

Dakota County Elections

MAKING SURE YOUR VOTE IS COUNTED



Dakota County is committed to administering secure, transparent and accurate elections. Experienced county staff follow state and federal 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
- **12** Cities where voters can vote in-person absentee before Election Day

Find your polling place, register to vote and check your registration, and apply for an absentee ballot at mnvotes.gov.

REGISTERING TO VOTE

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

When you register to vote, 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 county takes an active approach to maintaining accurate, updated voter registration data. We continually compare and match voter data with county, state and federal agencies to ensure voters are removed when they are no longer eligible.

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 submitted online for all elections except March township elections.

Dakota County processes the vast majority of absentee ballots cast in the county.

ABSENTEE VOTING IS SECURE

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

Validating: Confirming the eligibility and identity of a voter, and that the voter has not already voted in the election.

Verifying: Reviewing each returned ballot to ensure the name, address and identification matches what was provided on the absentee application. They also make sure the voter signed the envelope and it was confirmed by a witness.

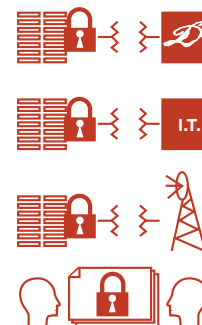
Auditing: Tracking the number of absentee ballot requests and the returned ballots during routine checks to ensure accuracy.

PROTECTING ELECTION DATA AND BALLOTS

The county protects elections data and ballots. The computer server storing election data is physically and electronically separate from the county's network and internet. A very limited number of staff have access to the election server. Remote access to the county election server is not possible.

All equipment used in an election is tested. Public accuracy tests ensure that equipment, including ballot counters, will accurately record votes. The tests are open to observers.

Ballots are also protected. Cast ballots are stored in a vault with secure entry points monitored by video cameras. Teams of two election judges always handle voted ballots.



VERIFYING ELECTION RESULTS

Every election is certified by a board of canvassers.

After each state election, we conduct a post-election review. We audit randomly selected precincts. Votes are counted by hand, and that total is compared with the machine-counted results from election night.

INVESTIGATING ILLEGAL VOTER ACTIVITY

Every in-person voter and absentee ballot voter is matched to the record on the registration system. Any ballot discrepancy or other suspected illegal voter activity is immediately referred to authorities for investigation.

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