LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF GREATER PITTSBURGH

TUTORIAL
Step-by-Step Guide

Understanding MAIL-IN VOTING in Pennsylvania

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Confused by the Mail-in Voting process?

Just walk-through this **TUTORIAL** to find all you need to know to become an active, informed voter!

But don't stop there! You may also **"tutor" someone else** to help spread the understanding of elections and voting to all citizens.

The League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh is a nonprofit 501 (C)(3) organization and is nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties.

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County Election Office

DEADLINES for Mail-in Voting

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MAIL-IN and ABSENTEE Voting
Dates and Deadlines

- **APPLY NOW!**
  The APPLICATION Process is Open
- **OCTOBER 26, 2021 at 5:00 PM:**
  Deadline to APPLY for a Mail-in or Absentee Ballot
- **NOVEMBER 2, 2021 at 8:00 PM:**
  Deadline to COMPLETE and RETURN a Mail-in or Absentee Ballot

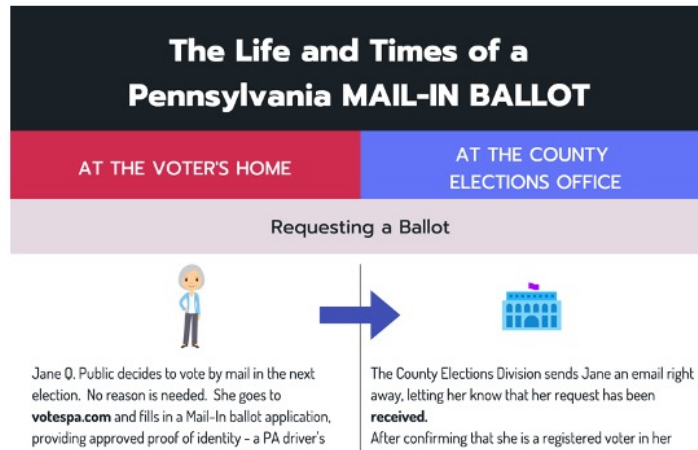**IMPORTANT Mail-In and Absentee Voting DATES and DEADLINES:**

*The Mail-in Ballot and Absentee Ballot are the same. "No-excuse" Mail-in voting in Pennsylvania does **not require a reason** for voting by mail. Anyone may apply for a "No-excuse" Mail-in Ballot. Absentee voting **does require** specific, approved reasons for absence from a polling place and voting with a Mail-in Ballot.*

Apply NOW! The APPLICATION Process is Open.
You may apply online, or on paper.

- **APPLY by OCTOBER 26, 2021, at 5:00 PM:** Your completed Mail-in Ballot APPLICATION must be RECEIVED by your **County Election Office** by this date.
- (The postmark is not enough.)

- **BALLOTS** will be sent once candidates and ballot initiatives are finalized and ballots are printed.

- **RECEIVED by NOVEMBER 2, 2021, at 8:00 PM:** *Y*our completed Mail-in BALLOT must be RETURNED and RECEIVED by your **County Election Office** by this date. (The postmark is not enough.)

UNDERSTANDING the
MAIL-IN Ballot Process
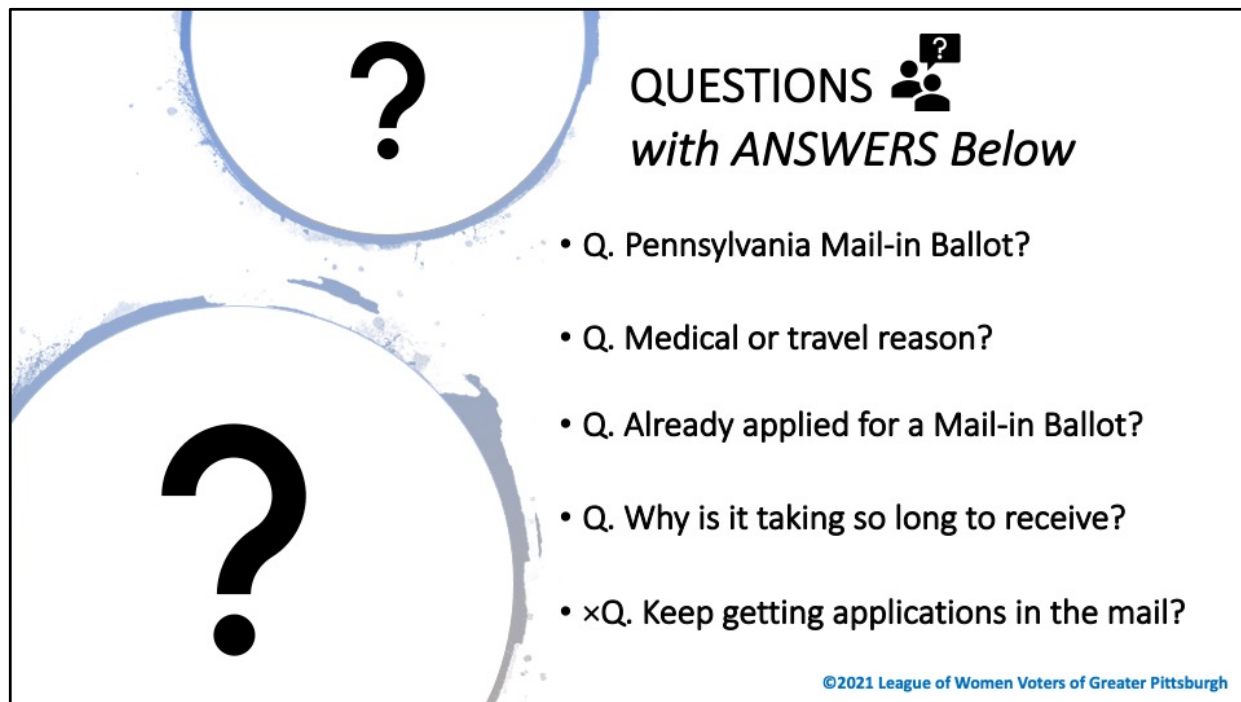
**The Life and Times of a
Pennsylvania MAIL-IN BALLOT**

