

Act 77 Changes to Elections in PA (beginning with April Primary)

No Straight Party Voting

Voters will no longer have a shortcut option to vote straight party, but they may still individually select only candidates from one party.

Nomination Petitions:

Circulators no longer need to be residents of the election district in which they are circulating petitions. Also, circulators now need only complete a statement for signature pages, rather than a notarized affidavit. This takes effect immediately.

Voter Registration Deadline:

- The deadline to register to vote is now 15 days before Election Day- April 13, rather than 30 days. The deadlines to appeal the denial of a voter registration have also been changed. Please note:
 - Voter registration applications postmarked by the deadline are no longer considered timely. A voter registration application must be **received** in the county by the 15-day deadline.

Canvassing of Ballots:

- Absentee and mail-in ballots (more information below) must now be counted centrally at the county board of election's office, rather than distributed to polling places and counted there. Canvassing can begin no earlier than close of polls on the day of the election and must begin no later than the third day following the election.

Absentee Balloting:

- Ballot Receipt Deadline
 - The deadline to receive a regular civilian absentee ballot has been extended to 8:00pm on Election Day. If those ballots are received after this time, they will not be counted unless the deadline is extended by a court.
- Voting Awareness
 - An individual who votes a timely received absentee ballot now may not vote at the polling place. However, if the voter requests but does not mail back their absentee ballot in time, they may still deliver the absentee ballot in person to the county elections office until 8pm on Election Day, or if they cannot do so, may vote by provisional ballot at the polling place.
- Over the Counter
 - County election boards are now required to process walk-in civilian absentee application and civilian absentee ballot requests in-person. The voter must be allowed to complete their application request and cast their ballot while in the county office and return the completed ballot.
- Emergency Window
 - This process has been simplified into one emergency period. Multiple individuals may now designate the same individual to carry their ballot.
- Application Window
 - Counties are now authorized to begin processing absentee applications more than 50 days before the election, if the ballot is ready to go and certified. Counties may also await the result of a court proceeding that would affect the content of ballots before delivery of absentee ballots, but in any case, counties must begin to deliver absentee ballots by the second Tuesday before the election.
- Permanent Absentee Voter List
 - Voters with a permanent disability may request to be placed on a permanent absentee voter list. These individuals will have an application mailed to them by the first week in February each year, which, if completed and returned, entitles them to receive ballots in the mail for all elections taking place in the remainder of the calendar year and for any special elections through the third week in February of the following year. This takes effect for elections held on or after 4/28/2020.
 - The Department is also allowed to provide an online application for permanent absentees.

Mail-in Balloting:

- New Ballot Option
 - Voters who do not qualify as absentee voters now have an option to apply for a new, vote by mail-in option. The primary difference with absentee voting is that Mail-in voters do not have to provide any reason or excuse for voting by mail.
- Online Application
 - In addition to an online absentee application, the Department may provide an online application for mail-in ballots.
- Deadlines Mirror Absentee
 - The deadlines for mail-in applications and mail-in ballots mirror the civilian absentee deadlines. The application must be received by 5:00pm on the Tuesday before the election and the completed ballot must be received by 8:00pm on election day April 28. _
- Over the Counter
 - County election boards are now required to process walk-in mail-in application and mail-in ballot requests in-person. The voter must be permitted to complete their application and cast their ballot while in the county office and return the completed ballot at that time to the election office in person.
- Voting Awareness
 - Like civilian absentee ballots, an individual who votes a timely received mail-in ballot may not vote at the polling place. However, if the voter requests but does not mail back their mail-in ballot in time, they may still deliver the mail-in ballot in person to the county elections office until 8 p.m. on Election Day, or if they cannot do so, may vote by provisional ballot at the polling place.
- Permanent Mail-in Voter List

Voters may request to be placed on a permanent mail-in voter list. These individuals will have an application mailed to them by the first week in February each year, which, if completed and returned, entitles them to receive ballots in the mail for all elections taking place in the remainder of the calendar year and for any special elections through the third week in February of the following year.