

# Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots

**State Board of Elections** 

## What's a FWAB?



#### What's a FWAB?

Although primarily used as a backup ballot for voters who have timely applied for an absentee ballot but who have not yet received it, the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) can also be used to register a voter and/or act as a request for an absentee ballot.

> The concept of the FWAB was created as part of the **Uniformed and Overseas**Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA).



# Who Can Use a FWAB?



#### Who Can Use a FWAB?

- > UOCAVA Voters
  - Military (both overseas and domestic)
  - Special Federal (U.S. Citizens residing overseas)

- Civilian Absentee Voters
  - Only if they are outside of the U.S.



August 3, 2016

# Sections of the FWAB



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- ➤ The FWAB contains three main parts:
  - > Instructions

#### Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

To describe the first and the families, and citizens residing outside the U.S.
Instructions for Voter's Declaration/Affirmation
Instructions for Voter's Declaration Instructions for Voter's Declaration Instructions for Voter's Declaration Instruction Instructio

The gray numbers and instructions below correspond to the gray numbered boxes on the face of the form.

In most States, you must have registered and requested an steamtee belief from your voting jurisdiction to use this form. If you have not done this, you cannot use this form unless your State allows voter registration via the PANB. If your State does not allow you to register you do using this form and you have not alleady submitted a Frederic Post Card Application or registered throughout an absentee belot by other means, your PANB-WIII of the sourhed to the property of the property of the property of the countries an absentee belot by other means, your PANB-WIII of the sourhed to the property of the prop

The classification you choose may determine in which election(s)
you will be allowed to vote. Choose the one that best represents
your current shueton.

The information you enter for your name should match the information you used to register to vote. The local election official who receives this form will match this to your voter registration information.

While most States allow you to enter either your Driver's License number or the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number, some will investidate this form without your full SSN. Check your State's pages in the Voting Assistance Guide on FVAP gov to see if your State requires the full SSN.

Also, many States ask that you provide your race or ethnic group in order to demonstrate that they are complying with the Voting Rights Act and the National Voter Registration Act.

If there are questions about your form, local election officials will use this information to contact you. An email address is the simplest and festest ewy for them to do so. Your voting materials will be sent to the email address(es) that you provide here if you request it and you "State allows it. Include an alternate phone number in Boxs 0 if necessary."

6 If you want to vote in primary elections, most States require you to specify a political party.

This determines the jurisdiction where you vote. For mills yr votes the worling address is your legal U.S. reddinnes. For overeast editions are this is usually the U.S. address where you led lived. You do not make to he have U.S. and physical files to this dedones of the other where you have a your district the reddinness or not sent for make the proposed of the p

Enter the address where you want voting materials to be sent.

8 Voting materials will be sent to this address unless you enter a forwarding address in Box 9.

Enter anything here that would help ensure your ballot is accepted. Indicate your preferred method for receiving future ballots, email, online download, or fax if requested. You can always get your absentee ballot by mail. Check your State's pages in the Voting Assistance Guide on FVAP gov for enything your State may specifically require here.

Affirmation Read this carefully. It is what you are agreeing to under oath and penalty of perjury by filling out and sending in this form. Some States require that your form be witnessed. Check your State's pages in the Voting Assistance Guide for your State's requirements. To vote, write in either a candidate's name or a political party for each office. Your State may allow you to vote in State and local elections in the Addendum-section of this ballot. You submitt the FVAB and later receive your State ballot you should make every reasonable effort to inform your local election office and return word State ballot.

Some States allow you to send your Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot electronically after printing, signing and scanning.

To return by mail, fold the ballot. Put it in a blank envelope, seal the envelope, and mark it "Security Envelope." This security envelope keeps your vote private.

Put the security envelope and the Declaration / Affirmation form into a larger envelope together. Seal the larger envelope.

#### in send your helint

- For non-U.S. mailing, put the correct amount of local postage in the top right corner on the front of the large envelope.
- In the upper left corner, enter your current complete military or overseas mailing address and the election date.
- Under "To," enter the name and mailing address of the local election official to whom you are sending the packet. It must be the same local election office where you sent your request for an absentee

#### Agency Disclosure Statement

The bublis regioning busden for this collection of Information is estimated to average in final large are regions, including the time for reviewing instructions, guithering and marketing in the data needed, and consigning and reviewing the collection of Information. Send comments regarding this busden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of Information, Industry suggestions for readuring the busden, to the Department of Defense, Washington Hassiquanters Services, Executive Services Directions; Information Management Division, 4500 Mark Center Drine, East Towns, Subcooking Services Directions; Information Management Division, 4500 Mark Center Drine, East Towns, Subcooking Collection, Period Center, Available of Collection, Center and Available of Center (Information Management Division, 4500 Mark Center Drine, East Towns, Subcooking Center), and Center (Information Information Inform

#### Privacy Act Statement

Authority. The authority to collect your personal information on this form comes from 42 USC 1973ff, "Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)."

