



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 1, 2022

Department of State: Voters Should Hand-Deliver Mail-in and Absentee Ballots Immediately

Acting Secretary Chapman outlines what voters need to know for Election Day and beyond

Harrisburg, PA – With just one week until the Nov. 8 election, Acting Secretary of State Leigh M. Chapman today encouraged Pennsylvanians voting by mail ballot to hand-deliver their ballots to their [county election office](#), a [drop box](#) or [other designated location](#) as soon as possible.

“It’s time to return your mail ballot to ensure it arrives by the deadline of 8 p.m. on Election Day. Do not wait until the last minute,” Chapman said during a Capitol press conference. “Hand deliver your mail ballot now to your county election office or authorized drop-off location to be certain your vote will be counted.”

Voters who requested a mail ballot have several options for hand-delivering their voted ballot. They can:

- Drop it off at their [county election office](#).
- Find out if their county has a [drop box](#). If so, they can deliver their ballot there.
- Find out if their county has a [satellite election office](#) where they can drop off their ballot.

Before casting their mail ballot, voters should:

- Read the instructions carefully.
- Fill out the ballot, being sure to follow instructions on how to mark selections.
- Seal the ballot in the inner **secrecy** envelope marked “Official Election Ballot.” Do not make any stray marks on the envelope.
- Then seal the secrecy envelope in the pre-addressed outer **return** envelope.
- Sign and date the declaration on the outer return envelope.

While voters can still [apply for a mail ballot](#) through today at 5 p.m., they are urged to fill out and return their ballot as soon as they receive it.

They also have the option of [voting their mail ballot in person](#) at their [county election office](#) through 5 p.m. today. They can apply for their ballot, wait while their eligibility is verified by an election official, then complete and return their ballot all in one visit.

Under Pennsylvania law, voters may return only their own ballots. The only exceptions to this are for voters with a disability who have [designated someone in writing to deliver their ballot](#), or

voters who need third-party delivery of an [emergency absentee ballot](#) if they have an unexpected illness, disability or last-minute absence from their municipality.

Voters who applied for and received a mail ballot and then decide they want to [vote at the polls](#) must bring their mail ballot packet with them to be voided, including the pre-addressed outer return envelope with the voter's declaration.

If a voter applied for a mail ballot but did not receive it or no longer has the mail ballot and envelopes, they may vote by [provisional ballot](#) at their polling place on Election Day. Their [county board of elections](#) will then verify that they did not vote by mail before counting their provisional ballot.

Polls will be open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Nov. 8. Chapman reminded voters that if they are in line by 8 p.m., they should stay there; they will be able to vote.

"Election Day is a week away," Chapman said. "It's time to execute your plan to vote. If you have a mail ballot, hand-deliver it immediately. And if you plan to vote in person on Nov. 8, be sure you know where your polling place is and have arranged for any needed transportation."

Chapman also reiterated that voters, candidates, the media and the public must be patient after the polls close as election officials make sure every eligible vote is counted accurately.

"Election professionals are your neighbors, your friends and your family," Chapman said. "They deserve to be able to do their jobs safely and accurately – and that requires giving them the time they need to do a thorough job."

"We will not have unofficial results on election night in every race," Chapman continued. "That is not indicative of anything bad or nefarious happening. It simply means the process for counting all eligible votes cast in Pennsylvania is working the way it is designed to work."

For more information on voting in Pennsylvania, visit [vote.pa.gov](#), call the Department of State's year-round voter hotline at 1-877-868-3772 or follow #ReadyToVotePA on social media.

MEDIA CONTACT: Amy Gulli, ra-st-press@pa.gov

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