

Absentee Voting Guidance for Town of Dakota Residents

Due to COVID-19, many Town of Dakota residents may wish to vote by absentee ballot in the November 3 election. Please note:

- **You must be registered to vote in order to request an absentee ballot.***
- **BY MAIL is the preferred method of voting absentee.** Absentee voting is being encouraged because it limits contact with people. When you vote absentee *in person* with the town clerk, it defeats that purpose. Please plan ahead, and vote by mail whenever possible.*
- **You must provide a photocopy of your ID with your mailed/emailed absentee request, unless:**
 - 1) You have recently voted absentee and already provided a copy of your ID to the Town of Dakota.
 - 2) You are a military or overseas voter.
 - 3) You are confined to your home indefinitely because of illness or disability.
- Per state law, all **requests for by-mail absentee ballots must be made in writing.** You cannot simply call and request an absentee ballot be sent to you. Request your ballot in the following ways:
 - 1) Go to <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/VoteAbsentee>. The website will take you through the process. *If you haven't previously voted absentee in the Town of Dakota, you may have to upload an image of your photo ID.*
 - 2) Go to <https://elections.wi.gov/forms/EL-121-english> and download the absentee application (Form EL-121). Complete it, make a copy of your photo ID, and mail the documents to N1470 State Road 22, Wautoma, WI 54982. *If you don't have Internet access, call the town hall at 920-787-4875 and ask that an absentee application be mailed to you. Please leave a message if no one is available, giving your name, phone number, and mailing address.*
 - 3) Email dakotatownhall@outlook.com and include in your message the following information (*remember to include a scan of your photo ID if not already provided*):
 - Your full name
 - Your Town of Dakota street address, and your mailing address, if different
 - If you are indefinitely confined due to illness/disability, please make note of that as well
- **Don't delay in requesting your absentee ballot.** It takes time for ballots to go back and forth through the mail system. All ballots must be received at the town hall by 8 p.m. on Election Day, November 3, 2020, in order to be counted.

To be safe, you should request your ballot at least a week before the election – but the sooner, the better!

* Online and by-mail voter registration is no longer allowed for this election. **If you are NOT yet registered and want to vote absentee**, you have to make an appointment with the town clerk (920-787-4875) **to register to vote in-person** no later than 5 p.m. on October 30. You can vote absentee at the town hall immediately afterward if you would like to. And, of course, you can always register to vote at the polls on Election Day prior to voting.

* **In-person absentee voting (“early voting”)** began in Wisconsin on **October 20**. If you wish to utilize this method of voting, **you must make an appointment** by calling or emailing the clerk (phone number and email address mentioned previously in this article). Phone messages and emails requesting appointments are typically answered within 24 hours. **The Town of Dakota has a *part-time* clerk, so please don’t drop by the town hall unannounced and expect to vote on the spot.**

Since absentee voting is a *privilege* (whereas traditional at-the-polls voting is a *constitutional right*), voting absentee DOES require a bit more effort—on your part and the clerk’s. ***Please be patient and understanding of this.***

And remember, as always, **polls WILL BE open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day**, with every possible precaution being taken to ensure your health and safety.