

# PUERTO RICO

## Absentee Voting Guide

FOR UNIFORMED SERVICES AND U.S. CITIZENS OVERSEAS

Website: [www.ceepur.org](http://www.ceepur.org)

Link to state election website is also available through FVAP website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)

**Presidential Primary Date: June 1, 2008 (Democratic Party)**

**State Primary Date: March 9, 2008**

**General Election Date: November 4, 2008**

<b>DEADLINES FOR UNIFORMED SERVICES*</b>	<b>Presidential Primary (Democratic Party)</b>	<b>State Primary**</b>	<b>General Election</b>
<b>Registration</b>	May 2, 2008 (temporary)	January 8, 2008	September 4, 2008***
<b>Ballot Request</b>	May 2, 2008	January 8, 2008	September 4, 2008****
<b>Ballot Return</b>	June 1, 2008	March 9, 2008	November 4, 2008

<b>DEADLINES FOR CIVILIANS OUTSIDE THE U.S.*</b>	<b>Presidential Primary (Democratic Party)</b>	<b>State Primary**</b>	<b>General Election</b>
<b>Registration</b>	May 2, 2008 (temporary)	January 8, 2008	September 4, 2008***
<b>Ballot Request</b>	May 2, 2008	January 8, 2008	September 4, 2008****
<b>Ballot Return</b>	June 1, 2008	March 9, 2008	November 4, 2008

Note: Election dates and information are current as of April 2008. Check the state election website above, the FVAP Website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov), or contact your Voting Assistance Officer for updates.

\*Special conditions apply; check the following pages for details.

\*\*Only permanently registered citizens may vote in state and local elections.

\*\*\*You may register temporarily by October 5, 2008 to vote for Resident Commissioner only.

\*\*\*\*Temporarily registered voters must request ballot by October 5, 2008.

# PUERTO RICO

Circled letters on the form below correspond to the instructions on the following page. You must complete all shaded areas.

## FEDERAL POST CARD APPLICATION

### REGISTRATION AND ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST - FEDERAL POST CARD APPLICATION (FPCA)

**1. I REQUEST ABSENTEE BALLOTS FOR ALL ELECTIONS IN WHICH I AM ELIGIBLE TO VOTE AND I AM (mark only one):**

- (a) A MEMBER OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES OR MERCHANT MARINE ON ACTIVE DUTY, OR AN ELIGIBLE SPOUSE OR DEPENDENT
- (b) A U.S. CITIZEN RESIDING OUTSIDE THE U.S. TEMPORARILY
- (c) A U.S. CITIZEN RESIDING OUTSIDE THE U.S. INDEFINITELY

**2. MY INFORMATION (Required)**

a. TYPED OR PRINTED NAME (Last, First, Middle) **A** SUFFIX (Jr., Sr., III, etc.) b. PREVIOUS NAME (if applicable)

c. SEX  M  F d. RACE e. DATE OF BIRTH **B** f. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER g. STATE DRIVER'S LICENSE OR I.D. NUMBER

h. TELEPHONE NUMBER (No DSN number; include all international prefixes) i. FAX NUMBER (No DSN number; include all international prefixes)

j. EMAIL ADDRESS **C**

**3. MY VOTING RESIDENCE ADDRESS (For military, use legal residence. For overseas citizens, use last legal residence in U.S.) (Required)**

a. NUMBER AND STREET (Cannot be a P.O. Box)

b. CITY, TOWN OR VILLAGE **D** c. COUNTY d. STATE e. ZIP CODE

**4. WHERE TO SEND MY VOTING MATERIALS**

a. MY CURRENT ADDRESS (Where I live now) (Required) **E** b. MY FORWARDING ADDRESS (Complete 4.b. only if you do not want your ballot mailed to the address in Block 4.a.)

c. I PREFER TO RECEIVE MY ABSENTEE BALLOT, AS PERMITTED BY MY STATE, BY: **F**  MAIL  FAX  EMAIL

**5. MY POLITICAL PARTY PREFERENCE (Optional, but may be required by states to register to vote in primary elections):** **G**

**6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Designate the period for which you want to receive ballots — see instructions for Block 6 paragraph (3). Consult the Voting Assistance Guide for other specific state instructions.)** **H**

