

Resource Guide

All of this material, and more, is on the
Google listserv – Google, Google Groups,
lwmvmo early voting study

We hope you find this useful in your
discussions.

Thank you for participating in the League
study.

Resource List

Early Voting and / or No Excuse Absentee Voting

Articles are in this notebook as follows. Because of multiple sources, we were unable to number the pages for the Leader's Guide. Most of these articles also are on the Google listserv and may be read or downloaded; there are more resources on the listserv than included in the Leader's Guide notebook.

Absentee Ballot Application – sample showing the acceptable reasons for voting “absentee.” **Absentee Ballot Envelope** (Jackson County, Mo.)-- ballot goes into this envelope. Envelopes vary from county-to-county.
Helpful for question 1.1, 1.4 (These two items are not on the listserv)

Alternative Voting Methods

How other states are currently voting. Compare and contrast Missouri's current laws. **Helpful for questions 1.1 – 1.8, 9**

Responses from Other Leagues About Early Voting Study

State President Lois Detrick contacted other Leagues to determine what they were doing regarding early voting. **Helpful for questions 1.1 through and including 1.8, 14**

Summary of the 2008 Elections – Secretary of State Robin Carnahan

Review of the election. **Helpful for questions 1.4, 1.7**

Surrounding States' Early Voting & Absentee Voting Status

Review of adjacent states' voting laws. **Helpful for questions 1.5, 14**

Additional Study Material

Absentee and Early Voting – Trends, Promises and Perils. James Fortier.

An American Enterprise Institute article, Fortier acknowledges that many states offer either or both, acknowledges the benefits and takes a cautionary approach to both early voting and no excuse absentee voting.

County Clerk Survey Response

We sent surveys to all 114 county clerks to get their opinions on early voting and no excuse absentee voting. Interesting in that some feel voters are “customers.” Other think voting is just more work and expense. **Helpful for questions 1, 1.8, 9, 13**

County Clerk Survey Map

Outline of the County Clerks and Local Election Administrators (LEAs) who responded to the survey as of the date we copied the material. Some Leagues will be interviewing their clerks; we'll add their comments to the information on the Google listserv; this information should be downloaded if you feel it is important to see the cross-section of counties that responded. We have not tied their response to their county. Helpful for question 2

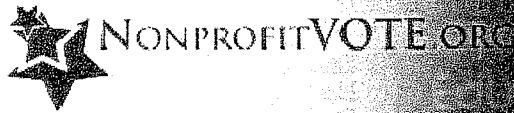
Description of Current Absentee System – Summary of Missouri's procedure based on interviews of election administrators.

Missouri House Interim Committee Report on Early Voting

Report from a public hearing held in conjunction with the Missouri Assoc. of Counties annual conference.

Proposed Legislation – S.B. 95 and H.B. 59.

Text of bills proposed in 2009.



WHY NONPROFITS 501(C)(3) GUIDELINES VOTE RESOURCES CENSUS 2010 BLOG

Early Voting In Person/Vote by Mail

What Is Early Voting In-Person and Vote-by-Mail

Early Voting In-Person allows voters to vote ahead of Election Day in-person in the weeks before an election. There are two types of early voting.

1. A voter casts their ballot early in-person at a public building like the county election office or at designated voting centers using the regular voting method like a voting machine.
2. A voter votes early in-person at their county election board or town hall using an absentee ballot.

Vote-by-Mail, generally known as **Absentee Voting**, allows voters to use an "absentee" ballot and return it by mail. State laws vary on whether a voter needs an excuse to use an absentee ballot, and also whether a voter can sign up to permanently receive mail-in ballots or if they must reapply for each election.

Where Is Early Voting Used?

Early Voting In-Person – More than 30 states currently allow early in-person voting, with only three states and DC requiring an excuse to do so.

Mail-In Voting – The majority of states allow "no excuse" mail voting. A voter does not need an excuse to use an absentee ballot.

Mail Only Voting – Oregon only allows voters to use a mail-in ballot. **Most of Washington's** counties have enacted vote-by-mail laws similar to Oregon's.

For state by state list – visit the [Early Voting Information Center](#).

Background: Why Tuesday

Voting on a Tuesday workday has challenged voters almost since the start of this tradition in the 1840's. Tuesday voting was originally set after the harvest to convenience a rural, - oriented population.

