

**RULES  
OF  
STATE ELECTION BOARD**

**CHAPTER 183-1  
GEORGIA ELECTION CODE**

**SUBJECT 183-1-14  
ABSENTEE VOTING**

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183-1-14-0.8-.14 Secure Absentee Ballot Drop Boxes

**RULE 183-1-14-0.8-.14 Secure Absentee Ballot Drop Boxes**

(1) County registrars are authorized to establish one or more drop box locations as a means for absentee by mail electors to deliver their ballots to the county registrars. Placing a voted absentee ballot into the drop box shall be deemed delivery pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385 and is subject to the limitations on who may deliver a ballot on behalf of an elector.

(2) A drop box shall only be located on county or municipal government property generally accessible to the public.

(3) Drop box locations may open beginning 49 days Election Day prior to any presidential preference primary, general primary other than a municipal general primary, general election other than a municipal general election, or special primary or special election in which there is a candidate for federal office on the ballot and the drop boxes for the aforementioned elections shall close at 7:00 p.m. For a statewide or federal special election or a statewide or federal runoff election, drop box locations may begin opening on the first day of advance voting. On Election Day, every drop box shall be closed and ballots collected at 7:00 p.m. Prior to opening a drop box for a new election, the registrar shall ensure that the drop box is empty. Any person acting on behalf of the registrar who opens a drop box prior to an election must have sworn an oath in the same form as the oath for poll officers set forth in O.C.G.A. § 21-2-95 prior to opening the drop box and shall sign a form indicating that the drop box was empty and secure at the time of opening. Counties shall provide notice of the location of each drop box by posting such information on the home page of the county election website no later than the day the drop boxes are placed in a location.

(4) Drop box locations must have adequate lighting and use a video recording device to monitor each drop box location. The video recording device must either continuously record the drop box location or use motion detection that records one frame, or more, per minute until detection of motion triggers continuous recording.

(5) Video recordings of the drop box locations must be retained by the county registrars for 30 days after the final certification of the election, or until conclusion of any contest involving an election on the ballot in the county jurisdiction, whichever is later, and shall be made available to Secretary of State investigators upon request or to the public, upon request, as soon as possible or at a charge that is not cost prohibitive to the public, if there is a charge.

(6) A drop box shall be constructed of durable material able to withstand vandalism and inclement weather. The opening slot of a drop box shall not allow ballots to be tampered with or removed and shall be designed to minimize the ability for liquid to be poured into the drop box or rain water to seep in.

(7) A drop box shall be securely fastened to the ground or an immovable fixture.

(8) If the drop box utilizes a drop-slot into a building, the ballots must drop into a locked container, and both the drop-slot and the container must be monitored by video recording devices.

(9) A drop box shall be clearly labeled “OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOT DROP BOX”. Each drop box location shall clearly display signage developed by the Secretary of State regarding Georgia law related to absentee ballot harvesting and destroying, defacing, or delaying delivery of ballots.

(10) Prior to the second Monday before Election Day, the county registrars must arrange for collection of the ballots from each drop box at least once every 72 hours. Beginning on the second Monday before Election Day and up until 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, the county registrars must arrange for collection of the ballots from each drop box location at least once every 24 hours. On Election Day, every drop box shall be closed and ballots collected at 7:00 p.m. Collection of ballots from a drop box must be made by a team of at least two people. Any person collecting ballots from a drop box must have sworn an oath in the same form as the oath for poll officers set forth in O.C.G.A. § 21-2-95. The collection team shall complete and sign a ballot transfer form upon removing the ballots from the drop box, which shall include the date, time, location and number of ballots. After emptying the drop box on 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, the collection team shall close the drop box and indicate on the ballot transfer form that the drop box was emptied and closed. The ballots from the drop box shall be immediately transported to the county registrar and processed and stored in the same manner as absentee ballots returned by mail are processed and stored. The county registrar or a designee thereof shall sign the ballot transfer form upon receipt of the ballots from the collection team.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 21-2-31, 21-2-386