

Wisconsin Elections Commission: More than 330,000 absentee ballots already returned for August 11 partisan primary

Posted on Monday, Aug 3, 2020

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MADISON, WI – More than 330,000 voters statewide have already returned their absentee ballots for the August 11 Partisan Primary, according to the Wisconsin Elections Commission.

As of Monday morning, 836,469 absentee ballot applications have been reported received by municipal clerks. Those clerks also report sending 821,378 ballots and receiving 331,097 back.

Meagan Wolfe, Wisconsin's chief elections official, urged voters to return their absentee ballots as soon as possible to ensure they are received by the deadline of 8 p.m. on Tuesday, August 11.

"We want everyone's vote to count, so complete and mail your absentee ballot as soon as possible," Wolfe said. "The post office advises it may take a week for mail to get from you to your clerk's office, so don't wait."

Wolfe said that if voters are concerned their ballot won't arrive at their clerk's office in time, they should make arrangements to drop their ballot off at the clerk's office or at the polling place on Election Day."

Wolfe also encouraged voters who have not already returned their absentee ballots to make sure the return envelope is signed and properly witnessed. Witnesses are required to sign the envelope and provide an address, and if either is missing, the

ballot cannot be counted.

These numbers from past Partisan Primaries put the 2020 requests into perspective:

Partisan Primary

Absentee Ballots Issued

Absentee Ballots Returned

Total Ballots Cast

Turnout

Percent Absentee

2016

101,803

76,529

645,619

14.47%

11.80%

2018

128,286

108,162

1,041,837

22.32%

10.38%

2020 to-date

821,378

331,097

NA

NA

NA

Partisan Primary turnout is normally significantly lower than general election turnout, which can be driven by whether there are any competitive statewide office or congressional office primaries on the ballot. In 2020 there are no statewide office primaries (i.e. Governor, U.S. Senator) on the ballot, which may affect overall turnout.

In comparison, there were 819,316 absentee ballots cast in the November 2016 Presidential Election and 1,159,800 cast for April 2020.

How to Request an Absentee Ballot

Registered voters can still request absentee ballots through MyVote Wisconsin, <https://myvote.wi.gov>. While the legal deadline to request an absentee ballot is Thursday, August 6, Wolfe urged anyone who plans to vote by absentee vote to make their request as soon as possible because it can take approximately one week for an absentee ballot to reach a voter through the mail, and also that much time for the ballot to be returned via mail.

Voters can also request absentee ballots by mailing, emailing or faxing their municipal clerk's office. You can find your clerk's contact information on MyVote Wisconsin. These requests must be accompanied by a copy of your photo ID. If you already have a photo ID on file from previous absentee requests under your current registration, you will not need to provide it again.

In-person absentee voting is also now available in municipal clerks' offices. Local hours and locations will vary, so voters interested in voting in-person absentee should check with their clerks' offices. Some clerks offer in-person voting by appointment only.