



From the Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections

Belleair Bluffs Mail Ballot Referendum Election Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this election being conducted by mail?

The City of Belleair Bluffs asked the Supervisor of Elections to conduct a "Mail Ballot" Referendum Election, pursuant to Florida Statute 101.6102.

Is this the first mail ballot election in Pinellas County?

No. The City of Oldsmar conducted an all mail ballot annexation election in March 2009 with a 63% turnout. And, other Florida counties have used this process for years.

Which Florida counties have conducted mail ballot elections?

2005-2009: 13 Florida counties conducted 23 mail ballot elections (Pinellas – 1, Brevard – 4, Miami-Dade – 3, Orange – 3, Broward – 2, Collier – 2, Volusia – 2, and 1 each in Gulf, Hamilton, Holmes, Jackson, Okaloosa and Santa Rosa.)

Do I have to be a registered voter, or can any property owner in the city participate in the election?

Florida law states that ALL registered voters with addresses (renters/owners) within the election area (Precinct 358) are eligible to vote in the election. Voter registration deadline is August 3 for this election.

Do I have to request a ballot for this election?

No. All registered voters in the election area (Precinct 358) will be mailed ballots as follows:

Week of July 13 – Overseas ballots will be mailed [FS 101.6103(7) and 101.62(4)(a)]

August 12 - Domestic ballots will be mailed to ALL registered Florida voters living in the election area (Precinct 358). Voters do not need to request a ballot. [FS 101.6103]

What if I don't get my ballot within a day or two after the mailing date?

Call the Supervisor of Elections Office at 727-464-6788 to check the status of your ballot.

What if I need my ballot before the mailing date because I'm going out of town?

Voters may pick up, vote or drop off their ballots in any Supervisor of Elections office during regular business hours, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday. Offices are located at:

County Courthouse, 315 Court St., Clearwater, Room 117

Election Service Center, 13001 Starkey Rd., Largo

County Building, 501 1st Ave. N., St. Petersburg

Can I have my ballot mailed to me early?

No. State law requires all domestic ballots for mail ballot elections to be mailed no sooner than 20 days prior to the election, and no later than 10 days prior to the election.

Can someone else pick up my ballot for me?

Yes. Voters may designate in writing someone to pick up their ballot no sooner than the fifth day prior to the election. The designee is limited to two ballots for each election other than his/her own ballot and ballots for his/her immediate family only. If picking up a replacement ballot, the designee will also need a signed Ballot Replacement Oath from the voter in order to pick up the replacement ballot.

What if I make a mistake on my ballot and need a replacement ballot?

Voters needing a replacement ballot (if a ballot was destroyed, spoiled, lost, or not received) are required to complete a Replacement Ballot Oath [FS 101.6103(4)] before receiving a replacement ballot.

Where do I get a Replacement Ballot Oath?

A copy of the oath is included in all mail ballot kits. You may also download a copy of the oath from our Web site or call (727) 464-6788 to have an oath emailed, faxed or mailed to you. If you did not receive a mail ballot, but the Supervisor of Elections records show that a ballot was mailed to you, you will need to complete a Replacement Ballot Oath.

Are the ballots and certificate envelopes the same as those used in regular elections?

The ballots are the same, but the certificate envelopes have additional language and require the voter to list his/her residence address in addition to signing the envelope.

When do I have to return my voted ballot? Voted ballots must be received in any Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections Office by 7 p.m. September 1. (See above locations). Postmarks are NOT relevant.

Are there any ballot dropoff locations for this election besides the Elections Offices?

No. Ballots must be mailed or delivered to any Elections Office.

Can I still vote at a polling place on Election Day if I haven't returned my mail ballot?

No. There are no polling places for this election. You may deliver your voted ballot or pick up a ballot and vote at any Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections office by 7 p.m. September 1.

What is the deadline to update my name or address on my voter record?

Addresses can be updated through Election Day. However, by state law the Supervisor of Elections cannot mail any ballots after the 4th day (August 28) before the election, to allow time to return the ballot; ballots can be picked up after that date. Any registered Florida voters who move into the election area on or before Election Day are eligible to vote in this election, but must update their addresses with the Supervisor of Elections office.

Is my ballot forwardable if I don't have my current address on my voter record?

No. State law prohibits the forwarding of ballots.

When will the ballots for this election be opened and processed?

State law allows mail ballots to be opened and processed beginning the sixth day (August 26) before the election. However, results must be suppressed until after 7 p.m. Election Day.

Who is paying for this election?

The City of Belleair Bluffs is conducting the election and will pay all election costs.

Are there any special criteria for conducting a mail ballot election?

Yes, according to state law.

- May be conducted by counties; cities; school districts covering no more than one county; special districts.
- The governing body calling for the election and the Supervisor of Elections conducting the election must authorize the use of mail ballots for the election
- The Secretary of State must approve a written plan for conducting the election, including a timetable, submitted by the Supervisor of Elections
- Includes annexation elections involving voters in one county
- Cannot include an election in which any candidate is nominated, elected, retained or recalled
- Cannot be held the same day as another election for the same voting area (other than another mail ballot election)
- The jurisdiction calling the election must pay for the election

Where can I find the laws governing mail ballot elections?

Florida Statutes 101.6102, 101.6103 and 101.62 cover mail ballot elections.

What if I have other questions? For more information, call (727) 464-6788.

njw/5/29/09