



# Best practices for envelope design

Center for Tech and Civic Life  
Center for Civic Design  
Vote at Home

February 13, 2020

# **Why we're here**

Our objectives

# Objectives

You will be able to:

- Understand mail ballot envelope standards
- Adapt national templates to your office's needs
- Implement principles of plain language and design to help voters

# Agenda

- Introductions and housekeeping
- Context and overview
- National elections envelope template
- Plain language and design best practices
- Case study: Michigan's approach
- Resources to remember
- Q&A



# Hello, there!



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CENTER FOR  
TECH AND  
CIVIC LIFE

# Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL)

Harnessing the promise of  
technology to modernize the  
American voting experience

@helloCTCL

[www.techandciviclife.org](http://www.techandciviclife.org)



Center for  
Civic Design

# Center for Civic Design (CCD)

Democracy is a design problem! We work to ensure voter intent through design.

@CivicDesign | [www.civicdesign.org](http://www.civicdesign.org)  
[civicdesign.org/projects/roadmap/](http://civicdesign.org/projects/roadmap/)



# Vote at Home

The National Vote at Home Institute is dedicated to ensuring the security of our elections and putting voters' needs first by advancing vote at home practices.

@VoteatHome

[www.voteathome.org](http://www.voteathome.org)

# Housekeeping

- Use chat to communicate
- Update your screen name: Josh (Chicago, IL)
- Mute your audio if you aren't speaking

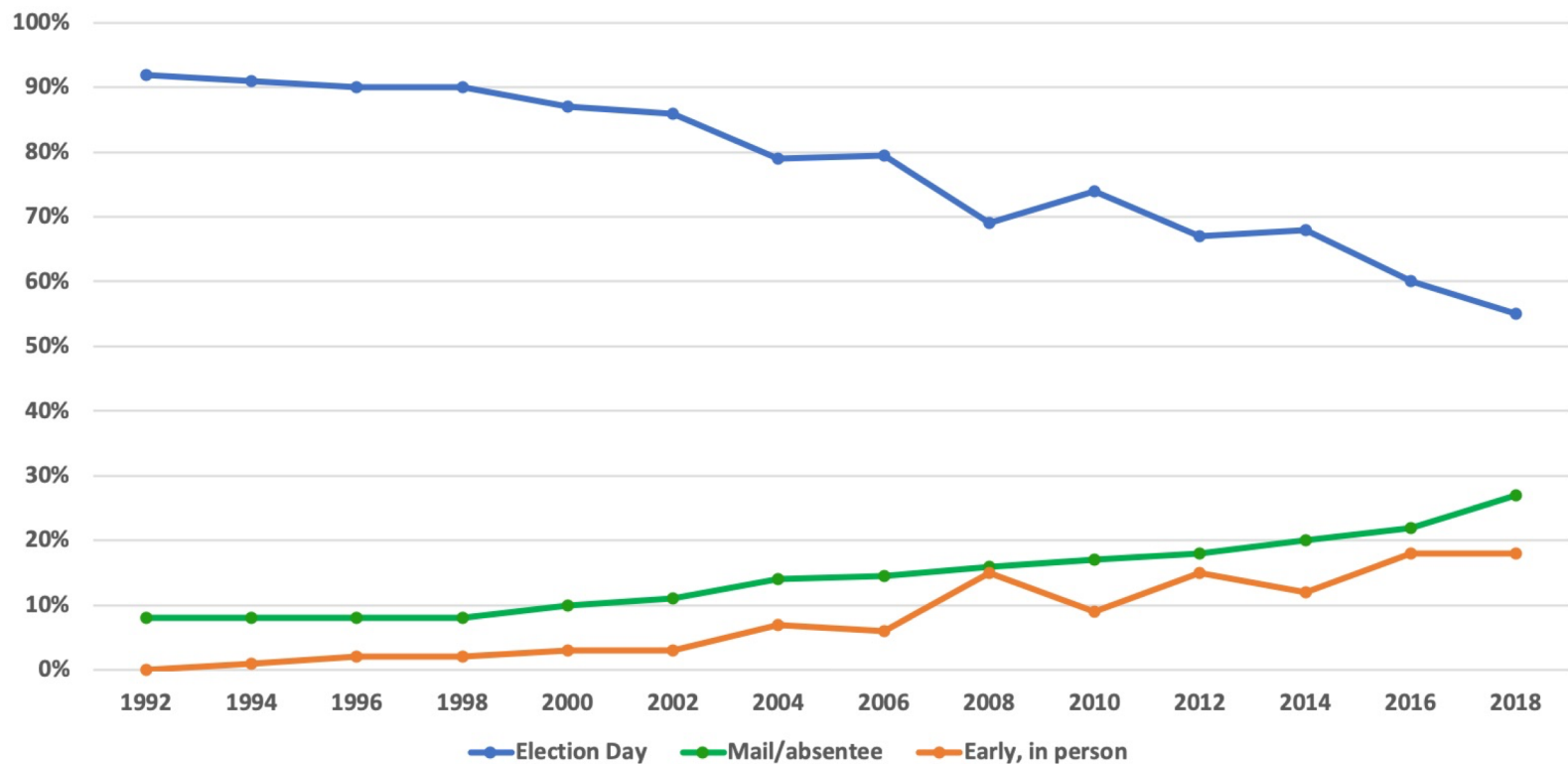
# **Context and overview**

Spotlight on envelope design

# Context and Overview

- Voting by mail is an increasingly common practice in localities across the US
- Practices range across states
- Statutes and requirements shift
- Design best practices increase efficiency while helping people vote the way they intend

## Percentage of US electorate versus choice of voting method



Sources: 1992-2016:: MIT Election Lab. 2018: PEW Research



States with blended policies in the Step 3 – 4 – 5 range.

**UT** 100% VAH in 2019

**HI** 100% in 2020

**CA** targeting 2022/24

**NE** has 11 counties on 100% VAH for 2020

**ND** has 30 counties using 100% mailed-out ballot voting

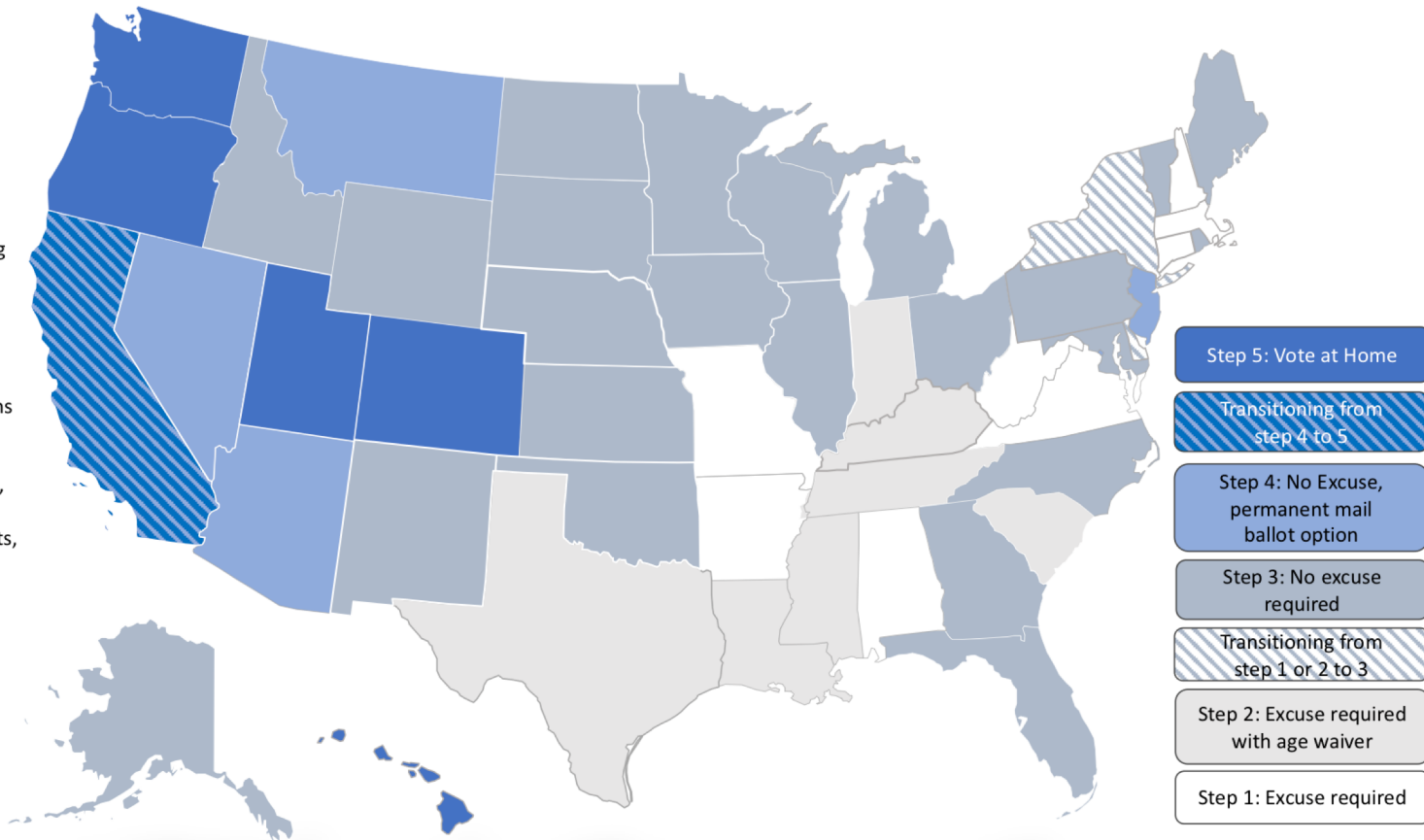
**OH** sends absentee request forms to all 8M voters, for some elections

