

MANUAL: Personnel
Chapter Series CC--Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual
Part 2--Commissioned Corps Personnel Administration

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Public Health Service

Chapter CC29--Officers' Relations, Services, and Benefits
Subchapter CC29.9--Miscellaneous
Personnel INSTRUCTION 4--Absentee Voting

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Section A. Purpose and Scope

This INSTRUCTION outlines the responsibilities and duties necessary to implement the provisions of the Federal Voting Assistance Act of 1955, as amended.

Section B. Federal Voting Assistance Act

Public Law 84-296, "The Federal Voting Assistance Act of 1955" as amended (50 U.S.C. 1451 et seq., also cited in 42 U.S.C. 1973cc - 1973cc-26) provides the basis for a Government wide program offering absentee voter assistance to certain categories of individuals. The law recommends that each State allow certain citizens living temporarily away from their legal voting places to vote in all elections. These citizens include members of the Armed Forces and the Merchant Marine, while in the active service, their spouses and dependents, and other citizens temporarily residing outside the United States. For purposes of the Act, "Armed Forces" include the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service.

The Act authorizes the President to designate someone to supervise the administration of Federal voting assistance responsibilities. The Secretary of Defense, as Presidential designee, coordinates the Federal program which encourages and assists those absent from their residences to vote, and makes

available information about absentee voting, registration requirements, and dates of impending elections.

Section C. Responsibilities

1. Headquarters, division or institute directors, program directors, and officers in charge of field activities, or their designees, will act as voting officers to assist PHS commissioned personnel within their respective organizations, as well as their spouses and dependents, with absentee voting. Voting officers are also responsible for requesting the material itemized in subparagraphs 2(a), 2(b), and 2(c), below, for distribution to PHS commissioned personnel.
2. The Commissioned Personnel Operations Division (CPOD), Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Office of Management (OM), PHS, will have responsibility for ordering and distributing to voting officers the following materials:
 - (a) The Department of Defense pamphlet "Voting Assistance Guide," issued periodically and containing information about voting and registration requirements in the various States;
 - (b) The "Federal Post Card Application for Absentee Ballot (FPCA)," SF-76, a postage-free card printed and distributed by the Federal Government for use by absentee voters covered under the Act; and
 - (c) Department of Defense memorandums containing information on election dates in the various States and changes in election laws occurring since the latest publication of the "Voting Assistance Guide."

For information and copies of the above materials the voting officers should contact:

Commissioned Personnel Operations Division, OPM, OM, PHS
Room 4-35, Parklawn Building
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Officers unable to contact their voting officers, or to obtain necessary information or materials, should write to the above address requesting absentee voter assistance.

Section D. Duties of Voting Officers

1. Each voting officer should:

- (a) Become familiar with the information contained in the "Voting Assistance Guide." The wide variation in State voting laws requires that voting officers consult the summaries of the laws of the States, contained in the Guide, before counseling any person on how to apply for voter registration or an absentee ballot;
- (b) Provide commissioned personnel and their spouses and dependents with current information on State absentee registration and voting requirements and procedures;
- (c) Supply the FPCA to those who desire to use it to apply for absentee ballots;
- (d) Assist officers and their spouses and dependents in applying for absentee ballots. Necessary certifications on applications and balloting forms can be made, if permitted under State law, by officials and officers delegated this authority under Delegations of Authority in Part 3 of this manual; and
- (e) Coordinate responses from their agencies or staff offices in the post-election surveys conducted by the Department of Defense.

Section E. Eligibility to Vote

1. Exhibit 1 contains information on how to complete the FPCA, which is the standard application for absentee voting accepted by most States from those individuals covered by the Federal Voting Assistance Act of 1955, as amended.
2. It is the responsibility of the appropriate State election official, not the voting officer, to determine an individual's eligibility to vote under the laws of a particular State. An individual who is unsure of his/her eligibility to vote by absentee ballot in any election should make inquiries of the Secretary of State or other appropriate election official of his/her voting residence, as to what steps he/she must take to register or to meet other requirements in order to be eligible to vote in that State.
3. Many States also have other systems of absentee registration and voting that apply to other specific categories of persons or all absentee voters in addition to procedures that may have been established under the Federal Voting Assistance Act of 1955, as amended. Furthermore, some officers and their spouses and dependents covered under the Federal Voting Assistance Act of 1955, as amended, may also be eligible to vote absentee under the Overseas Citizens Voting Rights Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 1973dd - 1973dd-5). Commissioned officers should consult their voting officers and/or the Secretary of State or other election officials of their State for more information on these alternative absentee voting procedures.

