



Election Law Changes from the 2016 Legislative Session

Absentee Ballots

A law was passed to change the term “absentee” to “vote by mail.” This was done mainly to emphasize the fact that because Florida is a “no-fault” absentee state, Florida voters do not need an excuse or have to be out of their county to vote by mail. Any voter can request and receive a vote-by-mail ballot for any and all elections.

The law still refers to “absent electors” and use by our absent military voters of the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) remains unchanged in the law.

Identification at the Polls

Three new forms of photo identification were approved: the Veteran Health ID Card (issued by VA), a Florida Concealed Carry Permit (issued under F.S. 790.06) and an Employee ID Card Issued by any branch, department, or agency of Federal, State, County or Municipal Government.

Please remember that Florida law requires both photo and signature ID and two of these new forms of ID do not carry the elector’s signature. ***If you present any approved form of photo ID that does not also contain your signature, you will be asked to provide a second form of ID that carries your signature.***

Legal Residence

The law has redefined “address of legal residence” to include “information necessary to differentiate one residence from another.” This means that if it is part of your legal address, that you should include as part of your voter registration your apartment, suite, lot, room, or dormitory room number; or any other identifier. Failure to provide this at the time of registration will not impact your ability to register nor may it be used as a basis to challenge an elector’s eligibility to vote.

We are still working on how this may actually impact our voters, but I think it is most likely that you may be asked to fill out a new form and provide the missing information at the time you present yourself to vote. You can update your address at any time using our web form or by calling the office.

Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force

A task force will be formed to study issues involving the development and implementation of an online voting system for military and overseas voters. The task force will consist of eleven members, three of which will be Supervisors of Elections (Okaloosa, Escambia and Hillsborough counties). They will report to the Governor and the Legislature not later than July 1, 2017 with their recommendations.