

WEC: Takes steps to ensure voting by absentee remains secure

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Elections Commission on Thursday assured voters across Wisconsin that voting absentee remains a secure and reliable way to vote following isolated attempts by individuals to submit fraudulent absentee ballot requests to “demonstrate” a perceived flaw in the MyVote website.

Following the attempts, the Commission has taken steps to prevent and identify efforts to submit fraudulent absentee ballot requests. At this time, there is no indication of unlawful, unauthorized absentee ballot requests beyond those identified in media reports.

The WEC takes alleged unlawful election activity seriously and, during an open meeting Wednesday, the Commission directed WEC staff to continue to work with law enforcement partners by providing any information and data requested with respect to unauthorized absentee ballot requests.

“Voters should rest assured that voting absentee remains a secure way to vote in the upcoming August 9 Partisan Primary,” said WEC Administrator Meagan Wolfe. “However, to provide additional reassurance, election officials at the state and local level continue to closely monitor for any indication of potentially unauthorized absentee ballot requests, no matter how rare those incidents may be.”

The Commission is taking the following actions to ensure the absentee voting process remains secure:

1. Sending Postcards: The WEC is notifying 3,962 Wisconsin voters whose absentee ballot request for the August 9 Partisan Primary is being sent to a mailing address different than the voter registration address on file for the voter. The WEC is sending a postcard this week to such voters at their residential address to notify them of the absentee ballot request on file with their record and provide them the opportunity to notify officials if they did not make the request.

The postcard states, in part:

*“This postcard confirms receipt of an absentee ballot request submitted through the MyVote Wisconsin website. **The absentee request indicated you would like your ballot sent to an address other than your home/voter registration address.***

*If you did not submit this request or have questions about your voter record, please call us at the phone number below or email elections@wisconsin.gov. **If you submitted this request, no further action is required of you.**”*

2. System Monitoring: WEC staff is monitoring the statewide voter registration system for indications of unauthorized absentee ballot requests, such as requests originating from the same device and multiple requests originating from the same source.

3. Communication with Clerks: The WEC will identify suspicious activity and refer it to municipal clerks to act upon, including clerks canceling the suspicious absentee ballot request. Additionally, clerks who identify and act upon suspicious activity on their own will communicate that information to the WEC and appropriate law enforcement partners.

4. Cooperation with Law Enforcement Partners: The WEC and local election officials will provide information to law enforcement of any suspicious activity, as well as work to fulfill law enforcement requests for data and information related to potentially unauthorized absentee ballot requests.

5. Warning Messages on MyVote: MyVote's final certification statement requires a person requesting an absentee ballot to affirm the following:



On July 28th, WEC staff added specific statutory citations to a warning on the MyVote website for voters to acknowledge.

The warning now states:



6. Voter Alertness: The WEC encourages all Wisconsin voters to take an active part in helping state and local officials maintain election security by checking their own voter status at [MyVote.wi.gov](https://myvote.wi.gov). Voters can enter their own information and see whether there is an absentee ballot request on file. Voters should keep in mind that voting in-person absentee will be recorded in [MyVote.wi.gov](https://myvote.wi.gov) as voting absentee.

7. Prioritizing Formal Complaints Submitted by the Public: The Commission voted Wednesday to expedite the consideration of any formal complaints submitted to the Commission related to the false procurement of absentee ballots.