**MI, MN & PA** have a permanent absentee list, but periodically send request forms, not ballots, to voters

**AL, KS, & WI** offer permanent absentee status to voters with disabilities

**DC** offers Step 4 to its voters

## Vote at Home Status by State – January 2020



# Statutes and requirements shift

Why you ***may have to*** make changes:

- state code or policy
- voting systems or options
- language requirements
- problems you're already experiencing
- accommodate increased volume

*As long as you're making changes:*

- *update to align with design and plain language best practices*
- *add USPS tracking mechanisms*
- *coordinate with surrounding counties or across the state*

# Why make changes?

Best practices for envelope design helps:

- answer voters questions
- get signatures in the right place by the right person
- get ballots back on time
- get ballots in the right place
- get envelope packages through the mail system

# The balancing act

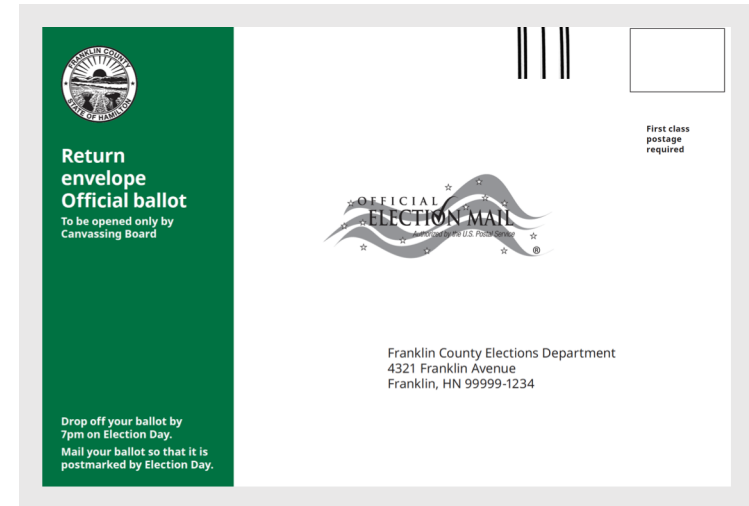
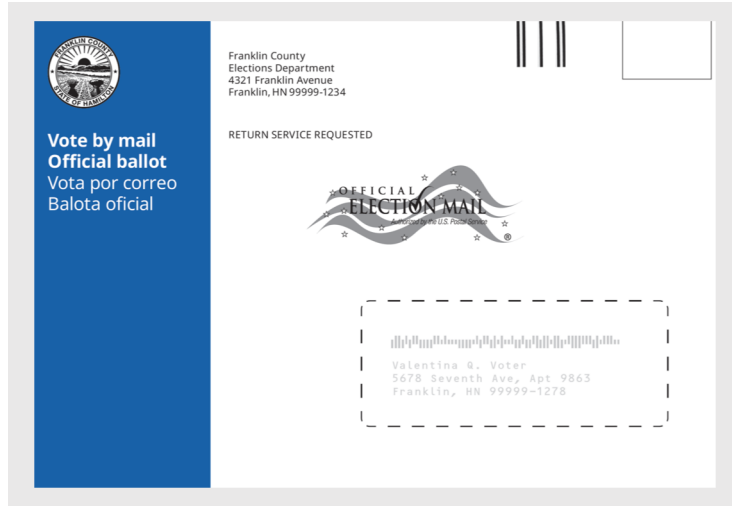
When designing your VAH envelope package, you need to:

- follow USPS requirements
- follow state rules and guidelines
- coordinate with vendors or print in-house
- align with plain language and design best practices

# **Vote at home envelopes**

Introducing a national template

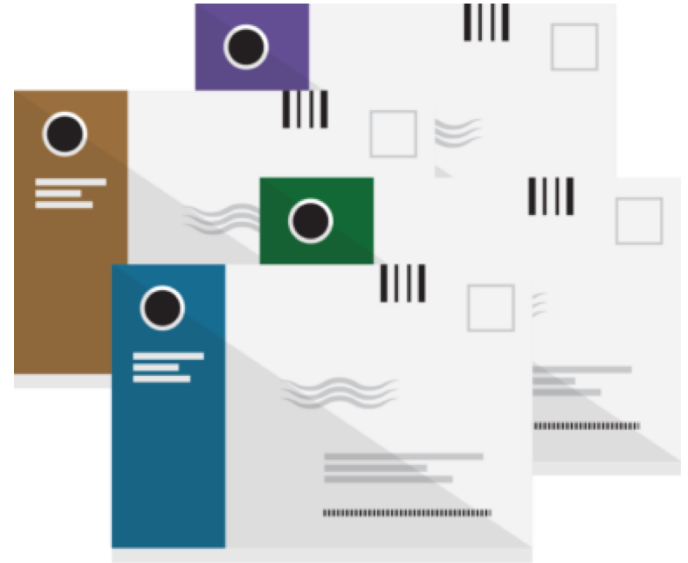
# Design solutions for voting at home



# Vote at home envelope template

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- USPS compliant
- Recognizable
- Accurate
- Flexible
- Usable
- Legal



Creating a national template

# Vote at home envelope template



Vote by mail  
Official ballot  
Vota por correo  
Balota oficial

Franklin County  
Elections Department  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Franklin, HN 99999-1234



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Valentina Q. Voter  
5678 Seventh Ave, Apt 9863  
Franklin, HN 99999-1278

**Vote by mail official ballot**  
*Why wait? Return your ballot before election day.*

## Contact information



**Franklin County Elections**  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Franklin, HN 99999



[www.franklincounty.gov/elections](http://www.franklincounty.gov/elections)



[elections@franklincounty.gov](mailto:elections@franklincounty.gov)



Information in English: 111-222-3333  
Información en español: 111-222-4444  
若需更多中文資訊: 111-222-5555



Fax: 111-222-6666



TTY: 1-222-555-1222

## How to return your ballot



**Drop Box**  
Drop off your ballot at a secure drop box —  
no postage required.



**Vote by Mail**  
Mail your ballot so it is postmarked by Election Day.

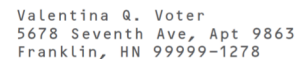


**Vote Center**  
Vote at any vote center in the county.

To find the Vote Center or Drop Box nearest you  
[www.yourcounty.gov/wheretovote](http://www.yourcounty.gov/wheretovote)

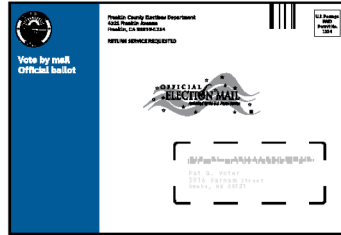


# Vote at home envelope template

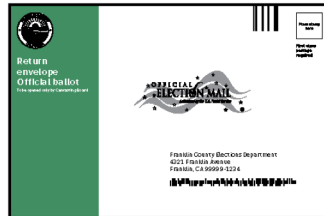


## Creating a national template

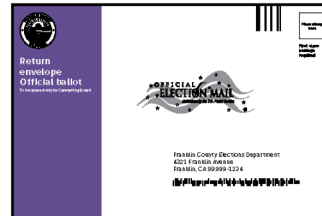
# Vote at home envelope template



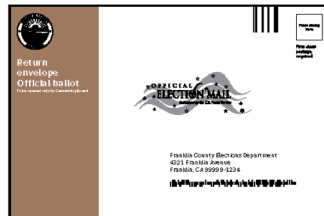
Outgoing (blue)



General election return (light green)



Special election return (dark purple)  
*Water District Election  
December 15, 2018*



General election UOCAVA return

# Vote at home envelope template

- Sample ballot
- Vote-by-mail ballot

- No postage paid
- BRM postage paid
- International

- Provisional
- Replacement
- Conditional voter



## Creating a national template

# Vote at home envelope template

COUNTY  
SEAL

Franklin County Elections  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Franklin, CA 99999-1234

Official ballot  
return envelope  
To be opened only by Canvassing Board.