EXHIBIT I

How To Complete the FPCA

- Complete both sides of the FPCA.
- Type or print in ink all entries except signatures.

An illegible, incomplete, or improperly completed FPCA may result in failure to receive a ballot.

Specific Instructions

Fill in State, territory, commonwealth (for Puerto Rico) or district (for District of Columbia) of voting residence.

1. Strike out election or elections *not* being applied for.
2. Enter name of party whose primary ballot you want (not necessary in some States).

Warning: You may have to comply with a deadline for changing parties.

3. Place an "X" or checkmark (" ") in the box that describes your status. If you are voting under the Overseas Citizens Voting Rights Act of 1975, enter that fact in item (6).

4. Enter your date of birth.

5. Enter the length of time you lived in the State (if less than 1 year, strike out "years" and write "months" immediately above it). Then enter your exact address (or as much of it as you remember) in the space provided. If a rural route, be as descriptive as you can as to exact location. Town (in New England) or township (in Michigan) should be entered in place of "county or parish." Leave "voting precinct or election district" blank if you do not know the answer.

6. Use to supplement or expand upon other entries.

7. Enter your current mailing address or other address to which registration or application forms or ballot should be sent. Ignore the parenthetical information if it does not apply to you.

8. Be certain that you comply with this statement.

9. Sign your name (in the presence of a witness if State law so requires.)

10. Type or print your name and rank or pay grade.

11. The authorized witness, if required, should complete this section carefully.

*May or may not be required to be filled out, depending upon State law. See Voter Assistance Guide for guidance.

FILL OUT BOTH SIDES OF CARD
POST CARD APPLICATION FOR ABSENTEE BALLOT

State or Commonwealth of _____ (Fill in name of State or Commonwealth)

(1) I hereby request an absentee ballot to vote in the coming election.
(GENERAL) (PRIMARY)* (SPECIAL) ELECTION.
(Strike out inapplicable words)

(2) *If a ballot is requested for a primary election, print your political party affiliation or preference in this box: _____
(If primary election is secret in your State, do not answer)

(3) I am a citizen of the United States, eligible to vote in the above State, and am:

a. A member of the Armed Forces of the United States _____

b. A member of the merchant marine of the United States _____

c. A citizen of the United States temporarily residing outside of the territorial limits of the United States and the District of Columbia _____

d. A spouse or dependent of a person listed in (a), or (b) above _____

e. A spouse or dependent residing with or accompanying a person described in (c) above _____

(4) I was born on _____ (Day) (Month) (Year)

(5) For _____ years preceding the above election my home (not military) residence in the above State has been _____
(Street and number or rural route, etc.)
in the county or parish of _____
The voting precinct or election district for this residence is _____
(Enter if known)

(6) Remarks: _____

(7) Mail my ballot to the following official address
For those assigned to the U.S.:

(Unit (Co., Sq., Trp., Bn., etc.), Governmental Agency, or Office)

(Military Base, Station, Camp, Fort, Ship, Airfield, Etc.)
For those assigned elsewhere:

(APO, or FPO number)

(8) I am NOT requesting a ballot from any other State and am not voting in any other manner in this election, except by absentee process, and have not voted and do not intend to vote in this election at any other address.

(9) _____
(Signature of person requesting ballot)

(10) _____
(Full name typed or printed, with rank or grade, and service number)

(11) Subscribed and sworn to before me on _____ (Day, month, and year)

(Typed or printed name of official administering oath)

(Signature of official administering oath)

(Title or rank, service number, and organization of administering official)

INSTRUCTIONS

A. Before filling out this form see your voting officer in regard to the voting laws of your State and absentee registration and voting procedure

B. Type or print all entries except signatures. **FILL OUT BOTH SIDES OF CARD.**

C. Address card to proper State official. Your voting officer or commanding officer will furnish you his title and address.

D. Mail card as soon as your State will accept your application.

E. NO postage is required for the card.