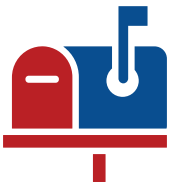




# BE ASSURED: VOTE-BY-MAIL IS SECURE

## Lake County Vote-by-Mail Process Explained



### REQUESTS AND TRACKING

Only the voter, their immediate family member, or a designee are authorized to request or pick up a vote-by-mail ballot. It is illegal for any person to offer or accept any benefit in exchange for distributing, ordering, requesting, collecting, delivering, or otherwise physically possessing more than two vote-by-mail ballots per election, except as outlined in FS 104.0616.

Voters are encouraged to track their ballot status at [www.LakeVotes.com/Voting/Voter-Information](http://www.LakeVotes.com/Voting/Voter-Information). The status of their ballot is shown in 4 stages: requested, sent, received and counted. The first two are self explanatory. The third status will be displayed in either red or blue color. The blue color indicates all is well and there are no issues with the signature on the ballot return envelope. The red color indicates there is an issue that will need to be resolved, and the system will provide instructions as to how to cure the issue. The counted status is activated within 24 hours of tabulation.



### PROCESSING AND VERIFICATION

As daily returns are received, the signature on each vote-by-mail envelope is examined to verify it matches the voter's record. When the ballot is received, the voting status is updated in our system to prevent a voter from voting twice in the same election. If there is no signature or a signature mismatch, the voter is immediately notified and has until two days after the election to cure. Very few vote-by-mail ballots are rejected; most of the rejections are due to the signature being completely missing and/or voters failing to cure the issue before the deadline.



### TABULATION

One of the biggest myths is that vote-by-mail ballots are only counted when it is a close contest. In fact, vote-by-mail ballots are counted first.

All accepted vote-by-mail ballots remain organized in batches, and are opened in teams. Each team is made up of two people who open the ballots, separating the ballot from the secrecy sleeve and the envelope. To maintain voter secrecy, all ballots and envelopes are placed facedown in separate stacks. Once all ballots from a batch have been opened, they are inserted in a high-speed scanner to be tabulated. Results are securely stored until after the polls close on Election Day. By 7:30 p.m. on Election Day, a copy of the first set of unofficial results is published on our website, which contains the total of all accepted vote-by-mail ballots and the Early Voting totals.



### AUDIT AND RETENTION

A public manual audit is conducted after each election. A randomly selected contest and precinct(s) is chosen by the Canvassing Board. Then all ballots (Vote-by-Mail, Early Voting, and Election Day) containing the selected precinct and race are hand counted to ensure the human count matches the machine count.

Once the audit is complete, all returned vote-by-mail ballots and certificate envelopes are boxed, labeled, and securely stored for 22 months after the certification of the election. Once the retention period has been met, the ballots are professionally destroyed.

Get involved in the process! Attend one our Information Sessions and apply to become an Election Worker or attend a Public Canvassing Board Meeting

For more information visit: [www.LakeVotes.com](http://www.LakeVotes.com)