



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

Report by the Department of State On Vote-By-Mail Voting – Security, Privacy and Election Transparency

Prepared by the Florida Department of State pursuant to Section 31 of Chapter 2022-73, *Laws of Florida*

February 1, 2023

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Overview	3
Florida Voters	3
Voting Method.....	3
Overview - Vote-By-Mail	4
Requesting a Vote-By-Mail Ballot	5
Recent Election Integrity Measures.....	7
Delivery of Vote-By-Mail Ballots.....	8
Voting by Persons with Disabilities.....	8
Returning a Voted Vote-By-Mail Ballot.....	9
Recent Election Integrity Measures.....	9
Duplicating and Canvassing Vote-By-Mail Ballots	10
Recent Election Integrity Measures.....	10
Verification of Signatures	10
Recent Election Integrity Measures.....	12
Bilingual Requirements	13
Tracking.....	14
Identification/Verification.....	15
For Registration	15
Recent Election Integrity Measures.....	15
For Voting.....	16
Recent Election Integrity Measures.....	17
Other States.....	17
Logistical Considerations.....	19
Privacy.....	19
Capacity/Workload.....	20
Challenges for Voting Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and Elderly Persons.....	20
Costs	21
Bilingual Requirements.....	22

Design Ballots/Envelopes..... 23

Recommendations..... 26

Appendix A: *Vote-By-Mail Process Revision Workgroup Report*, Florida Supervisors of Elections, January 2023..... 29

Appendix B: NCSL Report: Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options (ncsl.org) 35

Appendix C: Bilingual Requirements by Jurisdiction..... 36

Appendix D: Application for Georgia Absentee Ballot (Request) 37

Appendix E: Texas Application to Request a Vote-by-Mail Ballot 39

Appendix F: Brevard County Supervisor of Elections’ Vote-by-Mail Election Materials – Photos and screen shots of instructional video 40

Appendix G: Duval County Vote-by-Mail Ballot Material – Instructional Video Screen Shots..... 49

Executive Summary

This report is prepared by the Florida Department of State pursuant to Section 31 of Chapter 2022-73, Laws of Florida. The Legislature [found] that additional modifications to procedures governing vote-by-mail balloting would help to further ensure election integrity while also protecting voters from identity theft and preserving the public's right to participate in election processes. To achieve this purpose, the Legislature [directed] the Department of State to:

(1) Provide a plan to prescribe the use of a Florida driver license number, Florida identification card number, social security number, or any part thereof to confirm the identity of each elector returning a vote-by-mail ballot.

(2) Review issues involving the feasibility, development, and implementation of [above] plan, including issues related to:

(a) Obtaining a Florida driver license number or Florida identification card number and the last four digits of a social security number for each registered voter who does not have such numbers on file in the Florida Voter Registration System in coordination with other agencies such as the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV).

(b) Populating such numbers in the Florida Voter Registration System.

(c) Protecting identifying numbers submitted with a vote-by-mail ballot, including, but not limited to, prescribing the form of the return mailing envelope.

(d) Any necessary modifications to canvassing procedures for vote-by-mail ballots.

(e) Costs associated with development and implementation of the plan.

(f) A proposal for a program to educate electors on changes to the vote-by-mail process.

(g) A proposal for including a declaration of an elector's current address of legal residence with each written request for a vote-by-mail ballot.

(3) Review relevant processes of other states, relevant federal law, and seek input from supervisors of elections, which must include representation from supervisors of counties with large, medium, and small populations.

(4) Report a plan and any proposed legislation changes to the Legislature.

During the 2021 and 2022 legislative session, the Florida Legislature enacted a number of security measures relating to voter registration and voting as part of its effort to protect voters' rights to participate in the electoral process and to secure the integrity of the election process. Many of the legislative changes focused on the vote-by-mail process, including the request, the delivery, the return, and the observation of the duplication of damages ballots, signature verification and canvassing. See *Chapters [2021-11](#) and [2022-73](#), Laws of Florida*. These measures bolstered the security and transparency of the vote-by-mail process. The 2022 election cycle was the first major election cycle in which these measures were implemented since they were enacted. While the election cycle was a success without reports of wide-spread fraud that have plagued other states, the impact of some of those changes on voters' ability to request and vote a vote-by-mail ballot are still in play.

According to the Florida Supervisors of Elections' Vote-By-Mail Process Revision Workgroup Report ([Appendix A](#)), Supervisors of Elections voiced reservations about voter privacy and other logistical challenges that would come from a redesign of the vote-by-mail envelope and changes to the vote-by-mail process including the impact on the complex and labor-intensive procedures to ensure the security and timely delivery, return, verification, canvassing and reporting of results of vote-by-mail ballots. Their report also raised concerns about the current supply chain strain for the procurement of equipment, paper, and other consumables and reeducating voters about significant change to the vote-by-mail process before a presidential election cycle with the Presidential Preference Primary Election scheduled in less than one year (March 2024). The Department also identified similar and additional considerations and challenges in its review.

Considering the foregoing review and challenges that the Department foresees, the Department recommends building on the election integrity measures adopted recently to enhance the security of the vote-by-mail process. The Department proposes legislation to further those objectives by focusing primarily on the vote-by-mail ballot request process.

Overview

Florida Voters

Florida is the third most populous state following California and Texas.¹ Florida is relatively on par with both states in terms of percentage of registered voters and voting age population. Over 4.42 million registered voters are 65 years old or older which represents almost 31% of the number of active registered voters. There are over 365,543 registered voters who identify as military, military dependent and/or overseas.

Florida's voter registration numbers have more than doubled since 1994.

YR	# of Active Registered Voters in Florida 2000-2022 (Bookclosing General Elections)
1994	6,559,598
1996	8,077,877
1998	8,220,266
2000	8,752,717
2002	9,302,360
2004	10,301,290
2006	10,433,849
2008	11,247,634
2010	11,217,384
2012	11,934,446
2014	11,931,533
2016	12,863,773
2018	13,278,070
2020	14,441,869
2022	14,503,978

For perspective, the number of voters who voted in the Presidential Election (in November 2020) almost equaled the total number of registered voters in the entire state in 2008 and 2010.

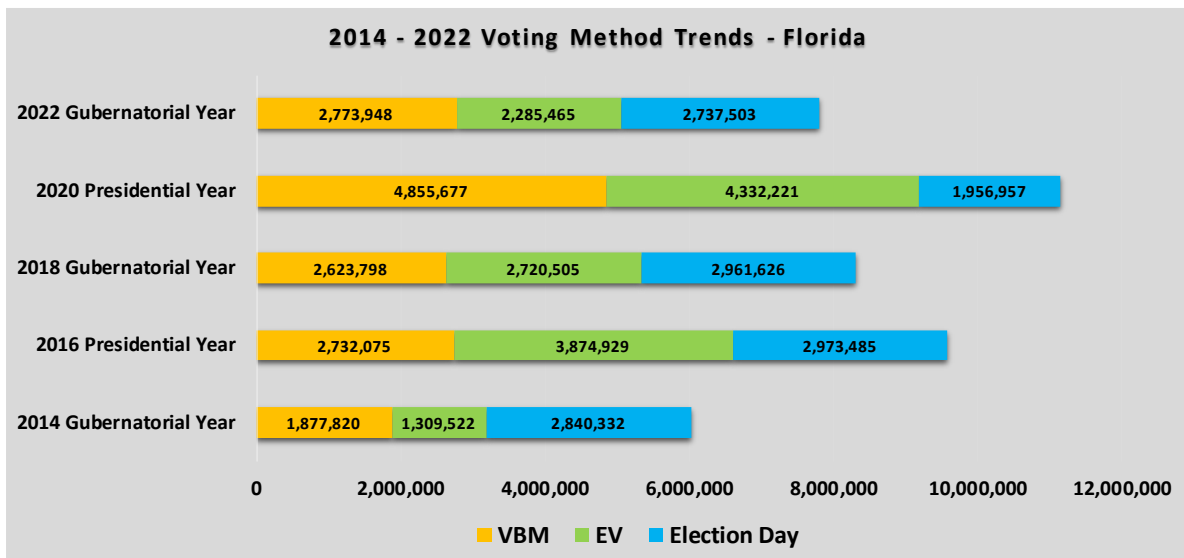
Voting Method

Florida voters enjoy three convenient methods of voting – voting by mail, early voting, or voting on Election Day. In addition to voting in person on Election Day, some form of absentee voting has been

¹ U.S. Census estimates as of July 2022 – California (over 21.9 million of California's voting age population is registered to vote (81.63%); Texas (Over 17.7 million of Texas' voting age population is registered (80.1%); and Florida (over 14.5 million of Florida's voting age population (17.5 million) (82%) is registered to vote). Source: <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-state-total.html>; <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/historical/70-92.shtml>; <https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/ror/15day-general-2022/historical-reg-stats.pdf>; <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/03/30/2022-06654/estimates-of-the-voting-age-population-for-2021>

available since at least 1917.² In 2004, the Florida Legislature specifically authorized early voting in the Supervisors of Elections’ main or branch offices. Early voting is a period of time before an election where a ballot is voted and tabulated, just as it is on Election Day. Early voting evolved from absentee voting in person at the Supervisors of Elections’ main and branch offices. In its present state, early voting is offered for a mandatory eight-day period. Supervisors of Elections may offer up to six more days of early voting. Therefore, if a Supervisor of Elections maximizes the number of days and hours of early voting, a voter may have up to 168 hours total of early voting available in their county.³

Voting trends over the years show that Florida voters chose to vote equally among the voting methods, with some deviation accounting for the 2020 pandemic and presidential versus a gubernatorial election year.



Overview - Vote-By-Mail

Florida’s statutory framework reflects the Legislature’s continuous effort to balance the interest in protecting every eligible voter’s right to vote and securing the integrity of the electoral process. In the past two legislative sessions, the Legislature focused on the vote-by-mail process.⁴

The major components of the vote-by-mail law and processes, some of which were enacted in the last few years, include but are not limited to,

- Requiring a personal identifying number in addition to a signed written request if made other than in person or by telephone,
- Prohibiting a vote-by-mail ballot being delivered without a request on file,
- Limiting the number of ballots that may be requested and/or picked up on behalf of another voter,

² Section 2, [Chapter 7380](#), Laws of Florida (1917) (absent person could vote anywhere at polls on election day and have ballot mailed back to county of residence to be counted.)

³ Section [101.657](#), Fla. Stat.

⁴ [Chapter 2021-11](#), Laws of Florida and [Chapter 2022-73](#), Laws of Florida

- Empowering the voter to track his or her ballot request and ballot return,
- Verifying signatures on ballot certificates,
- Allowing the voter to cure his or her ballot if a signature is missing or mismatches but requires additional identification with a signed affidavit,
- Providing notice to the voter if his or her vote-by-mail ballot was not counted and the reason why, including if was late, to afford the voter the opportunity to remediate the reason for the next election,
- Expiring vote-by-mail ballot requests every general election cycle to allow voters to refresh their request with accurate information,
- Prohibiting ballot harvesting of vote-by-mail ballots,
- Limiting lawful possession of ballots to the voter's own, and the ballots of their immediate family members and two others, and
- Providing greater transparency to the canvassing process by expanding observation opportunities to include duplication of damaged ballots, signature verification, and other canvassing processes.

Requesting a Vote-By-Mail Ballot

Requirements for requesting a vote-by-mail ballot⁵ have changed over the years. In 1951, an absent voter had to have an excuse, such as a physical disability that prevented the person from going to the polls without assistance⁶ or that the voter would be away from the county.⁷ In 2001, the Legislature allowed (without excuse) a request for a ballot to be mailed to an address already on record.⁸ The Legislature also required, as part of the request, the date of birth in lieu of the social security number, but retained the witness requirement. In 2004, the witness requirement was repealed.⁹ In 2011, the Legislature repealed the last of the stated excuses for requesting a ballot to be mailed to an address other than the one on record.¹⁰ Florida is now one of 27 states, including Washington, D.C., that currently offer no-excuse absentee voting (of which eight of those states have all mail elections.)¹¹ A number of states require excuses that range from working as a poll worker, serving on a jury, being out

⁵ Terminology changes from absentee ballot to vote-by-mail ballot in 2016. See [ch. 2016-37, Laws of Florida](#)

⁶ The *Americans with Disabilities Act and Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped* was enacted in 1984 which required polling places to be accessible for elderly person and persons with disabilities. See [52 U.S.C ch. 201](#)

⁷ [Chapter 267542, Laws of Florida \(1951\)](#)

⁸ Section 53, [Chapter 2001-40, Laws of Florida](#)

⁹ [Chapter 2004-232, Laws of Florida](#)

¹⁰ Section 37, [Chapter 2011-40, Laws of Florida](#)

¹¹ Eight of those states are reportedly offer all mail elections (California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Vermont (general election only), and Washington). Source: [Appendix B - Table 2, Excuses to Vote Absentee. *Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All Mail and Other Voting at Home Options*, July 12, 2022.](#) See [Appendix B, National Conference of State Legislatures - *Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options* \(ncsl.org\)](#)

of the county, illness or disability, person over a certain age, out of county on Election Day, student living outside the county, religious belief or practice, or address protected domestic violence victim.¹²

In 2013, the Legislature required a written signed request to mail a vote-by-mail ballot to an address other than the one on record.¹³ It also prohibited delivery of a vote-by-mail ballot on Election Day except in emergencies as affirmed in an affidavit. Absent uniformed services members and overseas voters are exempted from the requirement. In 2021, the Legislature required any voter requesting a vote-by-mail ballot to provide another identifier to verify the authenticity of the voter's request. All requests for a vote-by-mail ballot, regardless of the method, to include a Florida driver license number, Florida identification card number or last 4 digits of the voter's social security number. The number must be verified in the supervisor's records.

The current process therefore to obtain a vote-by-mail request is as follows:

To initiate a request, the voter can submit the request online, by phone, in person or through another writing (email, fax, etc.). No statewide form exists to request a vote-by-mail ballot, but the law specifies the following information,

1. The name of the elector for whom the ballot is requested;
2. The elector's address;
3. The elector's date of birth;
4. The requester's name;
5. The requester's address;
6. The requester's driver's license number, if available;
7. The requester's relationship to the elector; and
8. The requester's signature (written requests only).

A signed written request is required only if the address provided to deliver the ballot is not the same as the address on file. An exception exists for absent stateside, overseas military and overseas civilians. Additionally, a ballot may only be delivered by mail or in person with exceptions carved out for absent uniformed services and overseas voters who may receive the blank vote-by-mail ballot by fax or email.¹⁴

A United States uniformed services member on active duty, or a Merchant Marine member, a spouse or dependent thereof and a United States citizen residing outside of the United States have the option to submit a [Federal Post Card Application](#) (FPCA) that can be used solely as a voter registration form or as a combination voter registration and request for a vote-by-mail ballot. The FPCA is devised by the U.S. Department of Defense's [Federal Voting Assistance Program](#) (FVAP). The FPCA through FVAP's [Online](#)

¹²Id.

¹³ Section 11, [Chapter 2013-57](#), Laws of Florida

¹⁴ Sections [101.697](#) and [101.6952](#), Fla. Stat.

[Assistant](#) or as a [PDF form](#). By federal law, they must be able to submit a request for a vote-by-mail ballot by phone, mail, email, or fax.¹⁵

Additionally, options exist for persons with disabilities who may receive a blank vote-by-mail ballot by online ballot delivery, if the service is available within their county.¹⁶

The deadline to request that a vote-by-mail ballot to be **mailed** is no later than 5:00 p.m. on the 10th day before the election. A voter can pick up their own vote-by-mail ballot at any time once the ballot becomes available, including Election Day.

A voter can designate any person to pick up their ballot. The designee can pick up the ballot no earlier than nine days before Election Day. A designee is limited to picking up vote-by-mail ballots for two other voters per election (not including their own ballot and the ballots for immediate family members). An immediate family member refers to the designee's spouse or the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling of the designee or of the designee's spouse. The designee must submit an affidavit to pick-up the voter's blank ballot. Form DS-DE 37 ([English PDF](#) / [Español PDF](#)) is a combination form that includes the affidavit for ballot pick-up; the written authorization for the designee and if a request is not already on record, the voter's request for a vote-by-mail ballot. If a voter or designee waits until Election Day to pick up or have delivered a vote-by-mail ballot, the voter must complete an Election Day Vote-by-Mail Ballot Delivery Affidavit (DS-DE 136 - [English PDF](#) / [Español PDF](#)). The voter must affirm that an emergency exists that keeps the voter from being able to vote at his or her assigned polling place.

Recent Election Integrity Measures

As noted above, in 2021, the Florida Legislature added another security layer of authentication to process a request for a vote-by-mail ballot.¹⁷ Now, all requests for a vote-by-mail ballot must include a Florida driver license or state identification card number, or the last four digits of a social security number, regardless of the method for requesting a vote-by-mail ballot. The number provided must be verified by Supervisor's records. It also required that this additional information be recorded including the new identifying information and the identity of the designee, if applicable. Additionally, the Florida Legislature expressly prohibited the delivery of a vote-by-mail ballot without a request. It also modified the effective period for a ballot request to all elections held through the end of the calendar year of the next regularly scheduled general election.

¹⁵ While a number of special provisions apply for uniformed services members, their spouses and dependents, and overseas civilians exist in Florida's vote-by-mail laws, these state laws are based on provisions in the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)([52 U.S.C. § 20301 -20311](#)) and the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act(MOVE)(part of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2010) which amended sections of UOCAVA.

¹⁶ Section [101.662](#), Fla. Stat.

¹⁷ Section 4, [Chapter 2021-11](#), Laws of Florida

Delivery of Vote-By-Mail Ballots

Ballots for absent stateside and overseas military, and overseas civilian ballots are required to be sent no later than 45 days before an election.¹⁸ Over 365,543 registered voters self-identify as military, military dependent and overseas or have military or overseas addresses on file. The number of ballots sent to absent military and overseas voters who have standing requests at the time of the deadline to mail were as follows:

UOCAVA Ballots Sent Based on Requests on File at the Time of Statutory 45-day deadline to Send					
	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022
	Gubernatorial	Presidential	Gubernatorial	Presidential	Gubernatorial
PRIMARY	63,372	55,096	71,901	64,020	95,125
GENERAL	64,959	73,670	78,118	103,818	95,062

Ballots for domestic voters who have requests on file are required to be delivered within a seven-day window (40-33 days) before the applicable election.

