee ballot envelopes and applications from the sealed ballot box.
- Evaluate each application and ballot envelope.
  - Remember to allow for challenges.
- Mark each envelope as either “ACCEPTED” or “REJECTED” as determined by the Resolution Board.
- Open the ACCEPTED absentee ballots, and deposit those ballots into a ballot box to be scanned or tallied at 7:00 p.m.



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# Processing Absentee Ballots Cont.

1. Announce the name, address, and precinct as shown on each envelope and/or application.
  - Remember the rules for CHALLENGED ballots. Absentee voters may be challenged just like in-person voters.
2. Ensure each absentee ballot has a corresponding absentee ballot application.
3. Ensure the absentee ballot application contains the original seal and initials of the Municipal Clerk's office.
  - EXCEPTION: UOCAVA voters may use the Federal Postcard Application which is available online and will not have the original seal of the clerk on it. A UOCAVA absentee ballot must not be rejected for this reason.
  - EXCEPTION: A copy of an absentee application will be attached to the absentee ballot envelope of a voter who is permanently disabled and automatically receives a ballot by mail each election.



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# Processing Absentee Ballots Cont.

## 4. Ensure the absentee ballot application is signed by the voter.

- EXCEPTION: Military and overseas voters (“UOCAVA”) may use the Federal Post Card Application (“FPCA”) to request an absentee ballot. The FPCA may be electronically signed by the voter, meaning the voter’s name may be typewritten, instead of signed. A military or overseas absentee ballot must not be rejected for this reason.



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# Processing Absentee Ballots Cont.

5. Ensure the absentee ballot application is acknowledged as required by law.
  - For voters who vote an absentee ballot in the Municipal Clerk’s Office, the clerk or deputy clerk will complete the acknowledgement on the application.
  - For voters who are temporarily or permanently disabled, a witness signs the certificate at the bottom of the application. The witness certificate is located below the acknowledgement and begins with the words “I HEREBY CERTIFY.”
  - The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), used by military and overseas voters (UOCAVA), does NOT require an acknowledgement or witness signature.
  - Voters who are not UOCAVA or disabled, and who do not use the municipal clerk as the witness, must be acknowledged by “someone authorized to administer oaths,” such as a notary.



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# Processing Absentee Ballots Cont.

6. Compare the voter's signature on the absentee ballot application with the voter's signate on the absentee ballot envelope to ensure the signatures match.
7. Ensure the absentee ballot is signed across the flap by the voter.
  - EXCEPTION: The absentee ballot of a UOCAVA voter who returns his/her ballot by e-mail or fax to the municipal clerk will be placed in an absentee ballot envelope by the clerk and marked to indicate the ballot is that of a UOCAVA voter, signature across the flap is not required.



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# Processing Absentee Ballots Cont.

8. Ensure the absentee ballot envelope is acknowledged or witnessed as required by law, and the witness signed across the flap of the envelope.
  - The same acknowledgement rules apply for the envelope as for the application.
  - EXCEPTION: The absentee ballot of a UOCAVA voter who returns his/her ballot by e-mail or fax to the municipal clerk will be placed in an absentee ballot envelope by the clerk and marked to indicate the ballot is that of a UOCAVA voter; an acknowledgement or witness is not required.



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# Processing Absentee Ballots Cont.

9. Check the Absentee Voter List (BP-001) provided by the Municipal Clerk to ensure the absentee voter is still a qualified elector of the municipality and precinct associated with the absentee ballot.
  - If the absentee voter is listed on the BP-001 as no longer being a qualified voter, (voter is listed on the Voided ballots pages of the BP-001) mark the absentee ballot envelope “REJECTED” and write the reason for the rejection on the envelope.
10. If all the requirements in 1 through 9 above are present, the envelope should be marked “ACCEPTED.”
11. If any of the above requirements are not present or the applicant is not a qualified voter (9), the envelope should be marked “REJECTED” with the reason for the rejection listed on the ballot envelope.



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# Processing Absentee Ballots Cont.