Valentina Voter  
5678 MLK Avenue  
Franklin, CA 99999-1234

BUSINESS REPLY INSGNIA

Print your name

Address

City State Zip

If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:  
Witness, sign here

Franklin County Elections Department  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Franklin, CA 99999-1234

Did you...  
☐ Sign the voter's declaration in your own handwriting?  
☐ Put your ballot in the envelope?

I authorize the person below to return my ballot:  
Their name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Their signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to voter: \_\_\_\_\_

**Voter's declaration** I declare that  
• I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.  
• I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.  
• I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.  
You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature on your voter registration card. Voting twice in an election is a crime.

**Voter, sign here in ink.** Power of attorney is not acceptable.  
**X**

Date (MM/DD/YYYY) \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Print your voter registration address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:  
Witness, sign here \_\_\_\_\_

Franklin County  
General Election  
November 7, 2018

Valentina Q. Voter  
5678 Seventh Ave, Apt 9863  
Franklin, NH 99999-1278

Did you...  
☐ Sign the voter's declaration in your own handwriting?  
☐ Put your ballot in the envelope?

Made a mistake on your ballot?  
Call the election office for a replacement  
111-222-3333 or elections@yourcounty.gov  
¿Cometió un error en su boleta electoral?  
Lláme a la oficina electoral para un reemplazo  
111-222-4444 o elections@yourcounty.gov

I authorize the person below to return my ballot:  
Autorizo a la persona abajo a devolver mi boleta:  
Their name / Su nombre \_\_\_\_\_  
Their signature / Su firma \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to voter / Relación con el votante \_\_\_\_\_

**Voter's declaration** I declare that  
• I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.  
• I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.  
• I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.  
You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature on your voter registration card. Voting twice in an election is a crime.

**Voter, sign here in ink.**  
**X**

Date / Fecha (MM/DD/YYYY) \_\_\_\_\_

Print name / Imprimir nombre \_\_\_\_\_

Print your voter registration address / Imprimir tu dirección de registro de votante \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:  
Witness, sign here / Testigo, firme aquí \_\_\_\_\_

Franklin County  
General Election  
November 7, 2018

Valentina Q. Voter  
5678 Seventh Ave, Apt 9863  
Franklin, NH 99999-1278

# Designing your envelope system

Where to start

## Designing your envelope system

# Vote by mail envelope template

### Questions to ask:

- Who should we bring into the conversation?
- What else goes in the VAH package?
- Should we hide or reveal the signature?
- Do we track the envelopes?

FRANKLIN COUNTY ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Franklin, CA 99999-1234  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

COUNTY SEAL

Vote by mail  
Official ballot

Valentina Voter  
5678 MLK Avenue  
Franklin, CA 99999-1234

I authorize the person below to return my ballot:  
Autorizo a la persona abajo a devolver mi boleto.

Their name / Su nombre \_\_\_\_\_  
Their signature / Su firma \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to voter / Relación con el votante \_\_\_\_\_

Did you...  
☐ Sign the voter's declaration in your own handwriting?  
☐ Put your ballot in the envelope?  
Revisé si...  
☐ Firmé la declaración del votante con mi propia letra?  
☐ ¿Coloqué mi boleto electoral en el sobre?

**Voter's declaration** I declare that  
• I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.  
• I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.  
• I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.  
You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature in your voter registration card.  
Voting twice in an election is a crime.

**Declaración del votante** Yo declaro que:  
• Soy residente y votante en el condado, y la persona cuyo nombre aparece en este sobre.  
• No he solicitado, ni solicitaré una boleto electoral de voto por correo de ninguna otra jurisdicción en esta elección.  
• Declaro bajo pena de perjurio que esto es verdadero a mi nivel saber y entender.  
Debe firmar de pelo y letra. Su firma debe coincidir con la firma en la tarjeta de inscripción del votante.  
Votar dos veces en una elección es un crimen.

**Voter, sign here in ink.**  
Votante, firme aquí con tinta

**Power of attorney is not acceptable.**  
No se aceptan poderes notariales.

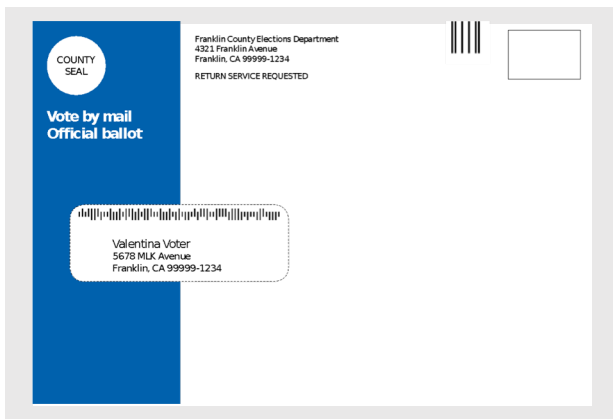
**Franklin County**

Date / Fecha (MM/DD/YYYY) \_\_\_\_\_  
Print name / Imprimir nombre \_\_\_\_\_  
Print your voter registration address / Imprime tu dirección de registro de votante \_\_\_\_\_

If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:  
Si usted no puede firmar, haga una marca y tenga que un testigo firme abajo.  
Witness, sign here / Testigo, firme aquí \_\_\_\_\_

# Designing your envelope system

## VAH envelope package

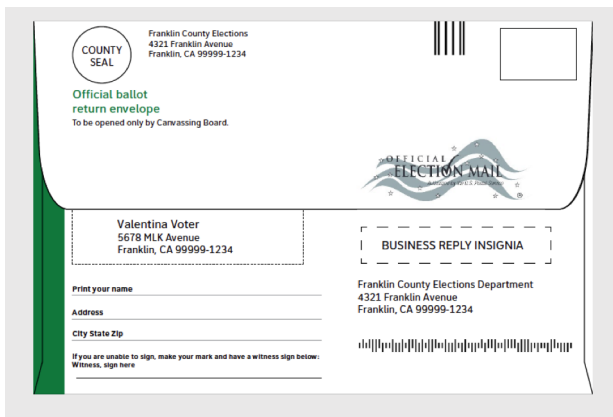


COUNTY SEAL

Franklin County Elections Department  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Franklin, CA 95999-1234  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Vote by mail  
Official ballot

Valentina Voter  
5678 MLK Avenue  
Franklin, CA 99999-1234



COUNTY SEAL

Franklin County Elections  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Franklin, CA 99999-1234

Official ballot  
return envelope  
To be opened only by Canvassing Board.

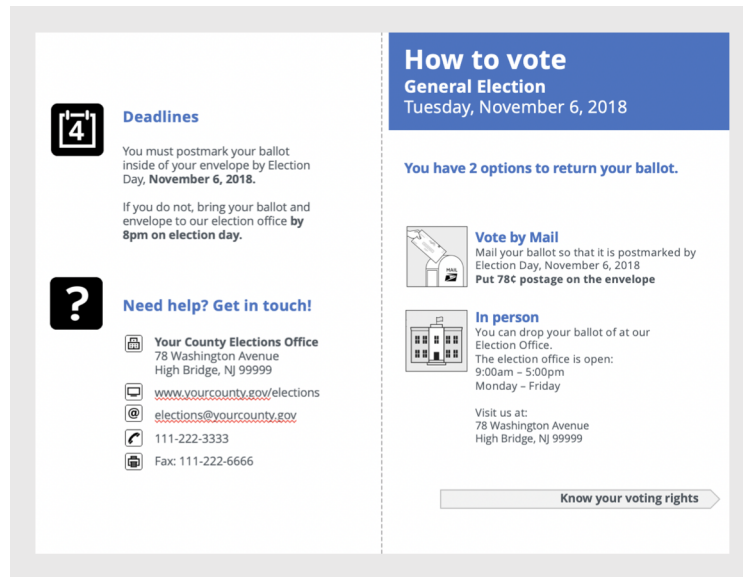
Valentina Voter  
5678 MLK Avenue  
Franklin, CA 99999-1234

BUSINESS REPLY INSIGNIA

Franklin County Elections Department  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Franklin, CA 99999-1234

Print your name  
Address  
City State Zip

If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:  
Witness, sign here




### How to vote General Election Tuesday, November 6, 2018


#### Deadlines


You must postmark your ballot inside of your envelope by Election Day, **November 6, 2018**.


