

2022 Election Law Changes

On May 13, 2022, [legislation \(S108, R165\)](#) was enacted that made comprehensive changes to how South Carolinians vote including establishing early voting and making significant changes to the absentee voting process.

Early Voting

In-person absentee voting has now been replaced with a two-week early voting period.

- Any voter can visit an early-voting location in their county and vote like they would at their polling place on Election Day
- [Bring your Photo ID](#) (if you do not have one, get one from your county elections office)
- Statewide General Elections:
 - Monday – Saturday for two weeks before election
 - Closed Sundays and holidays
 - 8:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
 - All county elections offices
 - Any additional locations will be determined by county elections offices no later than March 10 of the election year (July 1 for the 2022 General Election) and posted to [scVOTES.gov](#) and county websites.
- Other Elections and Primaries:
 - Monday – Friday for two weeks before election
 - Closed Saturdays, Sundays and holidays
 - 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 - All county elections offices
 - Any additional locations will be determined by county elections offices no later than March 10 of the election year (May 24 for the 2022 Primaries) and posted to [scVOTES.gov](#) and county websites.
- Runoffs:
 - Wednesday – Friday of the week prior to the runoff
 - Same hours and locations as the original election

Absentee Voting

Absentee voting allows qualified voters to cast a ballot by mail prior to Election Day. In-Person Absentee Voting is no longer available.

Voters Qualified to Vote Absentee:

1. Persons with employment obligations which prevent them from voting during early voting hours for the duration of the early voting period, and during the hours the polls are open on election day.
2. Persons attending a sick or physically disabled person which prevents them from voting during early voting hours for the duration of the early voting period, and during the hours the polls are open on election day.
3. Persons confined to a jail or pretrial facility pending disposition of arrest or trial which prevents them from voting during early voting hours for the duration of the early voting period, and during the hours the polls are open on election day.
4. Persons who will be absent from their county of residence during early voting hours for the duration of the early voting period, and during the hours the polls are open on election day.
5. Persons with physical disabilities.
6. Persons sixty-five years of age or older.
7. Members of the Armed Forces and Merchant Marines of the United States, their spouses, and dependents residing with them.
8. Persons admitted to a hospital as an emergency patient on the day of the election or within a four-day period before the election.

To Vote Absentee:

- Request an application by phone, mail, or in person at your county elections office.
 - Can be requested by voter, immediate family, or authorized representative (AR)
 - AR must be a registered voter acting on voter's behalf who is unable to go to the polls because of illness or disability
 - Individuals are limited to five application requests in addition to their own
- Sign and return the application to your county elections office by mail or in person.
 - County offices are issuing new applications based on the new requirements.
 - Only new applications will be accepted beginning June 1.
 - The deadline to return an application is 11 days before the election.
- You will receive your absentee ballot by mail.
- Vote and return your ballot to your county elections office by mail or in person no later than 7:00 p.m. on Election Day or in person at an early voting center during early voting hours.
 - Be sure to sign the voter's oath and have the return envelope witnessed.
 - Beginning July 1, the witness will be required to be 18 years old and print their name in addition to signing and providing their address on the return envelope.
 - Photo ID will be required to return your ballot in person.

Election Crimes

The following election law violations are now felonies. Penalties have increased to up to a \$5,000 fine and up to 5 years in prison.

- Fraudulent voting or attempt to fraudulently vote, aiding in fraudulent voting or attempt to fraudulently vote, voting more than once, or impersonating a voter.
- Requesting more than five absentee applications or returning more than five absentee ballots in addition to your own.
- Providing, offering to provide, or accepting anything of value in exchange for requesting, collecting, or delivering an absentee ballot.
- Willful violation of duties, fraud, or corruption by a poll manager.
- Willful neglect of duties or corruption by any election official.

For complete details, read [Senate Bill 108 \(R165\)](#) at [scstatehouse.gov](#).