

April 2014 Handbook Changed Pages

Voter Registration – Chapter 1

Page	Change	Bill Sec. # Code Cite
5-6	Revised the pre-registration deadline for the primary election.	HF 2366 Sec. 12

Absentee – Chapter 3

Page	Change	Bill Sec. # Code Cite
11-14	Revised language for new option of using a combined return and affidavit envelope.	HF 2366 Multiple sections
17-18	Removed requirement of marking party affiliation on affidavit envelope in primary elections.	HF 2366 Sec. 31
49-50	Removed requirement of marking party affiliation on affidavit envelope in primary elections. Changed affidavit review deadline for review by auditor's office for primary election.	HF 2366 Sec. 31 HF 2366 Sec. 20
69-70	Revised language for new option of using a combined return and affidavit envelope.	HF 2366 Multiple sections
87-88	Removed requirement of marking party affiliation on affidavit envelope in primary elections.	HF 2366 Sec. 31

Primary Elections – Chapter 8

Page	Change	Bill Sec. # Code Cite
TOC pg. 1-2	Revised headings.	N/A
1-2	Removed requirement of marking party affiliation on affidavit envelope in primary elections.	HF 2366 Sec. 31
3-4	Revised the pre-registration deadline for the primary election. Changed affidavit review deadline for review by auditor's office for primary election.	HF 2366 Sec. 12 HF 2366 Sec. 20

Auditor's Calendar to Primary Election

Page	Change	Bill Sec. # Code Cite
3-4	Revised the pre-registration deadline for the primary election. Changed affidavit review deadline for review by auditor's office for primary election.	HF 2366 Sec. 12 HF 2366 Sec. 20

Candidate's Guide to the Primary Election

Page	Change	Bill Sec. # Code Cite
13-14	Revised the pre-registration deadline for the primary election.	HF 2366 Sec. 12

ASVP Board Guide

Page	Change	Bill Sec. # Code Cite
5-6	Revised language for new option of using a combined return and affidavit envelope.	HF 2366 Multiple sections
7-8	Removed requirement of marking party affiliation on affidavit envelope in primary elections.	HF 2366 Sec. 31

Pre-Registration Deadlines

Voters who want their names to appear on the election registers on election day should pre-register to vote by 5 p.m.:

- 10 days before general elections
- 11 days before primary, city, school, and all other special elections

[§48A.9(1)]

Worry-Free Postmark

Any voter registration form that is postmarked no later than 15 days before election day is considered on time even if it is received after the voter pre-registration deadline.

[§48A.9(3)]

Military Discharges

Voter pre-registration deadlines do not apply to a person who has been discharged from military services within 30 days of an election. The person must show a copy of his or her discharge papers to the auditor before election day or a PEO on election day. The person will be allowed to vote as long as he or she completes a voter registration form. A voter in this situation is not required to, but can, use EDR procedures.

[§48A.5(6)]

Electronically Submitted Forms

New Registrants

Faxed or emailed voter registration forms for new registrants cannot be accepted. Contact the voter and ask the voter to send the original document.

[§48A.13]

Exception: UOCAVA voters may submit their FPCA electronically.

[IAC 721—21.320(2)(d), 821—2.8]

See the “Voter Registration and UOCAVA Voters” section for more information.

Voters Already Registered in County

Voters who are registered in your county may submit an update to their registration electronically. The notice of update must still be signed.

[§48A.27(2)(a)(1)]

Election Official Oath

Anyone who performs voter registration duties must take an oath before engaging in any official duties. The election official/clerk oath is available in the Election Forms Library.

[§48A.4]

Retention of Voter Registration Records

All records of a person's registration may be destroyed 22 months after the next general election following the cancellation of the person's voter registration.

[§48A.32]

"Incomplete" voter records may be cancelled and destroyed 22 months after the next general election following their receipt.

[IAC 821—2.8(5)]

For example, if John Citizen's registration is cancelled on June 2, 2009, you would need to wait 22 months after the 2010 general election to destroy records of his voter registration. His records could be destroyed on September 3, 2012, or later.

Instead of destroying the records, the auditor can choose to donate them to a historical society as long as all confidential information (driver's license and/or Social Security numbers and the name of the agency where a form was filled out) has been removed.

[§48A.32]

Scanned Documents

If voter registration documents are electronically scanned, keep the paper copies of the original documents as all records pertaining to a voter's registration must kept for the prescribed retention period.

[§48A.32]

9. Check the voter's absentee request to see if the voter would like the ballot mailed to the registration address or a mailing address.

- a. If the voter wants the ballot mailed to the voter's registration address, click on the "Use Address on File" checkbox.

If the voter has a mailing address listed on the voter's registration record, clicking "Use Address on File" will pull in the voter's registration mailing address for the absentee mailing label.

- b. If the voter lists a mailing address on the absentee request, type the mailing address into the "Absentee Address" field.

"Use Address on File" Marked and Mailing Address on Registration Record

Best Practice: In this situation, if the voter's ballot was returned undeliverable, unsend the ballot in I-VOTERS, uncheck the "Use Address on File" box, and resend the ballot to the voter's residential address as indicated on the absentee request. To unsend the ballot, open the "Absentee Details" screen from the voter's record and click "Unsend Ballot."

