

## ABSENTEE BY MAIL

### STEP 3

Upon receipt of the absentee ballot request form, fill it out completely. Make sure you fill it out correctly and it is signed by the voter, near relative, or verifiable legal guardian. In primary elections you must state your party affiliation. If you send in or drop off a request, make certain to include your name, home address, and address where you want the ballot mailed. If it is requested by a near relative, they must state their relationship to you, their address, and they must sign it. If it is for a primary, state your party affiliation. Once the application or request is received and checked, a ballot will be mailed to you.

### STEP 4

After receiving your ballot, **VOTE THE BALLOT IN SECRET**. Insert the ballot in the envelope, fill out the envelope completely and sign it. You or a near relative can drop off the ballot at the Board of Elections office or you can mail it. **Absentee ballots must be returned to the Scotland County Board of Elections by 5:00 PM on the day before the election.**

### STEP 5

Before returning your ballot, check and check again to make sure the return ballot envelope is filled out completely with all the information that is required. If it is not filled out properly, your ballot may not be counted.

If you have any questions, please call the Scotland County Board of Elections at 910-277-2595.

One of the main goals of the Scotland County Board of Elections is to help bring a greater understanding and participation in the voting process to the citizens of Scotland County.

In Scotland County registered voters have two options of voting other than appearing in person at their polling place on Election Day and casting their ballot. The two methods are: (1) No Excuse Absentee One-Stop Voting, and (2) Absentee by mail. Prior to 1999 voters in North Carolina had to have an excuse to vote by absentee ballot. In 1999 the North Carolina General Assembly passed laws that allowed voters to vote an absentee one-stop ballot without having to provide an excuse. In 2001 they amended the statute to include absentee voting by mail.

Absentee voters have the same obligations as those who vote at their polling place on Election Day. They must complete an application and vote their ballot in complete secrecy.



# Absentee Voting Scotland County



Many registered voters in Scotland County will be unable to vote in person at their polling place on Election day. This guide provides general information regarding the correct procedures to follow in order to vote by absentee ballot.

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## ABSENTEE VOTING

The history of voting in America is a story of ever increasing voting rights. The rules for eligibility have changed substantially since America's founding and continue to change today. Absentee voting provides a means for qualified voters to participate in upcoming elections even though they may not be able to go to the polls on Election Day. Although absentee voting is gaining popularity nationwide, the means of voting an absentee ballot has been an important part of the election procedure since it was used in colonial times as early as the 17th century. The Civil War produced a situation where absentee voting was used extensively for the first time in the United States. After the War, most of the absentee voter laws were repealed. They were reinstated during WWI and by the passage of the Soldier Voting Act during WWII. Absentee voting has a long and noble tradition. In today's fast paced society, it is a necessary and positive alternative for the voters of Scotland County.

Registered voters in Scotland County have two methods of absentee voting. One is Absentee by Mail and the other is No Excuse Absentee One-Stop Early Voting.

### NO EXCUSE ONE-STOP EARLY VOTING

The no excuse one-stop absentee voting process allows registered voters to appear at the one-stop voting site and cast their ballots. They do not need a reason to vote this way. At one-stop voting only, a registered voter can vote regardless of their normal polling place.

One-stop voting starts the third Thursday before an election and ends on the Saturday before the election. Unless otherwise posted, the One-Stop Voting Site is the conference room at the County Annex, 231 East Cronly Street.

Normal hours for one-stop voting are Monday—Friday 8:00 am till 5:00 pm and 8:00 am till 1:00 pm the Saturday before the election. Any change in the times for one-stop voting will be posted.

Upon entering the voting place, you will give your name, address and party, primary only, to the elections officials. If you are properly registered, you will be given an ATV Form to sign, then you will be allowed to vote a regular ballot.

If the precinct officials can not find your registration information, you may be asked to vote a provisional ballot, at which point you will be turned over to the Provisional Voter Coordinator. You will be instructed on how to fill out the provisional envelope and given a ballot. After you have completed your ballot, seal it in the envelope and return it to the Coordinator. You will be given an instruction sheet with a pin number on how to check to see if your ballot was counted. To avoid voting a provisional ballot, keep your voter registration updated.

### VOTER ASSISTANCE

Any near relative\* of the voter may offer assistance to the voter regardless of the voter's physical or mental ability. A voter may request assistance from someone other than a near relative if the voter meets one or more of the following conditions: (1) they are unable to enter the voting place or booth without assistance, (2) they are unable to mark their ballot without assistance, (3) the voter, due to illiteracy, is unable to mark their ballot, (4) the voter, due to blindness is unable to mark their ballot. The voter must ask for assistance and indicate who they wish to assist them, if they can not speak they may make the request in writing. The voter's employer, an agent of the employer, an officer or agent of the voter's union, or anyone holding power of attorney unless they are also a qualified near relative can not assist a voter.

**\*A near relative, as defined by law, is a spouse, brother, sister, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, step-parent, stepchild.**

### CURBSIDE VOTING

If you are unable to enter the polling place because of age or physical disability, you are allowed to vote in your vehicle. Look for the curbside voting sign. If someone is driving you and they are able to enter the precinct, they must vote inside the precinct.

Everything is the same at the One-Stop Voting Site as it is at a polling place.

### ABSENTEE BY MAIL

No excuse is needed to vote an absentee ballot by mail. Following are the steps to vote an absentee ballot by mail.

#### STEP 1

Absentee voting by mail begins 50 days before a General Election or primary and 30 days prior to a municipal election. **Requests must be received in the Scotland County Board of Elections office by 5:00 PM on the Tuesday before the election.**

#### STEP 2

Either obtain an absentee ballot request form from the Board of Elections or send in or drop off an absentee ballot request for the required form at the Board of Elections office. If you send in or drop off a request for the form, make certain to include your name, home address, and address where you want the form mailed. If it is requested by a near relative, they must state their relationship to you, their address, and they must sign it. If it is for a primary, state your party affiliation.