If you do not, bring your ballot and envelope to our election office **by 8pm on election day**.


#### Need help? Get in touch!

 **Your County Elections Office**  
78 Washington Avenue  
High Bridge, NJ 99999

 [www.yourcounty.gov/elections](http://www.yourcounty.gov/elections)

 [elections@yourcounty.gov](mailto:elections@yourcounty.gov)

 111-222-3333

 Fax: 111-222-6666

#### Vote by Mail

Mail your ballot so that it is postmarked by Election Day, November 6, 2018  
Put 78c postage on the envelope

#### In person

You can drop your ballot at our Election Office.  
The election office is open:  
9:00am - 5:00pm  
Monday - Friday

Visit us at:  
78 Washington Avenue  
High Bridge, NJ 99999

[Know your voting rights](#)

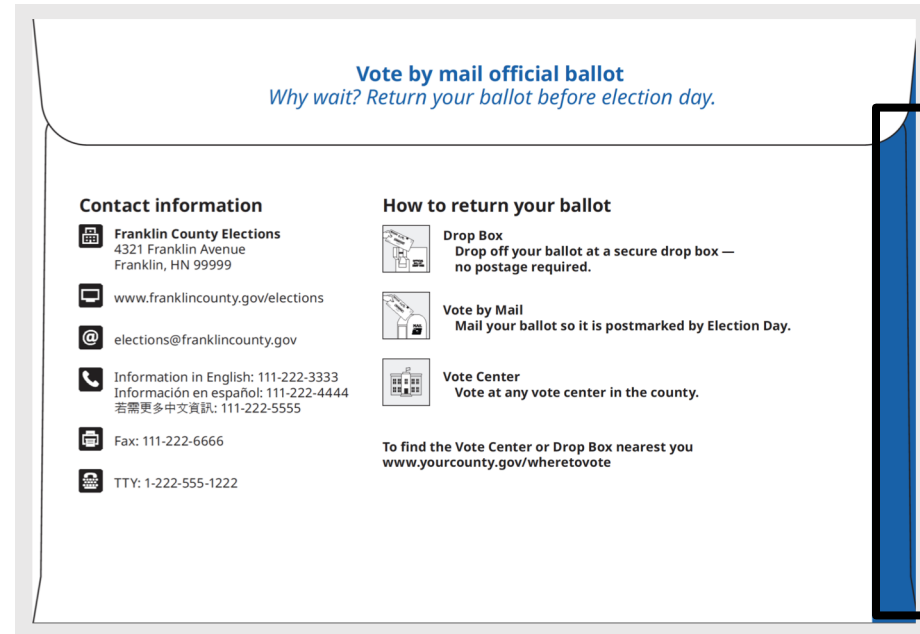
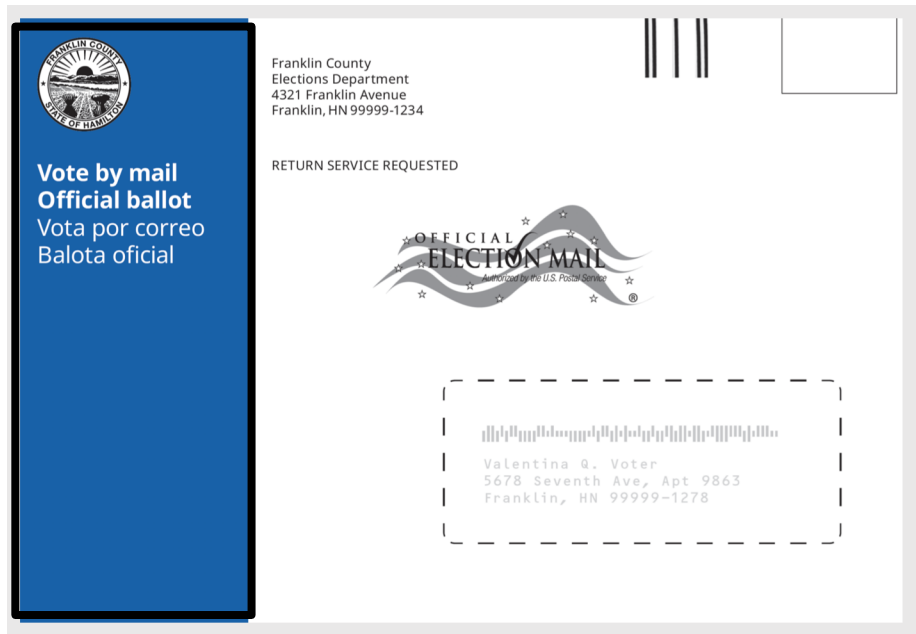
# **Zoom in**

