

Speaker 1:

Step two, waiting for your absentee ballot. After you've submitted your application to request your ballot, there's still some important steps for you to take. First of all, you'll need to call the secretary of state election division hotline at 6032718241, Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, to notify them that you have submitted an application to use the electronic system. Once again, this number will be in the description.

Speaker 1:

Great. So you've notified the secretary of state's office that you've requested an accessible ballot, and now you're waiting for the ballot to be made available and for voting materials to be mailed out. While you wait, you can go to the secretary of state's website, the link will be in the description, to track your absentee ballot. From the website, you'll be able to verify the receipt of your application and also obtain the date when your absentee materials were mailed to you. Remember, you won't receive an actual paper absentee ballot. But you will be receiving other materials, including the envelopes in which you will return your printed ballot.

Speaker 1:

Step three, casting your accessible electronic absentee ballot. In order to vote electronically, you must use the email link to access the system where you will then be asked to verify your identity by entering your name and date of birth as it appears in your voter registration records. And then entering your unique voter pin that you received in a separate email.

Speaker 1:

I want to point out that oftentimes when you enter your birth date, the website will automatically convert your numerical entry to the appropriate formatting by adding the appropriate slashes between month and date and date and year. And testing the system with my test credentials, if I entered 01 01 1980, without the slashes, it did not accept this as a valid date. I had to use the forward slash between the elements. I would note that it did accept 1/1/1980, indicating that leading zeros were not required.

Speaker 2:

Welcome to the New Hampshire accessible vote by mail system. Please let us know if you have any questions or issues. You will find your eligible elections below. Click begin ballot marking to begin.

Speaker 1:

Once you've successfully logged onto the system, it will begin walking you through the process. And it will immediately cue you to begin ballot marking if you're ready. I would also like to point out that the system is also appropriate for low vision users. There are three font sizes, standard, large and extra large. And also several different color options for ease of viewing. Standard full color, high contrast, white on black, high contrast black on white, yellow on black, and cyan on black.

Speaker 1:

Once you've successfully logged onto the system, it will start providing you instructions as you maneuver through the different headings. I do want to point out though that there was one bit of information that my screen reader, and I'm using narrator, did not read aloud. And that is a disclaimer,

that there is no information about your voting choices that is recorded or retained by this system. No information printed on a ballot, marked online, can be used to identify you.

Speaker 1:

You can expect your electronic absentee ballot to be several pages long in order to account for federal, state and local elections. For each section, you'll be provided directions to select one or more individuals for the office. And at the bottom of each section, you will have the option to indicate a write-in candidate. It is not required that you vote for each office. You may indicate your choice by clicking on the candidate or candidates of your choice using the Enter key.

Speaker 1:

If the instructions for that office indicate you may vote for more than one candidate for a particular office, do not vote for more than the number of candidates stated in the instructions. If you vote for more than the stated number of candidates for your vote, your vote will not be counted for that office. For any office, you may also use your computer to type in the name of a person who is not listed on the ballot and whom you want to write in as your selection. If the instructions for that specific office are that you may vote for more than one candidate, you may write in as many selections as the instructions permit. Use the next and previous buttons to move to the next office or the previous office.

Speaker 1:

After printing, you'll be queued to download the instructions, which I would highly recommend doing. As part of the instructions, you will also have the opportunity to complete an electronic affidavit. In the past, you only had the option to complete the affidavit envelope, which was not accessible. Now you can have the option to either sign the envelope or complete the online affidavit. When you are done printing, fold all of the pages of your ballot. You will insert them in the smaller of the two envelopes you received from your town or city clerk. Seal that envelope. Do not put any other materials in the small envelope. And again, it should only contain your ballot.

Speaker 1:

Next, you will want to complete your absentee ballot affidavit. Access the electronic, fillable PDF absentee ballot by clicking on the download instructions. You can open and complete the fillable PDF. Type your name in the form as your legal signature. Your signature certifies under penalty of voting fraud, that you meet the requirements of having a print disability to vote absentee using the electronic system for delivery and marking of the absentee ballot. Print the completed affidavit. Fold the affidavit and insert it in the larger of the two envelopes you received from your town or city clerk.

Speaker 1:

As an alternative, if able, you may sign the affidavit on the affidavit envelope. If you have someone assist you with the envelopes, that person may enter his or her name and signature on the line on the affidavit envelope. The printed name and signature of a person assisting the voter is a substitute for the voter's signature on the affidavit for a voter with a disability who is unable to sign the affidavit by hand.

Speaker 1:

If you are not a registered voter and are submitting a complete absentee voter registration form with your absentee ballot, complete the voter registration form, voter registration affidavit, which requires a

witness signature, and prepare copies of proof of identity and domicile. Fold these completed documents and insert them in the larger of the two envelopes you received from your town or city clerk.

Speaker 3:

The whole package can then be sent by mail or delivered in person to your city or town office. And a final and really important reminder. In New Hampshire absentee ballots need to be received by 5:00 PM on election day in order to be counted. According to the U.S Election Assistance Commission, absentee ballots that are received after the deadline is the most common reason for an absentee ballot not being counted. So again, get your absentee ballot in early to ensure that your vote counts.

Speaker 1:

You can visit the secretary of state's website at the link below to track your ballot and click on absentee ballot search. You may verify receipt of your application, the date when your absentee ballot was mailed to you, the date the clerk receives your completed absentee ballot, and after the election, learn if your absentee ballot was rejected or not counted and why. Contact your local clerk if you have questions regarding the information on the voter information look up absentee ballot search.

Speaker 3:

I hope that this answers some of your questions about how the accessible electronic absentee ballot process works. If you have additional questions, contact the secretary of state's office, Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Thanks and have a good day.