- Mark whether the ballot was ACCEPTED or REJECTED on the BP-001 (absentee voter list) provided by the officials in charge of the election.
- The REJECTED absentee ballots shall be bundled together in a separate strong envelope marked for REJECTED ballots and returned to a ballot box, which will be sealed.
- The ACCEPTED ballots, after verifying the ballots were ACCEPTED, may be opened by the Resolution Board and deposited into a sealed ballot box, without unfolding or viewing the marked ballot. The ACCEPTED absentee ballot envelopes and applications shall be retained in a sealed and secure ballot box to preserve the record of the election.



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# Voter Registration and Absentee Ballot Request

Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

This form is for absent Uniformed Service members, their families, and citizens residing outside the United States. It is used to register to vote, request an absentee ballot, and update your contact information. See your State's instructions at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov).

Print clearly in blue or black ink.

## 1. Who are you? Pick one.

I request an absentee ballot for all elections in which I am eligible to vote AND:

- ☐ I am on active duty in the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine -OR- ☐ I am an eligible spouse or dependent.  
☐ I am an activated National Guard member on State orders.  
☐ I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and I intend to return.  
☐ I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and my return is uncertain.  
☐ I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and I have never lived in the United States.

Last name	Suffix (Jr., II)	Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
First name	Previous names (if applicable)		
Middle name	Birth date (MM/DD/YYYY)	/	/
Social Security Number	Driver's license or State ID #		

## 2. What is your address in the U.S. State or territory where you are registering to vote and requesting an absentee ballot?

Your voting materials will not be sent to this address. See instructions on other side of form.

Street address	Apt #
City, town, village	State
County	ZIP

## 3. Where are you now? You must give your CURRENT address to receive your voting materials.

Your mailing address. (Different from above)

Your mail forwarding address. (If applicable)

## 4. What is your contact information? This is so election officials can reach you about your request.

Provide the country code and area code with your phone and fax number. Do not use a Defense Switched Network (DSN) number.

Email:	Phone:
Alternate email:	Fax:

## 5. What is your voting preference? Select One.

How do you want to receive voting materials from your election office?	<input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Email or online <input type="checkbox"/> Fax	What is your political party for primary elections?
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## 6. What additional information must you provide?

The following need more information: Alaska, Arizona, Puerto Rico, Vermont, and Virginia. (Ex. Proof of residency, employer, etc.) You may also use this space to clarify your voter information. See the Voting Assistance Guide at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov).

## 7. You must read and sign this statement.

I swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury, that:

- The information on this form is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a material misstatement of fact in completion of this document may constitute grounds for conviction of perjury.
- I am a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age (or will be by the day of the election), eligible to vote in the requested jurisdiction, and
- I am not disqualified to vote due to having been convicted of a felony or other disqualifying offense, nor have I been adjudicated mentally incompetent; or if so, my voting rights have been reinstated; and
- I am not registering, requesting a ballot, or voting in any other jurisdiction in the United States, except the jurisdiction cited in this voting form.

Sign here X

Today's date  
(MM/DD/YYYY)

This information is for official use only. Any unauthorized release may be punishable by law.

Previous editions are obsolete.

Standard Form 76 (Rev. 09-2017), GSA No. 0704-0063

## Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

1. Who are you? Pick one.

1. Who are you? Pick one.

For absent Uniformed Service members, their families, and citizens residing outside the United States.

- ☐ I am on active duty in the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine -OR- ☐ I am an eligible spouse or dependent.  
☐ I am an activated National Guard member on State orders.  
☐ I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and I intend to return.  
☐ I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and my return is uncertain.  
☐ I am a U.S. citizen living outside the country, and I have never lived in the United States.

Last name	Suffix (Jr., II)	Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
First name	Previous names (if applicable)		
Middle name	Birth date (MM/DD/YYYY)	/	/
Social Security Number	-	-	Driver's license or State ID #

2. What is your U.S. voting residence address?

Your voting materials will not be sent to this address. See instructions on other side of form.