Small changes for BIG impact



# Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

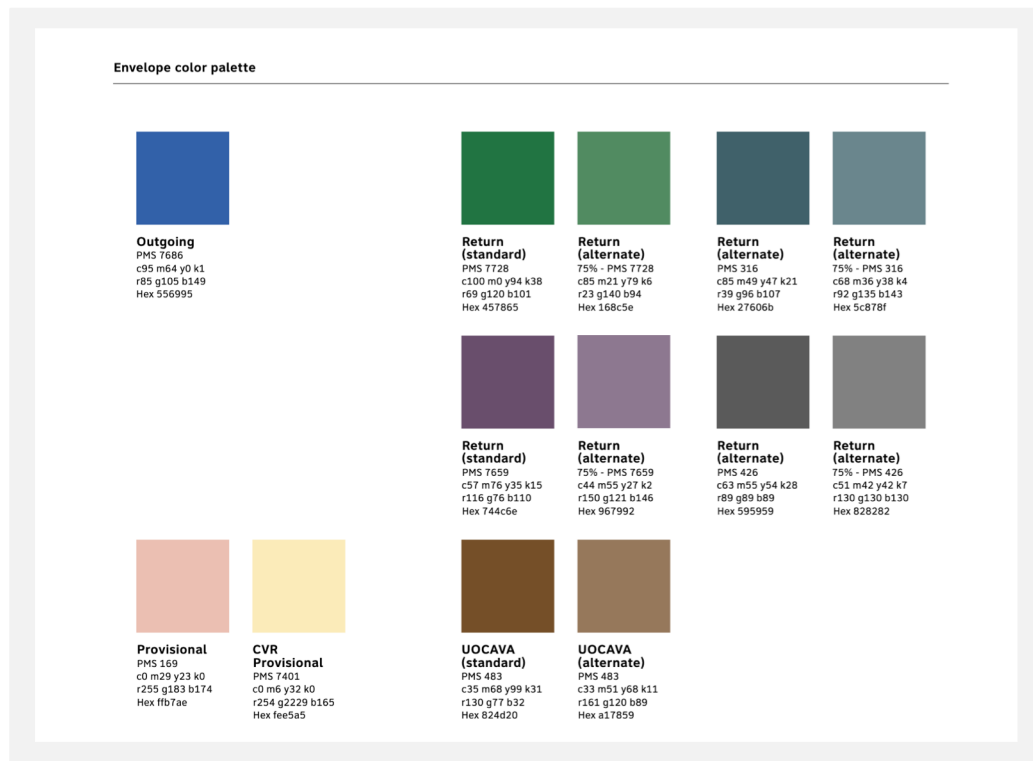
## Wrapping color



## Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

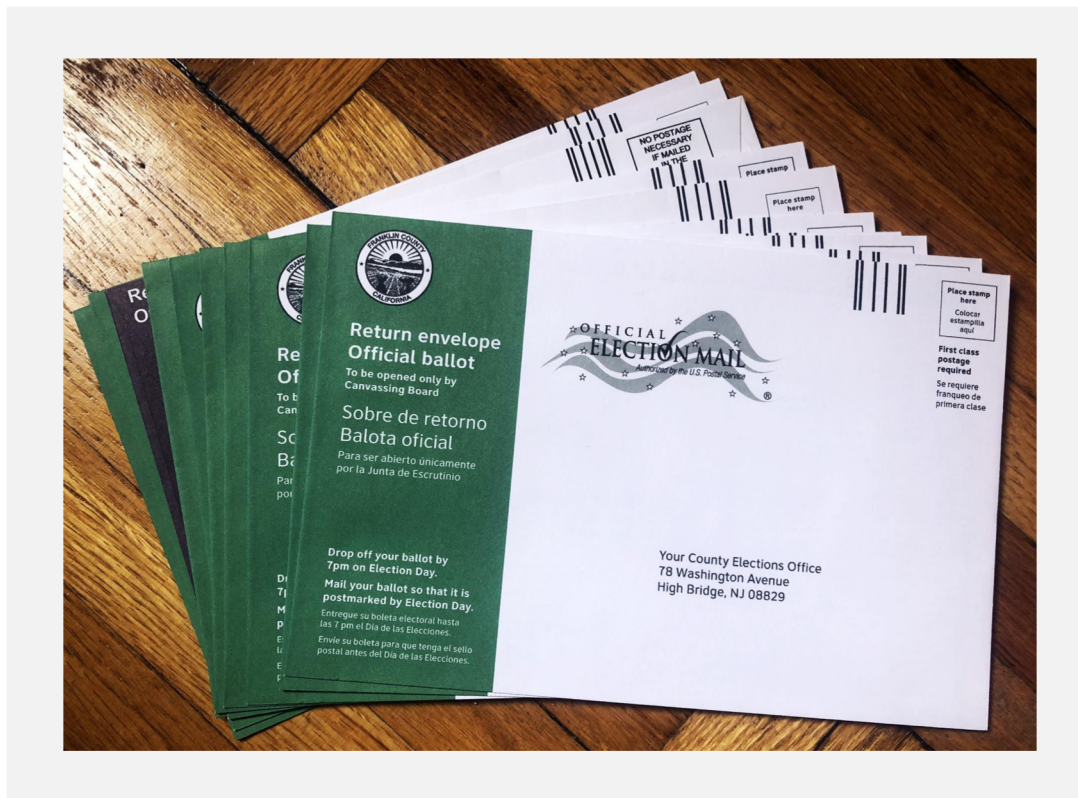
# Wrapping color

- Use blue for outgoing envelopes.
- If possible, coordinate return colors with surrounding counties.





Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

## Wrapping color



## Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

# Voter's declaration

<p>Did you...</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sign the voter's declaration in your own handwriting?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Put your ballot in the envelope?</p>	<p>I authorize the person below to return my ballot:</p> <p>Their name _____</p> <p>Their signature _____</p> <p>Relationship to voter _____</p>
<div><p><b>Voter's declaration I declare that</b></p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.</li><li>• I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.</li><li>• I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.</li></ul><p>You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature on your voter registration card. Voting twice in an election is a crime.</p></div> <p><b>Voter, sign here in ink.</b> Power of attorney is not acceptable.</p> <div></div> <p>Date (MM/DD/YYYY) _____</p> <p>Print name _____</p> <p>Print your voter registration address _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:</p> <p>Witness, sign here _____</p>	<p><b>Franklin County</b> General Election November 7, 2018</p> <p></p> <p>Valentina Q. Voter 5678 Seventh Ave, Apt 9863 Franklin, HN 99999-1278</p>

Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

## Voter's declaration

- Emphasize heading to set context.
- Use plain language *when possible*.
- Break dense legal information into bullet points.

**Voter's declaration** I declare that

- I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.
- I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.
- I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature on your voter registration card.

Voting twice in an election is a crime.

## Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

# Voter's declaration

I \_\_\_\_\_ assert that I am a United States citizen and a qualified and registered elector of the city, township or village named below. I am voting as an absent voter in conformity with state election law. Unless otherwise indicated below, I personally marked the ballot enclosed in this envelope without exhibiting it to any other person. I further assert that this absent voter ballot is being returned to the clerk or an assistant of the clerk by me personally; by public postal service, express mail service, parcel post service, or other common carrier; by a member of my immediate family; or by a person residing in my household.

An absent voter who knowingly makes a false statement is guilty of a misdemeanor.

### Voter's Declaration

Voter's name \_\_\_\_\_

I assert that

- I am a United States citizen and a qualified and registered elector of the city, township or village named below.
- I am voting as an absent voter in conformity with state election law. Unless otherwise indicated below, I personally marked the ballot enclosed in this envelope without exhibiting it to any other person.
- I further assert that this absent voter ballot is being returned to the clerk or an assistant of the clerk by me personally; by public postal service, express mail service, parcel post service, or other common carrier; by a member of my immediate family; or by a person residing in my household.
- An absent voter who knowingly makes a false statement is guilty of a misdemeanor.

### Voter's Declaration

Voter's name \_\_\_\_\_


I assert that

- I am a United States citizen
- I meet all of the requirements to vote
- I am registered to vote at the address listed below
- I marked my ballot and placed it in this envelope without showing it to anyone.
- I am returning my ballot to the clerk's office by delivering it myself or a member of my immediate family or household, or sending it by public postal, express mail, or parcel post service, or other common carrier

I understand that knowingly making a false statement is a misdemeanor.

## Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

# Signature box

<p>Did you...</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sign the voter's declaration in your own handwriting?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Put your ballot in the envelope?</p>	<p>I authorize the person below to return my ballot:</p> <p>Their name _____</p> <p>Their signature _____</p> <p>Relationship to voter _____</p>
<p><b>Voter's declaration I declare that</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.</li><li>• I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.</li><li>• I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.</li></ul> <p>You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature on your voter registration card. Voting twice in an election is a crime.</p>	<p><b>Franklin County</b> General Election November 7, 2018</p> <p>Valentina Q. Voter 5678 Seventh Ave, Apt 9863 Franklin, HN 99999-1278</p>
<p><b>Voter, sign here in ink. Power of attorney is not acceptable.</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"></div> <p>Date (MM/DD/YYYY) _____</p> <p>Print name _____</p> <p>Print your voter registration address _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:</b></p> <p>Witness, sign here _____</p>	<p>Valentina Q. Voter 5678 Seventh Ave, Apt 9863 Franklin, HN 99999-1278</p>

## Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

# Signature box

- Address the voter directly.
- Use action verbs.
- Add an 'X' inside the signature box.
- Include formatting for the date.
- If people need to sign with witnesses or a notary, tell them first.


**Voter, sign here in ink.**      **Power of attorney is not acceptable.**  
Votante, firme aquí con tinta      No se aceptan poderes notariales.

**X**

**Date / Fecha (MM/DD/YYYY)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print name / Imprimir nombre** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print your voter registration address /**  
**Imprime tu dirección de registro de votante** \_\_\_\_\_





**If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:**  
**Si usted no puede firmar, haga una marca y haga que un testigo firme abajo:**

**Witness, sign here / Testigo, firme aquí** \_\_\_\_\_



## Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

# Checklists

<p><b>Did you...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sign the voter's declaration in your own handwriting?</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Put your ballot in the envelope?</li></ul>	<p>I authorize the person below to return my ballot:</p> <p>Their name _____</p> <p>Their signature _____</p> <p>Relationship to voter _____</p>
<p><b>Voter's declaration I declare that</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.</li><li>• I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.</li><li>• I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.</li></ul> <p>You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature on your voter registration card. Voting twice in an election is a crime.</p> <p><b>Voter, sign here in ink.</b> Power of attorney is not acceptable.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 10px 0;"></div> <p>Date (MM/DD/YYYY) _____</p> <p>Print name _____</p> <p>Print your voter registration address _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:</p> <p>Witness, sign here _____</p>	<p><b>Franklin County</b> General Election November 7, 2018</p> <p></p> <p>Valentina Q. Voter 5678 Seventh Ave, Apt 9863 Franklin, HN 99999-1278</p>

## Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

# Checklists

- Put instructions as close to the task as possible.
- Break up multiple tasks
- Use boxes so voters can check off each task.
- Be as specific as possible.

### **Did you...**


- ☐ Sign the voter's declaration in your own handwriting?
- ☐ Put your ballot in the envelope?

### **Revise si...**

- ☐ ¿Firmó la declaración del votante con su propia letra?
- ☐ ¿Colocó su boleta electoral en el sobre?

## Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

# Headings and icons

<div><b>Did you...</b></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Sign the voter's declaration in your own handwriting?</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Put your ballot in the envelope?</div>	<div>I authorize the person below to return my ballot:</div> <div>Their name _____</div> <div>Their signature _____</div> <div>Relationship to voter _____</div>
<div><b>Voter's declaration I declare that</b></div> <div>I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.</li><li>• I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.</li></ul></div> <div>You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature on your voter registration card.</div> <div>Voting twice in an election is a crime.</div>	
<div><b>Voter, sign here in ink. Power of attorney is not acceptable.</b></div> <div><div>✕</div><div>Date (MM/DD/YYYY) _____</div><div>Print name _____</div><div>Print your voter registration address _____</div><div>_____</div><div>_____</div><div>If you are unable to sign, make your mark and have a witness sign below:</div><div>Witness, sign here _____</div></div>	<div><b>Franklin County</b></div> <div>General Election</div> <div>November 7, 2018</div> <div></div> <div>Valentina Q. Voter</div> <div>5678 Seventh Ave, Apt 9863</div> <div>Franklin, HN 99999-1278</div>

Zoom in: small changes for BIG impact

## Headings and icons

- Emphasize headings to separate sections.
- Make headings informative.
- Consider putting deadlines in multiple places, including in headings.

