

STATE OF NEW YORK

492

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 6, 2021

Introduced by Sens. HOYLMAN, MAY, BAILEY, BRESLIN, BROOKS, GAUGHRAN, GOUNARDES, JACKSON, KAMINSKY, KRUEGER, LIU, MAYER, PARKER, RIVERA, SALAZAR, SERRANO, SKOUFIS, STAVISKY, THOMAS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Elections

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to authorizing boards of elections to establish absentee ballot drop-off locations

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The election law is amended by adding a new section 8-414 to read as follows:

§ 8-414. Absentee ballot drop boxes. 1. For the purposes of this title, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "absentee ballot drop box" shall mean a secure receptacle established by a board of elections whereby an absentee ballot marked by a voter pursuant to section 8-410 of this title may be returned to the board of elections of the county or city of the voter's residence; and

(b) "absentee ballot drop-off location" shall mean a location consisting of a secured absentee ballot drop box at which an absentee ballot marked by a voter pursuant to section 8-410 of this title may be returned to the board of elections of the county or city of the voter's residence.

2. Each board of elections is hereby authorized to establish one or more absentee ballot drop-off locations as an additional means for the delivery of absentee ballots marked by a voter to the board of elections of the county or city of the voter's residence. Each such board of elections shall provide notice of the location of every such absentee ballot drop-off location by posting such information on its website no later than the day the absentee ballot drop-off location is established.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 3. The state board of elections is hereby authorized and directed to
2 promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of the
3 provisions of this section, including, but not limited to the location,
4 chain of custody, pick-up times, proper labeling, and security of absen-
5 tee ballot drop boxes established by boards of elections pursuant to
6 this section.

7 § 2. Section 8-410 of the election law, as amended by chapter 352 of
8 the laws of 1986, is amended to read as follows:

9 § 8-410. Absentee voting; method of. The absentee voter shall mark an
10 absentee ballot as provided for paper ballots or ballots prepared for
11 counting by ballot counting machines. He shall make no mark or writing
12 whatsoever upon the ballot, except as above prescribed, and shall see
13 that it bears no such mark or writing. He shall make no mark or writing
14 whatsoever on the outside of the ballot. After marking the ballot or
15 ballots he shall fold each such ballot and enclose them in the envelope
16 and seal the envelope. He shall then take and subscribe the oath on the
17 envelope, with blanks properly filled in. The envelope, containing the
18 ballot or ballots, shall then be mailed or delivered to the board of
19 elections of the county or city of his residence or deposited in an
20 absentee ballot drop box established by the board of elections of the
21 county or city of the voter's residence.

22 § 3. Subdivision 1 of section 8-412 of the election law, as amended by
23 section 2 of chapter 140 of the laws of 2020, is amended to read as
24 follows:

25 1. The board of elections shall cause all absentee ballots received by
26 it before the close of the polls on election day and all ballots
27 contained in envelopes showing a cancellation mark of the United States
28 postal service or a foreign country's postal service, or showing a dated
29 endorsement of receipt by another agency of the United States govern-
30 ment, with a date which is ascertained to be not later than the day of
31 the election and received by such board of elections not later than
32 seven days following the day of election to be cast and counted except
33 that the absentee ballot of a voter who requested such ballot by letter,
34 rather than application, shall not be counted unless a valid application
35 form, signed by such voter, is received by the board of elections with
36 such ballot. For purposes of this section, any absentee ballot received
37 by the board of elections by mail that does not bear or display a dated
38 postmark shall be presumed to have been timely mailed or delivered if
39 such ballot bears a time stamp of the receiving board of elections indi-
40 cating receipt by such board on the day after the election. For the
41 purposes of this section, an absentee ballot shall be deemed to be
42 received by the board of elections before the close of the polls on
43 election day if it is deposited in an absentee ballot drop box before
44 the close of polls on election day. Ballots received in accordance with
45 this section shall be deemed timely and the failure of a board of
46 elections to time stamp such ballots received in this manner on or
47 before election day shall not prohibit the canvassing of such ballots.
48 At the close of the polls on election day, the board of elections shall
49 close every absentee ballot drop box and collect absentee ballots depos-
50 ited in such absentee ballot drop box.

51 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.