

How are ballots counted in CT from SOTS (NJB copied and pasted from site)

[Absentee ballots](#) (for general election only)

Moderator must supervise the process of absentee ballot counting.

Absentee ballots may either be counted at one central location (with “central counting location moderator responsible” (nb: not defined) or at each polling place.

Registrars of Voters are jointly responsible for proper tabulator preparation, polling place preparation, poll worker training, and other duties as required by Connecticut election laws. (nb: absent is counting)

Absentee Ballot Counters: election officials tasked with handling, inspecting, and counting absentee ballots cast by electors. The law requires all absentee ballot counters to attend a training session conducted by the registrar(s) of voters and the moderators. The text for the training session is this Manual.

Counters are sworn to “faithfully discharge the law” “completely impartial with respect to any candidate or any political party.”

Delivery and Counting of Absentee Ballots on election day -

[Receipt of Ballots (Endorsements)

Received by the municipal clerk, who must endorse each envelope with the date, the time of receipt, the method of receipt, and the clerk’s signature. If the method of receipt was via drop box, the drop box location or assigned drop box number should be notated.

The municipal clerk executes an affidavit attesting to the accuracy of each endorsement and five affidavit to head moderator at close of polls. Head moderator must sign, noting time and then affidavit returned to clerk when counting complete.]

Delivery: Ballots must be delivered by the municipal clerk to the registrars of voters by 8:00 a.m., and after the close of the polls at 8:00 p.m.

Counting: The actual counting of the ballots can be performed at any time as designated by the registrars of voters, even if the ballots are delivered at various times during the day to the counting locations.

Absentee Ballot Counting Steps

Step 1. The counters report to the moderator the total number of absentee ballots received. This total includes Official Blank Absentee Ballots (Official Blank Ballots are special absentee ballots that are issued before full lists of candidates are available). If applicable, counters shall also report the total number of Overseas Ballots and Presidential Ballots received. The moderator will record the totals on the form titled “Certificate of Absentee Ballot Count” as part of the “Moderator’s Return.

Step 2. Except for ballots that have already been prechecked by the registrars, the absentee ballot counter must check the absentee elector's name and address as it appears on the return envelope against the elector's name as it appears on the official checklist and mark "absentee" or "A" next to the elector's name on the list. If the elector's name has already been checked off the checklist as voting in person, mark the envelope received with information similar to the following: "Rejected—Elector Voted in Person."

Step 3. The counters shall check each return envelope to be sure that it has been endorsed by the municipal clerk. If not endorsed properly, the ballot cannot be counted, mark the envelope received with information similar to the following: "Rejected— Clerk's Endorsement Incomplete." Place the rejected ballots in a depository envelope. In municipalities with more than one polling place absentee ballots must be delivered and counted at the correct polling place.

If elector not on any checklist in town, ballot cannot be counted and envelope marked: "Rejected— Elector's Name not on Official Checklist." Place the rejected ballot in the depository envelope containing other rejected ballots.

Step 4. If the unique ballot identification numbered return envelope issued to the elector is not returned with the elector's ballot, mark the envelope received with information similar to the following: "Rejected— Return Envelope Not with Ballot."

Step 5. Printed on each envelope is a statement which must be signed by the elector. If the statement is not signed, the ballot cannot be counted. The envelope shall be marked with information similar to the following: "Rejected—Elector's Voted Statement Not Signed." Note: An elector who is unable to write or sign their name can have a designee write the name of the elector, followed the word "by" and then the designee's own signature. It is only the signature that is positively required.

Step 6. Place the removed envelopes in the depository envelope and place the envelopes marked "Rejected" in the same depository envelope. Report to the moderator the number of envelopes marked "Rejected" for use in completing the form titled "Certificate of Absentee Ballot Count" as a part of the "Moderator's Return."

Step 7. Remove the ballots. Leave the ballots folded so that no markings can be seen. This is required to preserve the secrecy of the vote.

Step 8. Seal the depository envelope with nonreusable tape. The depository envelope should state the time of the count and the voting district (in towns that are divided into voting districts). The absentee ballot counters shall endorse their names and the envelope's contents on the depository envelope.

