

On October 24, 2004, the following was sent to subscribers of the ACS newsletter. It includes recent changes since the October 20 newsletter regarding voting matters.

Topics:

- Recent Voting Updates by States
- Voting FAQs
- On-Line Version of the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)
- Some Useful Voting Assistance Websites

Recent Voting Updates by States (since our last newsletter of 10/20/04):

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10/22/04 DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO ABSENTEE BALLOTS DELAYED:

- Ballots Must be Cast by November 2 and Received by November 12

10/21/04 ILLINOIS EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS FROM OVERSEAS VOTERS:

- Ballot will be counted if postmarked by 11:59 pm on Nov 1 and received by Nov 16.

10/21/04 BALLOTS FOR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN PENNSYLVANIA:

- * the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)
- * deadlines for receipt of ballots,
- * certified candidates for President.

These and other recent updates (see our previous newsletters), such as FedEx' Offer to Mail Ballots for Free, are available at <http://www.fvap.gov/> or our website <http://www.asktheconsul.org/>

Voting FAQs

Q: There have been some recent changes to some states' voting regulations. Where can voters get the most up-to-date information on voting?

A: The Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) is now on-line at

<http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/onlinefwab.html> ?

For their state's voting regulations, voters should follow this link:

<http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/vag/vagchapter3.html> .

The link to the recent press releases for last-minute changes:

<http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/releases/2004/2004list.html>

Q: What is the best way for Americans overseas to reach local election officials to resolve problems or ask for a waiver of the 30 rule for use of the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB)?

A: Use the link to state election officials:

<http://www.fvap.gov/links/statelinks.html>. Another option is to go to www.google.com and enter the name of the county (e.g., Fairfax County VA government) -- in many cases, you can quickly locate a phone number or e-mail address using this method.

Q: If voters submit a FWAB and subsequently receive their absentee ballot, what should they do?

A: They should vote the absentee ballot and send it back in time to meet their state's ballot receipt deadline. It may be helpful to include a note indicating that they previously sent in a FWAB. It will be up to local election officials to match up the two ballots and discard one so the vote is not counted twice.

Q: Can tourists use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) or the FWAB?

A: FVAP's position is that if a person is temporarily outside the US and has an address (and fax number) to which the ballot may be sent, then they can use the FPCA to request an absentee ballot - provided their state is still accepting absentee ballot requests. They should ask to have the ballot faxed out, or arrange with family or friends to have it sent overseas by courier. They can't use the FWAB unless they sent in an FPCA early enough for it to reach local election officials 30 days before the election... UNLESS ... (see 4 d on the FWAB) state or local election officials waive this requirement.

Q: What other options do tourists have if they want to vote?

A: The other option is to contact their local election officials to request a domestic absentee ballot (provided it is not too late to do so), have someone pick it up and send it to them by courier (or fax it out if allowed by state law), complete it and return it by the state ballot receipt deadline.

On-Line Version of the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) provides a "back-up" ballot, called the Federal Write In Absentee Ballot, or FWAB, available if a citizen outside the United States (including APO and FPO addresses) does not receive the regular absentee ballot from the state after having made a timely application for the ballot. The FWAB is used to vote for Federal offices (President/Vice President, U.S. Senator, U.S. Representative, Delegate or Resident Commissioner) in general elections. Some states now allow military and overseas citizens to use the FWAB in elections other than general elections or for offices other than Federal offices. Again, the citizen should consult Chapter 3 of the Guide for specific state or territorial requirements.

Generally, a citizen can only use the FWAB under three, very specific conditions. To be eligible for this ballot, the citizen must:

- * Be located outside the United States (including APO/FPO addresses);
- * Have applied for a regular ballot early enough so that the request is received by the appropriate local election official at least 30 days before the election;

AND

- * Not have received the requested regular absentee ballot from the state.

The On-Line Version of the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (OFWAB) is an alternative to the multipart stocked Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

Instructions for use of the OFWAB are located on Page 1 of the OFWAB under "Instructions to the Voter". Click here for the OFWAB. This form

is in Adobe Acrobat format. This form cannot be made to be Section 508 compliant. If the form is mailed within the APO/FPO or U.S. postal systems, a postage paid envelope may be printed onto your mailing envelope. You can get this file at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/returnenvelope.html>.

Some Useful Voting Assistance Websites

Department of State U.S. Election 2004 website:
<http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/democracy/elections.html>

International toll-free fax numbers are available at
<http://www.fvap.gov/services/faxing.html>

Visit <http://www.fvap.gov> for state election updates (such as, states/counties that now allow faxing of the voted ballot and additional states that allow late counting of ballots).

The Democrats Abroad Website is at <http://www.democratsabroad.org>
E-mail: info@democratsabroad.org

The Republicans Abroad website is located at
<http://www.republicansabroad.org>
E-mail: chairman@republicansabroad.org

If you have any specific questions that are not answered in this message or on the website (<http://www.asktheconsul.org/>), send us an e-mail at seoul_acs@state.gov