The screenshot shows the 'Voter Registration - Absentee Detail' window. Key elements include:
- **Absentee Type:** Election Specific (12/04/2012 Test Election)
- **Absentee Application Source:** HCF/Satellite Location
- **Election Type:** Federal, School, City, Special, All (all unchecked)
- **Date Requested:** 07/06/2012
- **Use Address On File:** Checked
- **Address:** 101 N MAIN ST, ALGONA, IA 50511
- **Absentee Address:** Country: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, USA checkbox checked
- **Buttons:** Unsend Ballot, Print Now, Print Later, Close

10. Click on "Print Later" to send a label to "Election Management" to print later. To print a label immediately, click on "Print Now."

Mailing Ballots

The auditor may mail ballots to voters as soon as they are ready, even if it is more than 40 days before an election.

[§53.8]

Carefully review each ballot style when you receive ballots from the printer and before they are mailed. If possible, test each ballot style to be sure the scanner can properly read them if using voting equipment.

After the ballots are ready, you are required by law to mail absentee ballots within 24 hours after receiving requests unless the voter is a resident of a hospital or health care facility. See pages 21 – 23 for more information.

[§53.8(1)]

Items to Include with Absentee Ballots

1. Public measure text (if any)

Include the full text of any public measures that are summarized on the ballot but not printed in full.

2. Secrecy envelope

Include a secrecy envelope if the ballot cannot be folded to cover all of the voting targets or if you plan to open the affidavit envelopes on Monday before election day.

[§53.8(1), 53.23(3)]

3. Affidavit envelope

The affidavit envelope is the equivalent of the voter's declaration of eligibility. It must be marked with the serial number (i.e. absentee sequence number) used to identify the absentee request in the auditor's records.

Important Note: The affidavit envelope and return envelope may be combined into one envelope.

[§53.8(1)]

4. Return envelope

Important Note: The affidavit envelope and return envelope may be combined into one envelope.

[§53.8(1)]

This envelope must be addressed to the auditor's office and have the appropriate return postage or postal permit guaranteeing that the auditor will pay the return postage. The envelope must be marked with the serial number (i.e. absentee sequence number) used to identify the absentee request in the auditor's records.

The return envelope must also have the return deadline statement printed or stamped on the flap or back of the envelope.

Return Deadline Statement:

“This ballot will only be eligible for counting if it is received by the auditor’s office before the polls close on election day or postmarked before election day and received by the deadline listed in the voting instructions included with this ballot.

Postmarks are not guaranteed!

Mail the ballot early to make sure it is received on time. Track the status of your absentee ballot at www.SOS.iowa.gov.”

[IAC 721—21.303(5)]

5. Absentee voting instructions

Include the instructions prepared by the SOS for either domestic or UOCAVA absentee voters. The general election instructions include information about straight party voting.

6. Absentee ballot receipt

A blank receipt must be included in case the voter wants to designate someone to return the ballot on behalf of the voter. The absentee voting instructions prepared by the SOS include a receipt and receipt instructions.

7. Delivery envelope

The delivery envelope must be addressed to the voter and be marked with the serial number (i.e. absentee sequence number) used to identify the absentee request in the auditor’s records. All other materials must be enclosed in this envelope.

Copies of the envelopes and absentee voting instructions are available in the Election Forms Library.

Deadline to Return Absentee Ballots by Mail

All ballots must be clearly postmarked before election day. If postmarked on election day, the absentee ballot must be received in the auditor's office by the time the polls close to eligible for counting. Ballots without postmarks or with illegible postmarks received after the polls close cannot be counted.

[§53.17(2)]

For primary and general elections, the ballots must be received by the auditor by noon on the Monday following the election.

Exception: If the USPS is closed on the deadline for ballot receipt, the ballot receipt deadline moves to Tuesday at noon.

For all other elections, if the canvass of votes by the board of supervisors is scheduled on the Monday or Tuesday after the election, the deadline to receive mailed ballots is noon on the Monday following the election.

Exception: If the USPS is closed on the deadline for ballot receipt, the ballot receipt deadline moves to Tuesday at noon.

[IAC 721—21.13]

If the canvass is earlier than noon on the Monday (or Tuesday) following the election, ballots must be received no later than the time the canvass is scheduled.

Contact Post Office

For all elections, if the canvass is scheduled earlier than noon on Monday (or Tuesday if applicable) the auditor must contact the post office at the latest practicable hour before the canvass and arrange for ballots received in the post office but not yet delivered to the office (if any) to be delivered or picked up before the canvass so they can be included in the final canvass totals.

[§53.17]

Ballots Returned to Polling Place on Election Day

The voter has two choices.

1. The voter can surrender the absentee ballot at the polls and vote a regular ballot.
2. The voter can deliver the absentee ballot to the auditor's office before the polls close.

[§53.19]

If the voter's designee delivers an absentee ballot to the polling place, the PEOs must refuse to accept the ballot and inform the designee that the ballot must be delivered to the auditor's office before the polls close. The PEOs cannot return the absentee ballot in time for the ballot to be counted.