The deadline to request that a vote-by-mail ballot be **mailed** is no later than 5:00 p.m. on the tenth day before the election. A Supervisor of Elections must mail the ballot out within two business days after receiving a request. The last day for the supervisor to mail a ballot is eight days before Election Day.¹⁹

Voting by Persons with Disabilities

Federal and state laws require that persons with disabilities be afforded an opportunity to vote that is equal to the opportunity offered to voters without disabilities, whether in person or absentee.²⁰ This applies to voting at the polls during early voting and on Election Day, and equally to voting by mail. Under the Florida Election Code, “persons with disabilities” means individuals who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Such activities include but are not limited to blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, mobility, permanent or temporary impairments, or cognitive or mental impairments that may affect recall, concentration or comprehension.

Counties offer a range of accessible voting options. In many counties, the supervisor of elections offers online ballot delivery of a ballot that a voter with disabilities can then mark online at their convenience and use whatever assistive tools are available to him or her. However, the law prohibits the electronic return of such ballot. This means the voter must mark the ballot, print the ballot, and enclose the voted

¹⁸ Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act; 52 U.S.C. §§ 20301–20311; Section 101.62, Fla. Stat.

¹⁹ Section 101.62(4), Fla. Stat.

²⁰ Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.; Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.; Help America Vote Act, 52 U.S.C. § 20901 et seq.

ballot in the required privacy sleeve or secrecy envelope and mailing envelope that is provided to all voters who vote by mail.

Returning a Voted Vote-By-Mail Ballot

In order to count, assuming all other requirements are met, and eligibility determined, a voted ballot must be received, regardless of postmark, by the Supervisor of Elections' office no later than 7:00 p.m. (local time) on Election Day. A ten-day extension exists for overseas voters only for Presidential Preference Primary and General Elections, provided the ballot is postmarked or dated by Election Day.

The methods for returning a voted ballot are delivery by mail, in-person, and into a secure ballot intake station during prescribed hours and locations. A voter may also choose to use a commercial expedited or special courier service at their own expense to return their voted ballot.

Only overseas voters (military and civilian) may return their voted ballot by fax in lieu of by mail. All other voters must return their voted ballot by mail, in-person or into a secure ballot intake station during prescribed hours and at designated locations. In the event that a requested vote-by-mail ballot did not arrive in time to meet the state deadline for return, absent stateside and overseas military and overseas civilians can complete and return an official back-up ballot known as the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB). The FWAB ([Online Assistant](#) or [PDF](#) form) is also available through the [Federal Voting Assistance Program](#). The FWAB can be used to vote in any federal, state or local election. (See section [101.6952](#), Florida Statutes).

The secure ballot intake stations (formerly known as drop boxes)²¹ were first formally authorized in law in 2019. The law required Supervisors of Elections to provide secure ballot intake stations to be placed at their main office and branch office(s) and at any designated early voting site, and optionally at any other site that would have qualified as an early voting site, provided staff was available.²²

Recent Election Integrity Measures

In 2021, the Florida Legislature added more security measures to the return of voted ballots by,

- Limiting the use of secure ballot intake stations other than at a supervisor's office to early voting hours,
- Requiring in-person monitoring of all secure ballot intake stations while accessible for deposit of ballots, and
- Limiting a person's lawful possession of ballots to his or her own, those of an immediate family member, and two others; expands the definition of "immediate family member" to include a grandchild; and clarifies that supervised voting at assisted living facilities and nursing homes is not subject to the limit.²³

²¹ Chapter 2022-73, Laws of Florida, amending section [101.69](#), Fla. Stat.

²² Section 20, Chapter 2019-162, Laws of Florida

²³ Section 28, Chapter 2021-11, Laws of Florida, amending section [104.0616](#), Fla. Stat.

Duplicating and Canvassing Vote-By-Mail Ballots

The law allows for the duplication of ballots in the event the ballot cannot be counted by the voting system's automatic tabulating equipment. A true duplicate copy is required to be created in an open and accessible room in the presence of witnesses.²⁴ This also applies in cases where the vote-by-mail ballot contains an overvoted race or undervoted race, if it can be determined that the voter made a definite choice in the race.²⁵ After a ballot has been duplicated, the defective ballot shall be placed in an envelope provided for that purpose, and the duplicate ballot shall be tallied with the other ballots for that precinct. Ultimately, it is the canvassing board that determines whether the duplicate ballot must be counted.

Recent Election Integrity Measures

In 2021, the Florida Legislature added more security and transparency measures, including requiring the presence of at least one canvassing board member during the duplication of ballot, and allowing observers to make a reasonable objection to the duplication of a ballot which then requires presentation to the canvassing board to further adjudicate.²⁶ Specifically, upon request, a physically present candidate, a political party official, a political committee official, or an authorized designee thereof, must be allowed to observe the duplication of ballots upon signing an affidavit affirming his or her acknowledgment that disclosure of election results discerned from observing the ballot duplication process while the election is ongoing is a felony. The observer must be allowed to observe the duplication of ballots in such a way that the observer is able to see the markings on each ballot and the duplication taking place.

One of the key factors attributed to Florida's success in canvassing ballots and timely preliminary election results is its expanded period for canvassing. In 2021, the Florida Legislature allowed canvassing to begin as early as 40 days before an election, provided the pre-election testing of voting equipment had first been completed.²⁷ This period also corresponds closer in time to when vote-by-mail ballots have already been sent out to absent statewide military, overseas military and overseas civilians. This expanded period allowed election officials including canvassing board members to better manage the canvassing workload, barring a significant number of returned ballots within the last week before Election Day which is out of the control of election officials. This provided election officials the opportunity to be able to focus on preparations for and conduct of early voting and Election Day.

Verification of Signatures

For a VBM ballot to be counted, a vote-by-mail voter must sign the certificate with the returned voted ballot. The signature on the certificate is later compared to the voter's signature on record to authenticate that the registered voter has signed their own ballot.²⁸ In some counties, an initial visual

²⁴ Section [101.5614](#), Fla. Stat.

²⁵ [Rule 1S-2.027](#), Fla. Admin. Code (Standards for Determining Voter's Choice on a Ballot); [Rule 1S-2.051](#), Fla. Admin. Code (Standards for Determining Voter's Choice on a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot).

²⁶ Section 20, [Chapter 2021-11](#), Laws of Florida, amending section [101.5614](#), Fla. Stat.

²⁷ Section 27, *id.*, amending section [101.68](#), Fla. Stat.

²⁸ Section [101.68](#), Fla. Stat.

review of signatures is made manually. Some county offices supplement the signature verification with automated signature comparison software. While the Supervisor of Elections who is a statutorily designated member of the canvassing board²⁹ and his or her staff traditionally conduct the initial verification, it is ultimately the canvassing board who collectively signs off on verified signatures and is responsible for verifying signatures that have been presented to the board. Signature verification training is made available to all Supervisors of Elections, including their staff, and the canvassing board.³⁰

If the signature does not match or the signature is missing, the elections office is required to notify the voter as soon as practicable to provide the voter an opportunity to cure the omission or mismatch.³¹ The voter can “cure” this defect³² by completing a Vote-by-Mail Ballot Cure Affidavit (DS-DE 139).³³ As another layer of authentication, a copy of an identification must be provided with the completed affidavit as follows:

- The signature on the voter’s certificate or the cure affidavit matches the elector’s signature in the registration books or precinct register; however, in the case of a cure affidavit, the supporting identification . . . must also confirm the identity of the elector; or
- The cure affidavit contains a signature that does not match the elector’s signature in the registration books or precinct register, but the elector has submitted a current and valid Tier 1 identification . . . which confirms the identity of the elector. Tier 1 identification or Tier 2 identification are as follows and must be provided:
 - *Tier 1 identification.*—Current and valid identification that includes name and photograph: Florida driver license; Florida identification card issued by DHSMV; United States passport; debit or credit card; military identification; student identification; retirement center identification; neighborhood association identification; public assistance identification; veteran health identification card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; a Florida license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm; or an employee identification card issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the Federal Government, the state, a county, or a municipality; or
 - *Tier 2 identification.*—ONLY IF A PERSON DO NOT HAVE A TIER 1 FORM OF IDENTIFICATION, identification that shows your name and current residence address: current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or government document (excluding voter information card).

The law authorizes the canvassing board to enlist clerical help for other work of the board under specified circumstances.³⁴ The canvassing board may employ such clerical help to assist with the work of the board as it deems necessary, with at least one member of the board present always. The canvassing board ultimately determines whether the ballot may be counted or not based on all the

²⁹ Section 102.141(1), Fla. Stat. If a supervisor is unable to serve or is disqualified, the chair of the board of county commissioners appoints a substitute member from the county board.

³⁰ Section 1, Chapter 2019-162, Laws of Florida, amending section 97.012, Fla. Stat., to add subsection (17)

³¹ Section 101.68, Fla. Stat.,

³² Section 101.68(4), Fla. Stat.

³³ <https://www.dos.myflorida.com/elections/forms-publications/forms/>

³⁴ Section 102.141(8), Fla. Stat.

evidence. Pursuant to law, every person whose vote-by-mail ballot is rejected by the canvassing board is notified of such action and is provided the specific reason why his or her ballot was not counted. The number of ballots not counted for 2020 and 2022 were as follows:

	2020 GEN	2022 GEN
Vote by mail ballots counted	4,864,040	2,773,976
Voter by mail ballots not counted	9,723	13,179

The reasons why a ballot may not count range from voter-caused error or eligibility issues, missing or mismatched signature that was not cured, no certificate envelope, a challenged voter, no longer a resident of county by time ballot arrived, or receipt after the deadline. The number of ballots received late more than doubled in 2022:³⁵

	2020 GEN	2022 GEN
Ballot received late <i>(Factors include but are not limited to postal delays, the voter mailing the ballot late, and inclement weather.)</i>	3,580	8,397

In May 2022, the Florida Department of State revised Rule 1S-2.043, Fla. Admin. Code, to clarify file specifications as to information about the request, delivery, return and canvass of a vote-by-mail ballot. A category was established to distinguish between ballots returned unsigned versus ballots returned with mismatched signatures. For the 2022 General Election, the following number of vote-by-mail ballots were not counted for reasons of signature defects:³⁶

Vote-by-mail not counted for signature defect	Total
Returned – Unsigned (i.e., a voter returned a vote-by-mail ballot with no signature on the Voter’s Certificate or the signature cure affidavit, and/or fails to provide requisite ID with affidavit to cure the omitted the signature.)	4691
Mismatched Signature (i.e., a voter returned a vote-by-mail ballot with a mismatched signature on the Voter’s Certificate or the signature cure affidavit, and/or fails to provide requisite ID with affidavit to cure the signature mismatch.)	7028

Recent Election Integrity Measures

Since signature verification is a key factor in authenticating the identity of a registered voter, training is an important requirement. In recognition thereof, the Florida Legislature added a requirement in 2019³⁷

³⁵ Source: Election Recap Report 2022 General Election pursuant to section 98.0981(1)(c), Fla. Stat.

³⁶ County Vote-by-Mail Ballot Request Files for 2022 General Election. These files are required to be filed daily starting 60 days before a primary election and ending 15 days after the general election. See section 101.62(3), Fla. Stat.

³⁷ Section 1, Chapter 2019-162, Laws of Florida

to make available formal signature match training to Supervisors of Elections and county canvassing board members. In 2022, the Florida Department of State contracted with the Florida State University Florida Institute of Government to convert the signature verification training program from a video program to an online multi-module program with testing components and a certificate of completion. The program takes two to three hours to complete. At a biennial Canvassing Board Workshop hosted by the Florida Supervisors of Elections, all canvassing board members and Supervisors of Elections were strongly encouraged to take the program before the 2022 election cycle. Some counties such as Miami-Dade County supplement their signature training with even more advanced courses through county support. To date, over 1,110 persons have taken part in the Department of State's signature verification online program. The program is publicly available online 24/7 upon the establishment of an account. No mandate currently exists in law for Supervisors of Elections, canvassing board members or any person whose duties involve signature verification to undergo training.

Additionally, counties are permitted to use automated signature verification technology³⁸ to facilitate preparatory signature verification process. However, no statutory duty exists to test and/or certify automated signature verification software technology. The technology may not be used to replace the duties and responsibilities of the Supervisor of Elections and the canvassing board as the final arbiter.

As an added security and transparency measure, in 2021, the Florida Legislature created new access requirements for a political party or candidate to observe meetings for signature matching and other processes.³⁹

Bilingual Requirements

All ballots, instructions, envelopes, affidavits and vote-by-mail materials must be provided in English and Spanish. The Voting Act has several provisions by which a state or local jurisdiction must adhere to bilingual requirements. The State of Florida and all counties are covered under one or more provisions (see [Appendix C](#)):

- Section 203:⁴⁰ Under this section, the U.S. Census Bureau (see www.census.gov) designates covered jurisdictions for language based on decennial census data and subsequent survey data

³⁸ [DE 13-07, Advisory Opinion](https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/2013/de1307.pdf); <https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/2013/de1307.pdf>

³⁹ Section 21, [Chapter 2021-11, Laws of Florida](#), amending section [101.572](#), Laws of Florida

⁴⁰ [52 USCA 10503](#) A jurisdiction is covered⁴⁰ under Section 203 where the number of United States citizens of voting age is a single language group within the jurisdiction:

- Is more than 10,000, or
- Is more than five percent of all voting age citizens, or
- On an Indian reservation, exceeds five percent of all reservation residents; and
- The illiteracy rate of the group is higher than the national illiteracy rate.

Covered language minorities are limited to American Indians, Asian Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Spanish-heritage citizens – i.e., the groups that Congress found to have faced barriers in the political process. If a county is subject to a minority language requirement under section 203, the Supervisor must make voting materials and information relating to the electoral process (including registration or voting notices, forms, ballot, instructions, etc.) in the designated language and provide minority language assistance in all elections.^[1] Pursuant to state law, in counties subject to multi-language ballot requirements, the supervisor may petition the United States Department of Justice for authorization for the supervisor to print and deliver single-language ballots for each minority language required. See section [101.151\(8\)](#), Fla. Stat.

in five-year periods, or comparable census data based on any one of four formulas (voting age population, racial/ethnic composition and illiteracy rate).

- Section 208:⁴¹ This section provides that “any voter who requires assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer or agent of that employer or officer or agent of the voter's union.” This section could apply to a voter who is illiterate or has limited English proficiency in a vote-by-mail or polling place scenario. This section is codified in sections [101.051](#), [101.655](#), and [101.661](#), Fla. Stat.)
- Section 2.⁴² This section prohibits voting and election-related practices and procedures that discriminate on the basis of race, color or membership in a language minority group.

Section “(e)”⁴³ This section entitled “Completion of requisite grade level education in American-flag schools in which predominate classroom language was other than English” pertains to the right to vote of United States citizens educated through at least 6th grade in American-flag schools in any state, territory, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, in a language other than English because of such citizens’ inability to read, write, understand, or interpret English. (*Commonly referred to as 4(e)).

Tracking

Any voter who has requested a vote-by-mail ballot can track online the status of his or her vote-by-mail ballot request and/or ballot through the county [Supervisor of Elections' website](#), or access the county-specific link on our [Vote-by-Mail Ballot Information and Status Lookup](#) webpage.⁴⁴ The United States Postal Service (USPS) also provides a free service (register online) called [Informed Delivery](#) that allows any customer to see in advance a digital image of the address side of certain mail pieces that are scheduled to be delivered to their mailing address which would include a requested vote-by-mail ballot. Other options, if time does not allow for timely return by mail, include in-person delivery, secure ballot intake stations designated by the county Supervisor of Elections, or expedited or special courier services.

In addition to the voter tracking his or her own ballot, Supervisors of Elections have a number of resources available to manage vote-by-mail ballots including USPS’ Intelligent Bar coding to track the outgoing mail piece and vendor tracking tools to encode marks on the return mailing envelope.

⁴¹ [52 USCA 10508](#)

⁴² [52 USCA 10301](#)

⁴³ [52 USCA 10303 \(e\)](#)

⁴⁴ If a voter’s registration information is protected pursuant to section [119.071\(2\)](#), (4), and/or (5), Florida Statutes, or the registered voter is a participant in the Attorney General Office’s Address Confidentiality Program, the voter will need to contact the Supervisor of Elections’ office about the status of the vote-by-mail ballot and request.

Identification/Verification

For Registration

In the age of cybersecurity, multi-factor authentication (or multiple layers of authentication) is key to ensuring the identity and authority of the person to access any privilege or right. This authentication in Florida begins at the front end (i.e., registration) with verifying a voter's personal identifying number provided on the voter registration application, even if someone affirms he or she does not have a Florida driver license number, state identification card number or social security number. The requirement to provide a Florida driver license number, state identification number or last four digits of the social security number did not become law until 1998 (becoming effective in 1999).⁴⁵ Prior to that time and back to at least 1994, a voter had the option to provide a social security number, but the number was not protected from public disclosure.⁴⁶

Therefore, as of 1999, before a person can register, the person must provide a personal identifying number (Florida driver license, Florida state identification card number or last four digits of their social security number) which must be verified by the Department of State through DHSMV, even if someone affirms on an application he or she does not have a Florida driver license number, state identification card number or social security number.⁴⁷ The number or the lack of existence of a number is either verified through DHSMV's own records or through the Social Security Administration through an agreement with the American Association of Motor Vehicles Administrators.⁴⁸ Florida driver license and state identification card numbers are safeguarded from public disclosure under the Drivers Privacy Protection Act.⁴⁹ Social security numbers are also protected under federal law.⁵⁰

Recent Election Integrity Measures

In 2021, the Florida Legislature required updates to name, party or address made on a voter registration application form to include the personal identifying number just as is required for new voter registration applications.⁵¹ As with new registrations, the personal identifying number is then added to the voter's record as the voter has voluntarily provided the information for purposes of updating his or her voter registration record.