### How to return your ballot / Cómo devolver su boleta



**Drop Box**  
Drop off your ballot at a secure drop box —  
no postage required.

Buzón

Entregue su boleta electoral en un buzón seguro –



**Vote by Mail**  
Mail your ballot so it is postmarked by Election Day.  
Votar por Correo

Enviar por correo su boleta electoral para que sea



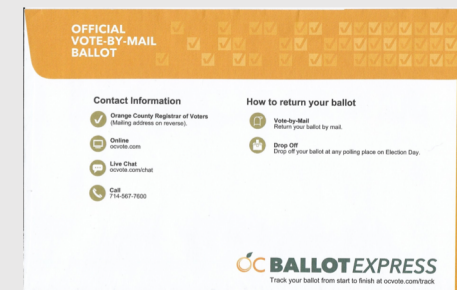
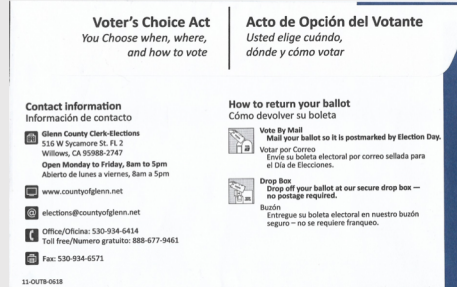
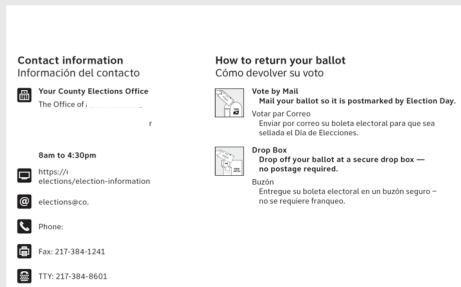
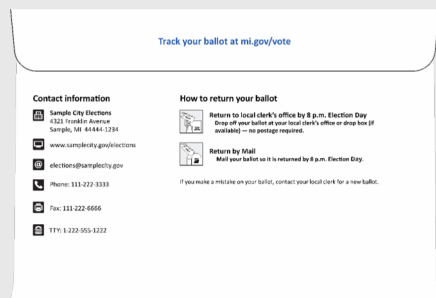
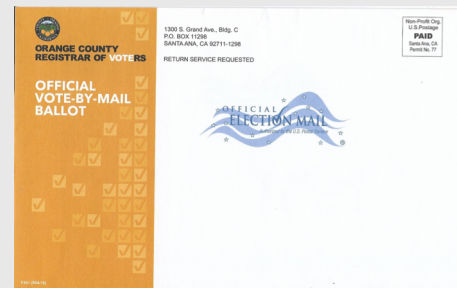
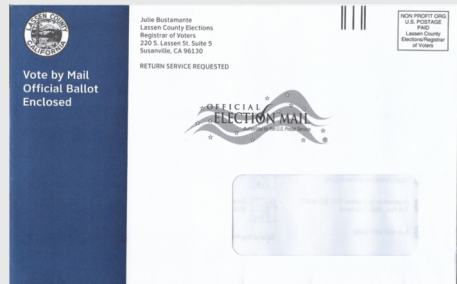
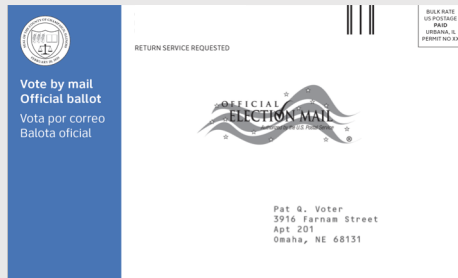
**Vote Center**  
Vote at any vote center in the county.  
Centro de Votación  
Vote en cualquier centro de votación en el condado.

**To find the Vote Center or Drop Box nearest you**  
[www.yourcounty.gov/wheretovote](http://www.yourcounty.gov/wheretovote)

Para encontrar el Centro de Votación o Buzón más cercano a usted  
[www.yourcounty.gov/wheretovote](http://www.yourcounty.gov/wheretovote)

# Case studies

## Work with other states



# Case studies

## Work with other states

**Return envelope Official ballot**

To be opened only by the President or Adjunct Voter Ballot Counting Board

**Keep your ballot secure.**

It is a crime for any person to possess, use, or attempt to use an absentee ballot except authorized election officials, members of a political party or other volunteer campaign during the normal process of their job, handling, mail, or a member of the voter's immediate family or household who is assisting the voter in returning the ballot.

**Don't forget to sign on the back.**

Drop-off: If mail your ballot to be returned by Sign on Election Day.

Track your ballot at our website.

Sample City Elections Department  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Sample, MI 48444-1234

Sample City  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Sample, MI 48444-1234

Form 1004 - Governmental Business Systems - 085  
Rev. 1/13

**Return envelope Official ballot**

To be opened only by Election Authority

**Sobre de retorno Balota oficial**

Para ser abierta solo por la autoridad electoral

**Drop off your ballot by 7pm on Election Day.**

Mail your ballot so that it is postmarked by Election Day.

Entregue su balota electoral hasta las 7 pm el Día de las Elecciones.

Envíe su balota para que tenga el sello postal antes del Día de las Elecciones.

Official ELECTION MAIL

CLERK

CLERK

**Return Envelope Official Ballot**

To be opened only by the Dorado County Canvassing Board

Drop off your ballot by 7pm on Election Day.

Mail your ballot so that it is postmarked by Election Day.

Official ELECTION MAIL

EL DORADO COUNTY  
REGISTRAR OF VOTERS  
PO BOX 678061  
PLACERVILLE CA 95667-8001

CLERK

**ORANGE COUNTY REGISTRAR OF VOTERS**

**OFFICIAL RETURN BALLOT ENVELOPE**

To be opened only by an Election Canvassing Board

Official ELECTION MAIL

NEAL KELLEY  
REGISTRAR OF VOTERS  
COUNTY OF ORANGE  
P.O. BOX 11090  
SANTA ANA, CA 92711-1090

**Did you...**

- Sign in the box below in your own handwriting?
- Put your ballot in the envelope?
- Return to local clerk before 8 p.m. on Election Day?

**I attest that:**

- I am a United States citizen.
- I am qualified and registered to vote at the address listed.
- I am voting in conformity with state election law.
- I marked my ballot and placed it in this envelope without showing it to anyone.
- I am returning my ballot to the clerk's office by delivering it myself or a member of my immediate family or household, or sending it by public postal, express mail, or parcel post service, or other common carrier.

**I understand that knowingly making a false statement is misdemeanor.**

**Voter, sign here in ink.**

This box must be signed on your vote will not be counted.

**For Clerk's use only**

Return date and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature verified: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Registered: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Ballot: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make a mistake on your ballot?**

Call the election office for a replacement  
217 388-3724 or elections@co.champaign.il.us

**Cometió un error en su balota electoral?**

Llame a la oficina electoral para un reemplazo  
217 388-3724 o elections@co.champaign.il.us

**Voter: Seal only your ballot in this envelope /**

**Votante: Selle solo su balota en este sobre**

**Affidavit Of Delivery / Declaración Jurada De Entrega**

I attest (swear) that:

residing at (insert address)

authorizes (insert name of person delivering ballot)

to deliver my ballot to the office of the Champaign County Clerk.

Yo (declararé al jurado) que:

que reside en (insertar la dirección)

autoriza (insertar el nombre de la persona que entrega la papeleta)

a entregar mi balota a la oficina del Secretario del Condado de Champaign.

**Signature of voter / Firma del elector**

Printed Name of Authorized Delivery Agent / Nombre impreso del agente de entrega autorizado

**Signature of Authorized Delivery Agent /**

Firma del Agente de Entrega Autorizado

**Make a mistake on your ballot?**

Call the election office for a replacement  
217 388-3724 or elections@co.champaign.il.us

**Cometió un error en su balota electoral?**

Llame a la oficina electoral para un reemplazo  
217 388-3724 o elections@co.champaign.il.us

**Voter: Seal only your ballot in this envelope /**

**Votante: Selle solo su balota en este sobre**

**BALLOT RETURN IDENTIFICATION ENVELOPE**

Did you...

- Sign the Voter's Declaration in your own handwriting?
- Put your ballot in the envelope?

**Voter's Declaration**

I declare that:

- I am a resident of and a voter in the county, and the person whose name appears on this envelope.
- I have not applied, nor will I apply for a vote-by-mail ballot from any other jurisdiction in this election.
- I declare under penalty of perjury that this is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

You must sign in your own handwriting. Your signature must match the signature in your voter registration card.

Valuing names in an election is a crime.

Voter, sign here in ink. Power of attorney is not acceptable.