2. Each voter must complete an absentee ballot request form. Review the form to be sure the voter provided all of the required information. Obtain missing information by asking the voter to complete the form.
3. File stamp the request form with the date received.
4. Enter the absentee request in I-VOTERS. (See also the “Processing In-Person Absentee Voters” instructions in this chapter.)

Voters may submit changes of name, telephone number, party affiliation, or changes of registration address (within county) on an absentee ballot request form. You may also update the voter’s driver’s license or Social Security number from an absentee ballot request form. The voter’s registration record in I-VOTERS must be updated to reflect the change at the time the absentee request is entered. Save the changes before adding the absentee ballot request.

[§53.2(7)]

5. Ask the voter to sign the affidavit envelope before giving the voter the ballot.

You are required to examine the affidavit for completeness. Check to be sure the voter signed the affidavit.

[§53.18, IAC 721—21.352(2), 21.354(2)]

6. Initial and issue the appropriate ballot to the voter. Ballots must be voted at the office; they may not be taken from the office.
7. Send the voter to a booth. Each voter must use a voting booth.
8. Ask the voter to wait while you review the affidavit envelope when the voter returns the ballot.

Check to be sure the voter:

- Sealed the affidavit envelope, apparently with the ballot inside
- Did not open and reseal the affidavit envelope

[§53.18, IAC 721—21.352(2), 21.354(2)]

9. Store the voted ballot and the request form.

File the request form in a secure place where it can be retrieved for viewing by the ASVP board, if necessary.

Store the voted ballot in a secure location accessible only to members of the auditor’s staff.

Regulations for Campaign Signs and Electioneering at Auditor's Office

During the hours when absentee voting is available at the auditor's office, campaign signs may not be posted within 300 feet of the absentee voting site. In addition, no electioneering shall be allowed within sight or hearing of voters at the absentee voting site.

[§53.10, 53.11, 68A.406]

Incomplete and Defective Affidavit Envelopes

Affidavit Review Process

Review the affidavit envelope if the ballot was received before 5 p.m. on the Saturday before the election for general elections and before 5 p.m. on the Friday before the election for all other elections.

[§53.18(2)]

Do not review affidavit envelopes received after this time. Instead, any absentee ballots received on the days immediately before the election should be received into I-VOTERS and stored in a secure location for delivery to and review by the ASVP board.

1. Open the return envelopes (if a combined return/affidavit envelope was not used).

The auditor can direct a staff member to open the return envelopes. Only a trained reviewer may remove the contents of the envelope.

[IAC 721—21.353(53)]

Only open one return envelope at a time.

[IAC 721—21.354(53)]

2. Remove affidavit envelopes (if a combined return/affidavit envelope was not used).
3. Store the return envelopes (if a combined return/affidavit envelope was not used) for the six or 22 month time period required. Do not throw away any envelopes.
4. Review each affidavit envelope to see if it is incomplete or defective.
5. Separate the ballots into the following categories for storage:

- No defects and affidavit is complete
- Incomplete

Incomplete affidavits requiring voter correction must be available for quick retrieval when a voter comes to make corrections.

- Defective

Attach defective affidavits to the original ballot request, replacement ballot request (if any), and replacement ballot (if any) for review by the ASVP board.

[IAC 721—21.354(5)]

Incomplete Affidavits

An incomplete affidavit is missing the voter's signature.

[IAC 721—21.354(4)]

Defective Affidavits

A defective affidavit occurs when the:

- Affidavit envelope is missing
- Affidavit envelope is not sealed
- Affidavit envelope has been opened and resealed
- Absentee ballot is not enclosed in the affidavit envelope
- Affidavit envelope was not signed and voter cannot come to the office to sign it
- Voter moved to a new precinct after submitting a voted absentee ballot

[IAC 721—21.354(4)]

Defect Due to Voter Move

If a voter registers to vote in a different precinct or county and the voter has already returned an absentee ballot, the ballot must be treated as defective. The voter may correct the defect by registering to vote in the precinct where the absentee ballot was cast if the voter is still able to claim residence for voter registration purposes in that precinct.

- If the pre-registration deadline has passed, the voter must use EDR procedures to re-register.
- If the voter is not eligible to re-register in the precinct where the absentee ballot was cast, the ballot must be set aside and challenged by the ASVP board.

[§48A.5, 48A.5A, IAC 721—21.355(2)(b)(3)]

If the voter moved to a new precinct within the county and has not submitted an additional absentee ballot request, see the "Processing Defective Affidavits" instructions for information on processing the ballot.

If the voter moved to a different county and also requests an absentee ballot in the new county,

1. Contact the county in which the voter was previously registered and ask the county to void the voter's ballot in I-VOTERS.
That county must send the voter a notice of defective affidavit.

Sending Ballots to UOCAVA Voters

For primary and general elections, ballots must be ready to send to UOCAVA voters at least 45 days before the election.

[§53.39(2)]

By Mail

Ballots must be mailed unless a voter specifically asks for the ballot to be sent electronically. Include the following with each mailed ballot:

1. Public measure text (if any)

Include the full text of any public measures that are summarized on the ballot but not printed in full.