**7. AFFIRMATION (required)**

I swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury, that:

- I am a member of the Uniformed Services or merchant marine on active duty or an eligible spouse or dependent of such a member, or a U.S. citizen temporarily residing outside the U.S., or other U.S. citizen residing outside the U.S., and
- I am a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age (or will be by the day of the election), eligible to vote in the requested jurisdiction, and
- I have not been convicted of a felony or other disqualifying offense or been adjudicated mentally incompetent, or if so, my voting rights have been reinstated, and
- I am not registering, requesting a ballot, or voting in any other jurisdiction in the U.S., and
- My signature and date below indicate when I completed this document, and
- The information on this form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that a material misstatement of fact in completion of this document may constitute grounds for conviction of perjury.

Signed: **I** Date: M M D D Y Y Y Y Signed: **J** Date: M M D D Y Y Y Y (Witness/Notary and address (if required))

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## I. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR FPCA

The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) is the primary form for requesting registration and/or an absentee ballot from your local election official. **Read all instructions printed below and on the FPCA before completing and signing your application.** Circled letters correspond to the circled letters on the sample form on the preceding page.

- A Block 2.a:** Both your paternal and your maternal surnames are required. Otherwise, provide your full name as it appears on file at the State Elections Commission.
- B Block 2.f and 2.g:** The Commonwealth shall assign a number that will serve to identify you for voter registration purposes. But for the voter registration process, your Puerto Rico Driver's License number is required. If you do not have a Puerto Rico Driver's License number, the last four digits of your Social Security number is required.
- C Block 2.h through 2.j:** Provide your email, phone or fax number, whichever is the easiest way to contact you.
- D Block 3.a through 3.e:** Provide the complete street address of your Puerto Rico voting residence. If your address includes a rural route, describe its' location in Block 6. For example: "On Highway \_\_\_\_, 2 miles past Highway \_\_\_\_, across the street from the \_\_\_\_ gas station." A post office box is not sufficient. This address must be different from the one provided in Block 4 and must be within Puerto Rico.
- E Block 4.a:** Print the complete address where you want your ballot sent — usually your current mailing address. It must be different from the address you provided in Block 3. Please note: members of the Armed Forces and merchant marine must utilize an APO/FPO address if available.
- F Block 4.c:** This form acts as a request for a mailed absentee ballot only. Puerto Rico does not allow you to receive or return the absentee ballot electronically. See Section II.D or III.D.
- G Block 5: If you do not list a party affiliation, you cannot vote in primary elections.** You must indicate your political party affiliation when applying for a primary ballot (Example: Democrat, Republican or any of the political parties registered in Puerto Rico) or write "none" in Block 5 of the FPCA. Political party affiliation is not required if only requesting absentee ballots for general elections.
- H Block 6:** Provide your father's and mother's first names.

The certifying officer who signs Block 7 must state here: "I certify that [voter] is a [member of the U.S. Army, student at XX University, etc., whichever is applicable]." See Sections II.C or III.C for details.

Submission of this form serves as a request to receive ballots for all Federal elections held through the next two regularly scheduled general elections. If you do not wish to receive ballots for that length of time, you may request a ballot for each election for Federal office held in the next election year OR a ballot for only the next scheduled election for Federal office by noting your choice here.

- I Block 7:** You are swearing or affirming that the information provided is true and correct by signing the FPCA. Also, see Sections II.C or III.C.
- J Block 7:** Applicant must sign and date in the presence of an oath taking official.

## II. UNIFORMED SERVICES

These procedures apply to persons who are U.S. citizens, residents of Puerto Rico and members of the Uniformed Services and their family members. Uniformed Services are defined as members of the U.S. Armed Forces, merchant marine, commissioned corps of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

### A. Registering and Requesting an Absentee Ballot

You should send an FPCA to your local election official early every year and whenever you change your mailing address (see Chapter Two).

To register permanently, you must register in person. However, you may register temporarily to vote in the primary and general elections for Resident Commissioner.

**To register temporarily and request an absentee ballot,** send your completed FPCA to the Absentee Voting Administrative Board so that it arrives not later than 30 days before the election. You will be sent a special absentee ballot which lists only the candidates for Resident Commissioner to the U.S. Congress.

