

In-Person Absentee Voting Procedures



Washington County supports legislation that will expand the time period allowed for an in-person absentee voter to place their ballot directly into the ballot tabulator during the 46-day absentee voting period.

Issue At-A-Glance

- Existing legislation allows voters to place their ballots directly into the ballot tabulator during the seven days before the election.
- Voters casting their ballot in-person during the first 39 days of the absentee voting period are required to use the more time consuming and expensive mail absentee ballot process which requires a minimum of two envelopes and an extensive manual process that does not notify the voter if there is an error on their ballot.
- In addition to the administrative burden of this process, voters have expressed a preference to place their ballot directly into a tabulator and see their vote counted.



25%

During the 2020 presidential election, approximately 25 percent of Washington County voters voted early in-person.

Support

In past legislative sessions, bipartisan bills allowing the expansion of direct feed absentee voting were supported by various voting rights groups, though not all agreed on the length of time. Support will come from the Minnesota Association of County Officers.

Previous Consideration

The County Board has actively supported the expansion of in-person direct feed absentee voting for several legislative sessions.

No Action

If no action is taken the in-person absentee voters will suffer disparate voter experiences, voter concerns will not be addressed, and the administrative costs for absentee voting will continue to expand as the popularity of absentee voting increases.

Financial Implications

Allowing in-person absentee voters to place their ballots directly into the ballot counter rather than using the supplies and procedures required for mail voting reduces costs per transaction over 50 percent.

Contact

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