

HB 158 - AS INTRODUCED

2025 SESSION

25-0680

08/09

HOUSE BILL **158**

AN ACT relative to public inspection of absentee ballot lists.

SPONSORS: Rep. Hill, Merr. 2; Rep. Bernardy, Rock. 36; Rep. Sweeney, Rock. 25; Rep. Verville, Rock. 2; Rep. Berry, Hills. 44; Rep. S. Boyd, Merr. 10; Rep. T. Walsh, Merr. 10; Rep. Sheehan, Hills. 43; Sen. Pearl, Dist 17; Sen. Avard, Dist 12; Sen. McConkey, Dist 3

COMMITTEE: Election Law

ANALYSIS

This bill requires that town and city clerks shall make absentee ballot voter lists available for public inspection, and requires the secretary of state to report on absentee ballots information.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT relative to public inspection of absentee ballot lists.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Procedure for Absence, Religious Observance, and Disability and Overseas Voting; Sending
2 Absentee Ballots. Amend RSA 657:15, I to read as follows:

3 I. When the verification required by RSA 657:12 or 657:13 has been made, the clerk shall
4 retain the application and, without delay, personally deliver, email, or mail to the applicant the
5 appropriate ballot and materials as described in RSA 657:7 through 657:8 or designate an assistant
6 to deliver such materials to the applicant. The clerk's option to email an absentee ballot to a voter
7 shall apply only to absentee ballot applications from UOCAVA voters. The clerk shall mail absentee
8 ballots in response to verified absentee ballot requests that have been received by 12:00 p.m. on the
9 day before the election. The clerk shall provide an absentee ballot to any voter requesting an
10 absentee ballot in person at the clerk's office up until 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election or as
11 may be provided elsewhere in Title LXIII. The clerk may not designate as an assistant any person
12 who is a candidate for nomination or office or who is working for such a candidate. Any ballots sent
13 pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be mailed or delivered only by officials from the city
14 or town clerk's office and delivered only to the applicant. If the address to which the absent voter's
15 ballot is sent is outside the United States or Canada, such papers shall be sent by air mail. Said
16 clerks shall keep lists of the names and addresses, arranged by voting places, of all applicants to
17 whom official absentee ballots have been sent, and shall identify those official absentee ballots which
18 have been returned to the clerk and shall record the absentee voter applicant information in the
19 statewide centralized voter registration database. The lists, ***excluding voters who have***
20 ***presented to the supervisors of the checklist valid protective orders pursuant to RSA 173-B,***
21 ***shall [not] be available for public inspection [at any time without] 60 days after the election day***
22 ***for which the absentee ballot was requested, or earlier with*** a court order.

23 ***I-a. The secretary of state shall use the information contained in the statewide***
24 ***centralized voter registration database regarding absentee ballot requests arriving by***
25 ***mail, except UOCAVA requests, to create a report detailing:***

26 (a) ***The number of absentee ballot requests received by mail throughout the state***
27 ***arranged by voting district.***

28 (b) ***The number of absentee ballot requests received by mail that were sent to an***
29 ***address other than the address shown on the checklist for that person.***

30 (c) ***The number of absentee ballot requests received by mail where more than 3***
31 ***ballots were sent to a common address.***

1 *(d) For the 20 most common addresses, as determined by the number of ballots*
2 *sent to that address, the actual addresses where the ballots were mailed.*

3 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.