Even before the new laws requiring a personal identifying number for requesting a ballot and for updating a voter record, Supervisors of Elections statewide conducted targeted voter outreach to solicit personal identifying numbers from those voters without the identifier in their records. Since that time, the percentage of total voter records that do not have an identifier in their record or have an incomplete or otherwise invalid identifier is less than 2.5%. See table below:

⁴⁵ Section 9, [Chapter 98-129](#), Laws of Florida

⁴⁶ [Chapter 94-224](#), Laws of Florida

⁴⁷ Special identification requirements and processes apply when a person registered by mail and if a first-time registrant and voter which exceptions under certain circumstances. See sections [97.0535](#), [101.6921](#), [101.6923](#), Fla. Stat.

⁴⁸ Section [97.053\(6\)](#), Fla. Stat.

⁴⁹ [18 U.S.C. 2721](#)

⁵⁰ Federal Privacy Act of 1974, [5 U.S.C. § 552](#)

⁵¹ Section 5, [Chapter 2021-11](#), Laws of Florida, amending section [97.053\(6\)](#), Fla. Stat.

Total number of voter records - active and inactive with personal identifying information					
Date	DL and/or SSN	Pct	No or Invalid DL/SSN	Pct2	Total Active and Inactive Voters
2/4/2021	14,478,290	95.50%	681,481	4.50%	15,159,771
1/25/2023	15,280,154	97.69%	361,351	2.31%	15,641,505

For Voting

The integrity of an election is contingent on the security surrounding voting processes. Therefore, the process for authentication continues when a voter presents to vote during early voting or on Election Day; a voter is required to provide one of 12 acceptable photo identifications with signature, which is, in essence, two-factor authentication.⁵²

1. Florida driver license.
2. Florida identification card issued by DHSMV.
3. United States passport.
4. Debit or credit card.
5. Military identification.
6. Student identification.
7. Retirement center identification.
8. Neighborhood association identification.
9. Public assistance identification.
10. Veteran health identification card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.
11. A license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm issued pursuant to section [790.06](#), Florida Statutes.
12. Employee identification card issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the Federal Government, the state, a county, or a municipality.

The purpose of the photo is for the poll worker to visually compare the person standing in front of the poll worker with the person in the photo and to compare the signature on the identification with the signature that the voter just signed on the paper or electronic precinct register.

If a photo and signature identification is not available, the voter is permitted to vote a provisional ballot. If a question arises as to the identification, the person is given the option to vote a provisional ballot. If a question arises as to the signature, the voter has an opportunity to execute a signature affidavit reaffirming his or her signature before being allowed to vote a regular ballot, otherwise the voter is given the option to vote a provisional ballot.⁵³

⁵² Section [101.043](#), Fla. Stat.

⁵³ Section [101.045](#), Fla. Stat.

To vote by mail, authenticating a voter's right to vote a mail ballot occurs at the front end with a signature verification and now the personal identifying number. The authentication again occurs at the back end when the signature comparison is made.

Recent Election Integrity Measures

As of 2022, all persons requesting a vote-by-mail ballot regardless of method (in person, phone, email, mail, online, fax, etc.) must provide a personal identifying number (Florida driver license number, Florida identification card number or last four digits of their social security number) that can be verified by the Supervisor of Elections.⁵⁴ If the request is in writing, the request must also be signed – an exception exists for absent uniformed services voters or overseas voters.

Authentication requirements for voting by mail range across states and are not uniform. They may include but are not limited to one or more combination of the following: signature, photo identification, voter identification number and witness.

Other States

State elections law across the county are generally not uniform making statutory, regulatory and procedural comparisons difficult. Voting by mail is no exception:

- Florida is one of at least 19 states that allows a voter to request a ballot online (The states are Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin).⁵⁵
- Florida is one of 26 states, including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands to compare the absent voter's information against the registration records.⁵⁶ At least 11 states verify the signature in addition to checking information and eligibility. Examples of what other states require for verification include requiring a copy of an ID, requiring an application, or other signed oath or one or more witnesses to authenticate.
 - For example, Georgia provides a statewide form⁵⁷ to submit a request (online or downloadable form). The request must include a date of birth and a Georgia driver license number or state identification card number, or an affirmation that neither has been issued with a copy of other acceptable forms of identification. See [Appendix D](#).

⁵⁴ Section 24, [Chapter 2021-11](#), Laws of Florida

⁵⁵ Source: [Appendix B - Table 6, States with Online Ballot Request Applications, Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options \(ncsl.org\)](#)(July 2022), National Conference of State Legislatures.

⁵⁶ Alabama, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Texas, Virgin Islands, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming. See [Appendix B - Table 8, How States Verify Vote-by-Mail Requests, Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options \(ncsl.org\)](#)(July 2022), National Conference of State Legislatures.

⁵⁷ [Application for Georgia Official Absentee Ballot \(ga.gov\)](#);
<https://securemyabsenteeballot.sos.ga.gov/resource/1674861954000/AbsenteeBallotPDF>

- Texas requires the submission of a statewide form⁵⁸ online with a few exceptions for persons with disabilities, absent stateside military and overseas military and civilians. See [Appendix E](#). The Texas form also requires the state driver license number, the state identification number, election identification certification number, or the last four digits of the social security number. Texas, unlike Florida and Georgia, requires an excuse to vote by mail (over 65 years of age, have a disability, expect to give birth within three weeks of an election, absent from the jurisdiction with specified date of absence and return, or in jail or involuntary commitment).
- Florida is one of 31 states that allow someone to return a vote-by-mail ballot for the voter.⁵⁹ Many of those states limit who may return the ballot and how many and when they can be returned, and for how long they can be in the person’s possession.
 - Florida is one of 17 states including the Virgin Islands that require a secrecy sleeve (also known as a privacy sleeve, inner envelope, or identification envelope).⁶⁰
 - Florida is one of at least 23 states which addresses drop boxes or secure ballot intake stations for the return of voted vote by mail ballots.⁶¹
 - Florida is one of 27 states that conduct signature verification on returned absentee/mail ballots, which entails comparing the signature on the absentee/mail ballot envelope with a signature already on file for the voter.⁶² It is the most reported method of verification. Nine states, the Virgin Islands and Washington, D.C., verify that an absentee/mail ballot envelope has been signed but do not conduct signature verification.⁶³ Nine states require the signature of a witness in addition to the voter’s signature. These states may conduct signature verification as well.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ [Application For a Ballot by Mail \(state.tx.us\) https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/forms/5-15f.pdf](https://webservices.sos.state.tx.us/forms/5-15f.pdf)

⁵⁹ Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Texas. Some limit who may return including Alabama which requires the return only by the voter either in person or by mail. See [Appendix B - Table 10: Ballot Collection Laws, Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options \(ncsl.org\)](#)(July 2022), National Conference of State Legislatures.

⁶⁰ See [Appendix B - Table 13: States That Require Secretary Sleeves for Absentee/Mail Ballots, Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options \(ncsl.org\)](#)(July 2022), National Conference of State Legislatures.

⁶¹ See [Appendix B - Table 9: Ballot Drop Box Laws, Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options \(ncsl.org\)](#)(July 2022), National Conference of State Legislatures.

⁶² Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington and West Virginia. See [Appendix B - Table 14. How States Verify Voted Absentee/Mail Ballots, Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options \(ncsl.org\)](#)(July 2022), National Conference of State Legislatures.

⁶³ Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Kansas, Maryland, Nebraska, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virgin Islands and Wyoming.

⁶⁴ Alabama (two witnesses or a notary), Alaska (witness or a notary), Louisiana, Minnesota (witness or notary), North Carolina (two witnesses or a notary), Rhode Island* (two witnesses or a notary), South Carolina*, Virginia and Wisconsin. Military and overseas voters are exempt from this requirement.

Three states require the absentee/mail ballot envelope to be notarized.⁶⁵ Arkansas requires a copy of the voter's ID be returned with the absentee/mail ballot. Georgia requires the voter's driver's license number or state identification card number, which is compared with the voter's registration record. Minnesota and Ohio also require the driver's license number, though Minnesota also requires a witness signature. Ohio conducts signature verification. Within the last year, Texas enacted law to also require a personal identifying number on the returned ballot certificate for a ballot to be counted.

Logistical Considerations

The following section details the logistical considerations and challenges identified through the Department's review of the issues and processes set forth in Section 31 of Chapter 2022-73, Laws of Florida. Some of the considerations and challenges reflect input from the Florida Supervisors of Elections (FSE). In addition to conference discussions, the FSE submitted a workgroup report entitled *Vote-By-Mail Process Revision Workgroup Report*, Florida Supervisors of Elections (January 2023). See [Appendix A](#). The workgroup consisted of thirteen county Supervisors of Elections, plus the chair. The thirteen counties included representation from the small, medium, and large size counties.

Privacy

The FSE workgroup highlighted the paramount importance of securing the privacy of voters' personal identifying information if personal identifying information is required on vote-by-mail certificates. Unfortunately, signatures adjacent to personal identifying numbers may make the vote-by-mail ballot even more of a target for identity or voter fraud according to the workgroup.⁶⁶ The workgroup's report acknowledged that while "an additional return envelope to protect the certificate or re-engineering a new certificate envelope with a larger flap, once sealed, protects the information. . . [b]oth solutions create additional costs and logistical challenges in a complex system where time is already of the essence."⁶⁷

The FSE workgroup also foresees the challenge of redaction in response to public records requests. Unlike signatures, which may be publicly inspected but not copied, the Florida driver license number, state identification card number and social security number are confidential and exempt from public disclosure.⁶⁸ The Department also notes that a requirement to add a personal identifying number on a returned voted ballot certificate would impact the public observation of signature verifications. These public observations would have to incorporate new procedures to redact and preserve the confidential and exempt Florida driver license, state identification card or social security number on the certificate before certificates are presented or projected for viewing.

⁶⁵ Mississippi, Missouri, and Oklahoma

⁶⁶ See [Appendix A](#), p. 4, *Vote-By-Mail Process Revision Workgroup Report*, Florida Supervisors of Elections, January 2023.

⁶⁷ See [Appendix A](#), p. 3, *Vote-By-Mail Process Revision Workgroup Report*, Florida Supervisors of Elections, January 2023.

⁶⁸ Section [97.0585](#), Fla.Stat.

Capacity/Workload

The FSE report states that the first option to add an envelope would require added steps in the in-bound mail processing, while the second option to re-engineer a new certificate with a flap solution would “stretch the capabilities” of in-house equipment currently used by supervisors and mail house vendors. According to the FSE report, it is currently unknown whether vendors even have the capacity to produce such envelopes with flaps large enough to accommodate all the information required, particularly amid paper shortages and supply chain constraints.

The issue of supply chain challenges and paper shortage impacting ballots and envelopes has been a topic of ongoing national-level discussions led by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission level since at least 2020. Both state and federal election officials in consort with vendors continue to strategize mitigation efforts for which the risks remain high for future elections. Election officials across the country saw a significant uptick in lead time for request for supplies whether paper, equipment or other goods or products or services necessary to conduct an election.⁶⁹ Revamping the vote-by-mail ballot envelopes at this juncture could further strain availability of paper and equipment.

Florida’s vote-by-mail laws are tightly choreographed to manage volume and workload involved with processing requests, canvassing, ensuring vote-by-mail ballots are counted for eligible voters and reporting election results. One of the key factors attributed to Florida’s timely reporting of elections results is the change in law that allowed an expanded pre-election canvassing period for returned vote-by-mail ballots. In Florida, mail ballots may be canvassed as early as 40 days before an election, provided the pre-election testing of voting equipment is completed first. This falls within the five days after UOCAVA ballots are required to be sent⁷⁰ and coincides with the seven-day window to mail out domestic vote-by-mail ballots. Additional requirements to processing a redesigned vote-by-mail ballot with protect information would significantly add to the workload.

For context of volume, Supervisors of Elections in Florida received over 2.7 million vote-by-mail ballots for the 2022 General Election. In comparison, Georgia and Texas, two states who require personal identifying information on the vote-by-mail certificate, had substantially fewer vote-by-mail ballots to process, with over 256,000 vote-by-mail ballots for Georgia, and over 359,000 for Texas in the 2022 General Election.

In the 2020 Presidential Election year, 4.8 million registered voters voted by mail in the General Election. According to the FSE, any additional steps for opening and processing, including verification, seriously risk impacting the timely reporting election results which Florida voters, candidates and parties have come to expect, and may undermine confidence in the elections process.⁷¹

Challenges for Voting Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and Elderly Persons

As stated previously, federal and state laws require that persons with disabilities be afforded the same opportunity to vote that is equal to the opportunity offered to voters without disabilities, whether in

⁶⁹ [Supply Chain Considerations for Election Officials | U.S. Election Assistance Commission \(eac.gov\); https://www.eac.gov/election-officials/supply-chain-considerations-election-officials](https://www.eac.gov/election-officials/supply-chain-considerations-election-officials)

⁷⁰ See section [101.62\(4\)](#), Fla. Stat.; [52 U.S.C. §§ 20302](#). Ballots must be sent no later than 45 days before a federal election to uniformed military (absent stateside and overseas) and overseas civilians with requests on file.

⁷¹ See [Appendix A](#), p. 4, *Vote-By-Mail Process Revision Workgroup Report*, Florida Supervisors of Elections, January 2023

person or absentee.⁷² This applies to voting at the polls during early voting and on Election Day and equally to voting by mail.

While information about the number of registered voters who would fall in the category of persons with disabilities is not available, the statewide voter registration application solicits optional information as to whether a voter will need assistance at the polls, which streamlines the process for the voter so that he or she need not complete a declaration for assistance at the polls if he or she presents to vote during early voting or on Election Day. As of January 2023, over 462,528 of the registrants (which may range from 18 and older) have indicated that they may need assistance at the polls. Since this field is voluntarily reported, this figure underrepresents the unreported number of registered voters who may have physical or mental impairments.⁷³

A voter with disabilities who may avail themselves of online ballot delivery of a ballot or other assistive tools for marking a vote-by-mail ballot must still contend with the return of their ballot as electronic return is not allowed. This means the voter must mark the ballot, print the ballot, and still enclose the voted ballot in the required privacy sleeve or secrecy envelope and mailing envelope that is provided by mail concurrently to all voters who vote by mail. Any additional physical or other requirements for returning a voted ballot must ensure that legal requirements do not pose impediments to access to mail in voting for persons with disabilities. Input from this community is warranted as to the potential impact.

Should new requirements be implemented, a statewide voter education program including a video preceding the launch of its redesigned vote by-mail ballot envelope would be warranted for all voters.

Costs

The FSE workgroup stated that adding a personal identifying information element to a vote-by-mail certificate, as any redesign of a vote-by-mail ballot, will increase the cost of elections including material, labor, freight, vendor, facility, and postage costs. These costs, in turn, impact the vote-by-mail process.

Florida law requires vote-by-mail ballots to be sent first class by nonforwardable return if undeliverable mail. Costs reportedly can vary widely based on weight, volume, and presort level. A vote-by-mail ballot packet typically includes the ballot which may be one or more pages, an instructional insert, a secrecy sleeve or privacy envelope, and return mailing envelope. Aside from initial costs in redesigning a vote-by-mail ballot packet, the addition of a secrecy flap or another privacy envelope for the voter certificate will increase average cost. Very few counties provide pre-paid postage for the return of voted vote-by-mail ballots. The current cost ranges from one to two Forever Stamps (up to three ounces). If the postage is prepaid, it would be a metered rate (60 cents per ounce., 84 cents for two ounces, and \$1.08 for three ounces).⁷⁴

The USPS practice and policy is to deliver ballot envelopes even if it does not have sufficient postage. The cost is assessed against the local election official. Depending on the number of such returned

⁷² Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.; Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.; Help America Vote Act, 52 U.S.C. § 20901 et seq.

⁷³ According to the Center for Disease Control, 4.5 million adults in Florida have a disability, representing 26% or one in four adults in Florida. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/impacts/florida.html>

⁷⁴ Source: Communications with FSE President and Supervisor of Elections for Leon County, Mark Earley.

ballots, the cost can be significant. Military and overseas voters have an option to use special free postage paid envelopes. Regardless of postage prepaid or not, the USPS recommends that domestic nonmilitary voters mail back their voted ballots at least one week before the Election Day deadline to account for any unforeseen events or weather issues.⁷⁵ The U.S. Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) recommends even earlier [timelines](#) (see timetable at the bottom of FVAP's website) for absent military and overseas voters.⁷⁶

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures as of 2022, most states leave it to the voter to pay for postage for the return of a voted ballot in most states.⁷⁷ Nineteen states and Washington, D.C., provide return postage for mailed ballots.

As of 2019, in lieu of mailing back their voted ballots, Florida voters have the low-cost option to return their ballot in person themselves or to have someone else on their behalf⁷⁸ to a secure ballot intake station at to their Supervisor of Elections' office or to any designated secure ballot intake station during the early voting period.⁷⁹

Bilingual Requirements

The Department notes that any changes contemplated for the voting by mail process, including the envelope, must take into consideration the federal and state law requirements that require that registration or voting notices, forms, instructions, assistance or other materials or information relating to the electoral process, including ballots, be provided in the applicable minority language as well as in the English language. With the requirement for bilingual election materials, spacing to include instructions and fields to complete may be challenging with little option except to reduce font size to accommodate the limitations on vote-by-mail ballot material design.

⁷⁵ [Election Mail - about.usps.com](#)

⁷⁶ [Chapter 1 \(fvap.gov\)](#)

⁷⁷ See [Appendix B - Table 12: States with Postage-Paid Election Mail, Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options \(ncsl.org\)](#)(July 2022), National Conference of State Legislatures.

⁷⁸ Florida law limits the maximum number of ballots a person may possess including voted vote-by-mail ballots. See section [104.0616](#), Fla. Stat.

⁷⁹ See [Chapter 2019-162](#), Laws of Florida amending section [101.69](#), Fla. Stat.