2. Secrecy envelope

Include a secrecy envelope if the ballot cannot be folded to cover all of the voting targets or if you plan to open the affidavit envelopes on Monday before election day.

[§53.8(1), 53.23(3)]

3. Affidavit envelope

The affidavit envelope is the equivalent of the voter's declaration of eligibility. It must be marked with the serial number (i.e. absentee sequence number) used to identify the absentee request in the auditor's records.

Important Note: The affidavit envelope and return envelope may be combined into one envelope.

[§53.8(1)]

4. Return envelope

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[§53.8(1)]

This envelope must be addressed to the auditor's office and have the appropriate return postage or postal permit guaranteeing that the auditor will pay the return postage. The envelope must be marked with the serial number (i.e. absentee sequence number) used to identify the absentee request in the auditor's records.

The return envelope must also have the return deadline statement below printed or stamped on the flap or back of the envelope:

"This ballot will only be eligible for counting if it is received by the auditor's office before the polls close on election day or postmarked before election day and received by the deadline listed in the voting instructions included with this ballot.

Postmarks are not guaranteed!

Mail the ballot early to make sure it is received on time. Track the status of your absentee ballot at www.sos.iowa.gov.”

[IAC 721—21.303(5)]

5. Absentee voting instructions

Include the instructions prepared by the SOS for UOCAVA absentee voters. The general elections instructions include information about straight party voting.

6. Absentee ballot receipt

A blank receipt must be included in case the voter wants to designate someone to return the ballot on behalf of the voter. The absentee voting instructions prepared by the SOS include a receipt and receipt instructions.

7. Delivery envelope

The delivery envelope must be addressed to the voter and be marked with the serial number (i.e. absentee sequence number) used to identify the absentee request in the auditor’s records. All other materials must be enclosed in this envelope.

Copies of the envelopes and absentee voting instructions are available in the Election Forms Library.

By Electronic Transmission

Auditors may choose to send ballots either through FVAP’s ETS server or directly to the voter’s email or fax.

If voters request for their ballots to be sent electronically, you must honor that request. Voters must indicate this choice on their request and provide their fax number or email address. If a voter does not provide an email address or fax number, send the ballots by postal mail.

[IAC 721—21.320(3)]

Include the following with each e-transmission ballot:

- A ballot
- E-transmission ballot instructions
- Required forms
 - Return envelope form (may be combined with affidavit envelope)
 - Affidavit envelope form (may be combined with return envelope)

The e-transmission ballot instructions and required forms are available in the Election Forms Library.

Opening Affidavit Envelopes

Affidavit envelopes can be opened the Monday before the election under the following circumstances:

- For any election if you provided secrecy envelopes and you determine removing secrecy envelopes from the affidavit envelopes is necessary due to the quantity of voted absentee ballots received so that counting will be completed by 10 p.m. on election day.
[IAC 721-21.359(53), §53.23(3)(a)]
- For the general election, if you convene the ASVP board to begin counting absentee ballots the day before the election.
[§53.23(3)(c)]

Rejecting Absentee Ballots Without Opening Affidavit

An absentee ballot must be rejected before the affidavit envelope is opened if any of the following conditions exists:

- Affidavit lacks the voter's signature,
- Voter is inactive/pending and has not provided §48A.8 ID by the time the ASVP board meets to consider provisional ballots,
- Applicant is not a duly registered voter in the precinct in which the ballot is cast,
- Affidavit envelope is missing,
- Affidavit envelope is open,
- Affidavit envelope has been opened and resealed,
- Affidavit envelope contains more than one ballot of any kind,
- Voter cast another ballot in person at the polls, or
- Voter submitted an absentee ballot request electronically and the original request form was not postmarked by the Friday before election day and was not received in the auditor's office by the time the polls close on election day.
[§53.25, IAC 721—21.2(2), 21.361(53)]

Process for Opening Affidavit Envelopes

The board must first review the voters' affidavits to determine which ballots will be accepted for counting.

1. Affidavit envelopes containing ballots that have been rejected for reasons set forth in §53.25 shall be set aside and stored in a manner prescribed by §53.26. Prepare the appropriate notices to send to the voters whose ballots were rejected. A board member must initial or sign the notices. A sample notice "Rejected Absentee" is available in the Election Forms Library. Voters whose ballots were rejected without opening the affidavit envelope must be notified of the rejection by the time of the canvass.

[§53.25, IAC 721—21.359(2)]

Rejected ballots must be marked "Rejected because (reason of rejection)." All rejected ballots must be sealed in an envelope marked "Defective ballots." The envelope must be marked with "absentee precinct," the date of the election at which the ballots were cast, and have a seal affixed that is signed by the PEOs.

The board should record the number of rejected ballots on the absentee and provisional ballot chain of custody log available in the Election Forms Library. The envelope with the rejected ballots shall be returned to the auditor.

[§53.26]

2. Affidavit envelopes that have been accepted for counting should then be stacked with the affidavits facing down and the secrecy folders should be removed.

If ballots are not being counted before election day for the general election, affidavit envelopes can only be opened for the purpose of removing the secrecy envelopes containing the ballot.