**TO BE COUNTED, YOU MUST:**

- Sign the Voter's Declaration.
- State the Voter's Declaration.
- Print your voter registration address on the Voter's Declaration.

**Clearly print your name below:**

**Witness, sign here**

**Orange County**

**I am unable to return my ballot and hereby authorize:**

Print name of person returning your ballot \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person returning your ballot \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

**Make a mistake on your ballot?**

Call 714.867.7588 or visit ovrco.co/contests

**Voter signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Power of Attorney NOT ACCEPTABLE.**

**Date of signing** \_\_\_\_\_

**Voter, print your information here.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

This envelope must be signed, dated and postmarked on or before Election Day. Your information label must be received no later than Election Day after Election Day.

ATTN: LRPD. Delivery address on other side.

# **Case study**

Creating an envelope system in  
Michigan

## Case studies

# Michigan

To Open Hold Here While Pulling Tab		Voter's Return Address	HAVE YOU SIGNED AT THE RED "X" ON THE REVERSE SIDE?	ADDITIONAL POSTAGE MAY BE REQUIRED
<div>OFFICIAL ABSENT VOTER'S BALLOT WARNING PERSONS WHO CAN LEGALLY BE IN POSSESSION OF AN ABSENT VOTER BALLOT ISSUED TO AN ABSENT VOTER ARE LIMITED TO THE ABSENT VOTER, A PERSON WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE ABSENT VOTER'S IMMEDIATE FAMILY OR RESIDES IN THE ABSENT VOTER'S HOUSEHOLD AND WHO HAS BEEN ASKED BY THE ABSENT VOTER TO RETURN THE BALLOT, A PERSON WHOSE JOB IT IS TO HANDLE MAIL, BEFORE DURING, OR AFTER BEING TRANSPORTED BY A PUBLIC POSTAL SERVICE, EXPRESS MAIL SERVICE, PARCEL POST SERVICE, OR COMMON CARRIER, BUT ONLY DURING THE NORMAL COURSE OF HIS OR HER EMPLOYMENT; AND THE CLERK, ASSISTANTS OF THE CLERK, AND OTHER AUTHORIZED ELECTION OFFICIALS OF THE CITY, TOWNSHIP, VILLAGE, OR SCHOOL DISTRICT. ANY OTHER PERSON IN POSSESSION OF AN ABSENT VOTER BALLOT IS GUILTY OF A FELONY.</div>			<div>OFFICIAL ELECTION MAIL As Approved by the U.S. Postal Service</div>	
DO NOT BEND		To	<div>CITY or TOWNSHIP NAME OFFICE OF THE CLERK 1234 N. MAIN STREET SAMPLE, MICHIGAN 92345</div>	

<b>CLERK USE ONLY</b>	Ballot Envelope Returned: Date _____ Time _____	Received By _____	Ballot No. _____	Precinct No. _____
	I certify that I have checked the signature on this envelope with the signature on file and they agree. <b>X</b>	Election Official _____	Election Date _____	Ward No. _____

## OFFICIAL ABSENT VOTER'S BALLOT

**BALLOT MUST BE RECEIVED BY YOUR  
CITY/TOWNSHIP CLERK BY 8 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY**

**TO BE COMPLETED ONLY IF VOTER IS ASSISTED  
IN VOTING BY ANOTHER PERSON**

I assisted the herein named absent voter who is disabled or otherwise unable to mark his/her absent voter ballot pursuant to his/her directions. The absent voter ballot was inserted into the return envelope without being exhibited to any other person.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Assisting Voter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address or R.R.

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, Township or Village

**A PERSON WHO ASSISTS AN ABSENT VOTER AND WHO KNOWINGLY MAKES  
A FALSE STATEMENT IS GUILTY OF A FELONY.**

**SIGN  
HERE: X**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Absent Voter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**The above form must be signed or your vote will not be counted.**

*AN ABSENT VOTER WHO KNOWINGLY MAKES A FALSE STATEMENT IS GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Voter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address or R.R.

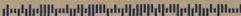
\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, Township, or Village

\_\_\_\_\_  
County





## Case studies

# Michigan's outgoing envelope



**Official absent voter ballot**

See instructions inside.

Sample City Elections Department  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Sample, MI 44444-1234

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED


OFFICIAL  
ELECTION MAIL


Label/window for  
voter's address  
(and IMb)


Form E7-W-L Governmental Business Systems - GBS  
Rev. 2019


Track your ballot at [mi.gov/vote](https://mi.gov/vote)


**Contact information**


 **Sample City Elections**  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Sample, MI 44444-1234

 [www.samplecity.gov/elections](https://www.samplecity.gov/elections)


 [elections@samplecity.gov](mailto:elections@samplecity.gov)


 Phone: 111-222-3333

 Fax: 111-222-6666

 TTY: 1-222-555-1222

**How to return your ballot**


 **Return to local clerk's office by 8 p.m. Election Day**  
Drop off your ballot at your local clerk's office or drop box (if available) — no postage required.

 **Return by Mail**  
Mail your ballot so it is returned by 8 p.m. Election Day.

If you make a mistake on your ballot, contact your local clerk for a new ballot.

## Case studies

# Michigan's return envelope



**Return envelope**  
**Official ballot**


To be opened only by the Precinct or Absent Voter Ballot Counting Board

**Keep your ballot secure.**  
It is a felony for anyone to be in possession of an absent voter ballot except authorized election officials, employees of postal services or other common carriers during the normal course of their job handling mail, or a member of the voter's immediate family or household who the absent voter has asked to return the ballot.

Don't forget to sign on the back.  
Drop off or mail your ballot so that it is returned by 8pm on Election Day.  
Track your ballot at [mi.gov/vote](https://mi.gov/vote).

Sample City Elections Department  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Sample, MI 44444-1234

First class postage required



Sample City  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Sample, MI 44444-1234

Form EBW Governmental Business Systems - GBS  
Rev. 2019

**Did you...**

- Sign in the box below in your own handwriting?
- Put your ballot in the envelope?
- Return to local clerk before 8 p.m. on Election Day?

**I assert that:**

- I am a United States citizen.
- I am qualified and registered to vote at the address listed.
- I am voting in conformity with state election law.
- I marked my ballot and placed it in this envelope without showing it to anyone.
- I am returning my ballot to the clerk's office by delivering it myself or a member of my immediate family or household, or sending it by public postal, express mail, or parcel post service, or other common carrier.

**I understand that knowingly making a false statement is a misdemeanor.**

**Voter, sign here in ink.** Power of attorney is not acceptable.  
*This box must be signed or your vote will not be counted.*

**Sign Here**

**X** \_\_\_\_\_ Date

**If someone assists you or helps you mark your ballot, they must sign and identify themselves.**  
I assisted the voter who is disabled or unable to mark his/her ballot according to his/her directions and without showing it to another person.  
Assistant, sign here  
Print name \_\_\_\_\_  
Print full address \_\_\_\_\_

A person who assists an absent voter and knowingly makes a false statement is guilty of a felony.

