Vote-by-Mail (VBM) for the November 3 General Election

Tuesday, November 3 is the General Election. While the major race on the ballot is for U.S. President, there are other races on the ballot for Congress, Florida State Senate and House seats, 6 Florida Constitutional amendments, countywide races, 2 County Charter questions, municipal races and three cities have municipal referendum questions.

Why use Vote-By-Mail (VBM)?
Vote-By-Mail (VBM) is an insurance policy in case you cannot vote in person. If you change your mind, that is okay. You can still vote in person during the early voting period or on Election Day.

- VBM can be brought to the polling place (early voting site or your precinct) where the poll worker will mark it void and place it in a special container for “spoiled ballots”. While it is not required to bring the VBM ballot to the early voting site or your precinct, it will speed up the process at the polls.
- You can use your VBM as a “guide” when voting in person. Present the VBM ballot to the poll worker. They will mark it void prior to your voting onsite. After voting, you must return the voided VBM ballot to the Clerk so it can be deposited in a special container for “spoiled ballots”.
- If you forget to bring the VBM with you, don’t worry, you can still vote! When you sign in to vote, the poll worker can void the VBM in the computer system and permit you to vote.

Another reason for using VBM is that it allows you to vote in the privacy of your own home. You receive your ballot before Election Day, which allows you to research candidates and ballot measures before you vote. One place to go for information is www.Vote411.org, the League’s award-winning website for voting information.

How do I sign up for Vote-by-Mail?
- Go to www.browardsoe.org to complete a request for VBM. You can do this in English, Spanish or Haitian Creole. Or, call the Broward County Supervisor of Elections office (SOE) at 954-357-7055.
- Vote-By-Mail ballots will be mailed to the address on file with the SOE office. The U.S. Postal Service is NOT allowed to forward the VBM packet to another address. Please be sure your mailing address is up-to-date. If the VBM ballot needs to be mailed to a different address because you are living somewhere else temporarily, that can be done. Again, by going to www.browardsoe.org and completing the required form.
- If you are having someone forward your mail to you, it is okay from them to fold the Vote-By-Mail packet so it will fit in a different mailing envelope to be sent to you.

Can anyone request a VBM ballot?
Yes – anyone who is already registered to vote can request a VBM. Florida is a “no excuse needed” VBM ballot request state. If you have not registered to vote, go online to
You must register to vote by midnight on October 5 to vote in the November 3 general election.

Is voting by mail safe?
- Yes, it is. There have been no legitimate studies that demonstrate there is increased fraud with VBM ballots.
- BUT, if you plan to mail your ballot, you must vote early so that you can place your VBM in the mail by October 19. Postage is pre-paid! VBM ballots must reach the Supervisor of Elections office by 7 pm on Election Day to be counted. A postmark date of Election Day (November 3) is not valid!
- If you do not want to use the postal service, you can drop off your completed VBM at Early Voting locations and at 24/7 drop-off boxes (see questions below).

Will my VBM ballot be counted?
Yes, it will be counted, but you must follow the directions provided! There are two main reasons why VBM ballots don’t get counted:
1) the voter did not sign the outside mailing envelope; or
2) the voter did not mail the ballot far enough in advance for it to reach the Supervisor of Elections office by 7 pm on Election Day. A postmark date on Election Day is not enough!!!!

I worry that my VBM ballot will get lost in the mail. Is there any place else that I can deposit my VBM ballot?
Yes, but your VBM ballot must be prepared as if you were dropping it off at the post office – the ballot must be placed in the return mailing envelope and the outside of the mailing envelope signed and dated where directed.
- NEW! The SOE has new, video-monitored, 24-hour secure (bolted down) Vote-By-Mail drop boxes at both of its locations:
  - Broward County Governmental Center
    115 S. Andrews Ave.
    Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
    Note: Drop-off box located on Brickell Avenue side of the Government Center
  - Lauderhill Office
    Supervisor of Elections at Lauderhill Mall
    1501 NW 40th Avenue
    Lauderhill, FL, 33313
    Note: Drop-off box is located on the backside of the mall, which is where the SOE office is located.

- You can drop off your VBM ballot at any Early Voting Site during the early voting period from October 19 through November 1. Early voting sites are open from 7 am to 7 pm.

- On Election Day (November 3), you **CANNOT** drop your VBM ballot at your polling place (precinct)! However, you can drop it off at the SOE offices (see above for locations), but the VBM ballot has to be **deposited by 7 pm**!

- It is acceptable to give your completed VBM ballot to a trusted friend or family member to deposit in a drop box for you. A trusted friend or family member can place any number of completed VBM ballots in the drop-off boxes, either at Early Voting sites or the 24/7 drop-off boxes at the SOE offices.