**If you are permanently registered and wish only to request an absentee ballot,** send a completed FPCA to the Absentee Voting Administrative Board so that it arrives not later than 60 days before the election. Alternatively, you may request a ballot by using the Petition for Absentee Ballot, which is available by mail either from the Elections Commission or the political parties, or download it electronically at [www.ceepur.org](http://www.ceepur.org).

If your absentee ballot request arrives between 59 and 30 days before the election, you will be sent the special absentee ballot which lists only candidates for Resident Commissioner to the U.S. Congress.

## B. Casting Your Vote

**Ballot Return Deadline:** Voted ballot must be **postmarked** not later than election day. The State Elections Commission must receive it **before 3:00 p.m. on election day**.

The State Elections Commission begins mailing ballots approximately 45 days before the election.

Due to its commonwealth status, Puerto Rico does not send representatives to the U.S. Senate or directly participate in the election of the President and Vice President of the U.S. At the Federal level, a Resident Commissioner to the House of Representatives is elected.

If you have not received your ballot in a timely manner, use the **Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot**. See instructions in Chapter Two.

## C. Notary/Witness Requirements

**FPCA:** Must be sworn to.

The person who administers the oath is verifying your identity and your status (for example, military spouse, merchant marine member, etc.).

**Military members, their spouses and their dependents** must obtain the signature of a commissioned officer.

**Merchant marine members** must obtain the signature of the highest officer on board.

**Returning a Ballot:** Must be sworn to.

The person who administers the oath is verifying your identity and your status (for example, military spouse, merchant marine member, etc.).

**Military members, their spouses and their dependents** must obtain the signature of a commissioned officer.

**Merchant marine members** must obtain the signature of the highest officer on board.

## D. Electronic Transmission of FPCAs and Ballots

- Puerto Rico allows electronic transmission of the FPCA, including fax and email, for absentee ballot request. You must submit the original FPCA by mail and it must be received by the State Elections Commission no later than 3:00 p.m. on election day.
- Puerto Rico does not allow electronic transmission of the blank absentee ballot or the voted absentee ballot.

Please refer to Appendix B for Specific instructions when transmitting election materials electronically. **Use the following numbers:**

DSN 223-5527  
(703) 693-5527

1-800-368-8683

(from U.S., Canada, Guam, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands only)

International toll-free fax numbers

(See inside back cover)

## E. Action Upon Denial of Registration or Absentee Ballot Request

Upon denial of your voter registration application or absentee ballot request, Puerto Rico shall provide you with the reason(s) for the rejection.

## III. CIVILIANS OUTSIDE U.S.

These procedures apply to persons who are U.S. citizens, residents of Puerto Rico and overseas electors. The term “overseas elector” means a U.S. citizen who resides outside the U.S. and (but for such residence) would be qualified to vote in Puerto Rico. (Consult Section B below for ballot type eligibility)

- those studying outside of Puerto Rico in a duly accredited educational institution
- agricultural workers under contract with the Agricultural Employment Program of the Commonwealth Labor Department outside Puerto Rico
- members of the diplomatic or foreign aid service of the U.S., or of exchange programs between Puerto Rico and a foreign government
- spouses and children of the above
- airline crew members who are working outside Puerto Rico on election day
- overseas electors

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If you are outside the U.S. and have not received your ballot in a timely manner, use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot. See instructions in Chapter Two.

## C. Notary/Witness Requirements

**FPCA:** Must be sworn to.

The person who administers the oath is verifying your identity and your status (for example, student, agricultural worker, etc.).

**Students** must obtain the signature of an official in the school registrar's office.

**Dependents, agricultural workers, and airline crew members** must swear an oath before a notary public or person authorized by law to administer the oath.

**Overseas electors** must obtain the signature of a consular officer.

**Returning a Ballot:** Must be sworn to.

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## IV. UNIFORMED SERVICES & CIVILIANS OUTSIDE U.S.

### Where To Send It

Mail the FPCA to:

**Absentee Voting Administrative Board**  
State Elections Commission  
PO Box 195552  
San Juan, PR 00919-5552

*You grace America when you vote.*

by Kathy R. Bruce, Summerville, GA

