

REJECTED ABSENTEE BALLOTS IN GWINNETT COUNTY COMMUNITY ADVISORY

Updated: October 17, 2018

Two days after we sued the Georgia Secretary of State over the “exact match” law that has frozen more than 53,000 voter registration applications -- 80% of which belong to people of color -- we learned that Gwinnett County has been rejecting absentee ballots and ballot requests at a rate four times higher than the state. And in Gwinnett County, Asian-American voters are being rejected at the highest rate of all.

Most concerning are the large number of ballot and ballot requests that have been rejected because a voter’s signature is not similar enough to the signature that the state has on file. These voters are not given any notice before their applications or ballots are rejected. That means some voters may not find out their ballots have been rejected until *after* Election Day when it is too late to fix the problem.

We have stepped up to fight this unfair process in court and are demanding that absentee voters be given notice of any signature mismatch issues *before* their applications or ballots are rejected.

We also want to assure you that *can* still vote even if your absentee ballot or application has been rejected. This advisory is to answer questions about steps to take to make sure your vote is counted.

Will I get a notification if my absentee ballot or ballot request was rejected?

Your county registrar is supposed to “promptly” notify you, but there is no specific requirement about *when* they must contact you. That means you might not receive notification until after the election when it is too late to fix the issue. That is why we strongly encourage you to take proactive steps to find out if your ballot or ballot request was rejected.

How do I find out if my absentee ballot request has been rejected?

Check if your ballot *request* has been rejected by checking the [Georgia My Voter Page](#) or by calling your county registrar. You can find the contact information for your county registrar’s office at [this link](#). The Gwinnett County contact information is 678-226-7210.

How do I find out if my absentee ballot was rejected?

Check if your ballot has been rejected by calling your county registrar’s office. **If you are a Gwinnett County voter, it is particularly critical for you to call to confirm that your vote has been counted.**

Can I still vote in the November 6, 2018 election if my absentee ballot or ballot request was rejected?

Yes. You can still vote **in person** during early voting or on Election Day without taking any additional steps. If possible, **we encourage you to vote in person and early** to minimize the risk of your vote not being counted. If you prefer or must vote by absentee ballot, you can still request a new one. The last day your county registrar can issue or mail absentee ballots is **Friday, November 2**, but we recommend that you plan to have your request in with enough time to follow up on the request before then.

What if I have received my absentee ballot but I now prefer to vote in person?

If you received an absentee ballot that you have not mailed and now prefer to vote in person, you can do so if you **bring the absentee ballot to the polls with you** to have it cancelled there.

What if my request for an absentee ballot is pending but I now prefer to vote in person?

This is a more complicated process. If you requested an absentee ballot and a decision has not yet been made on your request, you must request **in writing** to cancel your absentee ballot in order to vote in person. The request must be made specifically to a county registrar official or an absentee ballot clerk, not just to any poll worker. Because a county registrar official or absentee ballot clerk is not guaranteed to be at your polling location, you should plan to cancel your absentee ballot before you go to vote. **Call the Asian Americans Advancing Justice Voter Hotline at 470-765-VOTE for help with this process.**

If you have any other questions or face any trouble with voting absentee or in person during early voting or on Election Day, please call the voter hotline 470-765-VOTE (8683)