Step 9. Shuffle the folded ballots and then unfold them.

Step 10. Set aside ballots to be hand counted.

A. Ballots That Must be Hand Counted: Official Blank Absentee Ballots, Overseas Ballots (in federal elections and primaries only), and Presidential Ballots

B. Ballots With Obvious Marking Errors Quickly inspect the ballots before feeding them into the tabulator. Any ballots which obviously cannot be processed by the tabulator (mutilated ballots, ovals filled in with improper ink, etc.) should be set aside for hand counting. Also, set aside ballots which contain markings that will obviously result in lost votes (ovals on the ballot marked with a check mark or an "X" rather than filling in the oval completely; circling the candidate or party name rather than filling in the oval completely). The purpose of this brief inspection is to

spot obvious errors, not to substitute a hand count for tabulator processing. All offices and questions will have to be hand counted on these ballots that have been set aside.

C. Offices Elected from Part of a Town: If a wrong district ballot was improperly issued to an elector in a town where there are different candidates for the same office in different parts of the town, the ballot should be completely hand counted and only the races that the elector is entitled to vote for should be counted.

D. Stickered Races If the municipal clerk has notified election officials that a candidate's name has changed....

Step 11. Count the number of absentee ballots to be tabulator counted, wholly or in part, and give the number to the moderator to enter on the "Certificate of Absentee Ballot Count" as part of the "Moderator's Return." Feed these ballots into the tabulator for processing. If the ballot is rejected by the tabulator, follow the instructions on the display, as modified by the following instructions:

A. Overvote If the tabulator indicates that a ballot contains an overvote, check the ballot to be sure that there is in fact an overvote and not either a stray mark through one of the ovals (see Example 3) or a cross-endorsement which has been voted upon on multiple rows. Unless the ballot clearly shows an attempt by the elector to cast more than one vote for an office (other than a cross-endorsement), the ballot should be set aside to hand count for all offices. Subtract from the number of absentee ballots counted by the tabulator. If the ballot does contain a true overvote, reinsert the ballot, press and hold the "yes" key at the same time to perform an override. When the tabulator performs an override, it does not count any votes for the office in which an overvote occurs, but it does count all other properly marked votes.

B. Blank Ballot If the tabulator displays a message saying that a ballot is a "blank ballot", it usually means that the entire ballot is marked in such a way that the tabulator can read no votes whatsoever (the ballot may be marked with improper ink or the ovals for a candidate's name are check marked instead of filled in). Subtract the number of absentee ballots to be tabulator counted and set aside these ballots to be hand counted for all offices.

Step 12. The rule for hand counting ballots is that the intent of the elector governs. If the elector's ballot is properly marked, then the elector's intent is clear. However, many ballots are not properly marked. The following are a series of rules and examples of said rules for counting correctly or incorrectly cast absentee ballots.... If none of the example ballots are representative of the ballot to be counted, the absentee ballot counters must submit the ballot to the moderator and the moderator will make the decision as to whether the ballot may be counted or rejected. If the moderator is of the opinion that the ballot is marked for the purpose of providing a means of identifying the elector who cast it, the ballot may be rejected. However, the Connecticut Supreme Court upheld a moderator's decision to count an absentee ballot for the office of Representative in Congress where the elector made a correction on their vote for Governor and noted, "Please register my vote for Scott instead of Rowland," and signed their name. (In Re Election of U.S. Representative for the Second Congressional District, 231 Conn. 602, 657 (1994). The moderator must record the question and their decision in writing on the back of the ballot and return the ballot to the absentee ballot shows the name of the new candidate, a vote cast for the new candidate is counted. Additionally, if an elector writes in the name of the new candidate, the write-in vote is counted

Step 13. Filling out the Forms (basically tally sheets and signing of)....

Step 14. Depository Envelopes separate ones for counted, empty and rejected ballots, notes, worksheets,etc.....sealed with time and endorsement of ballot counters delivered to moderator who then gives to registrar who files with municipal clerk after 14 day lockdown period.