Design Ballots/Envelopes

Florida law sets forth the requirements ranging from uniform standards for ballot format and content,⁸⁰ to instructions for vote-by-mail voters,⁸¹ to specifications for mailing envelope, secrecy sleeve/privacy envelope, and return envelope. Current requirements and instructions for the delivery and return of vote-by-mail ballots encompass the detailed process and instructions as shown below, all of which must also be made available in Spanish.⁸²

101.64 Delivery of vote-by-mail ballots; envelopes; form.—

(1)(a) The supervisor shall enclose with each vote-by-mail ballot two envelopes: a secrecy envelope, into which the absent elector shall enclose his or her marked ballot; and a mailing envelope, into which the absent elector shall then place the secrecy envelope, which shall be addressed to the supervisor and also bear on the back side a certificate in substantially the following form:

Note: Please Read Instructions Carefully Before
Marking Ballot and Completing Voter's Certificate.

VOTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, _____, do solemnly swear or affirm that I am a qualified and registered voter of _____ County, Florida, and that I have not and will not vote more than one ballot in this election. I understand that if I commit or attempt to commit any fraud in connection with voting, vote a fraudulent ballot, or vote more than once in an election, I can be convicted of a felony of the third degree and fined up to \$5,000 and/or imprisoned for up to 5 years. I also understand that failure to sign this certificate will invalidate my ballot.

_____(Date)_____ _____(Voter's Signature)_____

_____(E-Mail Address)_____ _____(Home Telephone Number)_____

_____(Mobile Telephone Number)_____

(b) Each return mailing envelope must bear the absent elector's name and any encoded mark used by the supervisor's office.

(c) A mailing envelope or secrecy envelope may not bear any indication of the political affiliation of an absent elector.

(2) The certificate shall be arranged on the back of the mailing envelope so that the line for the signature of the absent elector is across the seal of the envelope; however, no statement shall appear on the envelope which indicates that a signature of the voter must cross the seal of the envelope. The absent elector shall execute the certificate on the envelope.

(3) In lieu of the voter's certificate provided in this section, the supervisor of elections shall provide each person voting absentee under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act with the standard oath prescribed by the presidential designee.

(4) The supervisor shall mark, code, indicate on, or otherwise track the precinct of the absent elector for each vote-by-mail ballot.

(5) The secrecy envelope must include, in bold font, substantially the following message:

IN ORDER FOR YOUR VOTE-BY-MAIL BALLOT TO COUNT, YOUR SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS MUST RECEIVE YOUR BALLOT BY 7 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY. IF YOU WAIT TO MAIL YOUR BALLOT, YOUR VOTE MIGHT NOT COUNT. TO PREVENT THIS FROM OCCURRING, PLEASE MAIL OR TURN IN YOUR BALLOT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

⁸⁰ Rule 1S-2.032, Fla. Admin. Code

⁸¹ See section 101.64, Fla. Stat. (delivery of vote-by-mail ballots, envelopes; form); section 101.65, Fla. Stat. (instructions to absent voters).

⁸²At least two county jurisdictions (Broward and Miami) also provide voting materials in Creole in response to constituent demographics that are significant but not yet enough to trigger bilingual requirements under federal law.

101.65 Instructions to absent electors.—The supervisor shall enclose with each vote-by-mail ballot separate printed instructions in substantially the following form; however, where the instructions appear in capitalized text, the text of the printed instructions must be in bold font:

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY
BEFORE MARKING BALLOT.

1. **VERY IMPORTANT.** In order to ensure that your vote-by-mail ballot will be counted, it should be completed and returned as soon as possible so that it can reach the supervisor of elections of the county in which your precinct is located no later than 7 p.m. on the day of the election. However, if you are an overseas voter casting a ballot in a presidential preference primary or general election, your vote-by-mail ballot must be postmarked or dated no later than the date of the election and received by the supervisor of elections of the county in which you are registered to vote no later than 10 days after the date of the election. Note that the later you return your ballot, the less time you will have to cure any signature deficiencies, which is authorized until 5 p.m. on the 2nd day after the election.

2. Mark your ballot in secret as instructed on the ballot. You must mark your own ballot unless you are unable to do so because of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write.

3. Mark only the number of candidates or issue choices for a race as indicated on the ballot. If you are allowed to "Vote for One" candidate and you vote for more than one candidate, your vote in that race will not be counted.

4. Place your marked ballot in the enclosed secrecy envelope.

5. Insert the secrecy envelope into the enclosed mailing envelope which is addressed to the supervisor.

6. Seal the mailing envelope and completely fill out the Voter's Certificate on the back of the mailing envelope.

7. **VERY IMPORTANT.** In order for your vote-by-mail ballot to be counted, you must sign your name on the line above (Voter's Signature). A vote-by-mail ballot will be considered illegal and not be counted if the signature on the voter's certificate does not match the signature on record. The signature on file at the time the supervisor of elections in the county in which your precinct is located receives your vote-by-mail ballot is the signature that will be used to verify your signature on the voter's certificate. If you need to update your signature for this election, send your signature update on a voter registration application to your supervisor of elections so that it is received before your vote-by-mail ballot is received.

8. **VERY IMPORTANT.** If you are an overseas voter, you must include the date you signed the Voter's Certificate on the line above (Date) or your ballot may not be counted.

9. Mail, deliver, or have delivered the completed mailing envelope. Be sure there is sufficient postage if mailed. **THE COMPLETED MAILING ENVELOPE CAN BE DELIVERED TO THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS OF THE COUNTY IN WHICH YOUR PRECINCT IS LOCATED OR DROPPED OFF AT AN AUTHORIZED SECURE BALLOT INTAKE STATION, AVAILABLE AT EACH EARLY VOTING LOCATION.**

10. **FELONY NOTICE.** It is a felony under Florida law to accept any gift, payment, or gratuity in exchange for your vote for a candidate. It is also a felony under Florida law to vote in an election using a false identity or false address, or under any other circumstances making your ballot false or fraudulent.

The Department notes that while these requirements are explicit, a properly designed mail piece is a critical component to minimizing voter confusion, ensuring timely delivery, and obtaining cost-efficient election mail rates. Therefore, Supervisors of Elections work closely with mail piece design analysts who are specially trained USPS employees to advise and evaluate mail pieces for machinability (processing), automation compatibility, artwork specifications that can work with Intelligent Mail barcode services,⁸³

⁸³The Intelligent Mail barcode is a 65 bar USPS barcode used to sort and track letters and flats. <https://www.usps.com/election-mail/creating-imb-election-mail-kit.pdf> Many Supervisors of Elections also use Informed Visibility to track their mail pieces in near-real time, which helps Supervisors identify mail delivery trends and predicted delivery dates.

and automation-based prices.⁸⁴ Supervisors of Elections must submit their questions and templates (as may be modified) months in advance to avoid unanticipated costs and/or untimely delivery for the mail pieces as designed or redesigned.

Only two counties have redesigned their vote-by-mail ballot envelope in a way to protect the signed voter certificate from plain view.⁸⁵ Brevard and Duval counties implemented their redesigned envelope in 2010. The following details information about their envelopes and the impact:

- According to the Brevard County Supervisor of Elections, each returned vote-by-mail ballots must be manually ‘deflapped’ prior to running it through the sorter. No special equipment exists for that purpose. The redesigned vote-by-mail envelope costs more than the regular envelope. Additionally, there are a limited number of vendors that produce envelopes with signature flap. The process for ‘deflapping’ requires a significant number of staff. Brevard County relies on temporary staff to help with this time-consuming process. As noted by Brevard County, this process can impact timely reporting if a large number of voted ballots are closer in time to Election Day. For example, in the 2022 General Election, Brevard County reported that over 6,000 vote-by-mail ballots were returned on Election Day hours before the 7:00 p.m. deadline. This directly impacted Brevard County’s ability to complete its reporting of its preliminary election night results until 3:00 a.m. the next day. Over 34% of voters (92,641) in Brevard voted by mail in the 2022 General Election. Brevard County does provide a prepaid postage return envelope. A link to a vote-by-mail instructional video is currently available on the Brevard County Supervisor of Elections’ webpage relating to vote-by-mail ballots.⁸⁶ See [Appendix F](#) for vote-by-mail materials and screen shots of the instructional video.
- Duval County Supervisor of Elections similarly reported that the flaps of returned voted ballot envelopes must be pulled off by hand and that no special equipment exists for that purpose. The processing time for vote-by-mail ballots can grow exponentially when the county has more than a two-page ballot. The redesign of the vote-by-mail envelope with the flap redesign cost 25 cents more than a regular return ballot envelope. The time-consuming processing of these styled vote-by-mail ballot envelopes has also impacted Duval County’s ability to complete reporting preliminary election night results until the following day. Over 18% of Duval County voters (over 61,289) voted by mail in the 2022 General Election. This represents an additional cost of \$15,000 for the special envelope over a regular styled vote-by-mail ballot envelope. Duval County provides prepaid postage return envelopes for its voters. The Supervisor of Elections’ office has an instructional video that details the process for completing a vote-by-mail ballot and returning the voted ballot. This vote-by-mail instructional video is currently available on their webpage relating to vote-by-mail ballots.⁸⁷ See [Appendix G](#) for photos of screen shots of the instructional video.

⁸⁴ <https://pe.usps.com/MailpieceDesign/Index>

⁸⁵ Information obtained through communications with Brevard County Supervisor of Elections’ Tim Bobanic and Duval County Supervisor of Elections’ Mike Hogan.

⁸⁶ <https://www.votebrevard.gov/Ballots-by-Mail/Mail-Ballot-Information>

⁸⁷ <https://www.duvalelections.com/Voter-Information/Vote-By-Mail>

Recommendations

While the FSE workgroup recommended unanimously to not make any further changes to the vote-by-mail process as suggested in the legislative proposal, it asked that if any such legislative changes are proposed, that implementation of such changes be postponed until after the 2024 Presidential Election cycle.⁸⁸

The Florida Legislature’s election integrity measures enacted within the last three years have significantly enhanced the security and transparency of the voting process, particularly as applied to voting by mail. This, in turn, fortifies and boosts voter confidence in the electoral process.

One of the current strengths of Florida’s electoral process is the Supervisors of Elections’ ability to meet their statutory duties for conducting elections, canvassing, and reporting election results timely and accurately within existing time constraints and deadlines. Any proposed changes to the vote-by-mail process must consider the significant impact on these activities and the voter. This is particularly important as Florida heads into a Presidential election cycle in which the voter turnout will likely exceed 70%. This is 20% higher than the turnout in the 2022 General Election.

Therefore, the Department of State recommends the following legislative proposals in the continuing effort to review and secure the integrity of elections:

- Prescribe a statewide uniform application form to request a vote-by-mail ballot. The form must include fields for the information required in section 101.62(1), Florida Statutes, including signature, Florida driver license or state identification card number, or last four digits of the social security number, and declaration or re-affirmation of legal residential address.
- Clarify that Supervisors of Elections must verify the personal identifying number in the vote-by-mail ballot request against their records and/or the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Once verified, the number must be added to the voter’s registration record if not already in the record. This is our recommendation for populating such numbers into the Florida Voter Registration System for those registered voters who do not have those numbers on file. This process would build on election integrity measures adopted in 2021 which require voters to submit a personal identifying number whenever updating an address, name, or party in the voter’s record. This also would ensure that these personal identifying numbers are consistent across voter and voting records.
- Require Supervisors of Elections to verify the voter’s signature on a written request for a vote-by-mail ballot.
- Eliminate requests by telephone for vote-by-mail ballot.
- Require vote-by-mail ballot envelopes to clearly state “Do Not Forward.”
- Prescribe when a voter or his/her designee may pick up a vote-by-mail ballot within early voting when an emergency precludes voting at the polls; allow for exceptions under certain circumstances.

⁸⁸ See [Appendix A](#), p. 5, *Vote-By-Mail Process Revision Workgroup Report*, Florida Supervisors of Elections, January 2023.

- Require first-time voters who registered by mail, have never voted in Florida, and have never been issued a Florida driver license, Florida state identification card or a social security card to vote in person the first time and conform vote-by-mail ballot return instructions with instructions for regular vote-by-mail ballots.
- Prescribe circumstances under which a vote-by-mail ballot envelope returned with two ballots will not count.
- Prescribe circumstances under which a vote-by-mail ballot may still be counted if the voter changes legal residency between counties.

Appendices



Florida Supervisors of Elections

MyFloridaElections.com

VOTE-BY-MAIL PROCESS

REVISION WORKGROUP REPORT

JANUARY 2023

Vote-by-Mail Process Revision Workgroup

BACKGROUND

During the 2022 regular session, the Florida Legislature passed SB 524, which was signed into law by Governor DeSantis. Section 31 addressed voter privacy, election integrity and access for the vote-by-mail (VBM) provisions as currently outlined in the Florida Election Code. The exact verbiage for Section 31 is as follows:

Section 31. (1) It is the intent of the Legislature to
1179 balance the security of vote-by-mail balloting with voter
1180 privacy and election transparency. The Legislature finds that
1181 further modifications to procedures governing vote-by-mail
1182 balloting would help to further ensure election integrity while
1183 also protecting voters from identity theft and preserving the
1184 public's right to participate in election processes. To achieve
1185 this purpose, the Legislature directs the Department of State to
1186 provide a plan to prescribe the use of a Florida driver license
1187 number, Florida identification card number, social security
1188 number, or any part thereof to confirm the identity of each
1189 elector returning a vote-by-mail ballot.
1190 (2) The Department of State shall review issues involving
1191 the feasibility, development, and implementation of such a plan,
1192 including issues related to:
1193 (a) In coordination with other agencies such as the
1194 Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, obtaining a
1195 Florida driver license number or Florida identification card
1196 number and the last four digits of a social security number for
1197 each registered voter who does not have such numbers on file in
1198 the Florida Voter Registration System.
1199 (b) Populating such numbers in the Florida Voter
1200 Registration System.
1201 (c) Protecting identifying numbers submitted with a vote
1202 by-mail ballot, including, but not limited to, prescribing the
1203 form of the return mailing envelope.
1204 (d) Any necessary modifications to canvassing procedures

1205 for vote-by-mail ballots.
1206 (e) Costs associated with development and implementation of
1207 the plan.
1208 (f) A proposal for a program to educate electors on changes
1209 to the vote-by-mail process.
1210 (g) A proposal for including a declaration of an elector's
1211 current address of legal residence with each written request for
1212 a vote-by-mail ballot.
1213 (3) In the course of reviewing the required issues, the
1214 Department of State must, at a minimum:
1215 (a) Review relevant processes of other states.
1216 (b) Review relevant federal law.
1217 (c) Seek input from supervisors of elections, which must
1218 include representation from supervisors of counties with large,
1219 medium, and small populations.
1220 (4) By February 1, 2023, the Department of State shall
1221 submit to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the
1222 House of Representatives a report on the plan and draft
1223 legislation for any statutory changes needed to implement the
1224 plan, including any necessary public records exemptions.

In accordance with SB 524, Section 31, a workgroup was commissioned by Supervisor of Elections Mark Earley, President of the Florida Supervisors of Elections (FSE), comprised of the following Supervisors:

Chair

The Honorable Brian Cortey – Pasco County

Members

The Honorable Maureen Baird – Citrus County

The Honorable Tim Bobanic – Brevard County

The Honorable Tomi Brown – Columbia County

The Honorable Chris Chambless – Clay County

The Honorable Mark Earley – Leon County

The Honorable Lori Edwards – Polk County

The Honorable Alan Hays – Lake County

The Honorable Kaiti Lenhart – Flagler County

The Honorable Julie Marcus - Pinellas County
The Honorable Charles Overturf – Putnam County
The Honorable Joe Scott – Broward County
The Honorable Amanda Seyfang – Bradford County
The Honorable Christina White – Miami Dade County

The following analysis regarding SB 524, Section 31 is derived from responses to a survey sent to all 67 Florida Supervisors, a forum discussion during the FSE 2022 Mid-Winter Conference that included vendors and representatives from the Department of State, and the workgroup's individual and collective expertise.

Florida Supervisors of Elections remain committed to protecting Florida voters and ensuring both the integrity of and public faith in elections.

Security, Logistics and Time:

Protecting mail ballot voters' personally identifiable information (PII), e.g.: driver license number, Florida identification card number or the last four digits of their social security number, is of paramount concern when requiring voters to write this information on their certificate envelopes. Proposed remedies to protect PII include adding an additional return mailing envelope to protect the certificate or engineering a new certificate envelope with a larger flap that, once sealed, protects the information. Both solutions create additional costs and logistical challenges in a complex system where time is already of the essence.

First, providing a return mailing envelope for the certificate envelope will both require the extra steps involved in removing the certificate from the mailing envelope during in-bound mail processing.

Alternatively, newly engineered envelopes with larger flaps will stretch capabilities of in-house equipment used by Supervisors and the mail house vendors used by many counties. It is unclear if vendors have the capacity to produce such envelopes amid ongoing paper shortages and supply chain constraints.

Regardless, an automated computer solution is currently not available to image PII on the certificate envelope and display it on election-worker computer terminals for human verification. Thus, verifying PII would be a manual process in which election workers must handle every certificate envelope at their workstations -- adding risk for error and an unknown amount of time.

Mail ballots must be received 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. Any additional time required to verify PII will result in delays of reporting election results.

Additionally, requiring voters to provide PII introduces another opportunity for error; we cannot quantify how many voters may write it illegibly or return certificate envelopes without it.

If voters do provide the information legibly, another confounding factor remains. Most Florida voters register to vote at Tax Collector's Offices while obtaining a driver license. This results in a driver license number being the only PII data field in most voter files. Contrastingly, most voters provide the last four digits of their social security number when asked to verify their identities using PII. As such, a disparity exists between what information is in the voter file and what information voters provide to be verified. Supervisors do not have tools to reconcile these differences.

In all cases, when voters do not provide the information, write it illegibly or provide different information than what is in the file, under current law, voters have no cure option. If the Legislature provides cure options, presumably Supervisors would follow the same process for signature deficiencies which includes sending these voters a letter via first class mail when time permits, a text message, an email (if an email address exists in the voter file) and a phone call. Without increasing legally mandated deadlines, timely certification may be jeopardized.

A cascading effect from delays of opening additional envelopes, the process involved in verifying PII and potentially offering the opportunity to cure deficiencies on certificate envelopes dominos into delays of tabulating votes and reporting results.

