

Good day, All

September 15, 2020

My name is Jim Deming. I am the interim clerk at Lake Township and wanted to clarify a few of the processes for Absentee Voting in Michigan for the upcoming Presidential Election on November 3, 2020. Due to the passage of the statewide ballot proposal 18-3, all eligible and registered voters in Michigan may now request an absent voter ballot without providing a reason. There is some confusion of how the new law works.

You must be registered to vote to request a ballot. A person can register at their local clerk's office or at the secretary of State's website. (<https://mVIC.sos.state.mi.us/RegisterVoter>) Your registration may be updated or reviewed at this website or by contacting your local clerk. Registration may be done anytime up to and including Election Day. Valid ID and proof of residency will be necessary to register.

Once returned to the local clerk's office, an application is reviewed, using the information on file in the Qualified Voter File. The Secretary of State's office is the custodian of Michigan's elections and maintains this file. All information on the application must match the Qualified Voter File to be accepted. This includes name, address, signature and the election for which you wish a ballot. This application is then kept on file. **It is important to note that ballots will not be sent unless requested by the voter with a valid application.**

Once the ballots are received from the Huron County Clerk's office, they are prepared and sent to the voter via the US Postal Service. Ballots may also be picked up at the Township Hall in person by appointment only. If you wish to pick up your ballot in person, notify the clerk's office as soon as possible. **Each voter must pick up their own ballot. By law, the clerk cannot give out another voter's ballot to be hand delivered.**

After voting your ballot, you have the opportunity to return the same by several different methods. The US Postal Service has been the method most widely used in the past. If using this method, please allow plenty of time for the ballot to reach our office. **We must receive the ballot by Election Day for your vote to be counted.**

There is also a drop box located in the south vestibule of the Township Hall located at 4988 West Kinde Road, Caseville, Michigan (Also known as Gotts Corner). This box is checked daily.

Once received, the clerk's office again verifies the signature on the return envelope with the signature on file. After being accepted, the ballot is securely stored in a locked device until Election Day. Ballots are not opened prior to Election Day and then only by two election workers, one from each of the two major political parties working together to process these ballots.

I hope this helps clear any confusion about the Absentee Voter process. Please contact the clerk's office with questions you may still have. (989-856-4867). Due to current Covid 19 restrictions, an appointment will be necessary to come to the Township Hall.

Respectfully

Jim Deming