



# Election Division Dispatch

Brad King & Angie Nussmeyer, Co-Directors | April 2026

## NEWS & UPDATES

### Updated USPS Website & Mail Kit for 2026 Elections

As noted at the spring clerk's conferences, the USPS has a new webpage to assist local and state election officials with their election mail needs. This includes resources on requesting election mail design review via Mail Design Analysts (MDAs), contacting customer relations, and reporting a problem. **This "Report a Problem" feature replaces electionmail.org, so please make sure to update your bookmarks!** The new Official Election Mail Guide (Kit 600) can also be found on this page along with other FAQs centered on election officials. You can find all of this and more at [usps.com/electionmail](https://usps.com/electionmail).

### Record Retention for Election Materials Changed

During the most recent legislative session SEA 113 was adopted and signed into law, which impacts the retention period for counties to manage certain election materials identified under IC 3-10-1-31.1. The period shifts from 22 months to 34 months beginning January 1, 2026. This is a retroactive start date, meaning any election materials under the control of county election officials as of January 1, 2026, are subject to the new 34 month retention rule. Essentially, this moves back the ability for counties to destroy records from the November 2023 election onward. This change does not impact other record retention procedures, such as the retention period for voter registration applications.

The 2026 *Indiana Election Calendar: Election Administrator's Guidebook* was updated to reflect these changes along with a revision to the public notice deadline for public tests being held on April 6, 2026, along with the dates of the December conference. (We're in contract negotiations now with a hotel and will make announcements as soon as we can!)

### March Build

At the end of last month Civix pushed updates to SVRS. These include more information on the BMV declination detail page such as the date of the declination along with the voter's most recent VR change and vote history; adding county-specific phone numbers to the SAMC; allowing counties to set an appointment/term start dates for CEB members in the county directory to assist with adding this information to agendas, as now required by state law; and copying over all uncontested candidates from the primary to the general election when the "Get Winners" process is executed. More information can be found on the INSVRS County Portal, including Build Notes and training videos.

### Democracy Works & Poll Location Data

Don't Forget! Each election cycle the state provides early voting and Election Day voting location information to Democracy Works, who then shares this information on their website, [all.votinginfotool.org](https://all.votinginfotool.org), and to other partners like Google and USA.gov. It is critical counties review their early voting and Election Day voting location information in SVRS to ensure its accuracy not just for our partners but also [indianavoters.com](https://indianavoters.com). If you have questions, please contact the Civix Help Desk.

### OK to use Previous Version of PRE-2 Form

Based on a county request, the older version of the PRE-2 (R3/12-02), which is the form poll workers complete to be paid, was recently grandfathered for county use. The current version of the form may continue to be used. The forms master list on the INSVRS County Portal is updated with the new Order information.