AT THE VOTER'S HOME	AT THE COUNTY ELECTIONS OFFICE

Requesting a Ballot

Jane Q. Public decides to vote by mail in the next election. No reason is needed. She goes to **votespa.com** and fills in a Mail-In ballot application, providing approved proof of identity – a PA driver's

The County Elections Division sends Jane an email right away, letting her know that her request has been **received.**
After confirming that she is a registered voter in her

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NOTE for this TUTORIAL: **To open files, hover over URLs until you see a text box which opens. Then follow the directions in the text box to click open the link. (You will see a pointing finger.)**

Want to understand the Mail-in Ballot process from beginning to end?
See this infographic for more.

- **VIEW or DOWNLOAD**

- *Please Copy this Direct link for sharing: www.lwvpgh.org/docs.ashx?id=711973*

QUESTIONS with ANSWERS Below

- Q. Pennsylvania Mail-in Ballot?
- Q. Medical or travel reason?
- Q. Already applied for a Mail-in Ballot?
- Q. Why is it taking so long to receive?
- ×Q. Keep getting applications in the mail?

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Q. Who can apply for a Pennsylvania Mail-in Ballot?
A. Anyone who is registered to vote in Pennsylvania may apply for a Mail-in Ballot.

Q. Do I need a medical or travel reason to use a Mail-in Ballot?
A. No. No excuse is needed. You may vote using a Mail-in Ballot simply because you prefer to.

Q. Why does the online application ask me about my reason for requesting a Mail-in Ballot if I don't need a reason?
A. The Pennsylvania Constitution requires that an absentee ballot be provided in case of illness or absence from the district. Until the PA Constitution is amended, the separate absentee category and its qualifying questions has to remain. In the meantime, just answer "no" to the qualifying questions, and you will continue to the mail-in application.

Q. I can't remember if I already applied for a Mail-in Ballot. What happens if I apply more than once?
A. If you apply for a Mail-in Ballot twice, your second application will be denied because it is a duplicate. There is no penalty for applying twice.

Q. My Ballot request was approved weeks ago, but I still haven't received my Ballot. Why is it taking so long?
A. Ballots are not printed until about a month before Election Day. This is because candidates have to qualify for the ballot by filing official paperwork and petitions. After deadlines and legal challenges are resolved, the County Elections Office can finalize candidates--then Ballots will be printed and mailed.

Q. I already applied for a Ballot, but I keep getting applications in the mail. Does this mean that my first application was rejected?
A. No. Many outside groups send Mail-in Ballot applications to voters. These groups include political candidates and parties and other groups. The County Elections Office does not send or control this mail, and these outside groups do not know whether you have already applied. If you do not want the application, just throw it out.