**For Clerk's use only**

Return date and time \_\_\_\_\_

Signature verified? ☐ Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

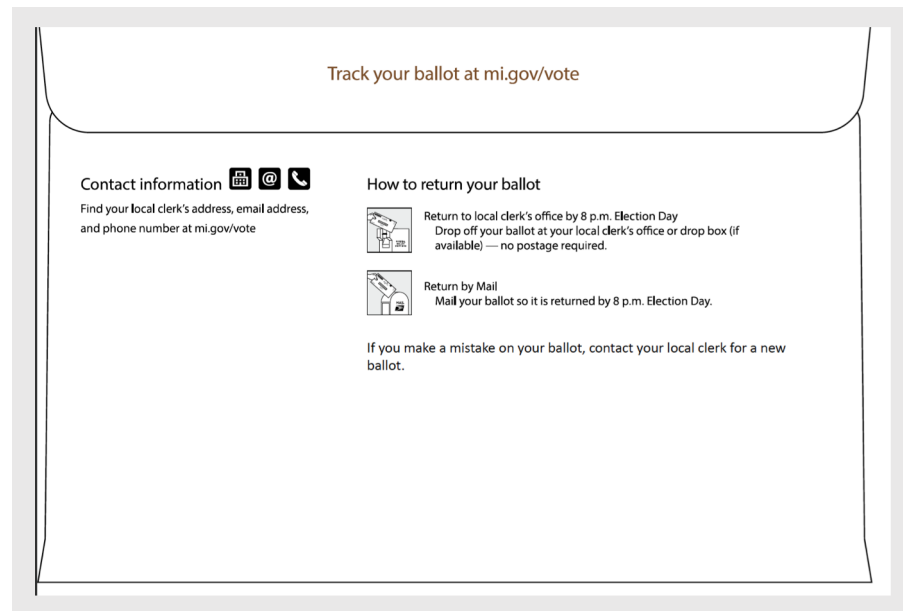
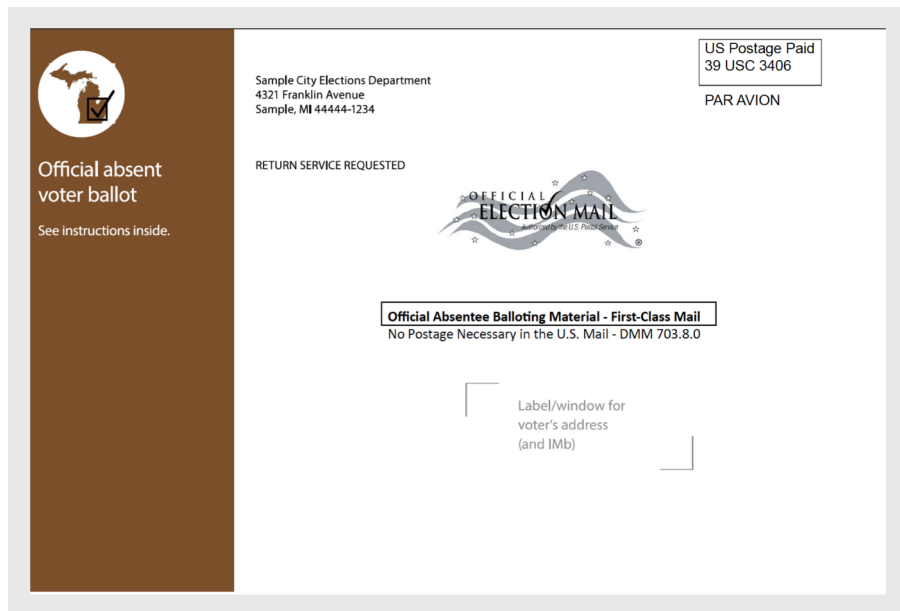
Rejected? ☐ Reason \_\_\_\_\_

Precinct \_\_\_\_\_

Ballot \_\_\_\_\_

## Case studies

# Michigan's UOCAVA outgoing envelope



## Case studies

# Michigan's UOCAVA return envelope



**Return envelope**  
**Official ballot**

To be opened only by the Precinct  
or Absent Voter Ballot Counting  
Board

Don't forget to sign on the back.  
Drop off or mail your ballot  
so that it is returned by  
8pm on Election Day.  
Track your ballot at [mi.gov/vote](https://mi.gov/vote).

Sample City Elections Dept  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Sample, MI 44444-1234  
USA



US Postage Paid  
39 USC 3406

PAR AVION



**Official Absentee Balloting Material - First-Class Mail**  
No Postage Necessary in the U.S. Mail - DMM 703.8.0

Sample City  
4321 Franklin Avenue  
Sample, MI 44444-1234



Did you...

- Sign in the box below in your own handwriting?
- Put your ballot in the envelope?
- Return to local clerk before 8 p.m. on Election Day?

**For Clerk's use only**

Precinct \_\_\_\_\_

Return date and time \_\_\_\_\_ Ballot \_\_\_\_\_

Signature verified? ☐ Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Rejected? ☐ Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

**I assert that:**

- I am a United States citizen.
- I am qualified and registered to vote at the address listed.
- I am not registered, requesting a ballot, or voting in any other jurisdiction in the U.S.
- I am voting in conformity with state election law.
- I marked my ballot and placed it in this envelope without showing it to anyone.
- I am returning my ballot to the clerk's office by delivering it myself or a member of my immediate family or household, or sending it by public postal, express mail, or parcel post service, or other common carrier.

**I understand that knowingly making a false statement is a misdemeanor.**

**Keep your ballot secure.**  
It is a felony for anyone to be in possession of an absent voter ballot except authorized election officials, employees of postal services or other common carriers during the normal course of their job handling mail, or a member of the voter's immediate family or household who the absent voter has asked to return the ballot.

**Voter, sign here in ink.** Power of attorney is not acceptable.  
*This box must be signed or your vote will not be counted.*

Sign Here

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**If someone assists you or helps you mark your ballot, they must sign and identify themselves.**  
I assisted the voter who is disabled or unable to mark his/her ballot according to his/her directions and without showing it to another person.

Assistant, sign here \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Print full address \_\_\_\_\_

A person who assists an absent voter and knowingly makes a false statement is guilty of a felony.

## Case studies

# Michigan's flyer for USPS



### There's a new look in 2020 for ballot mail envelopes in Michigan

Help us get ballots delivered to the voters and back  
to the clerk's office – quickly and accurately.

#### Blue envelopes are for delivery to voters

- The new envelopes are smaller and color coded, blue goes to the voter.
- The delivery address is clearly labeled on the front.



#### Green envelopes return ballots to the Clerk

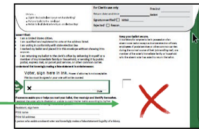
##### Front of envelope

- Green denotes delivery to the clerk's office.
- The clerk's address and IMb are clear on the front of the envelope.



##### Back of envelope

- This side is for the voter's use only.
- Do not deliver to the voter's address on the back.



#### Together, we can make the 2020 elections a success.

Have questions, contact the Michigan Bureau of Elections (517) 335-3237 or  
[elections@michigan.gov](mailto:elections@michigan.gov).

## Case studies

# Michigan's voter insert

### Absent Voter Ballot Mail Envelopes - New for 2020

The Absent Voter Ballot envelopes have a new look redesigned to meet USPS standards. You will receive this blue envelope containing your ballot starting with the March Presidential Primary.

#### Dates To Remember:

- **Friday, March 6** request your Absentee Ballot by mail until 5:00 pm
- **Monday, March 9** receive your absentee ballot in person in the Clerk's Office until 4:00 pm



### Absent Voter Ballot Mail Envelopes - New for 2020

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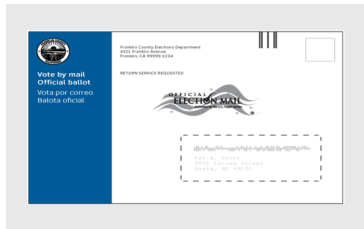
#### Dates To Remember:

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- **Monday, March 9** receive your absentee ballot in person in the Clerk's Office until 4:00 pm



# Resources

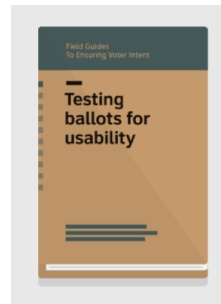
# Resources



## VBM workbook

Layouts and design guidelines

<https://civicdesign.org/fieldguides/104-designing-vote-at-home-envelopes/>



## Usability testing toolkit

Tools and resources for getting feedback from voters, poll workers, and other users.

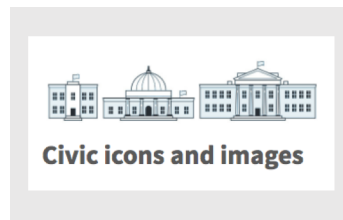
<https://electiontools.org/tool/usability-testing-kit/>



## Field Guides to Ensuring Voter Intent

Design guidelines based on solid research and best practices

<https://civicdesign.org/fieldguides/>



## Civic icons and images

Visual resources for election materials

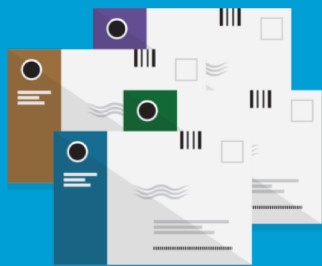
[electiontools.org/tool/civic-icons-and-images/](https://electiontools.org/tool/civic-icons-and-images/)



# How can we help?

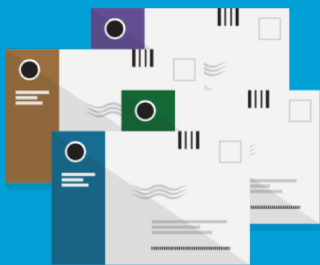
- Answer questions
- Provide feedback and support for integrating envelope best practices

Reach out to Maggie at CCD: [maggie@civicdesign.org](mailto:maggie@civicdesign.org)



## Q&A

- What practices will be useful to you?
- Any questions about today's topic?
- What additional support would be helpful?



**See you on 2/18 and 2/20**

## **Preparing helpful supplementary materials**

Tuesday, February 18th  
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm EST

## **Integrating low-cost tracking and reporting tools**

Thursday, February 20th  
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm EST

**Register: [techandciviclife.org/vote-at-home](https://techandciviclife.org/vote-at-home)**