



STATES WITH EARLY VOTING OR NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING

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ISSUE

Which states have (1) early voting or (2) no-excuse absentee voting? **This report has been partially updated by OLR Report [2018-R-0278](#).**

SUMMARY

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), currently 33 states have early voting, and 27 have no-excuse absentee voting. In addition, Massachusetts will implement early voting in 2016. Three other states, Colorado, Oregon, and Washington, conduct all elections by mail. Twenty states require an excuse to vote absentee ballot by mail. (Washington D.C. has both early and no-excuse absentee voting.)

Generally, early voting is when a voter appears in person to cast his or her ballot before Election Day. It typically occurs at a local election administrator's office or other locations designated by local officials. No-excuse absentee voting is when a voter applies for and receives a ballot to submit by mail without providing a reason for being absent from his or her polling place on Election Day. The states that vote by mail provide all voters with ballots to submit by mail.

The 33 early voting states include 13 states with what is known as "in-person absentee voting," which is when a voter applies for, receives, and casts an absentee ballot in person (rather than by mail) without providing a reason. Generally, the difference between these states and the 20 other early voting states is that in-person absentee ballots are subject to counting procedures applicable to absentee ballots. Conversely, in the other early voting states, the ballots are treated as regular ballots. However, because in-person absentee voting involves casting ballots in person before Election Day, it is considered to be a form of early voting.

Table 1 lists all 50 states and indicates whether they have early voting, no-excuse absentee voting, or all-mail voting, or require an excuse for absentee voting.

Table 1: 50 State Comparison of Pre-Election Day Voting Methods

State	Early Voting (In Person)	No-Excuse Absentee Voting (By Mail)	All-Mail Voting	Absentee Voting: Excuse Required (By Mail)
Alabama				X
Alaska	X	X		
Arizona	X	X		
Arkansas	X			X
California	X	X		
Colorado			X	
Connecticut				X
Delaware				X
Florida	X	X		
Georgia	X	X		
Hawaii	X	X		
Idaho	X ^a	X		
Illinois	X	X		
Indiana	X ^{a,b}			X
Iowa	X ^a	X		
Kansas	X	X		
Kentucky				X
Louisiana	X			X
Maine	X ^a	X		
Maryland	X	X		
Massachusetts	(will be implemented in 2016)			X
Michigan				X
Minnesota	X ^a	X		
Mississippi				X
Missouri				X
Montana	X ^a	X		
Nebraska	X	X		
Nevada	X	X		
New Hampshire				X
New Jersey	X ^a	X		
New Mexico	X	X		
New York				X
North Carolina	X	X		
North Dakota	X	X		
Ohio	X ^a	X		
Oklahoma	X ^a	X		
Oregon			X	
Pennsylvania				X
Rhode Island				X
South Carolina				X

Table 1 (continued)

State	Early Voting (In Person)	No-Excuse Absentee Voting (By Mail)	All-Mail Voting	Absentee Voting: Excuse Required (By Mail)
South Dakota	X ^a	X		
Tennessee	X			X
Texas	X			X
Utah	X	X		
Vermont	X ^a	X		
Virginia				X
Washington			X	
West Virginia	X			X
Wisconsin	X ^a	X		
Wyoming	X ^a	X		
TOTAL	33 ^c	27	3 ^d	20

Source: NCSL: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/absentee-and-early-voting.aspx> (last visited October 16, 2014)

^a These states have in-person absentee voting.

^b Indiana allows all registered voters to vote by absentee ballot in-person at the county election board beginning 28 days before the election, but permits only those voters with a specified reason (e.g., illness, absence from county) to vote absentee by mail.

^c Massachusetts is not included in this total: the state passed early voting in 2014, and it will go into effect in 2016.

^d In several other states besides the three identified in the table, certain jurisdictions (e.g., counties) hold elections entirely by mail.

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