

HB 1288 -- ADVANCE VOTING

SPONSOR: English

Beginning January 1, 2015, this bill allows voters to cast advance ballots starting on the third Wednesday before any election. Any registered voter may vote by advance ballot at the central voting location designated by the election authority. Voting will be allowed on weekdays during regular business hours beginning no earlier than 7:00 a.m. and no later than 7:00 p.m. and on Saturdays until 12:00 p.m. through the close of regular business hours on the Wednesday before the election.

The election judge will not allow any person who voted an advance ballot in the election to vote a provision ballot or vote at the polls on election day. Any voter casting more than one type of ballot during the same election will be guilty of a class one election offense. Persons voting by advance ballot will receive the same protections as those voting by absentee ballot. Costs associated with the implementation of advance voting, as authorized by this section, shall be paid from the general revenue of the State of Missouri.

The bill also requires election authorities to mail an advance voting ballot upon voter submission of an application. Applications must be made by the fourth Tuesday prior to the elections. Applications must be in writing and will state the applicant's name, address where he or she is or would be registered, and the address where the ballot will be mailed. An Application to vote in a primary election must also state which ballot the applicant wishes to receive. When an application does not designate a ballot, the election authority will, within three working days after receiving the application, notify the applicant, by mail, that they cannot deliver an advance ballot to the applicant until he or she designates which political party ballot he or she wishes to receive. If the applicant does not respond to this request, the election authority is authorized to provide the voter with that part of the ballot that does not require a political party designation. Advance ballots will be mailed by the third Tuesday prior to the election. Applications for an advance ballot will be signed by the applicant or, if the application is made by a guardian or relative, the application shall be signed by the guardian or relative, who must note on the application his or her relationship to the applicant. If an applicant, guardian or relative is blind, unable to read or write the English language or physically incapable of signing the application he or she shall sign by mark, witnessed by the signature of an election official or person of his or her own choosing. Any person who knowingly makes, delivers, or mails a fraudulent advance ballot application shall be

guilty of a class one election offense.

Election authorities will print sufficient quantities of advance ballots by the sixth Tuesday prior to an election. All absentee ballots for an election must be in the same form as the official ballots for the election, except that in lieu of the words "Official Ballot" at the top of the ballot, the words "Official Advance Ballot" will appear.

Upon receipt of a signed application for an advance ballot and if satisfied the applicant is entitled to vote by advance ballot, the election authority will, within three working days after receiving the application, deliver to the voter an advance ballot. Ballots will include voting instructions and envelopes and must be sent by first class, registered, or certified mail at the discretion of the election authority.

The election authority may reject an application for cause and must notify voters of the rejection of an application within three days of its submission. Making, mailing, or delivering a false application for an advance ballot will be a class one election offense.

No information influencing a vote may be sent in response to an application for an advance ballot to a voter.