If there are any ballots not enclosed in a secrecy envelope, two ASVP board members, one from each of the parties, shall place the ballot in a secrecy envelope without examining the ballot.

If there is more than one ballot in an affidavit envelope or the affidavit envelope is empty, the ballot must be rejected and the voter must be mailed a notice of rejection. A sample notice "Rejected Absentee" is available in the Election Forms Library. Send the notice of rejection by the time of the canvass.

[§53.23(3)(b)(1), 53.23(3)(b)(2), IAC 721—21.359(4)]

3. If secrecy folders were used, leave the ballots in the secrecy folders and mix the folders so they are in a different sequence.

If secrecy folders were not used, leave the ballots unfolded and mix the ballots up.

4. Remove ballots from secrecy folders (if any).
5. Unfold the ballots.

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Overview

What is the Primary Election?

The primary election is held for the members of political parties to nominate candidates for the general election. The term “primary election” when it is used in the *Iowa Code* or in this handbook refers to this election. It does NOT include the city primary election. For information on elections for cities with primary provisions, see the City Elections section of this handbook.

[§39.3(9), 43.1, 43.3]

Date of Primary Election

The primary election is held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in June of even-numbered years.

[§43.7]

Laws Related to Primary Elections

Chapter 43 of the *Iowa Code* is the main source of information for laws relating to the primary election. Section 43.5 refers to the other chapters of the *Iowa Code* that apply whenever Ch. 43 doesn't contain a specific requirement.

Political Parties

A political party is an organization whose candidate for president of the United States or governor of Iowa received at least two percent of the votes cast for president or governor at the last general election as determined by the state commissioner.

[§43.2]

Currently, there are only two political parties in Iowa: the Democratic Party and the Republican Party.

For more information, see the following link at the SOS website:
<http://sos.iowa.gov/elections/electioninfo/formpoliticalparty.html>.

What is Different About Primary Elections?

Party Affiliation Matters

The biggest difference between the primary election and all other elections is that a voter's party affiliation matters and must be included on election registers, eligibility slips (if used), absentee ballot requests, etc. Only voters who are registered with the Democratic or Republican parties (or people who declare their affiliation with one party or the other when casting a ballot) are allowed to vote in primary elections.

A voter must be a member of the party to participate in that party's nomination process. Iowa has a "closed" primary which means that voters can only vote in one party's primary election and only if they are willing to declare themselves as members of that party.

[§43.38]

No One is Elected

Candidates are *nominated* at the primary election to run as a political party's candidate in the general election.

Two Elections in One

At the primary, auditors are conducting one election for the Democratic Party and one election for the Republican Party. There are separate ballots, canvass materials, and certificates of write-in votes for each party.

Additional Publication Required

The notice of election must be published in two newspapers of general circulation if there are two generally circulated newspapers in the county.

[§49.53(2)]

Changes in Polling Places Since Last Primary Election

If the polling place for any precinct is different than the one used at the last primary election, you must include that information in the notice of election. You must also post a notice at the former polling place before the polls open on election day indicating where the polling place is for that precinct.

[§49.23]

Pre-Election

Paying for the Election

The county pays the election costs associated with conducting the election.

[§47.3(1)]

Special Election “Blackout” Dates

No special elections (including special elections held to fill vacancies) may be held for three weeks before and after the primary election.

[§39.2(1)(a)]

Memorial Day

Occasionally the Memorial Day holiday may affect certain deadlines related to the primary election. Deadlines (if any) will typically extend to the next business day after Memorial Day.

[§1C.1(5), 47.4]

Satellite Voting Petitions

Residents of the county can petition for satellite voting for primary elections. The minimum number of signatures required on a petition is 100 and the petition must be delivered to the auditor no later than 47 days before the election at 5 p.m. For more information about satellites, see the Absentee Voting chapter.

[§53.11]

At least seven days before the first day of a satellite, the auditor must notify the political parties of the date, time, and location of a satellite so the parties may appoint observers.

[§53.11(5)]

See the Absentee Voting chapter for more information.

Voter Pre-Registration Deadline

The pre-registration deadline is 11 days before the primary election at 5 p.m. This is a Friday. The auditor’s office must be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. After the deadline, voters may register to vote and cast an absentee ballot at the same time using EDR procedures at the auditor’s office or satellite station or they can use EDR procedures at their polling place on election day.

[§48A.7A(3), 48A.9]

Auditor's Office Open on Saturday

On the Saturday before the election, the auditor's office must be open for absentee voting and other election business for at least eight hours. There are no set hours.

[§47.2(5), 48A.9(2), 53.18(2)]

Affidavit Review

All ballots that are received by 5 p.m. on the Friday before the primary election must have their return envelopes opened and their affidavit envelopes reviewed for defects and completeness. If any problems are discovered, the voter must be notified immediately. For more information about reviewing affidavits, see the Absentee Voting chapter.