**If I use the mail to return my VBM ballot, how far in advance should I mail it?**

Mail at least 2 weeks **before** Election Day, which is October 20. The ballot must be received (not postmarked) by the Supervisor of Elections office by 7 pm on November 3. The return mailing envelope is pre-paid by the county – you do not need to add postage.

**What happens to my VBM ballot if it arrives at the Supervisor of Elections office AFTER 7 pm on Election Day (November 3)?**

The envelope is NOT opened, so your ballot is NOT counted. These unopened ballots are stored at the SOE office. They are not thrown away. Per Florida Statute 101.67(2) . . . “All ballots received thereafter [after 7 pm on Election Day] shall be marked with the time and date of receipt and filed in the supervisor’s office.”

**When should I expect my VBM packet to arrive at my house?**

- If you have requested your VBM ballot early, VBM packets will be mailed between September 24 and October 1 for the November 3 election. Remember, your ballot may not be mailed until the last day of the mailing period, and then it may take 3 to 5 days before it actually arrives at your house.

- For those VBM ballots requested too late for the bulk mailing above, **VBM ballots will still be mailed out as ballots are requested**. However, after **October 24** (10 days before Election Day), VBM ballots will NOT be mailed. If you wait until the last minute to request a VBM ballot, it is highly recommended that you return your completed VBM ballot to an Early Voting site during the early voting period or to one of the 24/7 drop-off boxes at the Supervisor of Elections offices. Remember, the ballot must be RECEIVED by 7 pm on Election Day. A postmark of November 3 is not adequate.

**What is included in the VBM packet I receive from the Supervisor of Elections?**

- There are 3 parts to the VBM packet: the ballot, the secrecy sleeve and the pre-paid, pre-addressed return mailing envelope. After marking your votes on the ballot (use blue or black pen; fill in ovals), place the voted ballot in the secrecy sleeve and then into the envelope. **Be sure to sign (and date) the return mailing envelope where directed.**
If there will be multiple VBM packets arriving to your house, keep your VBM packet separate from others in your household – bar codes on envelopes are unique to you. Look very closely at the back of the return mailing envelope, where you place your signature. Just below the bar code will be your name (in small print) – easy to miss, but very useful.

How do I track my VBM ballot?
Track your ballot at www.browardsoe.org, then click on “check your voter status/update”. At this site, you can determine the date you requested your VBM ballot, the date it was mailed (and the address it was mailed to), and the date your completed ballot was received by the Supervisor of Elections office for processing. Finally, it will indicate that your ballot was counted.

What is the most frequent reason that VBM ballots are rejected?
The primary reason VBM ballots are rejected is because voters did not sign the return mailing envelope!

Why am I asked to supply my email address and phone numbers on the outside of the return mailing envelope?
Florida election laws requires this information be requested. However, you are not required to supply it. BUT, it is very helpful to add this information. If there is a problem with your VBM ballot (perhaps you forgot to sign the envelope?), the Supervisor of Elections office can quickly contact you and have the problem with your VBM ballot corrected. This may be the difference between your vote being counted or not. Only the postal service employees or the SOE employees will see this information.

What does it mean when there is a “signature mismatch”? [Note: less than 0.1% of VBM ballots are rejected for signature mismatches!]
Trained SOE employees compare your signature on the outside of the return envelope with your signature on file in your voter record. If they believe the signature on the envelope does not match the signature on file, the envelope (with the ballot) is reviewed further by the 3-member Canvassing Board, who are also trained by a certified handwriting expert. The Canvassing Board is composed of a Broward County Court Judge, the Supervisor of Elections and a designated member of the Broward County Commission. Only the Canvassing Board can reject a VBM ballot. SOE employees cannot reject a VBM ballot.

How do I know if my signature on file with the SOE office (my voter record) will match my signature on the outside of my VBM ballot envelope?
If you registered to vote online, the signature on file will be the same as on the one on your Florida Driver’s License or Florida Identification Card. If you don’t remember how or when you registered to vote, use your Driver’s License signature as your guide. Signatures are protected information and cannot be shared or revealed by the SOE office. This is why it is so useful to add your email address and phone numbers to the outside of the mailing envelope. If there is a signature mismatch, the SOE office will be able to contact you quickly. You can also update your signature by going to www.RegisterToVoteFlorida.gov.
What happens if my VBM ballot is rejected?
You will be contacted by the Broward County Supervisor of Elections office, and they will tell you what you will need to do. By providing your email address and phone numbers on the outside of the mailing envelope, the SOE office can contact you quickly. Otherwise, it will be done mail, which takes much longer. You need to respond quickly to the SOE request, as you only have until 5:00 pm on the second day (November 5) after the election to get the appropriate paperwork back to the SOE office in order for your ballot to be counted.

