

City of Madison Clerk's Office: Spoiling absentee ballots explainer

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MADISON, WI – City of Madison voters who wish to spoil their returned absentee ballot need to contact the City of Madison Clerk's Office. Spoil requests should be made in writing by email (voting@cityofmadison.com), by mail, or in person. Spoil requests must be made by the voter.

What does spoiling your absentee ballot mean?

Spoiling your absentee means you have returned your absentee ballot to your municipal clerk, but, for whatever reason, you have changed your mind about how you marked your ballot.

Below is the process City of Madison voters should use to spoil their absentee ballot:

1. You, the City of Madison absentee voter, contact the City of Madison Clerk's Office by email (voting@cityofmadison.com), by mail, or in person to state that you would like to spoil your returned absentee ballot. You list your name and the address where you are registered to vote.
2. Clerk's Office staff locates your returned ballot.
3. At the top of your absentee certificate envelope, Clerk's Office staff writes "spoiled" and makes a small tear in the envelope.
4. Clerk's Office staff issues you a new absentee ballot.

What if I make a mistake on my absentee ballot before returning it?

If you make a mistake on your absentee ballot before returning it, you can request a new one be issued to you by contacting the City Clerk's Office. You can then destroy the ballot and the absentee certificate envelope that were sent to you originally and

recycle both pieces.

How many times can an absentee voter request a new ballot?

The Clerk's Office may only issue three (3) ballots to a voter by state law. The original ballot sent is ballot number one, so you would only be able to spoil your ballot twice.

What is the deadline for spoiling an absentee ballot?

If voting absentee by mail, the deadline is 5:00pm the Thursday before Election Day. For the August 8 Partisan Primary, that date is August 4.

If voting absentee in person, the deadline is the end of in-person absentee voting hours. The very last day for in-person absentee voting in the City of Madison is Sunday, August 7. The full schedule of in-person absentee voting locations in the City of Madison can be found on the [City Clerk's website](#).

What is the deadline to return an absentee ballot?

Absentee ballots must be received by Election Day in order to be counted. You can return your completed ballot by mail, in person to any in-person absentee voting location, or to your polling place on Election Day. If you choose to return your ballot by mail, the Clerk's Office suggests putting it in the mail at least one week before Election Day.