Requiring voters to provide PII adjacent to their signatures makes VBM mailings a high-value target for those seeking to commit identity theft, voter fraud and/or undermine faith in elections administration.

It should be noted that Florida law requires voters to confirm their PII before Supervisors are allowed to mail them a ballot. In addition, ballots are not forwardable; voters who want a ballot sent to an address that is not on file, must provide that request in writing; and every signature on a certificate envelope must be verified using the signature in the voter file.

Additionally, Section 97.0585(1)(c), Florida Statutes exempts the social security number, driver license number, and identification number of a voter from public viewing outlined in Section 119.07(1), Florida Statutes. The proposed PII requirements would strain compliance with exemption laws and the provisions in Section 101.572. Even if precautions are taken to protect PII, the FSE fears the stated goal of Section 31 to protect voters from identity theft achieves exactly the opposite.

A skeptical public already expresses concerns around identify theft and postulating that bad actors discard ballots from competing political parties. Section 31 may exacerbate this by adding new concerns that bad actors could remove the concealment flap to steal voter's identities and/or steal a highly visible voted certificate envelopes prior to receipt by supervisors.

Cost to Taxpayers/Voters:

Each time a process or legal requirement is added, costs to conduct elections increases. Similarly, adding the PII element to the election process will increase material, labor, freight, postage, vendor and facility costs.

Perhaps the greatest cost is intangible and unquantifiable. Floridians -- and voters across the nation -- largely trust our election results because they are reported within hours of polls closing. This trust that exists is hard-won and tenuous. Examples for how this trust is violated can be found in states where results take days to be reported. We fear the same fate will befall Florida if this law is enacted.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Florida has been a nationwide model for timely reporting of election results. The provisions within Section 31 would result in delays that will rankle the respective election stakeholders, to include voters, the public, media, and candidates.

Unanimously, Florida Supervisors of Elections view this legislative proposal as unnecessary and lacking adequate feasibility for implementation. Therefore, with regard to the tenets of Section 31 contained in SB 524, the workgroup -- and for the record -- all Supervisors of Elections in the State of Florida, oppose legislative efforts to implement this provision of Florida Law.

It is the recommendation of this workgroup to cease any further implementation of Section 31. However, if the legislature desires to proceed, we recommend not adopting the provisions prior to the 2024 presidential election cycle and determining statewide feasibility.

As noted above, the concerns and objections with implementing Section 31 of SB 524 primarily centered on securing PII, time, logistics, and cost. Voter education, however, must not be overlooked. Such a seismic change in vote-by-mail requirements must be communicated to every stakeholder: voters, candidates, political parties, and committees alike.

We, the Supervisors of the above referenced workgroup, submit this report to Supervisor of Elections Mark Earley, President of the Florida Supervisors of Elections.

Respectfully submitted on January 10, 2023.

Appendix B: NCSL Report: Voting Outside the Polling Place: Absentee, All-Mail and other Voting at Home Options (ncsl.org)

Updated July 12, 2022, National Conference of State Legislatures. Links to Tables below can be found through the link above.

Table 1: States with No-Excuse Absentee Voting

[Table](#)

Table 2: Excuses to Vote Absentee

[Table](#)

Table 3: States With Permanent Absentee Voting Lists

[Table](#)

Table 4: Removing Voters From Permanent Absentee Lists

[Table](#)

Table 5: Applying for an Absentee Ballot

[Table](#)

Table 6: States With Online Absentee Ballot Application Portals

[Table](#)

Table 7: When States Mail Out Absentee/Mail Ballots

[Table](#)

Table 8: How States Verify Absentee Ballot Applications

[Table](#)

Table 9: Ballot Drop Box Laws

[Table](#)

Table 10: Ballot Collection Laws

[Table](#)

Table 11: Receipt and Postmark Deadlines for Absentee/Mail Ballots

[Table](#)

Table 12: States With Postage-Paid Election Mail

[Table](#)

Table 13: States that Must Provide Secrecy Sleeves for Absentee/Mail Ballots

[Table](#)

Table 14: How States Verify Voted Absentee/Mail Ballots

[Table](#)

Table 15: States With Signature Cure Processes

[Table](#)

Table 16: When Absentee/Mail Ballot Processing and Counting Can Begin

[Table](#)

Table 17: How Election Results Are Reported

[Table](#)

Table 18: States With All-Mail Elections

[Table](#)

Appendix C: Bilingual Requirements by Jurisdiction

Covered Jurisdiction	Minority Language	Designation Pursuant to Voting Rights Act Language Provisions (In 2021, U.S. Census designated Collier (Spanish) and Glades (American Indian) under section 203. See Federal Register Vol. 86, No. 233 (December 8, 2021) 2021-26547.pdf (govinfo.gov) .)
State of Florida	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503) -statewide issued or prescribed voter registration/voting forms/materials/information
Broward	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503) - County voluntarily offers materials in Creole
Collier	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
DeSoto	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Glades	American Indian	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Hardee	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Hendry	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Hillsborough	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Lee	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Miami-Dade	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503) - County voluntarily offers materials in Creole
Orange	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Osceola	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503); County previously offered Spanish based on 2002 consent order based on alleged violations of Section 208 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10508) and Section 2 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10301) which was released in 2005 but federal monitoring still occurs in county resulting from subsequent cases
Palm Beach	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Pinellas	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Polk	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
Seminole	Spanish	Section 203 , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10503)
All counties	Spanish	Section “(e)” , Voting Rights Act (52 USCA 10303 (e)); All counties; see www.flrules.org for Rule 1S-2.032 , eff.04/23/2020 regarding uniform ballots and language, and Rule 1S-2.034 , eff. 04/23/ 2020 regarding polling place procedures for language assistance for statewide application. Prior history: Volusia County is a formally designated section (e) county by virtue of 2009 stipulation to provide expanded assistance and bilingual materials including ballots based on Section (e) allegations by Puerto-Rican born residents U.S. citizens in American-flag schools where Spanish was the dominant language.

Appendix D: Application for Georgia Absentee Ballot (Request)

(Two-page application)



Application for Georgia Official Absentee Ballot

The information provided in this document is made under oath and penalty of law and will be used for official government purposes. **When you sign this application, you affirm that you are a citizen of the U.S., currently reside in Georgia and are eligible to vote in Georgia.** Giving false information on this application violates Georgia law and is punishable by a fine up to \$100,000, imprisonment for up to 10 years, or both.

Please print clearly. Be sure to complete all **required** sections.

Date of Election Required	1	Date of Primary, Election, or Runoff (mm/dd/yyyy) _____ The application must be received by your election office* 11 days before the election.		
Print voter name Required	2	Your name as it appears on your voter registration. First _____ Middle _____ Last _____ Suffix _____		
Type of ballot Required in primary	3	<input type="checkbox"/> Democratic <input type="checkbox"/> Republican <input type="checkbox"/> Non Partisan (will not have ANY party candidates listed)		
Residential address Required Your ballot will be sent here unless you provide a temporary mailing address.	4	The residential or mailing address on your voter registration. If you no longer reside at the address where you are registered to vote, contact your county election office prior to submitting this application. Address _____ City _____ County _____ GA Zip _____		
Temporary ballot mailing address Only if you are temporarily living outside the county** and want your ballot sent to this address.	5	This address must be in a different county** than the one where you are registered unless you are physically disabled or detained in jail or other detention facility. Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____		
Contact information Recommended	6	Phone number _____ Email address _____		
Voter identification Required Print carefully. This information will be used to verify your identity. Failure to provide accurate information may delay processing your application. You must provide your date of birth AND • a Georgia Driver's License or Identification Card number OR • a copy of an acceptable identification from the list in the instructions.	7	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>Date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy) _____</div> <div style="text-align: center;">AND</div> <div>Georgia Driver's License Number or State Identification Card Number <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> OR <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have a Georgia Driver's License or Identification Card and I am providing a copy of acceptable identification below.</p> <div style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your identification on your ID card or document is visible. • Take a photo of your full completed application and submit it electronically to your elections office* (addresses are online: elections.sos.ga.gov/Elections/countyregistrars.do). You may also submit a hard copy of your application via U.S. mail or in person to your elections office*. • If your acceptable form of identification does not fit in this box, please attach a copy and submit it with your application. </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Place identification here if you did not provide a Georgia driver's license or ID number</p>		
Voter oath and signature Required Use a pen. No electronic signatures allowed.	8	<p>I, the undersigned, do swear and affirm that I am eligible to vote in Georgia, am a citizen of the U.S. and the facts presented in this application are true. By signing this oath, you are swearing that you are the voter requesting an absentee ballot. Signing this oath on behalf of another voter violates Georgia law and is punishable by a fine up to \$100,000, imprisonment for up to 10 years, or both.</p> <p>Voter, sign and date here (Required)</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%; border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">X</td> <td style="width: 30%; border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">Date (mm/dd/yyyy)</td> </tr> </table>	X	Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
X	Date (mm/dd/yyyy)			

If you received this application with your information pre-filled, received multiple or duplicate copies of this application in the mail after you have already requested, received, or voted an absentee ballot, or if an unauthorized person offers to return your absentee ballot application, please report this to elections@sos.ga.gov.

Form continues ►

APP-21_V2

This is NOT an official government publication and was NOT provided to you by any governmental entity and this is NOT a ballot. It is being distributed by: _____

Name and address of person, organization, or other entity distributing this document.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 521-2-381(a)(1)(c)(iii).

Application for Georgia Official Absentee Ballot

Print voter name

Required

9 Your name as it appears on your voter registration.
 First _____ Middle _____ Last _____ Suffix _____

Assisting a voter?

If yes, the assistant must complete this section. **Voter assistance is only allowed if the voter is illiterate or physically disabled.**

10 By signing as assisting the voter, you are swearing under oath that the voter is entitled to assistance. Assisting a voter who is not eligible for assistance in completing this application violates Georgia law and is punishable by a fine up to \$100,000 or imprisonment for up to 10 years, or both.

Assistant's name _____

Assistant's signature _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy) _____

Requesting a ballot on behalf of a voter?

If yes, complete this section. The voter must be physically disabled or temporarily residing out of the county** and must still be eligible to vote in the county** where he or she is registered.

11 I swear that the facts contained in this application are true and that I am either the mother, father, grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, spouse, son, daughter, niece, nephew, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law or sister-in-law of the age of 18 and **acknowledge that making a false statement on this application regarding my relationship to the voter violates Georgia law and is punishable by a fine up to \$1,000, 12 months in jail, or both.**

I swear (or affirm) that the above-named voter is: (check one)
 physically disabled
 temporarily residing out of the county**

Signature of authorized and eligible requestor

Relationship to voter _____

Ballot request opt-in

Optional
 If you meet the eligibility criteria, you may opt-in to receive an absentee ballot for the rest of the elections cycle without making another application.

12 I opt-in to receive an absentee ballot for the rest of the election cycle.
 I am eligible for the reason selected below:
 D- Disabled. I am physically disabled
 E- Elderly. I am 65 years of age or older
 U- UOCAVA. I am a uniformed service member, spouse or dependent of a uniformed service member, or other US citizen residing overseas. (Complete the information to the right)

UOCAVA Voters only
 My current status is (check one)
 MOS - Military Overseas
 MST - Military Stateside
 OST - Overseas Temporary Resident
 OSP - Overseas Permanent Resident (may vote for federal offices only)

(Optional) By entering my email, I request that my absentee ballot be transmitted to me electronically.
 Email _____

Acceptable forms of identification if you do not have a Georgia Driver's License or State Identification Card Number

Identification with your photograph:

- United States Passport
- Georgia voter identification card
- Other valid identification card issued by a branch, department, agency, or entity of the State of Georgia, any other state, or the United States authorized by law to issue personal identification
- United States military identification card
- Employee identification card issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States government, Georgia state government, or Georgia county, municipality, board, authority, or any other entity of the state of Georgia
- Tribal identification card

Documents that show your name and address:

- Current utility bill
- Bank statement
- Paycheck
- Government check
- Other government document

How to return your absentee ballot application

Absentee ballot applications must be received 11 days before the date of the election.

You can return the form by:

- mail
- email (as an attachment)
- fax
- in-person at your elections or registrar's office

Your County Board of Registrar's Office information can be found online:

<https://elections.sos.ga.gov/Elections/countyregistrars.do>

*In state, county, and federal elections, your elections office is your county elections office. In municipal elections, your elections office is your municipal elections office.

**Or, in municipal elections, municipality.

No person or entity other than the elector, a relative authorized to request an absentee ballot for such elector, a person signing as assisting an illiterate or physically disabled elector with his or her application, a common carrier charged with returning the ballot application, an absentee ballot clerk, a registrar, or a law enforcement officer in the course of an investigation shall handle or return an elector's completed absentee ballot application. **Handling a completed absentee ballot application by any person or entity other than as allowed in this paragraph is a misdemeanor.**

Ballot	Dates	ID Shown	For office use only
Dist. Combo _____	Received _____	GA DL _____	I certify that the above named voter <input type="checkbox"/> is eligible <input type="checkbox"/> is not eligible _____ Registrar signature _____
Precinct _____	ISS _____	Other _____	
Ballot # _____	Certified _____	Voter Reg # _____	
	Rejected _____		
Ballot to be: <input type="checkbox"/> Mailed electronically	<input type="checkbox"/> Delivered to voter in hospital by Registrars or Deputy	<input type="checkbox"/> Voted in office (municipal only)	

This is NOT an official government publication and was NOT provided to you by any governmental entity and this is NOT a ballot.

It is being distributed by: _____
 Name and address of person, organization, or other entity distributing this document.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A 521-2-381(a)(1)(c)(iii).

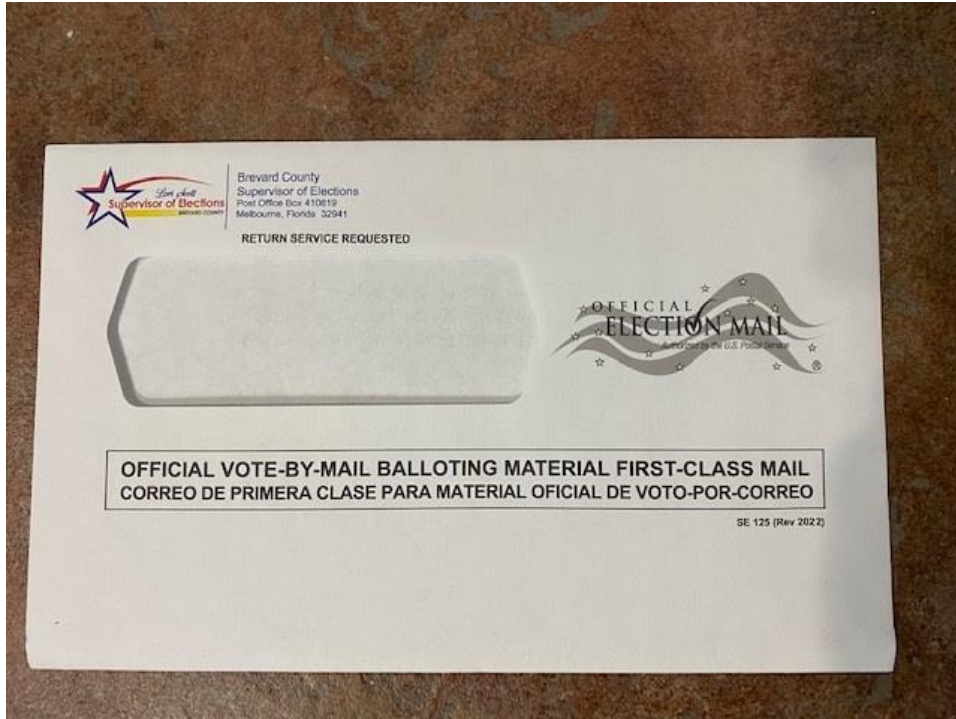
Appendix E: Texas Application to Request a Vote-by-Mail Ballot