## CALENDAR

- Apr. 3, 2026: Good Friday (IED Closed)
- Apr. 5, 2026: Beginning of the period where any homeowner's association rule prohibiting signs is suspended until the fifth day after Election Day
- Apr. 6, 2026: Deadline to conduct public test of voting systems
- Apr. 6, 2026: Statewide Voter Registration Deadline
- April 7, 2026: Early voting (in-person ABS voting) begins
- Apr. 10, 2026: Pre-Primary Reporting Period Ends
- Apr. 11, 2026: First day for candidate committees to file CFA-11, if applicable
- Apr. 13, 2026: Deadline to file IEC-9 or IEC-10 (or both for MicroVote counties) with IED to confirm public test was performed (If conducted on April 6)
- Apr. 14, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for D/R chairs to file Election Day poll worker nominations with CEB
- Apr. 14, 2026: Deadline for CEB to publish CAN-9 & list of Election Day voting locations in the newspaper
- Apr. 16, 2026: Travel board begins
- Apr. 17, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for candidate committees, regular party committees & PACs to file pre-primary report
- Apr. 23, 2026 (11:59P): Deadline for voter to file ABS-Mail, or ABS-VPD or FPCA who want ballot mailed to them (rather than sent by email or fax)
- Apr. 25, 2026: First of TWO Saturdays early voting must be offered at the clerk's office designated by the clerk or satellite office (All vote center counties must also have one additional vote center used on Election Day open for early voting)
- Apr. 27, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for CEB to file a copy of the CAN-9 notice of public question with IED and in the minutes of the Board
- Apr. 27, 2026 (11:59PM): Deadline for M/O voter to file an FPCA to register to vote (or update a registration) for the primary election. Note: their only voting option would be by email or fax; voting by mail deadline has passed.
- May 2, 2026: Second of TWO Saturdays early voting must be offered at the clerk's office designated by the clerk or satellite office (All vote center counties must also have one additional vote center used on Election Day open for early voting.)
- May 2, 2026: Earliest the central count of absentees may begin under IC 3-11.5-4-11.5
- May 2/3, 2026: Inspector supply pick-up weekend, where inspector or other member of CEB authorized in writing may pick up ballots and election supplies, including a sealed ePollbook, for the Inspector's precinct or vote center
- May 4, 2026: Multiple deadlines including the noon deadline for early voting or to receive a travel board application or a FPCA to vote by email or fax.
- May 5, 2026: Election Day! Polls open from 6 am to 6 pm local prevailing time
- May 7, 2026: Deadline for CEB to send ABS-18A/18B to a voter identified on Election Day to having a missing or mismatched signature on their ABS balloting materials
- May 8, 2026: First day the D/R parties can fill a ballot vacancy for November

## APRIL 2026 WEB TRAINING

- Apr. 2 | March Build Placeholder
- Apr. 6 & 9 | [IndianaVoters.com](https://indianavoters.com) Functionality & County Inputs
- Apr. 14 & 16 | County Election Results Entry
- Apr. 21 & 24 | Certificate of Error Processing
- Apr. 30 & May 7 | Post Election Processing

2026 Calendar is posted to the INSVRS County Portal and subject to change.

# IN FOCUS: Recent ABS FAQs for May Primary Election

Counties are beginning to prep for early voting while also managing absentee applications to vote by mail or travel board. Several counties have raised questions about specific procedures, and so we wanted to share this information to the larger election official audience:

**1/ Who can drop off absentee applications to county officials?** Any person can do so, but if it is not the voter, a bonded courier, or the voter's attorney in fact delivering it, then the person must fill out the ABS-17 form when handing over the applications to county officials. Individuals taking custody of the voter's application must include the date they collected the form in the space provided and turn the applications in not later than noon, ten days after taking custody of the form or the application deadline, whichever comes sooner. (IC 3-11-4-2)

**2/ Who can drop off completed absentee ballots to county officials?** Only the voter, a bonded courier, the voter's attorney in fact, a member of the voter's household, or a member of the voter's family may hand-deliver the completed absentee ballot. Counties must ask a member of the voter's household, the voter's attorney in fact, or a family member dropping off the ballot to complete the ABS-19 form. (IC 3-11-10-24; IC 3-14-2-16)

**3/ Can completed absentee ballots be dropped off at early voting locations?** Yes. Please make sure to have the ABS-19 form available in case a member of the voter's household, attorney in fact, or family drops off the ballot.

**4/ Does state law allow for ballot drop boxes?** Yes, but only if the county election board maintains "control" (meaning physical custody) of it at all times. There are some nuances in state law, particularly as it

relates to other government drop boxes where people may mistakenly leave their absentee ballots. County election officials need to make sure those drop boxes include a disclaimer or sign warning voters that any absentee ballot left in those boxes will not be counted. See page 161 of the *2026 Election Administrator's Manual* for more details. (IC 3-11-10-24)

**5/ A person picked the "public question" only choice on the absentee application for the primary election. Can I accept it?** County election officials should reject a "public question" only application if submitted for a precinct where no public question election is being held. With recent changes in state law it is very unlikely for any county or precinct to hold a public question election in May. However, it is still possible for a few types of public questions to appear on the primary ballot, which is why the application continues to include that option.

