



SECRETARY OF THE STATE  
30 TRINITY STREET  
HARTFORD, CT 06106

December 14, 2019

To Town Clerks:

Re: Absentee Ballot for March 3, 2020 Town Committee Primaries

Absentee ballots for town committee primaries become available on February 11, 2020. The following is an explanation of various laws relating to the possible town committee primaries.

#### 1. ORDER OF CANDIDATE NAMES ON BALLOTS

All candidates' names must appear in exactly the same size and style of type. Sec. 9-437(a) provides that names of candidates for town committee shall appear on the primary ballot label as authorized by each candidate.

Party-endorsed candidates appear on the first horizontal row (Row A), each name followed by an asterisk. If necessary, you may use the first two or more rows for the party-endorsed candidates if the number of candidates so dictates. Only those candidates who have been endorsed by a caucus held by the party pursuant to Section 9-390 and whose endorsements have been certified to you by the presiding officer or secretary of the caucus may be placed in the row(s) reserved for party-endorsed candidates. If no caucus was held, or if no endorsements were certified to you by 4:00 p.m., January 15, 2020, the first horizontal row on the ballot remains blank (and eliminate the candidate ovals), and the words "No Party Endorsement" must be inserted immediately under the position designation of Town Committee Members.

All candidates who have not been certified as endorsed at a caucus appear on the rows below the endorsed candidates (or below the blank top row if there are no endorsed candidates). These candidates, all of whom are on the ballot by petition, are arranged in slates corresponding to the petitions. These slates are divided into two groups. The first group consists of "full slates"; that is, those petitions which propose the full number of candidates that the party may nominate to the town committee at large or from the subdivision, as the case may be. The second group is composed of all other slates; i.e., "partial slates." Each of these two groups is then subdivided between (a) those filed by nine o'clock a.m. on the first business day following the day on which petitions become available, and (b) those filed after that time.

Those "filed by nine o'clock a.m. on the first business day following the day on which petitions become available shall be given precedence as to row based on the number of valid signatures filed in descending order from the greatest to the least." (Sec. 9-437). Those filed thereafter shall be given precedence based on the order in which they are filed. In all cases, however, full slates take precedence over partial slates.

This chart should provide an easy reference table:

Row Determined By

1. Full Slates

- A. Those filed by 9:00 a.m. of first business day following day petitions available.....Number of Valid Signatures
- B. Those filed after that time.....Order of Filing

2. Partial Slates

- A. Those filed by 9:00 a.m. of first business day following day petitions available.....Number of Valid Signatures
- B. Those filed after that time.....Order of Filing

For example, consider a town committee consisting of 18 members elected "At Large". The endorsing session is held on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Petitions become available January 11<sup>th</sup>; so 9:00 a.m., January 12<sup>th</sup> is the "first business day following the day on which petitions become available." Assume that 435 signatures are needed and:

- Petition A filed at 8:30 a.m., January 12<sup>th</sup>, proposes 18 candidates and has 475 valid signatures.
- Petition B filed at 8:45 a.m., January 12<sup>th</sup>, proposes 9 candidates and has 480 valid signatures.
- Petition C filed at 9:30 a.m., January 23<sup>th</sup>, proposes 18 candidates and has 450 valid signatures.
- Petition D filed at 8:50 a.m., January 12<sup>th</sup>, proposes 18 candidates and has 495 valid signatures.
- Petition E filed at 2:00 p.m., January 24<sup>th</sup>, proposes 10 candidates and has 480 valid signatures.

Petitions A, C and D are in the first group because they propose full slates. These are then subdivided between pre- and post-9:00 a.m. petitions. Petitions A and D are both filed before 9:00 a.m. on the first business day following the day petitions are available. Petition D appears before Petition A as it has more signatures. Petition C, the only other full slate, follows. Petitions B and E propose partial slates so they follow full slates. Petition B was filed "before 9:00 a.m." and Petition E after, so B comes before E. (If two "partial slates" had been filed "before 9:00 a.m.", their order would have been determined by number of signatures, like petitions A and D.) The ballot in this town committee primary will thus be as follows:

Row A	party-endorsed slate
Row B	petition D
Row C	petition A
Row D	petition C
Row E	petition B
Row F	petition E

The candidates' names are arranged alphabetically within each slate. A candidate for town committee may not be on two slates.

If there are no party endorsements or endorsements are not made until January 14, 2020, then petitions become available Wednesday, January 15, 2020, and Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, is the "first business day following the day upon which petitions become available."

## 2. ABSENTEE BALLOTS

All candidates for town committee must be on one page and ballots may be printed in two colors if two parties are conducting primaries. It is not necessary to include the Spanish instructions on your printed absentee ballot, unless you are a town in which this has been required by law -- presently only Bridgeport, East Hartford, Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Waterbury and Windham. However, you are encouraged to do so if you have a Spanish-speaking community of any size.

In accordance with Sec. 9-135a, the Secretary of the State prescribes that the State Seal shall be printed in the upper left of the face of each absentee ballot.

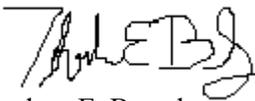
Under Sec. 9-135b(c), immediately upon receiving the printed absentee ballots, the municipal clerk must file with this office a printed absentee ballot for the municipality; or where there are different absentee ballots printed for different political subdivisions, an absentee ballot for each such political subdivision, and an affidavit as to the number of ballots printed. A copy of the affidavit (ED-629) is enclosed; you can make additional copies as necessary. If following such filing, any correction or other alteration is made on an absentee ballot, Section 9-135b(c) requires you to file with this office the corrected or altered ballot as soon as available, together with an affidavit as to the number of corrected ballots printed.

## 3. ACTIVE AND INACTIVE ENROLLMENT LIST

If you receive an application for an absentee ballot from an elector on the inactive enrollment list (and such person is not an elector residing outside the United States, or a serviceman, spouse or dependent), we advise that you send the applicant the enclosed Notice to Absentee Ballot Applicant (ED-660) prescribed by this office under Sec. 9-140(c), and a voter registration application for Restoration of Elector to Official Check List. (If such person is an elector residing outside the United States, or a serviceman, spouse or dependent, see the letter which we will soon send you concerning the Official Blank Absentee Ballot.)

We hope that the foregoing instructions will help you in discharging your absentee ballot duties in upcoming town committee primaries. Please do not hesitate to call us at (860) 509-6100 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
Denise Merrill  
Secretary of the State  
By



Theodore E. Bromley  
Director of Elections

Enclosures (ED-629, ED-660)



NOTICE TO ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICANT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Voting Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(No., Street and Town)

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT! THIS CONCERNS YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE BY ABSENTEE BALLOT**

The municipal clerk has received your application for an absentee ballot. Your name does not appear on the municipality's list of qualified electors and an absentee ballot cannot be issued to you until you are admitted or restored to such list.

Your application for an absentee ballot will be kept on file, and an absentee ballot will be mailed to you immediately after your name is added or restored to the list of qualified electors. Please feel free to contact this office or the office of the registrars of voters if you are in any doubt as to the cut-off dates for registration or restoration to the list of qualified electors.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Municipal Clerk (or Designee)