



Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State



Safe At Home

Business Services

Elections

Elections 101

Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State

Secretary of State Duties (1 of 2)

- Chief state election official
- Train and certify county election administrators
- Administer the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS)
- Interfaces with:
 - Driver & Vehicle Services (DVS) database
 - Social Security Administration database
 - Department of Health database
 - Online Voter Registration Online Absentee Ballot Application tools
 - Online lookups for Voter Registration and Absentee Ballot Status

Secretary of State Duties (2 of 2)

- Administer database of candidates and election results
- Certify that election equipment meets state standards
- Conduct data matches and provide data to County Auditors
 - US Postal Service National Change of Address data
 - Department of Corrections
 - Department of Public Safety
 - Courts
 - Electronic Registration Information Center

County Auditor Duties (1 of 2)

- Elections is one of many responsibilities for most counties
 - Responsible for all aspects of voter registration in their county
 - Verify voter data with DVS or SSA database
 - Send non-forwardable postcards to voters
 - Review data in SVRS on deaths, felony convictions, guardianships, non-citizens, and apply/remove a “challenge”
 - Forward information to county attorney about potential violations as appropriate
- Ballot layout and printing for state elections

County Auditor Duties (2 of 2)

- Purchase and maintain supplies and election equipment, including accessible voting equipment
- Program and test all voting equipment
- Issue absentee ballots
- Train and certify city, township and school district local election officials
- Train and certify election judges
- Compile election results and transmit to OSS website
- Conduct post-election audits

Municipal Clerk's Duties

- Determine precinct boundaries, polling locations
- Hire election judges & assign to precincts
- Train and certify election judges if duty delegated by county
- Health care facility absentee voting
- Administer absentee balloting, if delegated by county

In Person Voting (1 of 3)

- 30,000 election judges in nearly 4,000 precincts
- Minimum of 4 election judges for State General; 3 in precincts with less than 500 registered voters; some precincts use 15+
- 2 hours of training
 - Additional hour for head/chair election judge
- Judges from two major political parties must be present in each polling place

In Person Voting (2 of 3)

- Pre-registered voters sign oath
- Conduct challenged voter process when appropriate
- Conduct Election Day Registration application process
 - For non-registered voter
 - In the right polling place
 - Not voted absentee
 - Has authorized proof of residence
 - Completes voter registration application & signs roster

In Person Voting (3 of 3)

- Reconcile number of ballots with number of voters
- Certify precinct-level results

Absentee Balloting

- Two categories:
 1. Regular absentee voters
 2. Military and overseas voters (UOCAVA)

Regular Absentee Voting (1 of 4)

- Administered by county auditors and some municipal clerks
- For state elections, absentee ballots (AB) must be tracked in SVRS
- By mail and in-person
- Any eligible voter can vote absentee
- Must apply to vote by absentee ballot

Regular Absentee Voting (2 of 4)

- Must start at least 46 days before the election
- Must have witness who must be Minnesota voter or notary public

Regular Absentee Voting (3 of 4)

- County/city election officials must have an absentee ballot board
- Reviews ballots within 3 to 5 days to ensure that the envelope contains all required information
- If it does, it is accepted
- If not, it must be rejected
- 5+ days before the election, must send voter replacement ballot and explanation
- Within 5 days of the election, must attempt to contact the voter

Regular Absentee Voting (4 of 4)

After the close of business on the 7th day before the election, accepted absentee votes are considered “final.” County/cities may begin processing them by:

- Marking rosters with “AB”
- Removing ballots from envelopes and feeding into ballot counters
- If ballots arrive after rosters have been printed, providing supplemental list to polling places or waiting for rosters to be returned after polls close
- Counting the absentee votes after the polls close and all absentee ballots for precinct have been processed

Absentee Voting for Military and Overseas Voters

Exclusively administered by county auditors (for all elections)

- Special application process
- Special procedures for these voters
 - Blank ballots can be emailed or faxed
 - Ballots must be returned by mail
 - No witness requirement
 - Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot
- Ballots processed similar to other absentee ballots

Mail Balloting

- **Allowed in:**
 - Townships of any size outside the metro area
 - Cities outside the metro area with fewer than 400 registered voters
 - Precincts with fewer than 100 voters
 - Special elections referenda
- All registered voters are sent a ballot by mail
- Ballots returned by mail or delivered to county auditor's office
- Ballot Board to accept/reject mail ballots, etc.
- SVRS is used to process and track mail ballots