Street address	Apt #
City, town, village	State
County	ZIP

3. Where are you now? You must give your **CURRENT** contact information.

Your mailing address. (Different from above)		Your mail forwarding address. (If applicable)	
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4. What is your contact information? This is so election officials can reach you about your request.

Provide the country code and area code with your phone and fax number. Do not use a Defense Switched Network (DSN) number.

Email:	Phone:
Alternate email:	Fax:

5. What is your voting preference for future elections?

Do you want to register and request a ballot for all elections you are eligible to vote in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	How do you want to receive voting materials from your election office?	<input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Email or online <input type="checkbox"/> Fax	What is your political party for primary elections?
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**6. What additional information must you provide?**

The following need more information: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Puerto Rico, Virginia, and Wisconsin. (Ex. Witness signature, etc.)  
You may also use this space to clarify your voter information. See the Voting Assistance Guide online at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov).

**7. You must read and sign this statement.**

**I swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury, that:**

- \* The information on this form is to be accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a material misstatement of fact in completion of this document may constitute grounds for conviction of perjury.  
 \* I am a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age (or will be by the day of election), eligible to vote in the requested jurisdiction, and  
 \* I am not disqualified to vote due to having been convicted of a felony or other disqualifying offense, nor have I been adjudicated mentally incompetent; or if so, my voting rights have been reinstated; and  
 \* I am not registering, requesting a ballot, or voting in any other jurisdiction in the United States, except the jurisdiction cited in this voting form.  
 \* In voting, I have marked and sealed this ballot in private and have not allowed any person to observe the marking of this ballot, except those authorized to assist voters under State and Federal law.

Sign here **X**

Today's date  
(MM/DD/YYYY)

/ /

This information is for official use only. Any unauthorized release may be punishable by law.

Previous editions are obsolete.

Standard Form 106 (Rev. 04-2017) OMB No. 0704-0181

**Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)**

Print clearly in blue or black ink.

Vote by writing the NAME or PARTY of the candidates you choose. To find out about specific candidates and races go to [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov).

### Instructions

- This ballot can be used to vote for federal offices.
- DO NOT write your name or any identifying number (SSN, driver's license) on this ballot.
- Photocopy this page if you require additional room for candidates or ballot initiatives.
- If you are voting in American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands, you may vote for Delegate or Resident Commissioner, and in presidential primaries. State laws vary about using the FWAB for other offices like Governor or Mayor. Learn more online at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov).

### Federal offices

President and Vice President

U.S. Senator

U. S. Representative, Delegate, or  
Resident Commissioner to Congress

### Non-federal offices

[illegible]

### Ballot initiatives



Type ballot requested: (Choose one)

- ☐ Democratic Primary ☐ Republican Primary ☐ General Election ☐ Special Election  
☐ Democratic Runoff ☐ Republican Runoff ☐ General Runoff ☐ Special Runoff

**OFFICIAL APPLICATION FOR ABSENTEE ELECTOR'S BALLOT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, duly qualified and registered in the \_\_\_\_\_ Precinct of the County of STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, and State of Mississippi, coming with the purview of the definition 'ABSENTEE ELECTOR' will be absent from the county of my residence on election day, or unable to vote in person because (Check appropriate reason):

