



FAQ 2020 ELECTION

Q1: I just moved to Benton County from another state. How do I make sure my voting information is up to date for my new address?

A1: Arkansas requires a voter registration form to be submitted no more than 30 days prior to the election in which you wish to vote. The registration deadline for the November 3, 2020 General Election is Monday, October 5, 2020. Online registration is not available in Arkansas, but the registration application may be downloaded and printed from our website: vote.bentoncountyar.gov. The original application must be received in our office, (or postmarked) by October 5, 2020.

Q2: I just moved to Benton County from Washington County or another County in Arkansas. How do I make sure I can vote in Benton County?

A2: Eligible voters (either "Active" or "Inactive" status) may transfer their voter registration to another county within the State of Arkansas up to 4 days prior to election day. The deadline to transfer registrations within the state is close of business, October 30, 2020. This also requires a voter registration application to be filled out and signed.

Q3: I am voting absentee this year due to COVID19. How do I know my vote will count in the election? Can you tell me about that security process?

A3: The absentee process is handled with the utmost care by election officials to ensure that all ballots which have been properly submitted are counted. Several things to keep in mind:

- 1) Read the instructions which will be included in your ballot packet carefully, and make sure that you have completed all of the necessary steps. A checklist is provided.
- 2) Make sure that the ballot is returned before the deadline that applies to the method by which you will be returning it.

Mail: Physically received in the office of the County Clerk no later than 7:30 p.m. on Election Day - November 3, 2020. POSTMARK DATE DOES NOT COUNT

In-person delivery of your own ballot: Close of business the day **before** Election Day - November 2, 2020.

By Designated Bearer: Someone else may deliver your ballot for you no later than 7:30 p.m. on Election Day, November 3, 2020; however, that person must be indicated as the "Designated Bearer" on the Voter Statement signed by the voter and included with the ballot return envelope, and no one may serve as a designated bearer for more than two ballots per election. YOU MAY NOT DELIVER YOUR OWN BALLOT ON ELECTION DAY.

- 3) Make sure your signature is the same on both your absentee application and the voter statement. Use the full legal name you are registered with; don't use a nickname, and be as consistent as possible with handwriting.

Once a voter has requested an absentee ballot, that request is noted on their registration record, which prevents someone from voting at a polling site. Ballots are mailed to the address that the voter has indicated on the application, and are returned to the County Clerk by the postal service if for some reason it cannot be delivered.

When the voted ballots are returned to the County Clerk's Office, they are logged in the computer as having been returned, then secured until the Election Commission takes possession of them for processing.

The Election Commission opens every return envelope, compares the signature on the voter statement with the signature on the application which was previously submitted to the County Clerk,, and determines if the ballot can be counted. Once it has been determined that the ballot can be accepted for counting, the "Ballot Only" secrecy envelope is separated from the return documents and kept secure until they are counted.

Governor Hutchinson has issued an Executive Order allowing Election Commissions across the state to begin the "canvassing" process of absentee ballots one week earlier than is normally allowed by state law, due to the high number of absentee ballots anticipated for the General Election. No "Ballot Only" envelopes will be open, and no votes will be counted during that time. The Commission will only be determining which ballots will be accepted for counting, based on the return of the voter statement, and the signature on the voter statement matching the signature on the absentee application that was submitted.

Once absentee ballots are mailed out in late September, voters may go to <https://www.voterview.ar-nova.org/VoterView> and see that the ballot has been processed.

Q4: There's too much going on for me to know what I'm voting for. Can you tell me how I can see a sample ballot?

A4: Visit vote.bentoncountyar.gov to find links to sample ballots.

Q5: I want to vote in person, but I'm nervous of contracting COVID19. What measures are you taking to ensure safety?

A5: Social distancing will be observed, machines will be cleaned between use, and each voter will be given a new stylus to sign in and vote with. You shouldn't have to touch anything that has been touched by someone else. ID's will be placed on a surface that is sanitized between uses, and not handled by the election official.

Q7: Does my vote even matter?

A7: In a March 2018 primary race for a State Representative position, the winner was determined by 5 votes. Your voice can determine who wins and represents you in local , state, and federal government.

Q8: I submitted my absentee ballot request. What do I do next? When can I expect an absentee ballot in the mail?

A8: Ballots will be mailed out on or around September 18th. If your application has already been received by that date then you should expect your ballot within a week.

Q9: When do I need to return the absentee ballot and how?

A9: Ballots that are mailed back need to be received in our office by election day. Return envelopes and instructions are included with the ballot. If you wish to return your ballot in person, it must be received in one of the County Clerk's offices by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 2nd, the DAY BEFORE THE ELECTION.

Q10: Are absentee ballots counted on election night?

A10: Absentee ballots are not opened or counted until Election day. Results from early voting are counted at 7:30 p.m. on election night which gives the first set of results. Dependent upon the amount of absentee ballots, the 7:30 p.m. post may only be early voting whereas it usually is both absentee and early voting.

Q11: How are you keeping your poll workers safe?

A11: All poll workers will be provided masks and gloves to wear while dealing with voters. Benton County is also providing plexiglass shields for each check-in station.

Q12: Can I return the absentee ballot by hand to the satellite office?

A12: You can deliver your ballot to any of the three county clerk offices. Find a list of those locations here: <https://bentoncountyar.gov/county-clerk/> and pay careful attention to the return deadlines.