Principal Purpose: This form serves as a write-in absentee ball of for elections for Federal office or other elections provided by State law or special provisions for all persons covered by UOCAVA.

Routine Use(s): There is no retention of this information by the Federal government. Completed forms are sent by you to an appropriate State election official.

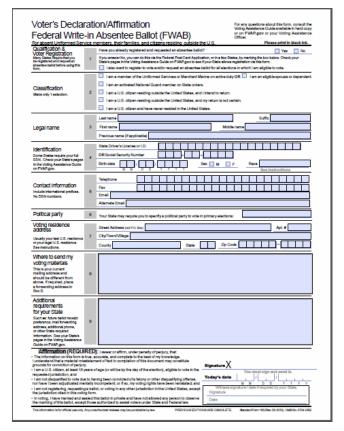
Disclosure: Your disclosure of personal information is voluntary. However, failure to provide the requested information may result in the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot not being recognized and therefore not counted.

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#### **Sections of the FWAB**

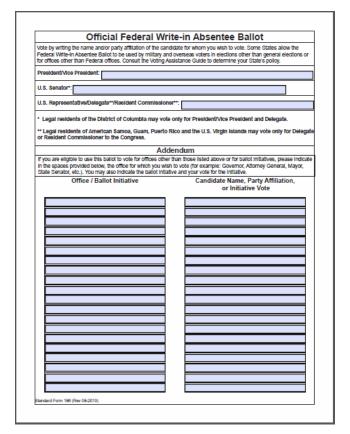
- ➤ The FWAB contains three main parts:
  - Instructions
  - Voter's Declaration/Affirmation





#### **Sections of the FWAB**

- ➤ The FWAB contains three main parts:
  - > Instructions
  - Voter's Declaration/Affirmation
  - ➤ Write-In Absentee Ballot





### A Closer Look...



#### A Closer Look...

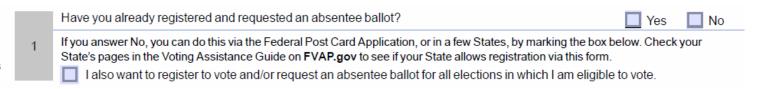
- Voter's Declaration/Affirmation Section
  - Looks an awful lot like aFederal Post Card Application (FPCA)
  - Can be used (just like an FPCA) to register a new voter or to act as a request for an absentee ballot from an existing voter.
  - One notable difference between this part of the FWAB and the FPCA is the omission of a spot for a voter to state their preference with regard to method of transmission of their voting materials ("mail" is therefore assumed).

	-in	Absentee Ballot (FWAB) embers, their families, and clitzens residing outside the U.S.	For any questions about this form, consult the Voting Assistance Guide available in hard copy or on FVAP.gov or your Voting Assistance Officer.  Please print in black ink.
Qualification & Voter Registration Many States Registration be registered and request an absentee belot before using this form.	1	Have you already registered and requested an absentee ballot?	Yes No
		If you answer No, you can do this vis the Federal Poet Card Application, or in a few State's pages in the Voting Assistance Guide on FVAP gov to see if your State slows  I also want to register to vote and/or request an absentee ballot for all elections.	registration via this form.
Classification Make only 1 selection.	2	I am a member of the Uniformed Services or Merchant Marine on active dut	y OR I am an eligible spouse or dependent
		I am an activated National Guard member on State orders.	
		I am a U.S. citizen residing outside the United States, and I intend to return.	
		I am a U.S. citizen residing outside the United States, and my return is not or	erbein.
		I am a U.S. ditzen and have rever resided in the United States.	
Legal name	3	Lastrame	Suffix
		Firstname	e name
		Previous name (if applicable)	
Identification Some States require your tail SSN. Checkyour State's pages Inthe Voting Assistance Guide on FVAP-gov.	4	State Driver's License or LD.	
		OR Social Security Number	1
		Seth date Sex M	F Race
			See Instructions
Contact Information	5	Telephone	
		Fax	
Include international prefixes. No DGN numbers.		Email	
		Alternate Ernal	
Political party	6	Your State may require you to specify a political party to vote in primary elections	
Voting residence		Street Address (not P.O. Rox)	Apt. #
addréss Usually your last U.S. residence	7	City/Town/Village	
oryour legal U.S. residence. See Instructions.		County State Zip Co	···
Where to send my			
voting materials This is your ourset			
mailing address and should be different from	8		
above, firequired, place			
a forwarding address in Box 9.			
Additional			
requirements for your State			
Such as: future ballot receipt			
preference, mail forwarding address, additional phone,	3		
or other State required Information. See your State's			
pages in the Voting Assistance Guide on FVAP.gov.			
Affirmation (REQUII	RED	I swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury, that:	
grounds for conviction of perjury	γ.	countle, and complete to the best of my knowledge. ent of fact in completion of this document may constitute Signature X	
<ul> <li>I am a U.S. citizen, at least 18 y requested jurisdiction, and</li> </ul>	warso	fage (or will be by the day of the election), eligible to vote in the	You must sign and send in.
· I am not disqualified to vote due	e to he	ring been convicted of a felony or other disqualifying offense, competent; or if so, my voting rights have been reinstated, and	
	gabali	ot, or voting in any other jurisdiction in the United States, except Witnesses	rignature / date if required by your State.
In unline I have rearlest and as	g name	is ballot in private and have not allowed any person to observe authorized to assist voters under State and Federal law.	



