Dakota County Elections
MAKING SURE YOUR VOTE IS COUNTED

Dakota County is committed to administering secure, accurate elections. Experienced county staff follow state laws to oversee elections. County responsibilities include:

- Training city and township clerks and election judges in election law, rules and procedures.
- Printing all ballots, programming voting devices and maintaining election equipment.
- Administering absentee ballots and reporting election results to the State of Minnesota.
- Ensuring campaign finance requirements for county offices are met.
- Certifying election results for county, state and federal offices.

HOW WE VOTE

- In-person, absentee and early voting
- 142 — Precincts in Dakota County
- 3 — County locations to vote absentee before Election Day
- 10 — Cities where voters can vote in-person absentee before Election Day
- 439,882 — Dakota County population
- 282,062 — Registered voters (as of 5/31/22)
- Find your polling place, register to vote and check your registration, and apply for an absentee ballot at www.mnvotes.org.

VOTER REGISTRATION

Your voter registration remains current until your name changes or address changes, or you have not voted in the past four years. You must register using the street address where you live. A post office box cannot be used as a residential address.

When you register, elections staff will verify that your name, birth date and driver's license or state ID provided on the registration application match information on the databases of the Department of Public Safety or the Social Security Administration.

The same verification process is used for residents who register in person or by mail.

APPLYING FOR AN ABSENTEE BALLOT

Any eligible voter may apply for an absentee ballot. Unregistered applicants will register to vote through the absentee voting process.

Absentee ballot applications can be submitted in person or by mail, email or fax. Applications can also be done online for federal, state and county elections.

Dakota County only processes about 10–15 percent of the absentee ballots cast in the county. Cities and school districts process the rest of the absentee ballots cast in the county.

SECURING THE ABSENTEE BALLOT

Dakota County takes many steps to make sure the absentee ballot process is secure. These steps include:

Checking: Your name is checked in the state voter registration system. If you moved, election staff make sure you are registered at the new address.

Double-checking: If you're a new voter, we check driver's license data or Social Security records. If we can't find you, we will require identification when you come in next to vote.

Checking again: At least two election staff check your ballot to make sure it's correct before sending it to you.

Verifying: Ballot envelope numbers identifying the voter and the request are verified by election judges once returned.
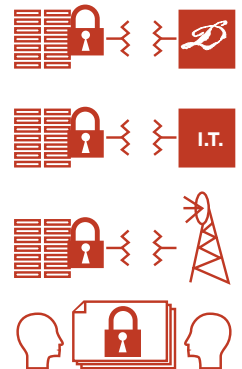
Reviewing: At least two election judges review each returned ballot to check the numbers or the voter signature match.

Tracking: We track the number of absentee ballot requests and the returned ballots. If any precinct has more returned ballots than requests, we resolve the issue before ballots are counted.

PROTECTING ELECTION DATA AND BALLOTS

The county follows required security practices to protect elections data and ballots. That begins with the elections computer server, which stores data. This hardware is physically and electronically separate from the county's main network. A very limited number of staff have access to the election server. Remote access to the county election server is not possible.

Ballots are also protected. The county always secures cast ballots.

INVESTIGATING ILLEGAL VOTING

During and after each election, every in-person voter and absentee ballot voter is matched to the record on the registration system. Any discrepancy is referred to the Dakota County Attorney's Office for investigation.

GET INVOLVED

Residents can participate in the election process. To apply to be an election judge on Election Day, contact your city or township office. To work on an absentee ballot board, contact your city or the county.

For more information, visit www.dakotacounty.us and search *voting and elections.*