All you need to correctly APPLY for a "No-Excuse" Mail-in Ballot either ONLINE or with a PAPER Application:

"No-Excuse" Mail-in Ballot APPLICATION Infographic:

• **VIEW or DOWNLOAD**

• *Please Copy this Direct Link for Sharing:* **www.lwvpgh.org/docs.ashx?id= 750976**

An OPTION when you register to vote or any time here:
The "ANNUAL BALLOT REQUEST" and the "PERMANENT LIST"

When you apply for a Pennsylvania Mail-In Ballot, you can choose to make an "Annual Voting Request."
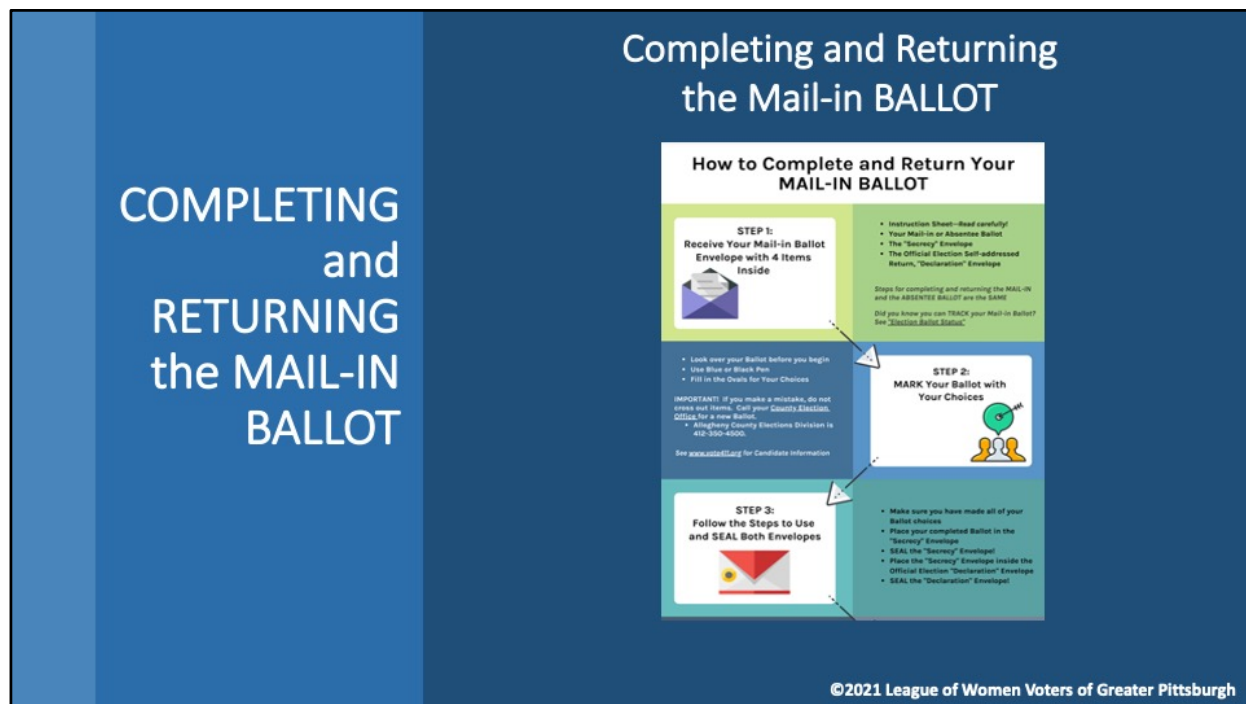*If you OPT IN, you will receive:*

- **BALLOTS for each election in the coming year:** The May Primary, November General Election, and any Special Elections that may occur. You will not need to apply again *until next year.*

- **an APPLICATION in the mail every year in February,** so that you can apply for your annual ballots again. You will receive an application *every* February until you remove yourself from the Permanent list.

Are you on the Permanent List? Find out here.

- Do you want to **remove your name** from the Permanent List and cancel your Annual Ballot Request? **Cancel here.**

Annual List??? Permanent List??? We try to sort it out in this infographic:

- **VIEW or DOWNLOAD**

- *Please Copy this Direct Link for Sharing www.lwvpgh.org/docs.ashx?id=751137 .*

In Pennsylvania, it is very important to complete and return your Mail-in Ballot correctly and on time, OR IT MAY NOT BE COUNTED!

See this infographic for all you need to know to correctly COMPLETE and RETURN the Mail-in BALLOT:

VIEW OR DOWNLOAD

- *Please Copy this Direct Link for Sharing:* www.lwvpgh.org/docs.ashx?id=787764

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One final thing to think about. If you voted with a Mail-in Ballot in 2020 but want to vote in-person at your polling place in 2021—here's how!

See the "Make a Plan to Vote at Your Polling Place" infographic:

VIEW or DOWNLOAD

- *Please Copy this Direct Link for Sharing:* www.lwvpgh.org/docs.ashx?id=725767

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For More Information about Mail-in Voting, see lwvpgh.org/mail-in .

- **Visit our new website at www.lwvpgh.org** for the most current, nonpartisan election, voting, and government information.

- Find other **Tutorials** and **unique infographics** at **www.lwvpgh.org** and in the **Voter Resource Library**.

Still have questions? Please contact us at: **civic.education@lwvpgh.org** .

BECOME A SUPER-VOTER AND VOTE IN EVERY ELECTION
"Democracy is NOT a spectator sport!"