[§53.18(2)]

Days from Election	Date	Event	Code Cite
-45	Saturday, April 19	UOCAVA absentee ballots must be ready to mail 45 days before the election. Regular absentee ballots must be mailed as soon as they are ready.	§53.8(1), 53.39(2), 53.40(2)
		Absentee Ballots Ready. First day absentee ballots may be voted in the auditor's office. Auditors must review all affidavits upon receipt.	§53.10, 53.18(2)
-40	Thursday, April 24	Health Care Facility Delivery. Within 10 days after ballots are printed, the auditor may send teams to deliver ballots to residents and patients of health care facilities. After this 10 day window, ballots cannot be delivered to health care facilities again until the 14 th day before the election.	§53.8(3), 53.22(1)(a)
		Election Board Names Due. Last day for the chairpersons of county Democratic and Republican parties to designate the names of precinct election officials for the two-year election board to the auditor.	§49.15(2)(a)
-29	Monday, May 5	Last day for city councils and school boards to designate the names of precinct election officials for the two-year election board to the auditor. <i>This deadline falls on Sunday, May 4, and is therefore moved to the next business day, Monday, May 5.</i>	§47.4
-21	Tuesday, May 13	No Special Elections Today. This includes special elections to fill vacancies.	§39.2(1)(a)
		Publications Begin. First day to publish notice of changes in polling places (this includes temporary changes and any polling places that have been changed since the last primary election).	§49.23
-20	Wednesday, May 14	First day the auditor may publish notice of the primary election and sample ballot. The notice of election must include an accessibility notice.	§49.53, IAC 721—21.50(10)
		Last Day for Auditor to Finalize Election Board Panel. Last day for auditor to finalize election board panels for elections for the next two years.	§49.15(1)
-15	Monday, May 19	Worry-Free Postmark Date. Mailed voter registration forms which are postmarked on or before today are considered on time to be pre-registered for the primary election even if they are received after 5 p.m. on Friday, May 23.	§48A.9(3)
		Last Day to Appoint Precinct Election Officials. Appointed by the auditor.	§49.13(1)
-14	Tuesday, May 20	No Special Elections Today. This includes special elections to fill vacancies.	§39.2(1)(a)
		Health Care Facility Delivery. Teams may resume delivery of absentee ballots to residents and patients of health care facilities.	§53.22(1)(a)

Days from Election	Date	Event	Code Cite
-11	Friday, May 23 – 5 p.m.	Voter Pre-Registration Deadline. The deadline to pre-register to vote for the primary election is 5 p.m. This applies to registration in person (including registration at driver's license stations or agencies) or by mail.	§48A.9(1)
		Exceptions: Mailed registration forms postmarked on or before Monday, May 19, are considered on time even if they are received after 5 p.m. today.	§48A.7A(3)
		After today, a person may register to vote at the auditor's office or at a satellite absentee voting station and vote an absentee ballot. The process is the same as for registering to vote on election day.	§48A.9(2)
Auditor's office must be open from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.			
-8	Monday, May 26	Memorial Day Holiday – State Offices Closed.	§1C.1
-7	Tuesday, May 27	No Special Elections Today. This includes special elections to fill vacancies.	§39.2(1)(a)
-4	Friday, May 30 – 5 p.m.	Publication Deadline. Last day to publish notice of election, sample ballot, and polling place changes. The notice of election must include an accessibility notice.	§49.23, 49.53, IAC 721—21.50(10)
		Deadline to request an absentee ballot by mail is 5 p.m.	§53.2(1)(b)
		Last Day to Submit Written Challenges to Absentee Voters. A person qualified to vote in the election may submit a written challenge to the qualifications of an absentee voter until 5 p.m. in the auditor's office (observers witnessing the processing of absentee ballots may submit challenges on Monday, June 2, and until the polls close on election day.)	§53.31(1)
		Absentee Affidavits. Last day for auditor to review absentee affidavits received by 5 p.m.	§53.18(2)
		Auditor's office must be open until 5 p.m.	
-3	Saturday, May 31	Auditors' Offices Open. The auditor's office must be open for at least 8 hours for absentee voting and other election business.	§47.2(5)
-3	Saturday, May 31 through Election Day at 5 p.m.	Voters admitted to hospitals or nursing homes after 12 a.m. on May 31 may call to request delivery of an absentee ballot. Deadline for a telephone request is 5 p.m. on election day.	§53.22(2)

