



July 24, 2020

Pandemic Voting What Do I Do?

This is an election year, of course, and there's a pandemic. The safest way to cast a ballot is to do so by mail. In Missouri, if a voter is vulnerable due to ill health or is 65 or older, they don't need a notary, but the rest of us do. You are eligible to vote absentee with a notary due to: religious beliefs; working as an election worker; incarceration; participation in a Safe at Home program; absence on election day.

Notaries therefore have to notarize the envelope in which the completed ballot is mailed to the board of elections. They do not have to corroborate the reason for a voter using a mail-in ballot; they just have to check the voter's identity.

If you are a notary and you want to provide this service for mail-in ballots, the best way to do so is to register here:

Missouri Secretary of State list of notary volunteers <https://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/MailinNotary>

Then there are local organizations:

- Bar Association <https://www.bamsl.org/index.cfm?pg=events&evAction=showDetail&eid=84211>
- St Louis Public Library <https://www.slpl.org/mail-in-ballot-notary-service/>
- Forward Together STL <https://www.facebook.com/groups/118714151944908/>

See if you can arrange with your church to hold notarization sessions outside nearby. Webster Groves Presbyterian and Trinity Presbyterian UCity are two such and you probably know others that are doing the same thing. I advertise on social media that I will be outside my church from 3pm to 5pm on Sunday. I put signs on the car window that say NOTARY. And then I sit and wait.

I also manage a Facebook group called [Vote by Mail STL](#) and you will find useful information there. It has 584 members. For example, a member of the group informed us that Central Reform Congregation has a [drive-through notary signing](#) on Sunday July 26th.

Our churches are an ideal venue for socially distanced notarizing, since many have parking lots and are well located.

Notaries, please make an effort to offer your services to your community in this very important election year.

Best wishes,
Nigel Holloway