150 years later workday voting creates multiple issues for voters working two jobs, adults balancing children and older parents, an ever more mobile population and many commuting to and working far from their voting precinct. Census surveys suggest it remains a top challenge to voters. States have begun to experiment with a variety of expanded early in-person and mail voting options.

More on Why Tuesday: [History – Election Day-Wikipedia](#)

Benefits of Early Voting Options

- Early voting helps more voters participate, particularly in lower profile elections.

August 4th Webinar

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Newsletter Sign Up

Nonprofit Voting News - Receive monthly updates on new resources, activity ideas and highlights of the role of nonprofits are playing in the 2008 elections. [See a recent issue.](#)

[SIGN UP!](#)

- Voters with long commutes, significant travel, multiple family commitments or without easy access to their assigned poll location have a longer time period in which to cast their ballots than they would with a traditional Tuesday elections.
- The use of early voting has risen with every election. Voters like the option.
- Voters have adequate time to read and contemplate complicated ballot issues in their homes instead of in a voting booth.
- It saves money for election administrators.
- It is, for now, a likely more viable option than making all elections holidays (though once every four years would be nice!), weekend voting used in other countries or voting online.

Learn more about Early Voting and Vote by Mail

[Election Reform Project of the
American Enterprise Institute and
Brookings](#)

[Early Voting Information Center](#)

[No Vote By Mail Project](#)

Challenges of Early Voting and Issues To Be Addressed

Early voting, especially absentee or vote-by-mail, is not without notable challenges and problems.

- Mail is subject to errors and lost ballots. Mail delivery failure is the greatest-cited problem both in applying for an absentee ballot by mail and in receiving and returning the ballot by mail.
- Election administrators don't always process or count mail-in votes properly. It adds a layer of confusion for voters and election administrators that, particularly for voters, is aggravated by procedures being different in the 50 states.
- Researchers have noted a bias found in mail-in voting towards upper-income, regular voters. This may be attributed to the greater use of mail, more stable addresses and experience in voting of higher-income and older voters. Vote-by-mail appears to be less used by lower-income and younger voters who change addresses more frequently and/or do not use regular mail as often as others. These groups are more likely to prefer in-person early voting options.
- When mail is the only option, the secret ballot is, to a degree, compromised. It is both a plus and a minus when voters convene to discuss their ballots as they fill them out, given the opportunity for undue influence in certain settings.

Other Alternatives: Weekends or Holidays?

Would it be better to vote on a weekend?

Many countries vote on Sunday. Some U.S. jurisdictions use Saturdays. In the U.S. weekend voting may conflict with weekend traditions from religious observance, sports, using weekends to travel or that for many people weekends are workdays.

What about Election Day as a holiday?

Election Day is a holiday in Puerto Rico and other places. A problem for the United States is how many elections are held every year. All elections can be important and decisive from primaries, generals, local contests, etc. Most countries don't vote as often as we do. Still, a popular option remains the idea of a "Democracy Day" holiday, at least every two or four years on November Election Day.

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Professionally developed by Data-Scribe. Design by DB Interactive.

LOCATION:	REG.#	WARD	PCT.
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KANSAS CITY BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS • 1828 Walnut St. K.C.MO 64108 • (816) 842-4820 ext. 225
 • Absentee Fax (816) 221-3348

ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION

I, _____, for the purpose of securing an absentee ballot
PRINT NAME

for the election to be held on **November 3, 2009**, hereby declare that I am a registered voter at the following address:

RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS **ZIP CODE** **PHONE#**
 In Kansas City, Jackson County Missouri; that I am entitled to vote by absentee ballot at said election; that the reason for requesting an absentee ballot is:

PLEASE CHECK ONE BOX

- Absence on Election Day from the jurisdiction of the election authority in which I am registered to vote.
- Incapacity or confinement due to illness or physical disability, including caring for a person who is incapacitated or confined due to illness or disability.
- Religious belief or practice.
- Employment as an election authority, as a member of an election authority, or by an election authority at a location other than my polling place.
- Incarceration, although I have retained all the necessary qualifications for voting.

Note: Applicants who registered by mail and are voting for the first time must attach a copy of ID issued by MO State, an agency of the state, or a local election authority of the state; ID issued by the US Government or agency thereof; ID issued by an institution of higher education located within the state of MO; a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document that contains the name and address of the voter; driver's license or state ID card issued by another state; or other ID approved by the Secretary of State.

I hereby declare under the penalties of perjury that the foregoing reason is true and correct and that I truly expect to be prevented from going to the polls on Election Day due to the reason checked above.