Date	Event	Code Cite
Monday, May 19	Worry-Free Postmark Date. Mailed voter registrations forms which are postmarked on or before today are considered on time to be pre-registered for the primary election even if they are received after 5 p.m. on May 23.	§48A.9(3)
Friday, May 23 – 5 p.m.	Voter Pre-Registration Deadline. The deadline to pre-register to vote for the primary election is 5 p.m. Exceptions: Mailed registration forms postmarked on or before Monday, May 19, are considered on time even if they are received after 5 p.m. today.	§48A.9(1)
Monday, May 26	Memorial Day Holiday – State Offices Closed.	§1C.1
Friday, May 30 – 5 p.m.	Absentee Ballot by Mail Request Deadline. Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail. Deadline is 5 p.m.	§53.2(1)(b)
Saturday, May 31	County Auditors’ Offices Open. The county auditor’s office must be open for at least 8 hours for absentee voting and other election business.	§47.2(5), 53.18(2)
Monday, June 2	Absentee Ballot In-Person Deadline. Last day to request and vote an absentee ballot in person at the county auditor’s office. Last Day for Voters to Fix Incomplete Affidavits. Voters have until 5 p.m. to fix incomplete affidavit envelopes at the county auditor’s office.	§53.2(1)(a) §53.18(2)
Tuesday, June 3	Primary Election Day. Polls are open from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m. Absentee ballots may be delivered to the county auditor until 9 p.m.	§43.7, 49.73, 53.17(1)(a)
Thursday, June 5	Number of Provisional Ballots Posted. Number of provisional ballots cast in each precinct must be posted by the county auditor no later than 9 a.m. Special Precinct Board Convened. The county auditor may reconvene the special precinct board no earlier than noon to consider provisional ballots and absentee ballots that were postmarked Monday, June 2, or earlier.	§50.20 §50.21, 50.22
Monday, June 9 – Noon	Absentee Ballot Deadline. Absentee ballots that were postmarked Monday, June 2, or earlier and received by noon today are considered to be on time to be counted.	§53.17(2)
Monday, June 9/ Tuesday, June 10	County Canvass of Votes. May occur either Monday or Tuesday.	§43.49
Thursday, June 12/ Friday, June 13 – 5 p.m.	Recount Request Deadline. Written requests for a recount must be filed in the county auditor’s office by 5 p.m. on the third day after the county canvass of votes.	§43.56(1), 50.48(1)(a)
Monday, June 30	State Canvass of Votes Must Be Complete.	§43.63, 50.38
	Election Contests Deadline. Deadlines for contesting the results of the primary election vary by office. See the county auditor or Secretary of State for specific contest deadlines.	

2014 General Election Calendar

Date	Event	Code Cite
Monday, July 28	<p>State and Federal Candidate Filing Begins. First day for non-party political organizations (NPPO) candidates and candidates nominated by petition to file nomination papers for state and federal offices with the Secretary of State.</p>	§44.4(1), 45.4
Monday, August 4	<p>County Candidate Filing Begins. First day for NPPO candidates and candidates nominated by petition to file nomination papers for county and township with the county auditor.</p>	§44.4(1), 45.4
Thursday, August 7	<p>Primary Nominee Withdrawal Deadline for State and Federal Offices. Last day for state and federal candidates who were nominated at the primary election to withdraw. Notice of withdrawal must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Last Day for Vacancies – State and Federal. If a midterm vacancy in a state or federal office occurs on or before August 7, the office must be on the ballot to fill vacancy at the general election. Political party nominations must be made by convention.</p>	<p>§43.76(1)</p> <p>§43.6(1), 43.77(4), 43.78(1)</p>
Friday, August 15 – 5 p.m.	<p>State and Federal Candidate Filing Deadline. Last day to file nomination papers with the Secretary of State. This includes NPPO candidates, candidates nominated by petition, and Democratic and Republican parties' nominations to fill ballot vacancies. Deadline is 5 p.m.</p>	§43.78(2), 44.4(1), 45.4
Friday, August 22	<p>State and Federal Candidate Withdrawal Deadline. Last day for NPPO candidates and candidates nominated by petition who filed with the Secretary of State to withdraw. Notice of withdrawal must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>State and Federal Candidate Objection Deadline. Last day to file written objections to nomination papers with the Secretary of State. Deadline is 5 p.m.</p> <p>State and Federal Candidate Substitution Deadline. Last day for NPPOs to replace candidates who withdrew, died, or were found ineligible for state and federal offices.</p> <p>Primary Nominee Withdrawal Deadline for County Offices. Last day for county candidates who were nominated at the primary election to withdraw. Notice of withdrawal must be submitted in writing to the county auditor.</p> <p>Last Day for Vacancies – County. If a midterm vacancy in a county office occurs on or before August 22, the office must be on the ballot to fill vacancy at the general election. Political party nominations must be made by convention.</p>	<p>§44.9(1), 45.4</p> <p>§44.4(2)(a)(1)</p> <p>§44.11</p> <p>§43.76(2)</p> <p>§43.77(5)(b), 43.78(1), 69.14A(1)(b)(2)</p>
Wednesday, August 27 – 5 p.m.	<p>County Candidate Filing Deadline. Last day to file nomination papers with county auditor. This includes NPPO candidates, candidates nominated by petition, and Democratic and Republican parties' nominations to fill ballot vacancies. Deadline is 5 p.m.</p>	§43.78(3), 44.4(1), 45.4

Reviewing Envelopes

Counting votes is only one of the responsibilities of the ASVP board. The majority of the board's time will be spent reviewing and sorting the ballots.

Envelopes Overview

There are always two envelopes and sometimes three envelopes involved in the return of an absentee ballot. Members of the ASVP need to be familiar with all of the envelopes involved. The envelopes are records of the election that need to be kept for a specified time period after the election. Never throw away any envelopes.

From the outside in, the envelopes are:

1. **Return Envelope** (larger envelope)

This is the envelope the voter uses to return the ballot to the auditor. After the election, the ASVP board may need to review the postmark on this envelope. Depending on when the ballot was received by the auditor's office, the board may receive ballots whose return envelope has been opened and removed by the auditor's office so that the affidavit envelope could be checked for errors.