Application for a Ballot by Mail			
<p>If someone helps you complete this form or mails, emails or faxes this form for you, that person must complete the Witness/Assistant Box 6 below. If you email or fax this form to the Early Voting Clerk, you must also send the original hardcopy to the Early Voting Clerk. If you are faxing or emailing this form on or near the deadline to apply for a Ballot by Mail, you must send the original hardcopy so that the Clerk receives it no later than the fourth business day after the day the Clerk received your email or fax. Original signatures are required on both the fax or email image and the physical hard copy. Electronic signatures are not permitted. THE HARDCOPY OF THIS APPLICATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE EARLY VOTING CLERK AND MEET ALL LEGALLY REQUIRED DEADLINES. Please read the instructions on the back of this form completely. If you have any questions, please call the Early Voting Clerk in your county of registration or the office of the Texas Secretary of State at 1-800-252-8683 or log on to www.sos.texas.gov for a list of County Early Voting Clerks and their email and physical addresses.</p>			
<p>1. Voter Information: Please print all information clearly and legibly</p> <p>Name: _____ <small>Last, First, Middle Suffix (Jr, Sr)</small></p> <p>Residence Address as shown on your Voter Registration Certificate</p> <p>Address: _____ <small>Street Apt. # (if any) City State Zip Code</small></p> <p>Optional Information: Providing this information is helpful to the Early Voting Clerk, but not required.</p> <p>Date of Birth: ____/____/____ VUID#: _____ Pct #: _____</p> <p>Email: _____ Tel #: _____</p>	<p>YOU MUST PROVIDE ONE of the following numbers</p> <p>Texas Driver's License, Texas Personal Identification Number or Election Identification Certificate Number issued by the Department of Public Safety (NOT your voter registration VUID#)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>If you do not have a Texas Driver's License, Texas Personal Identification Number or a Texas Election Identification Certificate Number, give the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number</p> <p>_____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have not been issued a Texas Driver's License/Texas Personal Identification Number/Texas Election Identification Certificate or Social Security Number</p>		
<p>2. Mail my Ballot to:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My Residence Address (as listed on my Voter Registration Certificate)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other Address - You may use the Other Address line only if the other address fits one of the categories below</p> <p>Address: _____ <small>Apt. # (if any) City State Zip Code</small></p> <p>My Other Address is: (Check one)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The mailing address listed on my Voter Registration Certificate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Address Outside the County (voters absent from the county)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hospital, Nursing Home, Long-Term Care Facility, Retirement or Assisted Living Center or a Relative _____ (Indicate Relationship)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Address of the Jail/Civil Commitment Facility or a Relative _____ (Indicate Relationship)</p>			
<p>3. Reason For Voting by Mail:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 65 Years of Age or Older</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disability (as defined in Texas Election Code 82.002(a), see instructions on reverse) By checking this box, "I affirm that I have a sickness or physical condition that prevents me from appearing at the polling place on Election Day without a likelihood of needing personal assistance or of injuring my health."</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Expected to give birth within three weeks before or after Election Day</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Expected Absence from the County (You may apply for a ballot for one election and its resulting runoff, if your dates of absence from the county include both elections)</p> <p>Date you can begin to receive mail at your out of county address: ____/____/____ Date of return to residence address: ____/____/____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Confined in Jail or Involuntary Civil Commitment (You may only apply for a ballot for one election and any resulting runoff)</p>			
<p>4. Send me a Ballot for the Following Elections:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top; padding-right: 10px;"> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Annual Application Send me a ballot for all Elections in this voting year (January – December) Annual Applications only available for voters 65 and older and voters with disabilities. You must select a party if you wish to vote in a primary. Select only one party's primary and its resulting runoff.</p> <p>Primary Election (even numbered years only)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Democratic Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Republican Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Send me a Primary Ballot</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Uniform Election Dates</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> November Election <input type="checkbox"/> May Election (not a primary runoff)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff <input type="checkbox"/> Other Special Election: _____ (Name or Date of Special Election, if known)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Primary Election (even numbered years only)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Democratic Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Republican Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p>(Voters who are absent from the county or confined in jail/civily committed may only apply for one election and its resulting runoff.)</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Annual Application Send me a ballot for all Elections in this voting year (January – December) Annual Applications only available for voters 65 and older and voters with disabilities. You must select a party if you wish to vote in a primary. Select only one party's primary and its resulting runoff.</p> <p>Primary Election (even numbered years only)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Democratic Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Republican Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Send me a Primary Ballot</p>	<p>Uniform Election Dates</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> November Election <input type="checkbox"/> May Election (not a primary runoff)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff <input type="checkbox"/> Other Special Election: _____ (Name or Date of Special Election, if known)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Primary Election (even numbered years only)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Democratic Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Republican Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p>(Voters who are absent from the county or confined in jail/civily committed may only apply for one election and its resulting runoff.)</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Annual Application Send me a ballot for all Elections in this voting year (January – December) Annual Applications only available for voters 65 and older and voters with disabilities. You must select a party if you wish to vote in a primary. Select only one party's primary and its resulting runoff.</p> <p>Primary Election (even numbered years only)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Democratic Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Republican Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Send me a Primary Ballot</p>	<p>Uniform Election Dates</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> November Election <input type="checkbox"/> May Election (not a primary runoff)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff <input type="checkbox"/> Other Special Election: _____ (Name or Date of Special Election, if known)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Primary Election (even numbered years only)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Democratic Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Republican Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Any Resulting Runoff</p> <p>(Voters who are absent from the county or confined in jail/civily committed may only apply for one election and its resulting runoff.)</p>		
<p>5. Sign Here:</p> <p>"I certify that the information given in this application is true, and I understand that giving false information in this application is a crime."</p> <p>X _____ Date: ____/____/____</p> <p>If applicant is unable to sign or make a mark (in the presence of a witness), the witness must complete the witness portion in Box 6 below. The signature or mark of the voter in the blank above must be an original signature made with a pen and ink. Electronic signatures are not permitted.</p>			
<p>6. If someone helps you complete this form or mails, emails or faxes the form for you, that person must complete the section below.</p> <p>Instructions for Witnesses and Assistants: See back of this form for the definitions of Witness and Assistant.</p> <p>Check one or both boxes below if you served as a Witness, an Assistant or both. All information below must be completed!</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the applicant is unable to make a mark, you must check this box and complete all information below. Do not sign for the voter in Box 5.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Witness – If you are acting as a Witness to the applicant's signature or mark or signing on the applicant's behalf, you must state your relationship to the applicant here: _____ (Indicate Relationship)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assistant – If you assisted the applicant in completing this application in the applicant's presence or mailed/emailed/faxed the application on behalf of the applicant. _____ (Indicate Relationship)</p> <p>Failure to complete this section is a Class A Misdemeanor if applicant's signature was witnessed or applicant was assisted in completing this application.</p> <p>X _____</p> <p>Signature of Witness/Assistant _____ Printed Name of Witness/Assistant _____</p> <p>Street Address _____ Apt. # (if any) _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____</p>			

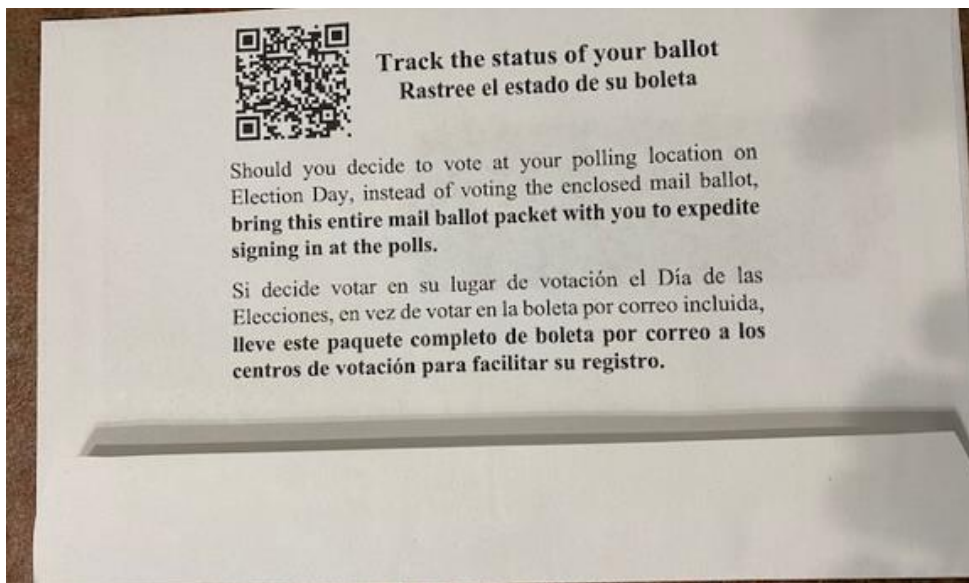
Este formulario está disponible en Español. Para conseguir la versión en Español favor llamar sin cargo al 1-800-252-8683 a la oficina del Secretario de Estado o la Secretaria de Votación Adelantada.

Appendix F: Brevard County Supervisor of Elections' Vote-by-Mail Election Materials – Photos and screen shots of instructional video

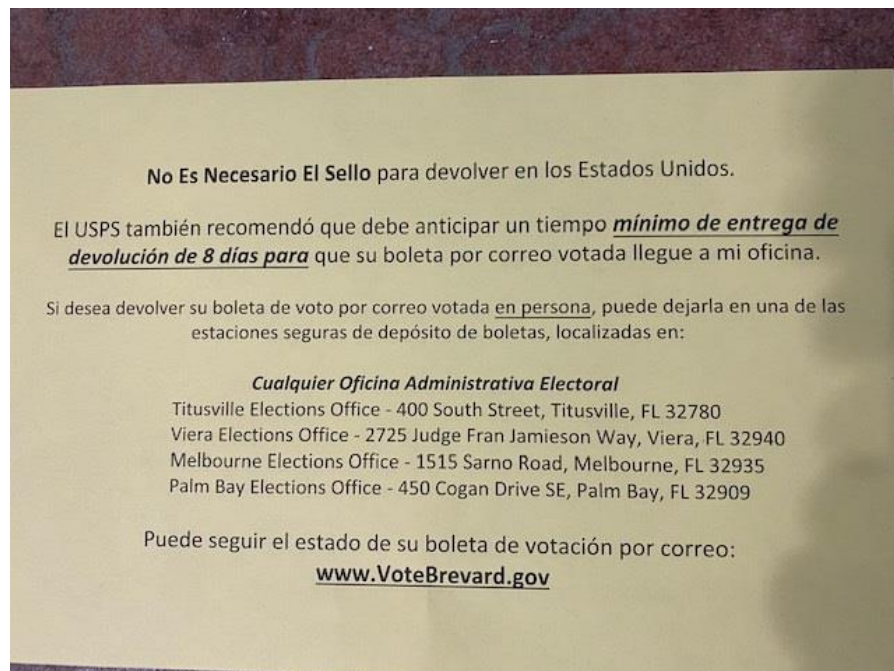
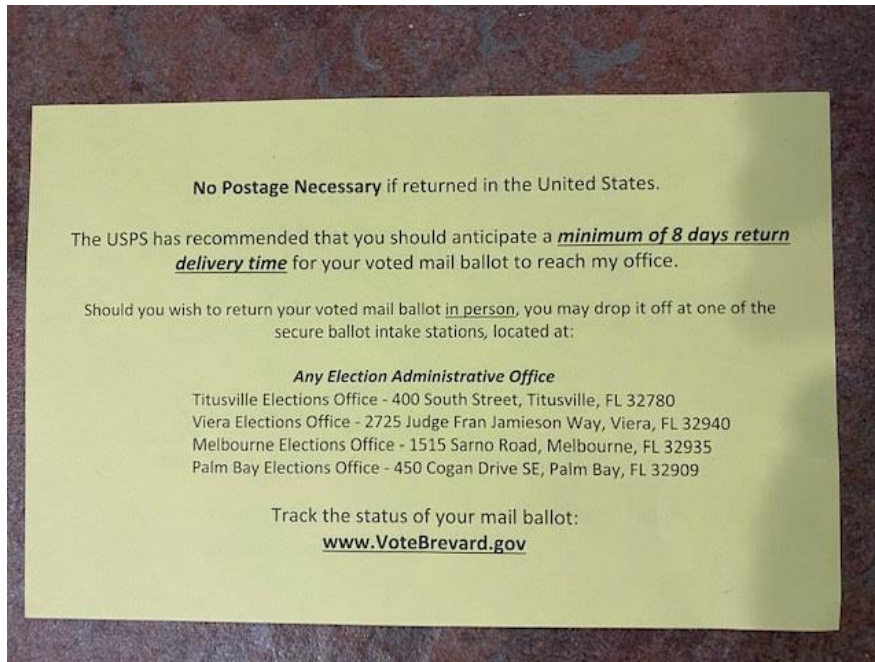
1. Vote-by-Mail Election Materials



Mailing envelope – front and back



Prepaid postage notice included in envelope – English and Spanish




Secrecy Sleeve – English and Spanish sides

SECRETY SLEEVE
READ BOTH SIDES OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE MARKING BALLOT

- VERY IMPORTANT. IN ORDER FOR YOUR MAIL BALLOT TO COUNT, YOUR SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS MUST RECEIVE YOUR BALLOT BY 7 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY. IF YOU WANT TO MAIL YOUR BALLOT, YOUR VOTE MIGHT NOT COUNT. TO PREVENT THIS FROM OCCURRING, PLEASE MAIL OR TURN IN YOUR BALLOT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** However, if you are an overseas voter casting a ballot in a presidential, preference or primary or general election, your mail ballot must be postmarked or dated no later than the date of the election and received by the Supervisor of Elections of the county in which you are registered to vote no later than 10 days after the date of the election. Note: The later you return your ballot, the less time you will have to cure any signature deficiencies, which is authorized until 5 p.m. on the 11th day after the election.
- Mark your ballot in secret as instructed on the ballot. You must mark your own ballot unless you are unable to do so because of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write.
- Mark only the number of candidates or issue choices for a race as indicated on the ballot. If you are allowed to "Vote for One" candidate and you vote for more than one candidate, your vote in that race will not be counted.
- Place your marked ballot in this secrecy sleeve.
- Insert the secrecy sleeve into the enclosed mailing envelope which is addressed to the Supervisor.
- Seal the mailing envelope and completely fill out the **Voter's Certificate** on the back of the mailing envelope.
- VERY IMPORTANT. In order for your mail ballot to be counted, you must sign your name on the line above (Voter's Signature).** A mail ballot will be considered illegal and not be counted if the signature on the voter's certificate does not match the signature on record. The signature on file at the time the Supervisor of Elections in the county in which your precinct is located receives your mail ballot is the signature that will be used to verify your signature on the voter's certificate. If you need to update your signature for this election, send your signature update on a voter registration application to your Supervisor of Elections so that it is received before your mail ballot is received.
- VERY IMPORTANT. If you are an overseas voter, you must include the date you signed the Voter's Certificate on the line above (Date) or your ballot may not be counted.**
- Mail, deliver, or have delivered the completed mailing envelope to the Supervisor of Elections Office. **THE COMPLETED MAILING ENVELOPE CAN BE DELIVERED TO THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS OF THE COUNTY IN WHICH YOUR PRECINCT IS LOCATED OR DROPPED OFF AT AN AUTHORIZED SECURE BALLOT INTAKE STATION, AVAILABLE AT EACH EARLY VOTING LOCATION.**
- FELONY NOTICE:** It is a felony under Florida law to accept any gift, payment, or gratuity in exchange for your vote for a candidate. It is also a felony under Florida law to vote in an election using a false identity or false address, or under any other circumstances making your ballot false or fraudulent.

SECRETY SLEEVE
READ BOTH SIDES OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY AND COMPLETELY BEFORE MARKING BALLOT

HOW TO MARK YOUR MAIL BALLOT



- Only use black pen.
- Completely fill in the oval.
- Do not circle the oval or use checkmarks or X's.
- If you make a mistake filling in the oval for a choice when you intend to vote for the other, mark through the erroneous vote with an X, fill in the oval to the left of the choice for which you intended to vote and write "This one" beside it.
- Not voting all races or issues will **NOT INVALIDATE** your ballot.
- Do not make any stray marks or use tape on your ballot.
- Do not tear or cut any portion of your ballot.
- Check both sides of your ballot.

If you are returning your ballot by mail, send it to Lori Scott, Supervisor of Elections, PO BOX 410819, Melbourne, FL 32941.

PLACE YOUR BALLOT IN THIS SECRETY SLEEVE AND RETURN IN THE MAILING ENVELOPE PROVIDED.

DID YOU REMEMBER TO SIGN YOUR VOTER'S CERTIFICATE?

Florida law requires that your signature match the signature on your voter registration file in order for your mail ballot to be counted. Visit our website at www.VoteBrevard.gov for information on updating the signature on your registration file.
(No power of attorney permitted for a voter's signature)

You may track the status of your mail ballot through the process on: www.VoteBrevard.gov


B-201 (Rev 9-29-2022)

CUBIERTA DE CONFIDENCIALIDAD
LEA CUIDADOSAMENTE AMBOS LADOS DE ESTAS INSTRUCCIONES ANTES DE MARCAR LA BOLETA

- MUY IMPORTANTE. PARA QUE SU BOLETA POR CORREO CUENTE, SU SUPERVISOR DE ELECCIONES DEBE RECIBIR LA BOLETA ANTES DE LAS 7 P.M. DEL DÍA DE LA ELECCIÓN. SI USTED ESPERA PARA ENTREGAR SU BOLETA, ES POSIBLE QUE SU VOTO NO CUENTE. PARA ENTRAR QUE ESTO OCURRA, ENVÍE POR CORREO O ENTREGUE SU BOLETA LO ANTES POSIBLE.** Sin embargo, si usted es un votante en el extranjero en una elección primaria de preferencia presidencial o elección general su boleta debe tener la fecha o el matetario postal con la fecha de no más tardar del Día de la Elección, y ser recibida por el Supervisor de Elecciones del condado en el que está inscrito para votar no más tardar de 10 días después de la fecha de la elección. Nota: Cuanto más tarde devuelva su boleta, menos tiempo tendrá para corregir cualquier problema con la firma, lo que se permitirá hacer hasta las 5 p.m. del segundo día después de la elección.
- Marque su boleta en secreto como se indica en la boleta, usted debe marcar su propia boleta, a menos que no pueda hacerlo debido a ceguera, discapacidad, o imposibilidad de leer o escribir.
- Marque únicamente el número de candidatos o de opciones de preguntas para cada contienda, como se indica en la boleta. Si se indica que puede "Votar por Uno" y vota por más de un candidato, no se contará su voto en esa contienda.
- Coloque su boleta marcada en la cubierta de confidencialidad.
- Incluya la cubierta de confidencialidad en el sobre de envío por correo adjunto que está dirigido al Supervisor.
- Seale el sobre de envío por correo y complete en su totalidad el Certificado de Votante que se encuentra al reverso del sobre de envío por correo.
- MUY IMPORTANTE.** Para que su boleta por correo cuente, debe firmar con su nombre en la línea de arriba (Firma del Votante). Una boleta por correo se considera legal y no se cuenta si la firma en el certificado de votante no coincide con la firma en el registro. Para verificar su firma en el certificado de votante, se usará la firma que se tenga en el archivo al momento en que el Supervisor de Elecciones del condado donde se encuentra su recinto reciba su boleta por correo. Si requiere actualizar su firma para esta elección, envíe a su Supervisor de Elecciones la actualización de su firma en una solicitud de inscripción del votante a fin de que se reciba antes de recibir su boleta por correo.
- MUY IMPORTANTE.** Si es un votante en el extranjero, debe incluir la fecha en la que firmó el Certificado del votante en la línea de arriba (Fecha). De lo contrario, es posible que su boleta no cuente.
- Enviar por correo, entregar o recita el sobre de envío completamente terminado. **EL SOBRE DE ENVÍO POR CORREO COMPLETAMENTE TERMINADO SE PUEDE ENTREGAR EN LA OFICINA DEL SUPERVISOR DE ELECCIONES DEL CONDADO DONDE SE ENCUENTRA SU RECINTO O SE PUEDE DEPOSITAR EN UNA ESTACIÓN SEGURA Y AUTORIZADA DE DEPÓSITO DE BOLETAS, DISPONIBLE EN TODOS LOS LUGARES DE VOTACION ADELANTADA.**
- AVISO DE DELITO GRAVE:** En virtud de la ley de Florida, es un delito grave aceptar cualquier regalo, pago, o propina a cambio de que vote por un candidato. De acuerdo con la ley de Florida, también es un delito grave votar en una elección usando una falsa identidad o dirección, o bajo cualquier otra circunstancia que haga que su boleta sea falsa o fraudulenta.

