



Increases from 7 to 14 days prior to the date of an election, the time frame that a qualified voter must return a completed application for a mail-in absentee ballot to the county clerks' office. The methods by which a voter may request an application for a mail-in absentee ballot, a county clerk may use for transmitting an application to a voter, and a voter may return the completed request for application are standardized to include facsimile machines and electronic filing, along with regular mail and in person. The request for an application can also be done by phone.

The time frame for which an application for a mail-in absentee ballot by means of a federal post-card application shall be received by the county clerk's office, is extended from 7 days to 14 days before the election.

For any voter who does not receive a mail-in absentee ballot within a reasonable amount of time after applying for one, the voter **may** contact the county clerk, who shall reissue a second mail-in absentee ballot.

A voter who has applied for a mail-in absentee ballot but has yet to receive it, may appear at the county clerk's office on Election Day to be removed from the list of persons who were sent a mail-in absentee ballot and be allowed to vote in the precinct in which he or she is registered. The voter may also appear at the county clerk's office during in-person absentee voting days and be allowed to vote by in-person absentee ballot.

Increases from 15 to 45 days before any special election that the county clerk must cause ballot labels for each candidate and/or question to be voted on to be printed and ready for use.

Increases from 28 days to 49 days the minimal time for which a write-in candidate must file his or her intent to be a write-in candidate **in a special election**. This brings the filing deadline for write-in candidates in conformity with the filing deadline for party and independent candidates.

The time frame for which a voter may use the declaration accompanying a federal write-in absentee ballot as an application for a military-overseas ballot is extended from seven days to fourteen days before the election.

**The fiscal impact of HB 304 HCS on county clerk's offices would be minimal.**

The Kentucky County Clerk's Association expects the fiscal impact of HB 304 HCS on county governments to be minimal. Conversely, the Association opposes the return of completed absentee ballots back to the office by fax or email. The issue being the lack of an original signature to compare against the voter registration record, or in general, possibly no signature at all. The Association's position on cancelling the absentee ballot on Election Day has not yet been established as of the date of this mandate statement.

The Secretary of State (SOS) expects the fiscal impact to be a cost savings to county governments and county clerks. By including facsimile machines and electronic filing as a means for requesting, transmitting, and returning mail-in absentee ballot applications, the SOS expects a postage savings for county clerks and voters.

For a General Assembly special election where there is only one candidate to be voted upon, the election may be held in the county clerk's office instead of the individual precincts of that county, the SOS expects this to result in a county savings of \$1,800 to \$2,000 per precinct and a savings of \$255 per precinct for the State Board of Elections.

**Part III: Differences to Local Government Mandate Statement from Prior Versions**

HB 304 HCS 1 made the following changes to HB 304 as introduced:

- Changes the meeting schedule for the county board of elections.
- Changes the time frame for which an application for a mail-in absentee ballot by means of a federal post-card application shall be received by the county clerk's office.
- Reinstates language that was deleted by the bill as introduced, regarding the procedure for cancelling a mail in absentee ballot and allowing the voter to vote in his or her precinct on Election Day is returned to the statute.
- Changes *shall* to *may* regarding second request for a mail-in absentee ballot.
- Changes the time frame regarding application for a military-overseas ballots.

**Data Source(s):** LRC Staff, Kentucky County Clerks' Association, Secretary of State

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