

The Office of Secretary of the State

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Press Releases



SECRETARY OF THE STATE
CONNECTICUT

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Reminder: Absentee Ballot Voter Eligibility Expansion Includes November Election

HARTFORD – Secretary of the State Mark Kohler today reminded voters of the changes made to the absentee ballot statutes during this year’s legislative session that expand voter access to absentee ballots. These changes, made in Public Act 22-2 to Connecticut General Statutes 9-135 and 9-137 to closely conform the statutory language to the language in article Sixth, Section 7 of the Connecticut Constitution, will be in effect for the November election.

“Access to absentee ballots was expanded this year, so voters should be aware that they may now be eligible to vote by absentee ballot,” said Secretary Kohler. “Voters are eligible to vote by absentee ballot if they are unable to go to their polling place on Election Day because of absence from their town for a period of time on Election Day, because of a sickness, or because of a disability. This includes voters who are unable to go to their polling place because of a sickness or physical disability of another person, or because of the continued presence of a sickness, such as the COVID-19 virus.”

A voter who is a caretaker of an immunocompromised person can vote by absentee ballot if the sickness and/or physical disability of the person in their care renders the voter unable to appear at their polling place. Similarly, a voter who, in the voter’s best judgment, is unable to appear in the polling place because of the continued presence of a sickness such as the COVID-19 virus is eligible to vote by absentee ballot.

An official interpretation of the changes made was issued under the powers granted to the Secretary of the State by Connecticut General Statutes Section 9-3 and is consistent with the state’s Supreme Court decision in [Fay v. Merrill \(338 Conn.1\)](#) (<https://cases.justia.com/connecticut/supreme-court/2021-sc20477.pdf?ts=1617206472>), in which the court held that the determination about whether a voter is unable to appear at the polling place on the day of the election is made by the individual voter and that the Connecticut Constitution’s language is sufficiently broad so as to allow for voters to vote by absentee ballot when a specific, identifiable disease or disability is present - even when the voter themselves is not personally sick or disabled.

Voters can request an application for an absentee ballot from their town clerk or download an application at [myvote.ct.gov/absentee](https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Election-Services/Voter-Information/Absentee-Voting) (<https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Election-Services/Voter-Information/Absentee-Voting>) and return it to their town clerk.

[PA22-2ABChangesOpinion.pdf \(ct.gov\)](#)

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