CUBIERTA DE CONFIDENCIALIDAD
LEA AMBOS LADOS DE ESTAS INSTRUCCIONES COMPLETA Y CUIDADOSAMENTE ANTES DE MARCAR LA BOLETA

CÓMO MARCAR SU BOLETA POR CORREO



- Use solo bolígrafo de tinta negra.
- Llene el óvalo completamente.
- No encierre el óvalo en un círculo, ni marque con una marca de verificación o con una X.
- Si comete un error y llena el óvalo de una opción cuando realmente quería votar por otra, marque a través del voto erróneo con una X, llene el óvalo al lado izquierdo de la opción por la que realmente quería votar y anote a un lado "Esta opción".
- Si no vota por todas las contiendas o preguntas, **NO INVALIDARÁ** su boleta.
- No haga marcas fuera de lugar ni use cinta adhesiva en su boleta.
- No rasgue ni corte ninguna parte de su boleta.
- Verifique ambos lados de su boleta.

Si va a devolver su boleta por correo, envíela a Lori Scott, Supervisor of Elections, PO BOX 410819, Melbourne, FL 32941.

COLOQUE SU BOLETA EN LA CUBIERTA DE CONFIDENCIALIDAD Y DEVUÉLVALA EN EL SOBRE DE ENVÍO POR CORREO QUE SE LE PROPORCIONÓ.

¿TE ACORDASTE DE FIRMAR TU CERTIFICADO DE VOTANTE?

Para que su boleta por correo pueda contar, la ley de Florida exige que su firma coincida con la firma que se tiene en su archivo de inscripción de votante. Visite nuestro sitio web en www.VoteBrevard.gov para obtener información sobre cómo actualizar la firma en su archivo de inscripción.
(No se permite usar un poder legal para la firma del votante).

Puede seguir el estado de su boleta de votación por correo y su proceso en: www.VoteBrevard.gov

B-201 (Rev 9-29-2022)

**2 FOLD DOWN AND SEAL FLAP
DOBLE Y SELLE LA SOLAPA**



**Did you remember to sign your name below?
¿Te acordaste de firmar tu nombre abajo?**

FOLD HERE ↓ FOLD HERE ↓ FOLD HERE ↓ FOLD HERE
DOBLE AQUÍ ↓ DOBLE AQUÍ ↓ DOBLE AQUÍ ↓ DOBLE AQUÍ

**VOTER'S CERTIFICATE
CERTIFICADO DEL VOTANTE**
(Section 101.64, Florida Statutes)
(Sección 101.64, Estatutos de Florida)

NOTE: PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE
MARKING BALLOT AND COMPLETING VOTER'S CERTIFICATE
NOTA: LEA CUIDADOSAMENTE LAS INSTRUCCIONES ANTES DE
MARCAR SU BOLETA Y COMPLETAR EL CERTIFICADO DEL VOTANTE

SAMPLE



I, _____ do solemnly swear or affirm that I am a qualified and registered voter of Brevard County, Florida, and that I have not and will not vote more than one ballot in this election. I understand that if I commit or attempt to commit any fraud in connection with voting, vote a fraudulent ballot, or vote more than once in an election, I can be convicted of a felony of the third degree and fined up to \$5,000 and/or imprisoned for up to 5 years. I also understand that failure to sign this certificate will invalidate my ballot. **SEAL ENVELOPE FLAP TO THE RIGHT BEFORE SIGNING. ONE BALLOT PER ENVELOPE.**

Yo, _____ juro solemnemente o afirmo que soy un votante calificado e inscrito en el Condado de Brevard, Florida, y que no he votado ni votare en más de una boleta en esta elección. Entiendo que si cometo o intento cometer algún fraude en relación con la votación, si voto en una boleta fraudulenta, o voto más de una vez en una elección, me pueden condenar por un delito mayor del tercer grado y recibir una multa de hasta \$5,000 y/o encarcelado hasta por 5 años. También entiendo que si no firmo este certificado mi boleta no será válida. **SELLE EL DOBLEZ DEL SOBRE HACIA EL LADO DERECHO ANTES DE FIRMAR. UNA BOLETA POR SOBRE.**

Florida law requires that your signature match the signature on your voter registration file in order for your ballot to be counted. Call (321) 833-2127 for information on updating or signature on your voter registration file.
La ley de Florida requiere que su firma concuerde con la que en su archivo de registro del votante para que su boleta se cuente como sea contada. Llame al (321) 833-2127 para más información sobre cómo actualizar la firma en su archivo de registro del votante.

(Power of attorney **NOT** permitted)
(NQ se permite usar un poder legal)

VOTER SIGNATURE (REQUIRED)
FIRMA DEL VOTANTE (OBLIGATORIO)

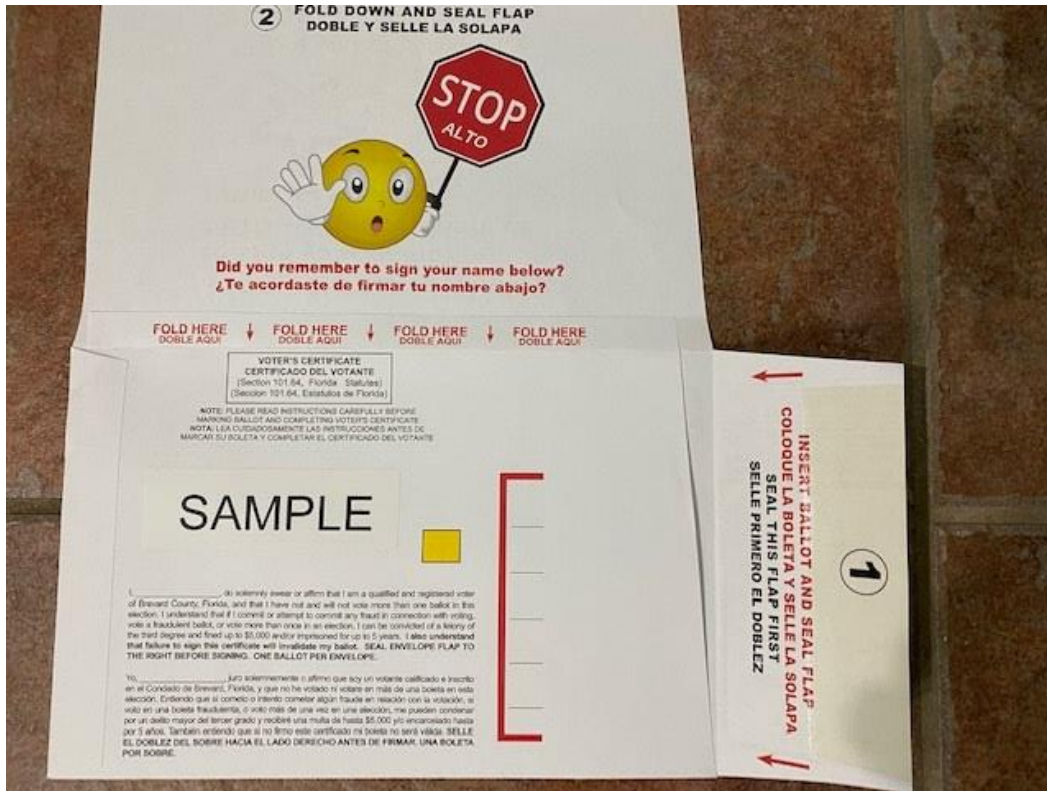
DATE
FECHA

HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER (OPTIONAL)
NÚMERO DE TELÉFONO EN CASA (OPCIONAL)

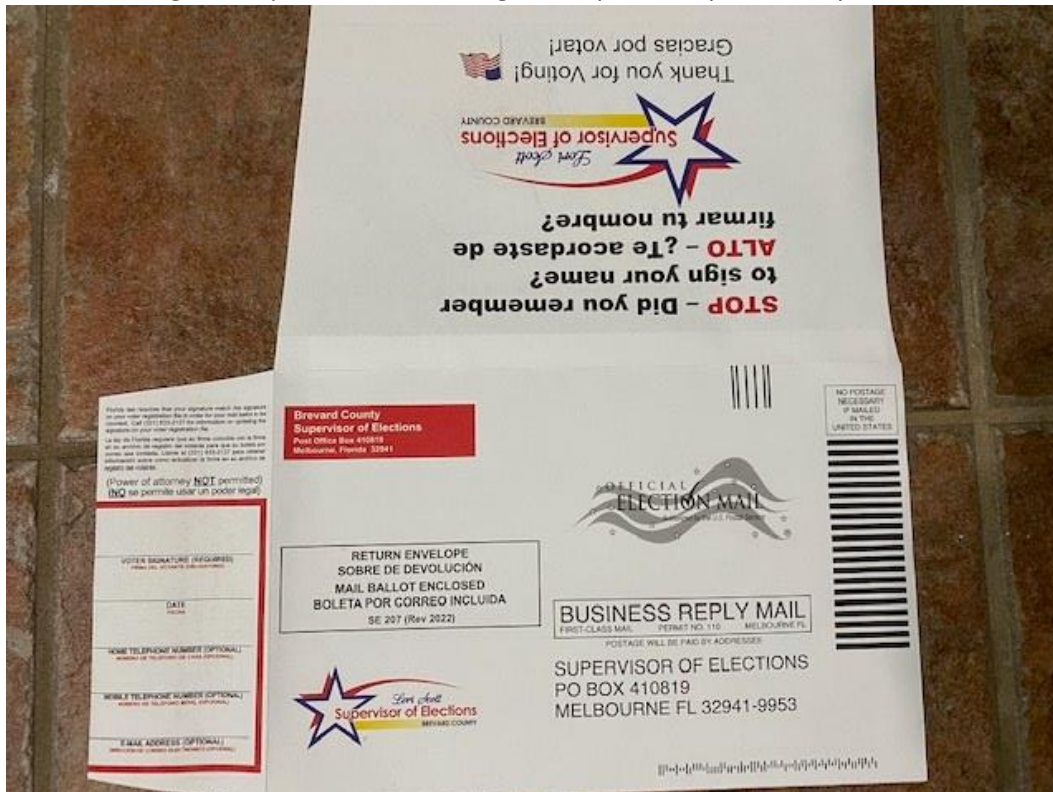
MOBILE TELEPHONE NUMBER (OPTIONAL)
NÚMERO DE TELÉFONO MÓVIL (OPCIONAL)

E-MAIL ADDRESS (OPTIONAL)
DIRECCIÓN DE CORREO ELECTRÓNICO (OPCIONAL)

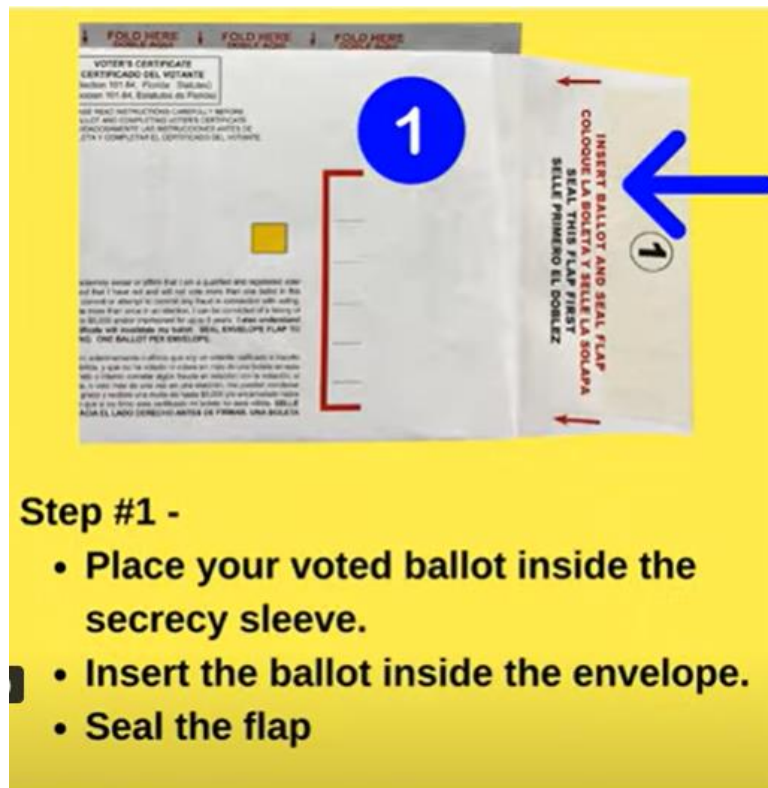
Return Mailing Envelope – inside mailing envelope with open secrecy flap on bottom.



Return Mailing Envelope – outside mailing envelope with open secrecy on bottom.



2. Brevard County Instructional Video Screen Shots



VOTER'S CERTIFICATE
CERTIFICADO DEL VOTANTE
 (Section 101.84, Florida Statutes)
 (Sección 101.84, Estatuto de Florida)

NOTE, PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE MARKING BALLOT AND COMPLETING VOTER'S CERTIFICATE
NOTA: LEA CUIDADOSAMENTE LAS INSTRUCCIONES ANTES DE MARCAR SU BOLETA Y COMPLETAR EL CERTIFICADO DEL VOTANTE

Florida law requires that your signature match the signature on your voter registration file in order for your ballot to be counted. Call (202) 533-2127 for information on verifying the signature on your voter registration file.
 La ley de Florida requiere que su firma coincida con la firma de su archivo de registro del votante para que su boleta sea contada. Llame al (202) 533-2127 para obtener información sobre cómo verificar la firma en su archivo de registro del votante.

(Power of attorney **NOT** permitted)
 (No se permite usar un poder legal)

VOTER SIGNATURE (REQUIRED)
 (Firma del votante (obligatoria))

DATE
 (Fecha)

HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER (OPTIONAL)
 (Número de teléfono en casa (opcional))

MOBILE TELEPHONE NUMBER (OPTIONAL)
 (Número de teléfono celular (opcional))

E-MAIL ADDRESS (OPTIONAL)
 (Dirección de correo electrónico (opcional))

I, _____ do solemnly swear or affirm that I am a qualified and registered voter of Broward County, Florida, and that I have not and will not vote more than one ballot in this election. I understand that if I commit or attempt to commit any fraud in connection with voting, write a fraudulent ballot, or vote more than once in an election, I can be convicted of a felony of the third degree and fined up to \$5,000 and/or imprisoned for up to 5 years. I also understand that failure to sign this certificate will invalidate my ballot. **SEAL ENVELOPE FLAP TO THE RIGHT BEFORE SIGNING. ONE BALLOT PER ENVELOPE.**

Yo, _____ juro solemnemente o afirmo que soy un votante calificado y registrado en el Condado de Broward, Florida, y que no he votado ni votare en más de una boleta en esta elección. Entiendo que si cometo o intento cometer algún fraude en relación con la votación, si voto en una boleta fraudulenta, o voto más de una vez en una elección, me pueden condenar por un delito mayor del tercer grado o recibir una multa de hasta \$5,000 y/o encarcelación por por 5 años. También entiendo que si no firmo este certificado mi boleta no será válida. **EL DOBLEZ DEL SOBRE HACIA EL LADO DERECHO ANTES DE FIRMAR. UNA BOLETA POR SOBRE.**

- Fill out the voter's certificate
- After reading the oath, print your name

VOTER'S CERTIFICATE
CERTIFICADO DEL VOTANTE
 (Section 101.84, Florida Statutes)
 (Sección 101.84, Estatuto de Florida)

NOTE, PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE MARKING BALLOT AND COMPLETING VOTER'S CERTIFICATE
NOTA: LEA CUIDADOSAMENTE LAS INSTRUCCIONES ANTES DE MARCAR SU BOLETA Y COMPLETAR EL CERTIFICADO DEL VOTANTE

Florida law requires that your signature match the signature on your voter registration file in order for your ballot to be counted. Call (202) 533-2127 for information on verifying the signature on your voter registration file.
 La ley de Florida requiere que su firma coincida con la firma de su archivo de registro del votante para que su boleta sea contada. Llame al (202) 533-2127 para obtener información sobre cómo verificar la firma en su archivo de registro del votante.