**6/ This is the first election where an absentee ballot must be rejected if the voter fails to include an accurate date next to their signature on the absentee affidavit. At what point in the process does that happen?** The statute contemplates that the absentee counters reject any absentee ballot where the signature date is missing or otherwise inaccurate (such as a date in the future) at the time they are doing their review, which can only happen during the central count. The voter may request an ABS-21 by 5PM on Election Day to vote a regular ballot at their voting location, if applicable. This is a different process than identifying a missing or mismatched signature during the first or second signature review, which requires the use of the ABS-18A or ABS-18B forms. Those forms can be completed and submitted to the CEB not later than noon, 8 days after the election.

## VR CORNER

### SAMCs & Freeze Period Reminders

A reminder that counties cannot mail any SAMC during the 90 day federal freeze periods ahead of the May and November 2026 elections. Any SAMCs that may be returned that were previously mailed before the freeze began can only be processed during this time if the voter is authorizing cancellation at a previous address or updating their registration within the county (and the state VR deadline has not passed, assuming the voter is moving to a new precinct). A voter that may already be in inactive status can be flipped back to active if the SAMC is received at any time confirming their registration status. However, no county can move a VR status to inactive during the freeze.

Counties should wait to move a registration to inactive or to send a SAMC until after vote history is applied from the most recent election. A voter might update their registration ahead of or on Election Day or confirm their registration when they go to vote absentee or on Election Day. These are scenarios where the voter would remain in "active" status, since those actions took place after the SAMC was sent.

Lastly, the BMV Declination Hopper should not be used to send a SAMC during a freeze period in those limited cases where the voter's registration address does not correspond to the voter's declination address. However, counties may process declinations out of the hopper if the two addresses match. The same holds true for any paper VRG-6 declinations received by other full service agencies.

## International Mail Disruptions

Recent conflicts and discontinuance of traditional mail service in some countries (Denmark) around the world are creating disruptions in the delivery of mail to international addresses:

- USPS link to the countries with a service suspension as of March 27, 2026: <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/service-alerts/international/>
- USPS link to zip codes with a service alert for APO/DPO addresses for military and overseas voters as of March 27, 2026: <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/service-alerts/>

Non-military voters can ask that an absentee ballot be mailed to them anywhere in the world, even if they are using the ABS-Mail form because they do not consider themselves to be an overseas voter. Military and overseas voters, of course, should be using the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) if they meet the qualifications under federal and state law.

If a voter is requesting a mailed ballot to any area of the world with an identified mail suspension, please communicate with the voter on their preference of alternative mail delivery options. If the voter can use the FPCA, then encourage them to request their absentee sent by email to avoid mail altogether, if possible, or suggest that they also file a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB). This is the voter's back-up ballot that can be used to remake a ballot card, if the voter's original absentee does not arrive on time to be counted.

# Photo ID for Voting Purposes

A few reminders as we head into election season about the state's photo ID law used for voting purposes (IC 3-5-2.1-84):

- ID must be issued by the state of Indiana or federal government.
- ID must be current or expired since the last general election (Nov. 5, 2024)
- ID must contain the name of the voter that reasonably conforms to the voter's registration name (conform does not mean exact!)
- ID must include a photo that is a reasonable likeness of the voter

There is no requirement that the voter's address on their photo ID match their registration address. The only time that comes into play is if the person is flagged as a first time voter in SVRS (and later, in the poll list). These individuals must provide documentation that they reside at the address on their registration before voting a regular ballot. These individuals CAN provide an Indiana driver's license or ID card that has the voter's name and address conforming with the voter's registration. They can also provide a bank statement, utility bill, paycheck, or government document showing the voter's name and address on that documentation corresponds to their registration.

