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..Title
Deadline for Absentee Ballots – For the purpose of changing the deadline for the timeliness of absentee ballots for City of Annapolis elections.
..Body

**CITY COUNCIL OF THE
City of Annapolis**

Ordinance 24-20

Introduced by: Mayor Buckley

**Referred to
Rules and City Government Committee**

AN ORDINANCE concerning

Deadline for Absentee Ballots

FOR the purpose of changing the deadline for the timeliness of absentee ballots for City of Annapolis elections.

BY repealing and re-enacting with amendments the following portions of the Code of the City of Annapolis, 2018 Edition
4.28.100.

SECTION I: BE IT ESTABLISHED AND ORDAINED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL that the Code of the City of Annapolis shall be amended to read as follows:

**TITLE 4 – ELECTIONS
Chapter 4.28– ABSENTEE VOTING**

Section 4.28.100 – Canvassing of ballots.

- A. The board shall not open or unfold any provisional or absentee ballot at any time prior to the closing of the polls.
- B. At any time after the closing of the polls on election day and not later than the canvass of the votes cast at the regular voting places in the City, the board shall meet at the office of the board and shall proceed to count, certify and canvass the absentee ballots contained in the ballot envelopes.
- C. Timeliness of absentee ballots:

1 1. A ballot shall be considered as received timely, provided:

2
3 a. It has been received by the board prior to the closing of the polls on election
4 day; or

5
6 b. It was mailed ON OR before election day, the United States Postal Service,
7 or postal service of any other country, has provided verification of that fact
8 by affixing a mark so indicating on the covering envelope, and the board
9 receives the ballot from the United States Postal Service not later than 10:00
10 A.M. ON THE DATE OF THE CANVASS~~close of business on the~~
11 ~~Wednesday following election day.~~

12
13 2. Any ballot NOT received IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBPARAGRAPH 1
14 ABOVE ~~after the of business on the first Wednesday following election day may~~
15 SHALL not be counted.

16
17 D. All ballots are presumed to be validly cast, and all votes are presumed to be valid and
18 shall be counted, notwithstanding any deficiency in the manner in which the ballot
19 and/or vote was sought, sent or presented to appropriate officials, and no ballot or vote
20 shall be set aside unless there is clear and convincing evidence, as unanimously
21 determined by the board of canvassers, that said ballot and/or vote was improperly
22 cast.

23
24 E. A ballot may not be rejected by the board except by the unanimous vote of the board
25 members present and voting, provided at least two members are present and that they
26 are not of the same major political party. This canvass shall be conducted by ward and
27 precinct in accordance with the applicable provisions of this title. All voters'
28 applications, medical certificates, notarial affidavits, certifications, ballot envelopes
29 and ballots, to have voters' applications and all documentation kept separately from
30 ballots cast in polling precincts, shall be kept separate and apart from ballots cast at
31 the regular voting places and retained for six months after the date of election at which
32 they were cast, unless, prior to that time, the board is ordered by a court of competent
33 jurisdiction to keep the same for any longer period. The board may appoint those
34 numbers of temporary judges as the board may deem necessary to adequately and
35 promptly carry out the provisions of this section.

36
37 F. Any absentee ballot voted for a person who has ceased to be a candidate shall not be
38 counted for that candidate but the vote shall not invalidate the remainder of the ballot.

39
40 G. If the absentee resident who marked a ballot dies before election day, the ballot shall
41 be counted if the ballot is postmarked or received before the absentee resident's death,
42 and the fact that the absentee resident later may be shown actually to have been dead
43 on election day shall not invalidate the ballot or the election.

44
45 H. For the purposes of absentee ballots, if the board determines that the provisions for
46 filling out and signing the oath on the outside of the ballot envelope substantially have

1 been complied with and that the person signing the voter's oath is entitled to vote under
2 this title in any precinct of the City, and already has not voted in the precinct on
3 election day, they shall open the ballot envelope and remove the ballot and place it in
4 a ballot box or ballot boxes prepared for that purpose. If an oath is unsigned, it is
5 automatically excluded from the count. When any ballot envelope is opened, the board
6 shall enter in the appropriate register the fact that the voter whose name appears on the
7 envelope has voted, using the initials "A.B." to indicate the vote has been by absentee
8 ballot. If there is more than one ballot in the ballot envelope, all shall be rejected.
9 Absentee ballots may be marked by any kind of pencil or ink.

10
11 I. For the purposes of provisional ballots, if the board determines that the voter is entitled
12 to vote under this title in any precinct of the City and has not already voted in the
13 precinct on election day, they shall open the ballot envelope, remove the ballot and
14 place it in a ballot box or ballot boxes prepared for that purpose. When any ballot
15 envelope is opened, the board shall enter in the appropriate register the fact that the
16 voter whose name appears on the envelope has voted, using the initials "P.B." to
17 indicate the vote has been by provisional ballot. If there is more than one ballot in the
18 ballot envelope, all shall be rejected. Provisional ballots may be marked by any kind
19 of pencil or ink.

20
21 J. If the board receives from the same person, prior to the deadline for receipt of absentee
22 ballots, more than one absentee ballot, it shall count, certify and canvass only the
23 absentee ballot contained in the ballot envelope on which the voter's oath was last
24 executed, and if the oath on two or more of the ballot envelopes containing absentee
25 ballots are dated the same or if both are undated, none of the ballots received from
26 such persons shall be counted.

27
28 **SECTION II: AND BE IT FURTHER ESTABLISHED AND ORDAINED BY**
29 **THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that this ordinance shall take effect from the date
30 of its passage.

31
32 **EXPLANATION**

33 Underlining indicates matter added to existing law.

34 ~~Strikethrough~~ indicates matter stricken from existing law.

35 [Brackets] indicate amendments.