(Power of attorney **NOT** permitted)
 (No se permite usar un poder legal)

VOTER SIGNATURE (REQUIRED)
 (Firma del votante (obligatoria))

DATE
 (Fecha)

HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER (OPTIONAL)
 (Número de teléfono en casa (opcional))

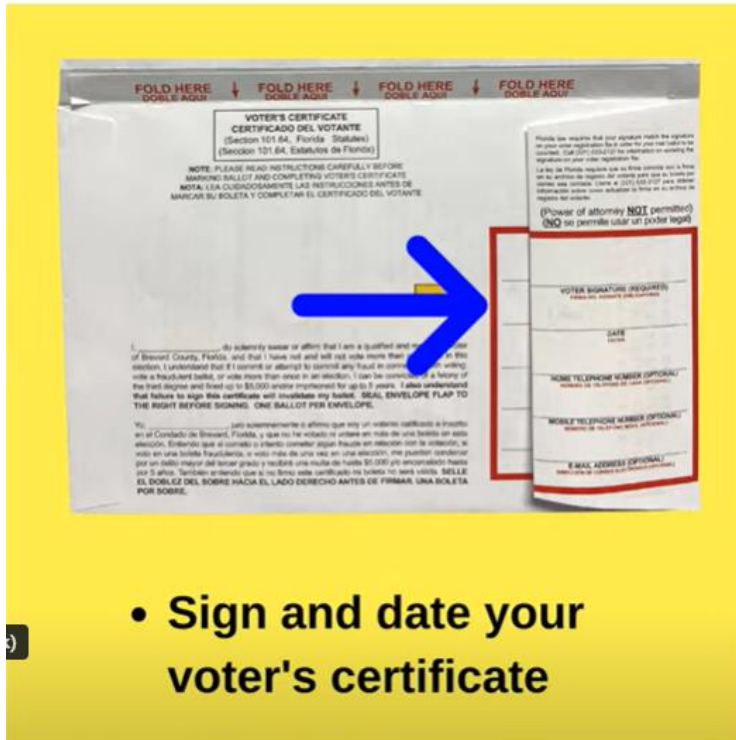
MOBILE TELEPHONE NUMBER (OPTIONAL)
 (Número de teléfono celular (opcional))

E-MAIL ADDRESS (OPTIONAL)
 (Dirección de correo electrónico (opcional))

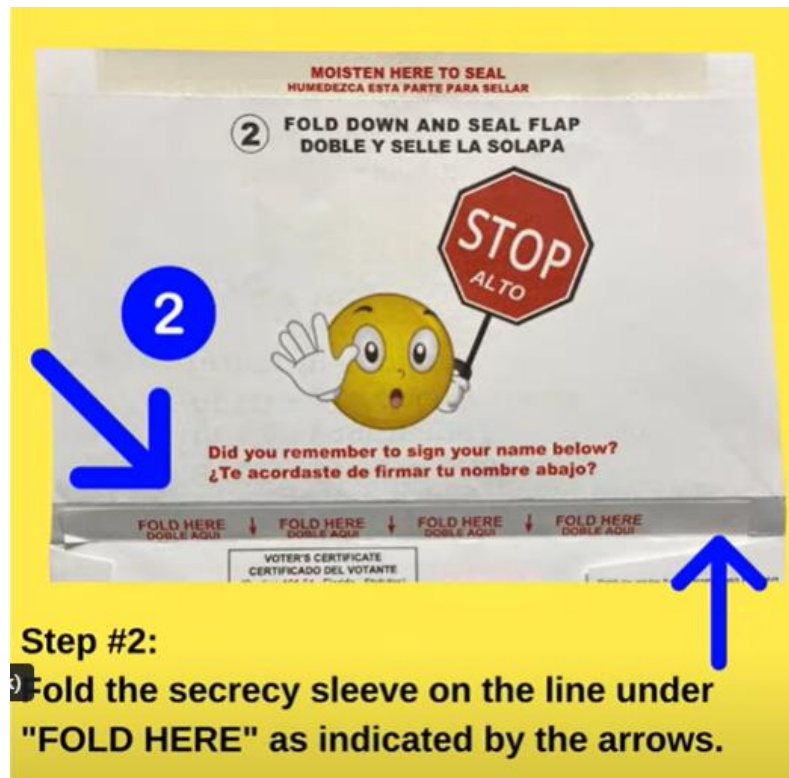
I, _____ do solemnly swear or affirm that I am a qualified and registered voter of Broward County, Florida, and that I have not and will not vote more than one ballot in this election. I understand that if I commit or attempt to commit any fraud in connection with voting, write a fraudulent ballot, or vote more than once in an election, I can be convicted of a felony of the third degree and fined up to \$5,000 and/or imprisoned for up to 5 years. I also understand that failure to sign this certificate will invalidate my ballot. **SEAL ENVELOPE FLAP TO THE RIGHT BEFORE SIGNING. ONE BALLOT PER ENVELOPE.**

Yo, _____ juro solemnemente o afirmo que soy un votante calificado y registrado en el Condado de Broward, Florida, y que no he votado ni votare en más de una boleta en esta elección. Entiendo que si cometo o intento cometer algún fraude en relación con la votación, si voto en una boleta fraudulenta, o voto más de una vez en una elección, me pueden condenar por un delito mayor del tercer grado o recibir una multa de hasta \$5,000 y/o encarcelación por por 5 años. También entiendo que si no firmo este certificado mi boleta no será válida. **EL DOBLEZ DEL SOBRE HACIA EL LADO DERECHO ANTES DE FIRMAR. UNA BOLETA POR SOBRE.**

Providing current contact information helps in case we need to contact you about your ballot.



- Sign and date your voter's certificate



- Step #2:**
- Fold the secrecy sleeve on the line under "FOLD HERE" as indicated by the arrows.



Return your mail ballot:

- By mailing it via the USPS
- Dropping it off at an Early Voting location during hours of operation
- Putting it in a Secure Ballot Intake Station at any of the 4 elections administrative offices



REMEMBER -

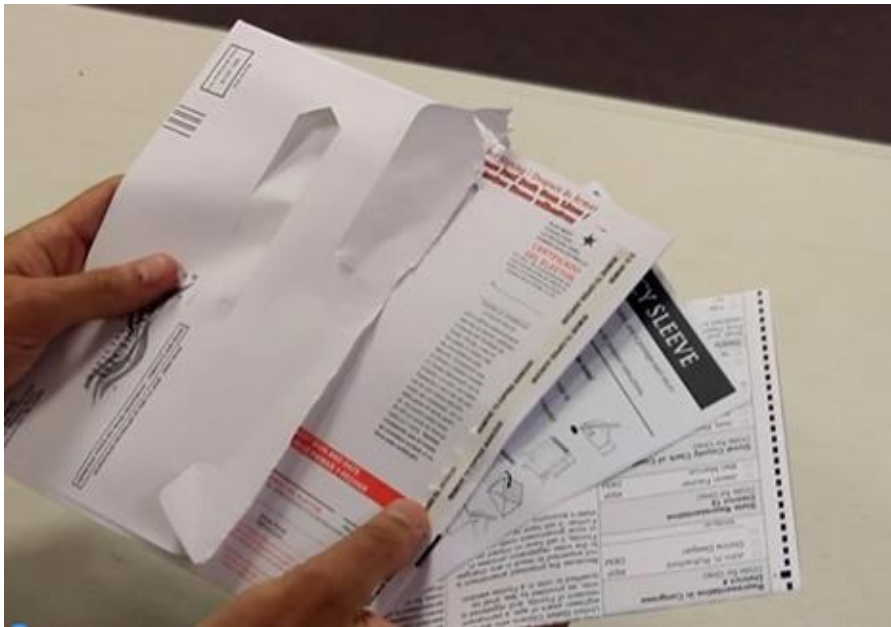
Mail ballots must be received in the Supervisor of Elections office on Election Day **by 7:00 p.m.** in order to be counted!

Appendix G: Duval County Vote-by-Mail Ballot Material – Instructional Video Screen Shots

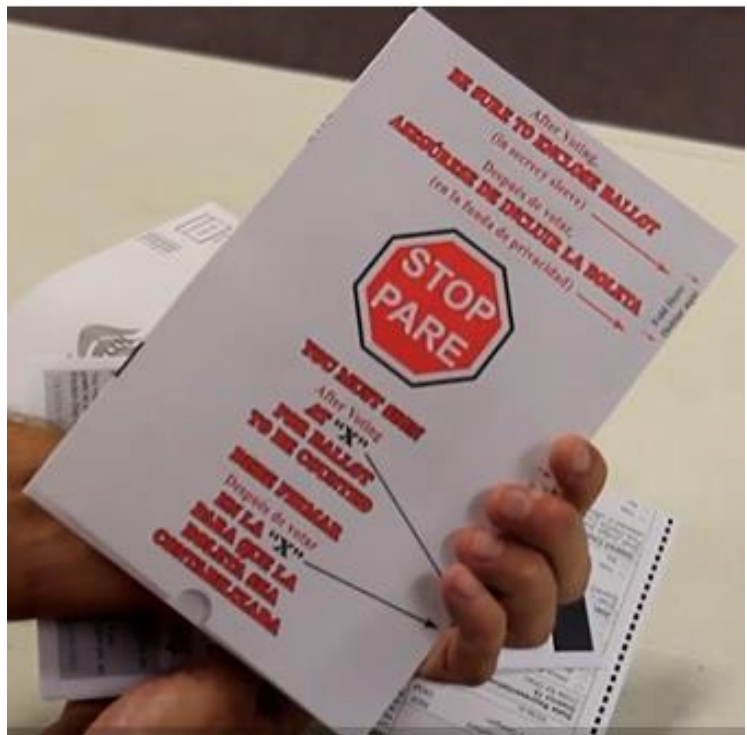
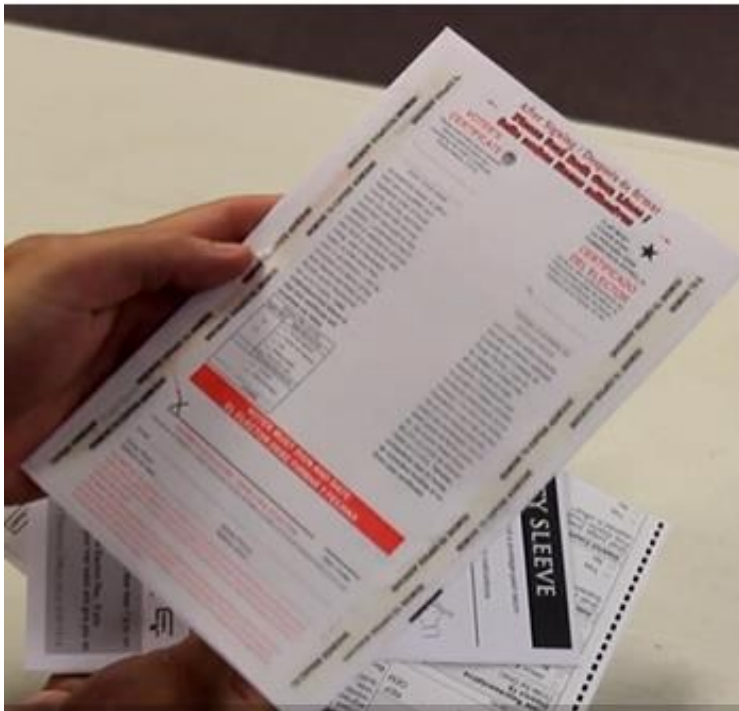
Screen shots of instruction video



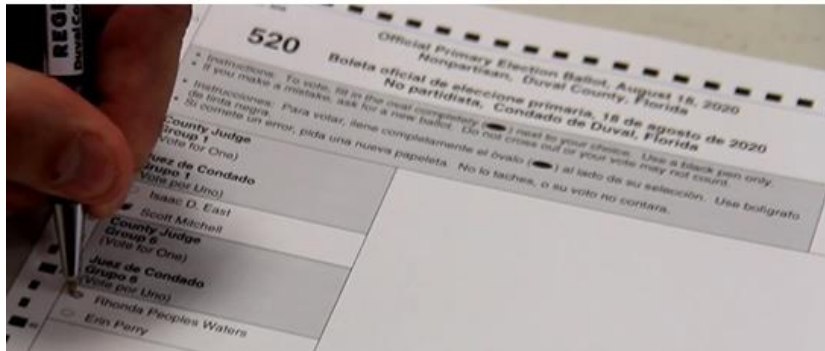
Content of vote-by-mail ballot envelope – ballot, secrecy sleeve, instructions, return mailing envelope with certificate



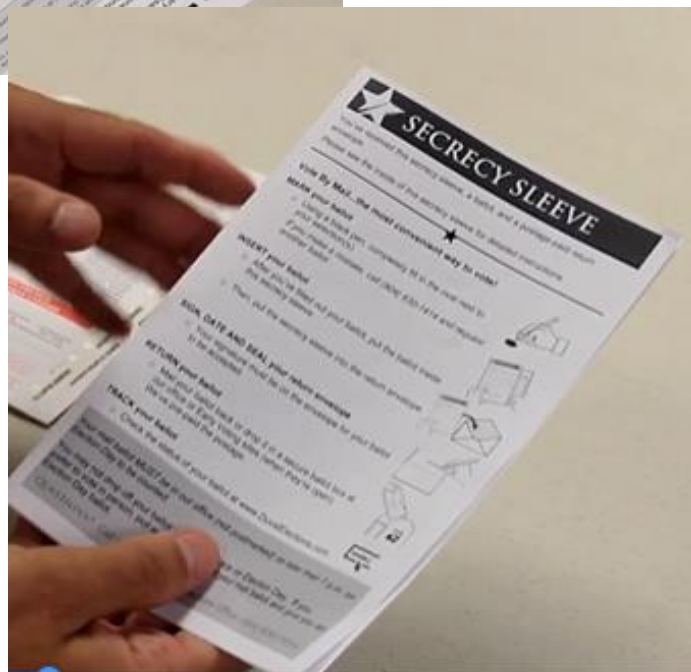
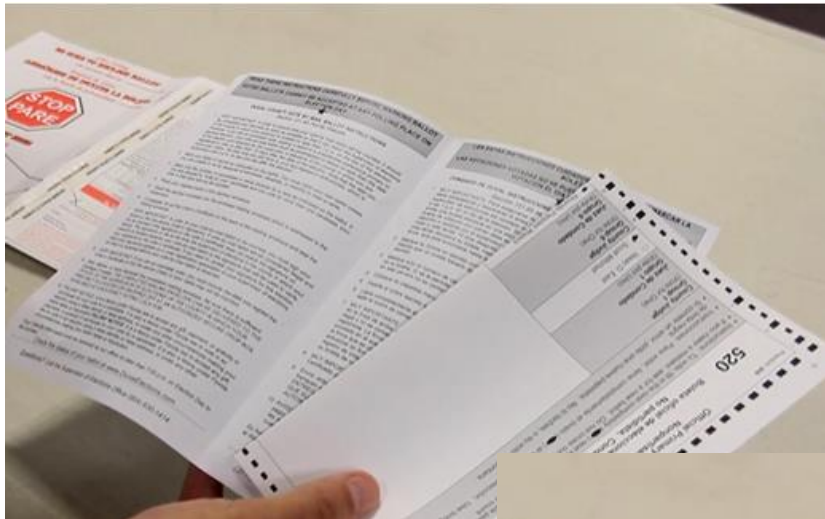
Voter certificate on return mailing envelope



Marking the ballot



Placing ballot in secrecy sleeve



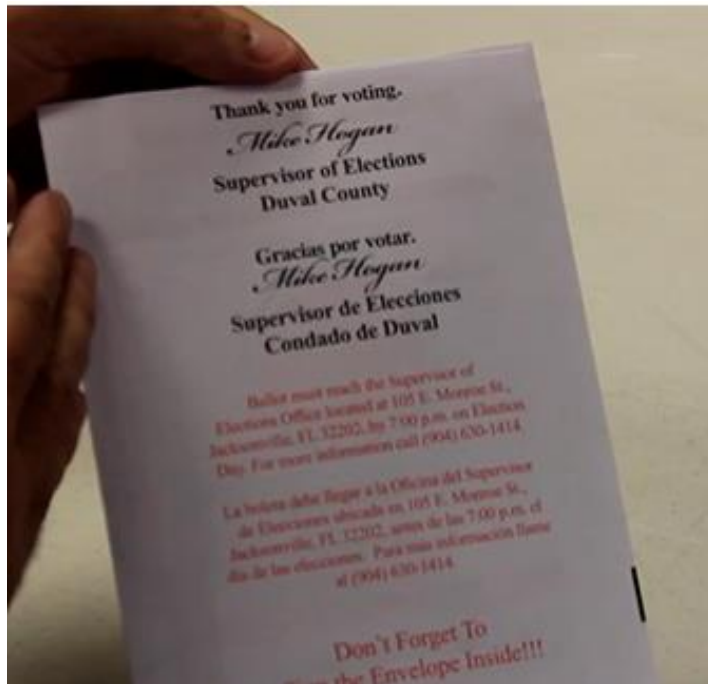
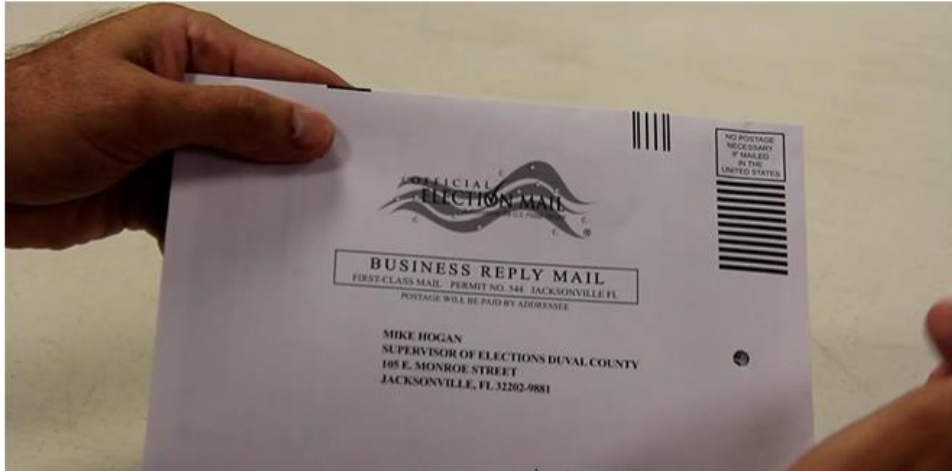
Placing ballot in secrecy sleeve within envelope



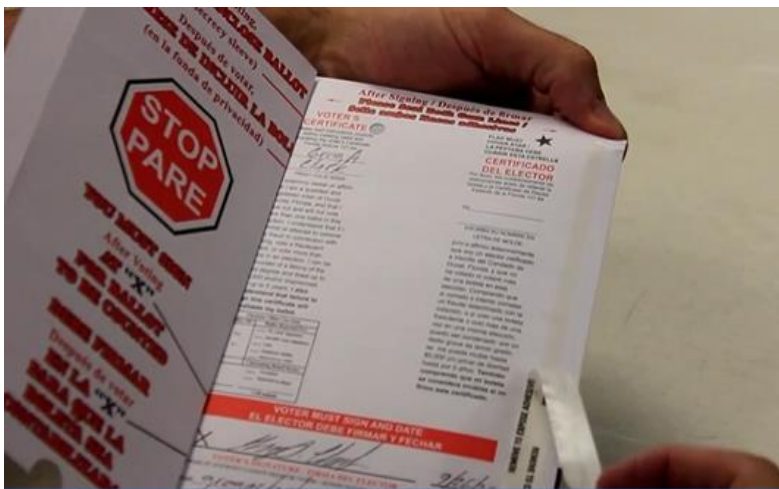
Completing the voter certificate



Return mailing/prepaid postage



Removal of adhesive tape in fold and on edge of envelope to seal



Seal envelope by folding towards adhesive edge