#### A Closer Look...

Qualification & Voter Registration Many States require that you be registered and request an absentee ballot before using this form.

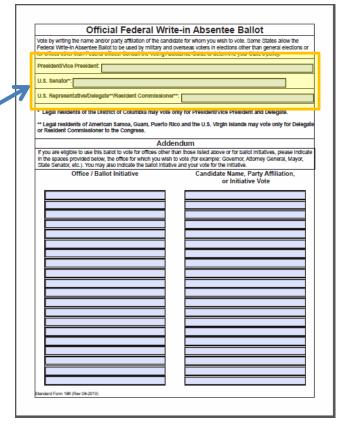


- Another difference between this part of the FWAB and the FPCA is Section 1, which asks the voter to state their reason for using the FWAB:
  - > To act as a backup ballot if they have already requested an absentee ballot; or
  - ➤ To register and/or request an absentee ballot



#### A Closer Look...

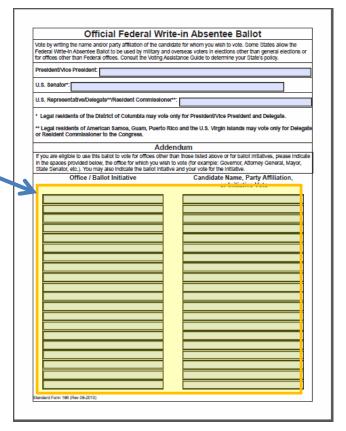
- Write-In Absentee Ballot Section
  - ➤ The FWAB already contains spots for federal offices:
    - President/Vice President
    - > U.S. Senator
    - ➤ U.S. Representative in Congress





#### A Closer Look...

- Write-In Absentee Ballot Section
  - The FWAB also allows for a voter to state additional offices or ballot initiatives that they are eligible to vote for, along with a space for them to state their vote in the form of a Candidate Name, Party Affiliation or Initiative Vote for each enumerated contest.





# How Should a County Board Canvass a FWAB?



#### **How Should a County Board Canvass a FWAB?**

- ➤ If a FWAB contains the name of a person or persons in the space provided for a vote for any office, such ballot shall be counted as a vote for such person or persons.
- ➤ A vote for a person who is the candidate of a party or independent body either for president or vice president shall be deemed to be a vote for both the candidates of such party or independent body for such offices.
- ➤ If such a ballot contains the name of a party or independent body in the space provided for a vote for any office, such ballot shall be deemed to be a vote for the candidate or candidates, if any, of such party or independent body for such office.



#### **How Should a County Board Canvass a FWAB?**

- ➤ In the case of the offices of president and vice-president a vote cast for a candidate, either directly or by writing in the name of a party or independent body, shall also be deemed to be votes for the electors supporting such candidate.
- Any abbreviation, misspelling or other minor variation in the form of the name of a candidate or a party or independent body shall be disregarded in determining the validity of the ballot, if the intention can be ascertained.

# When Should a County Board NOT Canvass a FWAB?



#### When Should a County Board NOT Canvass a FWAB?

- ➤ If an individual returns a FWAB to a County Board with all sections completed, but is either not already registered or is a registered voter but has not submitted a request for an absentee ballot.
- In this scenario, a board should use the FWAB to register the individual as a voter and/or treat it as a request for an absentee ballot.
  - If possible, the board should attempt to transmit an official ballot to the voter.
  - ➤ If timely receipt of an official ballot is in doubt, the board should also attempt to advise the voter that their originally submitted FWAB cannot be canvassed, but that they would now be eligible to return a newly completed FWAB.



#### When Should a County Board NOT Canvass a FWAB?

➤ If a voter timely returns both a FWAB and an official absentee ballot to a County Board, the official ballot should always be the one ballot canvassed by the board, regardless of the order in which they were received.



## Other Uses of the FWAB



#### Other Uses of the FWAB

If a board of elections has been <u>served with a court order restraining or</u>

<u>enjoining the issuance of ballots</u>, and is unable to transmit ballots to military

and/or special federal voters by the applicable statutory deadline, they shall

transmit, in the preferred method of transmission designated by the voter, a FWAB

to all such voters eligible to vote in the election.



## **FWAB Resources**



#### **FWAB Resources**



- The web site of the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), https://www.fvap.gov, is a great place for voters and election administrators alike to find useful information on the FWAB.
- ➤ The FVAP site also provides a FWAB Wizard which walks a voter through the process of completing a FWAB, including access to specific contest and candidate information based on the voter's address.



## **Questions?**