Further, state law does NOT require a voter to provide a REAL ID to vote in person. Instead, it simply contemplates that the ID be issued by the state of Indiana or the federal government. The star in the upper right corner is an indication that the person can enter federal buildings or fly on an airplane, for example.

The Indiana BMV still issues non-REAL IDs to any person with a "legacy" credential, meaning the person received their driver's license or state ID card before REAL ID requirements went into effect some years ago. An individual who chooses to renew their non-REAL ID license will have the highlighted phrase below printed on it. This type of ID may be used for voting purposes, but does limit the person's ability to use it for other purposes as noted above in the examples.

Lastly, certain military IDs and IDs issued by a Native American tribe or band recognized by the U.S. government are not required to include an expiration date under our state law. State law also no longer permits a college student to use an ID issued by their Indiana public university as an ID for voting purposes. Photo ID examples and analysis can be found in the Voter Outreach Library on IED's web page.



# QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

**Q. When do county chairs need to submit names to the CEB for Election Day poll workers? And does the CEB need to notify the chairs about the number of poll workers needed?**

A. County chairs have until noon, three weeks out from election day (or April 14, 2026, for the May primary election) to nominate individuals to serve as Election Day poll workers, in writing. Only after the noon deadline can the CEB act to fill any vacancies.

**Q. Can county chairs nominate poll workers to work a half day on Election Day?**

A. Yes. State law permits the county chair to nominate clerks and judges to work a full or half day (open to noon and noon to close). The CEB cannot reject a poll worker nominated for a half day. However, an Inspector must be required to work the full day. (IC 3-6-6, generally)

**Q. Do we apply the primary voting history rules to poll workers?**

A. No. Any person nominated by the county party chair is assumed to be a member of that political party. No legal requirement exists for the Election Day poll worker (or ABS voter board or counter, for that matter) to have a vote history that aligns with the party making the nomination. CEBs lack the authority to reject a poll worker for that reason.

**Q. Do candidates hoping to fill a ballot vacancy need to follow the two primary voting history rule to qualify to run for the office?**

A. No. Unlike candidates running for their party's nomination in the primary election or seeking to fill an elected office vacancy, state law does not require a candidate hoping to fill a ballot vacancy on the November ballot to meet the same standard. However, the candidate must still meet the other qualifications necessary to run and hold office.

**Q. Can you explain the recent change in state law about resolutions expiring for parties to fill all local office ballot vacancies by direct appointment?**

A. Political party organizations can authorize their county chair or central committee to directly appoint candidates to fill a ballot vacancy for local offices instead of holding a caucus. These resolutions could be opened previously, but a recent change in state law expires them on the primary election day in the year their PCs are on the ballot. For Democrats that means any direct appointment authority given to fill ballot vacancies expires on May 5, 2026, and will expire again in May 2030. For Republicans, their resolutions will expire on primary election day in 2028, 2032, and so on. The party organization can further restrict the resolution to one election cycle or in a specific date range in 2027, for example. But, the resolution cannot extend further than the primary election day in the year PCs are on the ballot for that party. (Note: this resolution does NOT apply to any elected office vacancy, so please do not confuse the two!)

**Q. Can we redact information from SVRS reports or deny the request outright, if we believe it contains sensitive or personal identifying information?**

A. Unless state law requires the redaction, no. State law requires the redaction of a full 9-digit SSN down to the last four digits and **no information about a voter enrolled in the AG's Address Confidentiality program can be shared.** Our SVRS reports are refined to NOT include any person flagged in the system as a participant in the AG's program. Additionally, state law was recently update to allow state and federal judicial office holders to fill a request to have their personal information (including their residence address) to be redacted from any copy of voter registration, election, or campaign finance documents **that is posted online or on social media.** But this new law DOES NOT permit the judge's information from being made confidential in SVRS or redact from a record request by a public records request. If a copy of a judge's CFA-1 is posted online, then that judge can request that their personal information be redacted from the online copy only.