



Town of Florence, Wisconsin

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Did You Know. . .Florence Facts Voting Absentee (shared 03-26-26)

Did you know that there are two basic ways you can vote in Wisconsin? The first is at the polls on Election Day, and the second is by absentee ballot. There are rules and regulations that govern Elections and the Voting process in Wisconsin Statutes. Twelve different chapters cover elections, but chapter six specifically governs The Electors and Voting Absentee.

Did you know that any registered voter can request and vote an absentee ballot?

There are two basic ways to vote absentee in Wisconsin. Absentee ballots can be mailed to voters either at their home address or at a different address specified by the voter, or they can vote an in-person absentee. A common question by voters is, "Can I stop and pick-up an Absentee Ballot?" The short answer is "No." Many people are surprised to learn they can't just pick one up, but methods for obtaining an absentee ballot are governed by Wisconsin Statute 6.86.

Did you know that if a voter wants a ballot mailed to them, they need to have a written request on file? It can be a handwritten note, application, fax or an e-mail. Voters are also required, in most cases, to have a copy of their photo id on file with the Town. Once a voter has provided a copy of their photo id for absentee purposes, they will not have to provide a copy of it again unless they move or change their name.

Did you know that there are three common types of absentee requests? An election specific request is an absentee ballot request for just one specific election. A calendar year request is for absentee ballots for the entire year from the date of the request until December 31. An indefinitely confined request is for a voter who is indefinitely confined because of age, physical illness, infirmity or is disabled for an indefinite period of time and the request may be for all future elections. If a calendar or indefinitely confined voter doesn't return their ballot for an election, the clerk follows up with them to make sure they want to continue receiving absentee ballots. Statutes also govern other less common types of absentee requests including sequestered jurors and hospitalized electors.

Did you know that when the ballots are mailed out depends on what election it is?

The Wisconsin Statutes spell out how many days prior to the election that the County must have the ballots to the Town, and they specify a deadline for when they need to be mailed by the Town to the voter. Once the Town has the ballots, absentee ballots are sent out to voters within 24 hours of receiving the request.

Did you know that all absentee ballots must be returned to the Town and at the polling place by 8:00 p.m. on Election Night? Regardless of when the ballot is sent to the voter, all absentee ballots must be returned to the polling place to be processed and counted on Election Day. It can take up to 7-10 days for an absentee ballot to come back to the Town through mail once it is voted by the voter. For this reason, voters who plan to vote an absentee ballot by mail are strongly encouraged to request their ballot early, vote the ballot and return it as soon as possible.

When you return your absentee ballot to the Town, the clerk verifies that the voter has signed the certificate envelope and that a witness has signed their name, printed their name and written their address on the envelope. **Did you know, if one of those items is missing**

the clerk will contact you to let you know it needs to be corrected and let you know what options you have for correcting it? In addition, the clerk looks at the envelope to make sure it is sealed and that it does not appear to have been tampered with. Then it is recorded as returned in the statewide election management program and is alphabetized and locked in a box with the rest of the returned absentee ballots. That box is delivered by the clerk to the polls on election day.

Did you know that Wisconsin also offers voters the ability to vote an in-person absentee ballot? On the news this is often called “early voting.” In-person absentee voting happens in the Town of Florence Office. Voters simply need to bring their photo ID with them, and they can vote right in the office. The ballot is then sealed in an absentee certificate envelope, which is signed by the voter. The envelope is then locked with the other absentee envelopes and is not opened until Election Day.

Did you know that there are procedures in place for handling absentee ballots? When it comes to processing absentee ballots, two election inspectors verify the certificate envelope: that it is still sealed and hasn’t been tampered with, that the voter signed and that the witness completed their portion of the envelope. Then a voter number is issued to that absentee voter which is written on the poll book, on the absentee ballot log and on the absentee certificate envelope itself. After all of the absentee ballots certificate envelopes are processed, two elections workers open all of the envelopes that have been given numbers. These workers verify that the clerk has initialed the ballot and place the ballot into a bin with the other absentee ballots. The inspectors do not see how a voter marked their ballot due to how the ballot is folded in the envelope. Once all of the absentee envelopes are opened, the ballots are unfolded and then placed in a box to be fed into the tabulator by workers before the polls close.

Did you know that there are deadlines for when you can request an absentee ballot? All methods of voting absentee have dates associated with them. There are dates and provisions for voting absentee if you are indefinitely confined, are serving on jury duty, are hospitalized, in the military, etc. Specific dates for each election can be found on the Town of Florence website at www.townofflorencewisconsin.com under Elections & Voting. The dates are listed for the next election. The current dates outlined on the website are for the April 7, 2026 Spring Election. After that election is over, they will be updated for the Partisan Primary Election on August 11, 2026.

The Town of Florence is proud to have open, transparent government. It means that people can clearly see what the Town is doing, why it is doing it, and how decisions are made. Open and transparent means that information is not hidden, decisions are made at meetings open to the public, and questions and answers can be shared from the Board with the community. The ultimate goal is that people can see and understand the decisions that are made, how to ask questions, and share information.

One way the Town of Florence is looking to accomplish this is by sharing informational facts about the Town and the Town’s government. Through sharing facts, the Town is looking to help increase awareness and understanding of local Government.