Important Note: The affidavit envelope and return envelope may be combined into one envelope.

[§53.8(1)]

2. **Affidavit Envelope** (medium envelope)

The affidavit envelope contains the ballot. The outside of the envelope contains the voter's affidavit. Completing the affidavit on the envelope is the equivalent of the voter's declaration of eligibility at the polls on election day. This envelope must be inspected for potential problems. Depending on when the ballot was received by the auditor's office, the board may receive ballots whose affidavit envelope has already been reviewed and either approved or flagged as a problem by the auditor's office.

Important Note: The affidavit envelope and return envelope may be combined into one envelope.

[§53.8(1)]

3. **Secrecy Envelope** (smaller envelope)

This envelope may or may not have been provided to the voter and if provided, may or may not have been used by the voter. The purpose of the secrecy envelope is to protect the voter's right to a secret ballot. Like all other envelopes, these envelopes must be carefully accounted for.

Reviewing Affidavit Envelopes

Whether you are a member of the ASVP board who is processing ballots the Monday before election day, on election day, or after election day, the process of opening the return envelope (if a combined return/affidavit envelope was not used) and reviewing the affidavit envelope will be the same. The instructions below apply to all meetings of the ASVP Board.

The difference between the board's work before election day and on or after election day is where the work stops. The auditor may or may not have the board open affidavit envelopes on the Monday before the election. Only in the case of the general election can the board count votes before election day. Counting votes before election day is not at the board's discretion but is only at the direction of the auditor and in limited circumstances. Ensure the board has received clear instructions regarding its duties before work begins.

Six Steps

- 1. Complete the Absentee and Provisional Ballot Chain of Custody Log.**

Verify the number of ballots upon receiving them from the auditor.

- 2. Check the postmark.** (when necessary)

If you are reviewing envelopes before election day, you may skip this step (because you know the ballot is on time).

If you are reviewing envelopes on election day, you must reject ballots received after the polls close and either have no postmark or ineligible postmarks.

If you are reviewing envelopes after election day, you must reject ballots that are not postmarked before election day. Reject ballots that have no postmark or have an ineligible postmark.

Remember that absentee ballots which were hand delivered to the auditor's office will not have a postmark. (Skip this step if affidavit envelopes have already been removed a return envelope and reviewed by the auditor's office.) In this situation, the auditor should have time-stamped the envelope with the time the ballot was delivered to the office. Hand-delivered ballots are on time if they arrive before the polls close on election day.

- 3. Open return envelopes (if a combined return/affidavit envelope was not used).**

The return envelopes may be opened either manually or with an automatic letter opener.
[IAC 721—21.353, 21.354]

- 4. Remove the affidavit envelopes from return envelopes (if a combined return/affidavit envelope was not used).**

Stack the return envelopes, which must be kept with other records of the election.

5. Sort the affidavit envelopes into three piles.

Pile #1: Rejected

Reject the ballot without opening the affidavit envelope if any of the following conditions exist:

- The ballot arrived too late to be counted
- Affidavit lacks the voter's signature
- Applicant is not a duly registered voter in the precinct in which the ballot was cast
- Voter is inactive/pending and has not provided §48A.8 ID by the time the ASVP board meets to consider provisional ballots
- Affidavit envelope is open or the affidavit envelope has been opened and resealed
- Affidavit envelope contains more than one ballot of any kind
- Voter voted in person at the polls
- Voter submitted an absentee ballot request electronically and the original request form was not postmarked by the Friday before election day and was not received in the auditor's office by the time the polls closed on election day

[§53.25, IAC 721—21.2(2), 21.354, 21.361]

Pile #2: Challenged ballots

Put all challenged ballots together. A ballot may be challenged by a precinct official or an observer. A ballot may also be challenged by any registered voter in the county if the challenge is received by the auditor no later than the Friday before the election. See "Challenging Absentee Ballots" earlier in this guide.

Pile #3: Ballots that are accepted for counting

Put all ballots that are accepted for counting together. Stack the envelopes with the affidavit facing down.

[IAC 721—21.359(3)]

6. Complete processing of rejected absentee ballots.

- a. Flip the affidavit envelope over so the back of the envelope is facing you.
- b. Write the following on the back of the envelope “Rejected because (insert the reason for rejection).”
- c. All rejected ballots must be sealed in an envelope marked “defective ballots.” The envelope must be marked with “absentee precinct.” Include the date of the election at which the ballots were cast. All board members must sign the sealed envelope.
- d. Record the number of rejected ballots on the absentee and provisional ballot chain of custody log. The envelope marked “defective ballots” containing the rejected ballots must be returned to the auditor.
[§53.25, 53.26, 53.27, IAC 721-21.361]
- e. Prepare rejection notices for voters whose ballots must be rejected. These notices must be prepared by either the auditor or the board but must be initialed by a board member.

A sample rejection notice is available on the SOS website.

Mail the notices immediately. The notices must be sent by the time of the county canvass.

[§53.25]