



OFFICE OF THE IOWA SECRETARY OF STATE

September 2, 2020

Official Guidance: No-Contact Ballot Delivery

Iowa Code §§ 53.8 and 53.17 provide Iowa voters with 4 ways in which their voted absentee ballot can be returned to the correct County Auditor's Office:

1. The voter may return their voted ballot via the USPS
2. The voter's designee may return the voted ballot via USPS
3. The voter may personally deliver their voted ballot to the County Auditor's Office
4. The voter's designee may personally deliver the voted ballot to the County Auditor's Office

Recognizing that some voters may desire to personally deliver their voted ballot to their County Auditor's Office in a no-contact manner, the Secretary of State's Office is issuing the following official guidance related to no-contact ballot delivery systems for voted absentee ballots:

1. The County Auditor's Office is the location where voters may receive services pursuant to Iowa Code §§48A.17, 50.20, 53.10 and 53.18.
2. A County Auditor may develop a no-contact ballot delivery system option located at their office, as defined above, or on county owned and maintained property directly surrounding the building where their office is located.
 - It is recommended that the no-contact ballot delivery system be limited to the collection of election materials.
 - If the no-contact ballot delivery system is a multi-use system, only the County Auditor or individuals employed by the County Auditor shall have access.
3. County Auditors must take all reasonable and necessary steps to ensure the accessibility and security of the no-contact ballot delivery system.
 - Such security measures may include placing the system within the regular sight of the County Auditor or their staff, monitoring the system with a video security system, or establishing some other type of monitoring system.
 - A video security surveillance system may include existing systems in the building where the County Auditor's Office is located.
 - If utilized, the video security surveillance system should create a recording, which can be reviewed by the County Auditor and law enforcement in the event misconduct occurs.

4. The no-contact ballot delivery system shall be available when the County Auditor's Office is open and staffed. If the no-contact ballot delivery system is available to voters during hours when the County Auditor's Office is closed, the County Auditor must take all steps necessary to ensure that the system is always secure and monitored.
5. The no-contact ballot delivery system shall be securely fastened to a stationary surface or to an immovable object.
6. The no-contact ballot delivery systems shall be secured by a lock and may include a tamper-evident seal. Only the County Auditor or individuals employed by the County Auditor shall have access to the keys and/or combination of the lock.
7. Materials delivered via the no-contact ballot delivery system shall be retrieved by the County Auditor or an individual employed by the County Auditor in an expeditious manner, but not less than once per 24-hour period.
8. The County Auditor's Office shall maintain a log of each time election materials are retrieved from the no-contact ballot delivery system, including date, time and the staff member who retrieved the materials.
9. On Election Day, the no-contact ballot delivery system shall be emptied at the time polls close. A record shall be kept, including the date, time and staff member who retrieved the materials, to memorialize that absentee ballots were delivered timely. Any ballots retrieved at the time polls close shall be immediately delivered to the Absentee and Special Voters Precinct Board for review and tabulation.
10. All elections materials received via a no-contact ballot delivery system shall be processed in the same manner as election materials delivered directly to an individual employed by the County Auditor's Office in a traditional hand to hand delivery.