



Arkansas House Newsletter

July 17, 2020

Voting in November



Arkansans who may have concerns about going to the polls this November while the health crisis continues can make plans now to ensure their vote counts.

Arkansas law allows voters to request absentee ballots if they will be “unavoidably absent” on Election Day or if they have illnesses or physical disabilities. Arkansas Secretary of State John Thurston has interpreted this law to allow the ability to vote with an absentee ballot due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an interpretation that Governor Hutchinson and both the Republican and Democratic party leaders are in agreement.

Thurston said voters could now begin requesting absentee ballots from the Arkansas Secretary of State’s office or their local county clerk. To receive an absentee ballot, you must be a registered voter. The voter registration deadline is October 5.

The deadline for requesting an absentee ballot by mail is October 27, though a voter can pick up an absentee ballot in person until November 2, the day before the election.

All absentee ballots must be returned by 7 p.m. on Election Day, November 3, to be counted, Thurston said. Note: On your application, you may designate how you wish to receive your ballot: by picking it up in person, by mail, or bearer.

The absentee voting requirements are different from the universal vote-by-mail system in place in some states, which send a ballot by mail to every registered voter. In Arkansas, a voter must request an absentee ballot. Absentee voters are also required to submit a photocopy of their voter ID in with their ballot.

For more information on how to download an absentee ballot application and how to contact your county clerk, [**HERE**](#).

You can also contact the Arkansas Secretary of State's office with any questions or concerns at [**voterservices@sos.arkansas.gov**](mailto:voterservices@sos.arkansas.gov).