I forgot to request my VBM and I don’t feel safe going to the polls in person due to the Covid-19 virus. Now what do I do?

- The last day to request a VBM ballot be mailed to you for the November 3 election is 5 pm on October 24 (10 days before Election Day). Call 954-357-7055. Because of the time it will take for the VBM ballot to be mailed to you, we highly suggest that you return the completed (voted) ballot by dropping off your completed ballot at the Early Voting Sites during the early voting period or drop your completed ballot off at the SOE offices by 7 pm on Election Day.
- On Election Day, you can obtain a VBM ballot, but you will need to go in person or have a trusted individual go to the SOE office and complete this form: https://www.browardsoe.org/Portals/Broward/Documents/Voting%20Methods/DSDE136_Election_Day_Absentee_Ballot_Delivery.pdf

May I request VBM ballots for my family members or my neighbors?
Yes, you may request a VBM ballot for anyone in your immediate family or anyone for whom you are a legal guardian and for up to 2 other voters. Use this form: https://www.browardsoe.org/Portals/Broward/Documents/Voting%20Methods/AffidavittoPickUpABforaVoter.pdf

When do VBM ballots actually get counted?
Per a June 17, 2020 Executive Order by Governor DeSantis: “County Canvassing Boards may begin canvassing Vote-By-Mail ballots upon completion of the public Logic and Accuracy Testing of tabulation machines/equipment, pursuant to Section 101.5612(2), Florida Statutes.” In Broward County, this is scheduled to occur on October 9. Although Vote-By-Mail ballots are being processed by the SOE office every day prior to Election Day, results cannot be released until 7 pm on Election Day.

In all likelihood, Vote-By-Mail ballots will still be arriving on Election Day, so please be patient, as FINAL results may not be available for a day or two after Election Day.
Where are the 22 Early Voting sites in Broward County where I can drop-off my Vote-By-Mail ballot?

For links to the sites listed below, go to https://www.browardsoe.org/Voting-Methods/Early-Voting-Dates-Hours-and-Sites

Use the Broward County Transit map to locate sites on county map and determine possible bus routes to the Early Voting sites: https://www.broward.org/BCT/Documents/SystemMap.pdf

The letters following each location are approximate map coordinates on the transit map.

- African-American Research Library, 2650 Sistrunk Boulevard, Ft. Lauderdale 33311 (M13)
- Broward Health North, Conference Room , 201 E. Sample Road, Deerfield Beach 33064 (F16)
- Coral Ridge Mall, N or NW Entrance, 3200 N. Federal Highway, Ft. Lauderdale 33306 (K16)
- Davie/Cooper City Library, 4600 SW 82nd Avenue, Davie, FL 33328 (Q10)
- Emma Lou Olson Civic Center, 1801 NE 6th St., Pompano Beach, FL 33060 (G16)
- Ft. Lauderdale Branch Library, 1350 E. Sunrise Blvd., Rm 130, Ft. Lauderdale 33304 (M16)
- Hallandale Beach Cultural Comm. Center, 410 SE 3rd Street, Hallandale Beach 33009 (U14)
- Hollywood Branch Library, 2600 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, FL 33020 (S15)
- Miramar Branch Library, 2050 Civic Center Place, Miramar, FL 33025 (T8)
- Nob Hill Soccer Club, 10200 Sunset Strip, Sunrise, FL 33322 (L8)
- North Regional Library, 1100 Coconut Creek Boulevard, Coconut Creek, FL 33066 (G13)
- Northwest Regional Library, 3151 University Drive, Coral Springs, FL 33065 (F10)
- Nova Southeastern University, Alvin Sherman Library, 3301 Ray Ferrero Jr. Blvd, Davie, FL 33314 (P10)
- Pine Trails Park Amphitheater, 10555 Trails End, Parkland, FL 33076 (C9)
- E Pat Larkins Community Center, 520 MLK Blvd., Pompano Beach 33060 (G15)
- Lauderhill Mall, 1519 NW 40th Ave, Lauderhill, FL 33313 (L12)
- South Regional Library, 7300 Pines Boulevard, Pembroke Pines, FL 33024 (S10)
- Southwest Regional Library, 16835 Sheridan Street, Pembroke Pines, FL 33331 (R4)
- Tamarac Branch Library, 8701 W. Commercial Boulevard, Tamarac, FL 33321 (I9)
- West Regional Library, 8601 W. Broward Boulevard, Plantation, FL 33324 (N9)
- Weston Branch Library, 4205 Bonaventure Boulevard, Weston, FL 33332 (N2)
- Women's Club of Wilton Manors, 600 NE 21st Court, Wilton Manors, FL 33305 (L15)