

---

By: **Delegates Zirkin, Morhaim, and Finifter**  
Introduced and read first time: February 12, 1999  
Assigned to: Commerce and Government Matters

---

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Elections - Distribution of Applications for Absentee Ballots**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the methods for submitting an application for an  
4 absentee ballot; authorizing the distribution of applications for absentee ballots  
5 in certain locations or by certain methods; and generally relating to absentee  
6 ballots.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
8 Article 33 - Election Code  
9 Section 9-305  
10 Annotated Code of Maryland  
11 (1997 Replacement Volume and 1998 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
13 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article 33 - Election Code**

15 9-305.

16 (a) An application for an absentee ballot[, signed by the voter,] may be made:

17 (1) On a form produced by the local board [and supplied to the voter on  
18 request]; OR

19 (2) On a form provided under federal law[; or

20 (3) In a written request that includes:

21 (i) The voter's name and residence address;

22 (ii) The address to which the ballot is to be mailed, if different from  
23 the residence address; and

24 (iii) The reason, as authorized in § 9-304 of this subtitle, for  
25 absentee voting].

1 (B) AN APPLICATION FOR AN ABSENTEE BALLOT MAY BE MADE AVAILABLE TO  
2 ANY INDIVIDUAL:

3 (1) AT A LOCAL BOARD OFFICE OR THE STATE BOARD OFFICE;

4 (2) BY MAIL;

5 (3) IN HIGH SCHOOLS;

6 (4) AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION;

7 (5) IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES;

8 (6) IN ANY STATE OR LOCAL OFFICE THAT SERVES THE GENERAL  
9 PUBLIC; OR

10 (7) ON THE INTERNET.

11 (C) ANY INDIVIDUAL MAY OBTAIN ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS FOR  
12 DISTRIBUTION.

13 [(b)] (D) Except for a late application under subsection (c) of this section, an  
14 application for an absentee ballot must be received by a local board not later than the  
15 Tuesday preceding the election, at the time specified in the guidelines.

16 [(c)] (E) (1) Beginning on the Wednesday preceding the election, through  
17 the closing of the polls on election day, a registered voter or the voter's duly  
18 authorized agent may apply in person for an absentee ballot at the office of the local  
19 board if the voter is qualified for absentee voting under § 9-304 of this subtitle or §  
20 10-102 of this article.

21 (2) A special application for an absentee ballot issued under this  
22 subsection shall be supplied by the staff of the local board to the voter or the voter's  
23 duly authorized agent.

24 (3) The application shall be made under penalty of perjury, but without a  
25 formal oath, specifying the reason for absentee voting.

26 (4) After review of the application, if the staff of the local board finds  
27 that the voter qualifies for absentee voting, the staff shall issue an absentee ballot to  
28 the voter or the voter's duly authorized agent.

29 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
30 October 1, 1999.