



**Native Vote Alliance of Minnesota
and the Minnesota Participation Project**

Mobilizing and Empowering Native People



Absentee Voting: Making Your Voice Count

Voting By Absentee Ballot

*If you or someone you know will be unable to make it to the polls for either the primary election or the general election, you can still make your voice heard. This can be done in one of two ways: 1) by requesting and returning your absentee ballot in the mail, or 2) make it to your county's polling place on one of their absentee voting days. As of **August 1, 2006**, a participant in a residential program for adults or a resident of a shelter for battered women may designate an agent to deliver their ballot to the county auditor.*

An absentee ballot is an easy way to vote before Election Day; just follow these steps:

Step One: Request Your Absentee Ballot

An absentee ballot application is required before the actual ballot can be issued. You don't have to use a special form; all you have to do is make a written request for that includes the following information:

- Application may be faxed (see your county website for fax numbers)
- Application must have your name and residence address
- Application must have the reason you are voting absentee
- Application must have the date and your signature
- Your birthdate is NOT required

A single application may be used to request a ballot for both the primary election and the general election. You may also request in your application to be placed on a permanent absentee voter list. If you elect to do so, each year your ballot will be mailed to the address you provided until you request to be removed from this list. Your request should be sent to the Elections Office in your county.

Step Two: Review your ballot and accompanying materials

Once your application has been processed, you will receive a packet of materials which will include: an unmarked absentee ballot, a tan secrecy envelope for your ballot, and a white return envelope for your ballot. These materials should be sent to you approximately 30 days before the primary election and 30 days before the general election.

Step Three: Vote!

Once you have received your ballot, you can cast your vote.

Registered Voters:

- You will need a witness who will sign your ballot. The witness must meet the following criteria:
 - a) anyone who is registered to vote in Minnesota
 - b) a notary public
 - c) any person having the authority to administer oaths

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- Show your witness the unmarked ballot
- Mark the ballot in secrecy or, if you are disabled or otherwise unable to mark the ballot, have your witness assist you.
- Place your folded ballot(s) in the tan secrecy envelope.
- Place the tan secrecy envelope into the white return envelope.
- Print your name and address and then sign the white return envelope. Have your witness do the same in the appropriate place on the return envelope.
- Return the ballot in one of the following ways:
 - a) by mail so that it will be delivered by election day
 - b) in person no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election by having someone else deliver your ballot before 3:00 p.m. on election day (Note: this person may not return ballots for more than three voters).

Important Dates for Absentee Voters for the 2008 Elections

August 8 Counties must make absentee ballots available to voters for the state primary election.

October 3 Counties must make absentee ballots available to voters for the general election.

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| <p>September 6, from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. September 8, until 5 p.m. November 1, from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. November 3, until 5 p.m.</p> | } | <p>Counties and designated municipalities must be open for absentee voting</p> |
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November 3, 5 p.m. Deadline for an absentee voter to turn in absentee ballot.

November 4, 3 p.m. Deadline for an individual delivering an absentee ballot on behalf of an absentee voter