PENALTY FOR VIOLATION – If any person shall willfully make any false certification, affidavit or statement required to be made under Missouri Election Laws, such person, upon conviction thereof, shall be deemed guilty of a class one election offense.

_____/_____/_____
Date of Birth

Last 4-digits of SSN

Mailing address if different from above:

ZIP

 SIGNATURE OF VOTER (AS REGISTERED) _____
 DATE

 SIGNATURE OF PERSON REQUESTING APPLICATION
 FOR VOTER OR ACTING AS WITNESS IF VOTER SIGNS
 WITH AN "X" OR REQUIRES ASSISTANCE

RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT*
 *(IF MAKING APPLICATION FOR A RELATIVE, YOU MUST APPLY IN PERSON)

This application, if properly completed and signed, may be delivered in person, mailed to the address shown above, or faxed to the Board at 816-221-3348. If received by the Board no later than 5:00 P.M. on October 28, 2009, a ballot will be mailed.

☞ **NOTE:** Missouri Statutes now allow election authorities to automatically send absentee applications to all voters who are permanently disabled. If you consider yourself to be in this classification, and would like to request your name be included on this list, check here .

WARD _____

PRECINCT _____

STATE OF MISSOURI
COUNTY OF JACKSON, CITY OF KANSAS CITY

I, _____, a registered voter of
(print name)

Kansas City (Jackson County), declare under penalties of perjury that I expect to be prevented from going to the polls on election day due to (check one):

- Absence on Election day from the jurisdiction of the Election Authority in which I am registered;
- Incapacity or confinement due to illness or physical disability, including caring for a person who is incapacitated or confined due to illness or disability (notarization NOT required 115.283);
- Religious belief or practice;
- Employment as an Election Authority or by an Election Authority at a location other than my polling place;
- Incarceration, although I have retained all the necessary qualifications for voting.

I hereby state under penalties of perjury that I am qualified to vote in this election; I have not voted and will not vote other than by this ballot at this election. I further state that I marked the enclosed ballot in secret. If I am blind, unable to read or write English, or physically incapable of marking the ballot, the person of my choosing indicated below marked the enclosed ballot at my direction. All of the information on this statement is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true.

Signature of Voter

Address of Voter

Mailing Address (if different)

THIS BALLOT MUST BE NOTARIZED

(Unless you are ill, incapacitated or caring for someone who is ill or incapacitated.)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____ 20____

Signature of Notary
(or other officer authorized to administer oaths)

My Commission Expires

Official Capacity

County of Commission

Commission Number

The above voter needed assistance in marking and signing the ballot because of blindness, other physical disability, inability to read, or inability to read English. I marked the ballot enclosed in this envelope at the voter's direction, when I was alone with the voter, and had no other communication with the voter as to how he or she was to vote. The voter swore or affirmed the voter affidavit above and I then signed the voter's name and completed the other voter information. Signed this day under penalties of perjury:

Signature of assisting person _____

Printed name of assisting person _____

Address of assisting person _____

THIS ENVELOPE MUST BE NOTARIZED - REASON FOR VOTING ABSENTEE MUST BE CHECKED IN APPROPRIATE BOX

Alternative Voting Methods

Summary

Missouri League of Women Voters
Early Voting Study 2009

This report, summarized for the Missouri League of Women Voters 2009 Early Voting Study, was prepared in 2008 by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC).

The bipartisan commission was created as a result of the 2002 Help America Vote Act (HAVA), established to help state and local governments administer Federal elections.

Section 241(b) (10) of HAVA requires EAC to study **“The feasibility and advisability of conducting elections for Federal office on different days, at different places, and during different hours, including the advisability of establishing a uniform poll closing time and establishing:**

- A. A legal public holiday under Section 6103 of Title 5, United States Code (USC) as the date on which general elections for Federal office are held;
- B. The Tuesday next after the first Monday in November in every even numbered year, as a legal public holiday under such section;
- C. A date other than the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November in every even numbered year as the date on which general elections of Federal office are held;
- D. Any data described in subparagraph D as a legal public under such section.

The study says that each alternative voting method is feasible in nearly every State because the changes to current election administration practices mostly require legislation at the local, State and / or Federal level.

The full report is at www.eac.gov/ -

(Please look for the final draft of the alternative voting methods study)

The purpose of this summary is to provide Missouri League of Women Voters with a brief review of alternate voting methods, specifically early voting, including no excuse absentee ballots, in use in other states.