- ( ) (PRESIDENTIAL APPLICANT ONLY): I am currently a resident of Mississippi or have moved therefrom within thirty (30) days of the coming presidential election.
- ( ) I am an enlisted or commissioned member of any component of the United States Armed Forces and am a citizen of Mississippi, or a spouse or dependent of such a member.
- ( ) I am a member of the Merchant Marines or American Red Cross and am a citizen of Mississippi or a spouse or dependent of such a member.
- ( ) I am a disabled war veteran who is a patient in any hospital and am a citizen of Mississippi or a spouse or dependent of such a veteran.
- ( ) I am a civilian attached to and serving outside of the United States with any branch of the United States Armed Forces or with the Merchant Marines or American Red Cross, and am a citizen of Mississippi or dependent of such a civilian.
- ( ) I am a trained or certified emergency response provider deployed during the absentee voting period, on election day or during any state of emergency declared by the President of the United States or Governor of any state within the United States.
- ( ) I am a citizen of Mississippi temporarily residing outside the territorial limits of the United States and the District of Columbia.
- ( ) I am a student, teacher or administrator at a college, university, junior or community college, high, junior high, elementary or grade school whose studies or employment at such institution necessitates my absence from the county of my voting residence or a spouse or dependent of such a student, teacher or administrator who maintains a common domicile outside the city of my voting residence with such student, teacher or administrator.
- ( ) I will be outside the county on Election Day.
- ( ) I have a temporary or permanent physical disability, which may include, but is not limited to, a physician-imposed quarantine due to COVID-19 during the year 2020. Or, I am caring for a dependent that is under a physician-imposed quarantine due to COVID-19 beginning with the effective date of this act and the same being repealed on December 31, 2020.
- ( ) I am sixty-five (65) years of age or older.
- ( ) I am the parent, spouse or dependent of a person with a temporary or permanent physical disability, who is hospitalized outside his county of residence or more than fifty (50) miles away from his residence, and I will be with such a person on election day.
- ( ) I am a member of the congressional delegation, or a spouse or dependent of a member of the congressional delegation.
- ( ) I am required to be at work on election day during the times at which the polls will be open.

I hereby make application for an official ballot, or ballots, to be voted by me at the election to be held in \_\_\_\_\_ County, for the \_\_\_\_\_ Election.

Mail "ABSENTEE ELECTOR'S BALLOT" to me at the following address: \_\_\_\_\_ (If eligible to vote by mail)4

( ) Mailed ballots only: I wish to receive an absentee ballot for the runoff election

I realize that I can be fined up to Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) and sentenced up to five (5) years in the penitentiary for making a false statement in this application and for selling my vote and violating the Mississippi Absentee Voter Law.

If you are temporarily or permanently disabled, you are not required to have this application notarized or signed by an official authorized to administer oaths for absentee balloting. You are required to sign this application in the proper place and have a person eighteen (18) years of age or older witness your signature and sign this application in the proper place.

**DO NOT SIGN WITHOUT READING**

IN THE WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and seal this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_,

(Signature of Absentee Elector)

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_,

(Official authorized to administer oaths for absentee balloting)

( Circuit Clerk )

(Deputy Clerk )

**TO BE SIGNED BY A WITNESS FOR VOTERS TEMPORARILY OR PERMANENTLY DISABLED:**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that this application for an absentee elector's ballot was signed by the above-named disabled elector in my presence and that I am at least eighteen (18) years of age, this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_,

( Signature of Witness )

Office Use Only

Seal Here

Clerk Init \_\_\_\_\_

**CERTIFICATE OF DELIVERY**

I hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ has requested that I, \_\_\_\_\_

(Print name of voter)

(Print name of person delivering application)

deliver to the voter this absentee ballot application. \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature of person delivering application)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address of person delivering application)



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# Counting Absentee Ballots

- After the polls have closed (7:00 p.m.), the Resolution Board shall begin counting absentee ballots.
- If a central scanner at Election Central is not used in the election, meaning hand-count paper ballots are used for absentee ballots, the seal on the ballot box containing the ACCEPTED absentee ballots is removed and the Resolution Board begins hand-counting the absentee ballots.



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## Hand Count Ballot Tally Sheet

Party \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Precinct \_\_\_\_\_

		Count										
		5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	Total
Times Counted	(Number of Ballots)											
Times Blank	(Number of Times No Votes Cast)											
Times Over	(Number of Times Over Voted)											
	(Candidate 1)											
	(Candidate 2)											
	(Candidate 3)											
	(Candidate 4)											
	(Candidate 5)											
Write-in	(Number Only - Do Not Record Name)											



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# Counting Absentee Ballots Cont.

- If a scanner is used at Election Central, the seal on the ballot box containing the **ACCEPTED** absentee ballots is removed, and the accepted absentee ballots are scanned under the supervision of the officials in charge of the election.
- Any ballots that have been marked as “**REJECTED**” are to remain sealed and secured in a sealed ballot box.



