FVAP.GOV
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Voting Residence

Overseas Citizens

FACT SHEET

Wherever U.S. citizens go, FVAP ensures their voice is heard.

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) works to ensure Service members, their eligible family members and overseas citizens are aware of their right to vote and have the tools and resources to successfully do so - from anywhere in the world.

What is a voting residence and why is it important?

You need a voting residence to vote via absentee ballot — even if you are only voting for Federal offices. **Your local election official needs your exact voting residence address to determine which offices and candidates you are eligible to vote for, and to send you the appropriate ballot for your voting precinct.**

Your voting residence is your address in the State in which you were last domiciled, immediately prior to leaving the United States.

This residence may remain valid even if:
- You no longer own property or have other ties to that State.
- Your intent to return to that State is uncertain.
- Your previous address is no longer a recognized residential address.

Voting in an election for Federal offices often may not be used as the sole basis of determining residency for the purpose of imposing State and local taxes. When claiming a new legal residence or domicile, legal counsel should be consulted because there may be other factors to consider, such as tax implications.

If you cannot remember the address where you last physically resided, then FVAP recommends checking old tax records, passports or family correspondence. Sometimes local election officials can help identify your address if you were previously registered. To claim a new legal residence or domicile, consult legal counsel as there may be other factors to consider, such as tax implications.

Voting residence and the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

It is important to remember that your voting residence address listed on the FPCA must be an address in the United States. Placing an overseas address in block 7 of the form may automatically disqualify you.

Children born outside the U.S.

Voting rights vary by State for U.S. citizens born overseas who have never established residence in the United States. In some States, U.S. citizens 18 years or older who were born abroad but have never resided in the U.S. are eligible to vote absentee. A listing can be found at FVAP.gov.

If neither of your parents is from one of these States, it is possible that you do not currently have voting rights. However, additional States are working on passing legislation to allow citizens born overseas who have never established residency in the U.S. to vote in the State in which their parents are eligible. Visit FVAP.gov for State information.

Students studying abroad

If you are living overseas for an extended period during an election season and will need to vote absentee, complete an FPCA at FVAP.gov to request your absentee ballot. Your voting residency will continue to be your last legal residence prior to leaving the United States to study abroad.

CONTACT FVAP

Monday–Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Phone: 1-800-438-VOTE (8683) I DSN: 425-1584 I Email: vote@fvap.gov
Go to FVAP.gov and click on “contact” to find where to send your election materials. Media inquiries: media@fvap.gov
Facebook.com/DoDFVAP and Twitter @FVAP