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# **Absentee Ballots**

- The absentee totals are added to the precinct count of ballots cast on Election Day.
- Make sure the total number of absentee ballots are accounted for and all absentee materials (opened accepted ballots, envelopes and rejected absentee ballots still sealed in their envelopes) are sealed in a ballot box.



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# Absentee Ballots

Election Officials (election commissioners, executive committee and clerks) do **NOT**:

- Review and/or mark absentee ballots envelopes as “ACCEPTED” or “REJECTED.”
- Re-evaluate absentee ballot envelopes or applications.
  - Resolution Board’s decision is final.
  - If the Resolution Board does not review and mark the absentee ballot envelopes, you must call them back to the courthouse to process and mark.



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# Resolution Board: Reviewing Ballots



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# Procedure

- Ballots rejected by a voting machine must be deposited in a strong and secure envelope marked for the “Resolution Board.”
- The “Resolution Board” envelope is handled solely by the officials in charge of the election.
- The officials in charge of the election deliver the “Resolution Board” envelope to the Resolution Board.



# Procedure

- If the Resolution Board can determine the intent of the voter from the ballot, they prepare a duplicate ballot, identical to the voter's marked ballot, to replace the damaged or defective ballot.
- The duplicate ballot is scanned through the tabulating equipment (OMR).



# Preparing a Duplicate Ballot

- The Resolution Board makes a copy of the voter's original damaged or defective ballot, and
- Marks the voter's original ballot as “Original #1” and the copy as “Duplicate #1.”
- The Board prepares subsequent originals and duplicates in the same manner with sequential numbering.



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# **Blank Ballots**

- Blank ballots are ballots a voting machine rejects because it does not detect a vote on the ballot.
- The Resolution Board examines a blank ballot to verify whether it is blank or marked with a “non-detectable” marking device.
- If marked with a “non-detectable” marking device, the Resolution Board prepares a duplicate ballot of the voter’s original ballot and then scans the ballot through the tabulating equipment (OMR).



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# Over-votes

- Over-votes are ballots that contain more votes for a particular race or measure than the voter is entitled to cast.
- All ballots rejected by the OMR containing over-votes must be reviewed by the Resolution Board.
- If the voter's intent cannot be determined by the Resolution Board, the officials in charge of the election may use the voting machine to count the votes in the races which are unaffected by the over-vote.
- All other ballots which are over-voted are counted manually by the Resolution Board and the voter's intent is determined by the provisions set forth in statute.



# **OMR Ballot Acceptable Marks**

In reviewing a ballot on which a voter failed to fill in the circle, the Resolution Board shall count the vote if:

1. The voter marks the circle with an (X) or checkmark and the lines intersect within or on the line of the circle by the ballot measure or candidate.
2. The voter blackens the circle and the blackened portion extends beyond the boundaries of the circle.
3. The voter marks the ballot with an (X) or checkmark and the lines that form the mark intersect adjacent to the ballot measure or the name of the candidate.



# OMR Ballot Acceptable Marks

4. The voter underlines the ballot measure or the name of a candidate.
5. The voter draws a line from the circle to a ballot measure or the name of a candidate.
6. The voter draws a circle around the ballot measure or the name of the candidate.
7. The voter draws a circle around the circle adjacent to the ballot measure or the name of the candidate.



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# Voting Equipment

- OMR and automatic tabulating equipment shall be programmed, calibrated, adjusted and set up to reject ballots that appear to be damaged or defective.
- Any switch, lever or feature on OMR or automatic tabulating equipment that enables or permits the equipment to override the rejection of damaged or defective ballots so that such ballots will not be reviewed by the Resolution Board shall not be utilized.



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# **Contact Information**

## **Mississippi Secretary of State's Office *Elections Division***

*P.O. Box 136*

*Jackson, MS 39205*

*(601)576-2550*

*Elections Hotline (800)829-6786*

[\*ElectionsAnswers@sos.ms.gov\*](mailto:ElectionsAnswers@sos.ms.gov)

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