

HB 686-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2025 SESSION

25-0502

07/08

HOUSE BILL **686-FN**

AN ACT requiring a voter to provide identification when requesting an absentee ballot.

SPONSORS: Rep. Potenza, Straf. 19; Rep. Ankarberg, Straf. 7; Rep. Berry, Hills. 44; Rep. Burnham, Straf. 2; Rep. DeRoy, Straf. 3; Rep. Kuttab, Rock. 17; Rep. Turcotte, Straf. 4; Rep. Wherry, Hills. 13

COMMITTEE: Election Law

ANALYSIS

This bill:

I. Requires anyone who requests an absentee ballot to provide a copy of government issued photo identification alongside their absentee ballot application.

II. Requires that absentee ballot applications be notarized.

III. Requires a person to cure any errors in their application in person and prove their domicile to their city or town clerk.

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Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.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 requiring a voter to provide identification when requesting an absentee ballot.

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

1 1 Elections; Absentee Voting; Forms. Amend RSA 657:4, I to read as follows:

2 I. Prior to any state election, the secretary of state shall prepare the appropriate application
3 forms for absentee ballots worded in substantially the following form. The secretary of state shall
4 insert the names of all parties qualified as set forth in RSA 652:11 in the list of parties on the
5 application form. The secretary of state shall prepare the application forms in such quantity as he or
6 she deems necessary:

7 Absence (Excluding Absence Due to Residence Outside the United States), Religious Observance,
8 and Disability:

9 I hereby declare that (check one):

10 I am a duly qualified voter who is currently registered to vote in this town/ward.

11 I am absent from the town/city where I am domiciled and will be until after the next election,
12 or I am unable to register in person due to a disability, and request that the forms necessary for
13 absentee voter registration be sent to me with the absentee ballot.

14 I will be entitled to vote by absentee ballot because (check one):

15 I plan to be absent on the day of the election from the city, town, or unincorporated place
16 where I am domiciled.

17 I am confined in a penal institution for a misdemeanor or while awaiting trial.

18 I am requesting a ballot for the presidential primary election and I may be absent on the day
19 of the election from the city, town, or unincorporated place where I am domiciled, but the date of the
20 election has not been announced. I understand that I may only make such a request 14 days after
21 the filing period for candidates has closed, and that if I will not be absent on the date of the election I
22 am not eligible to vote by absentee ballot.

23 I cannot appear in public on election day because of observance of a religious commitment.

24 I am unable to vote in person due to a disability.

25 I cannot appear at any time during polling hours at my polling place because of an
26 employment obligation. For the purposes of this application, the term "employment" shall include
27 the care of children and infirm adults, with or without compensation.

28 For use only on the Monday immediately prior to the election: I cannot appear at my polling place on
29 election day because the National Weather Service has issued a winter storm warning, blizzard
30 warning, or ice storm warning for election day applicable to my city, town, or unincorporated place
31 and either (check one):

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1 ____ I am elderly or infirm or I have a physical disability, and would otherwise vote in person but I
2 have concerns for my safety traveling in the storm.

3 ____ I anticipate that school, child care, or adult care will be canceled, and would otherwise vote in
4 person but will need to care for children or infirm adults.

5 Any person who votes or attempts to vote using an absentee ballot who is not entitled to vote by
6 absentee ballot shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. RSA 657:24.

7 I am requesting an official absentee ballot for the following election (check one):

8 ____ Presidential Primary to be held on _____

9 (MM/DD/YYYY)

10 (The date may appear as blank when the date is not known.)

11 ____ State Primary to be held on _____

12 (MM/DD/YYYY)

13 ____ General Election

14 For primary elections, I am a member of or I am now declaring my affiliation with the (check one):

15 ____ Republican Party

16 ____ Democratic Party

17 ____ (name of any party determined by the secretary of state to have achieved official status under
18 RSA 652:11)

19 and am requesting a ballot for that party's primary.

20 Please print:

21 Applicant's Name:

22 _____

23 (Last) (First) (Middle) (Sr., Jr., II., III)

24 Applicant's Voting Domicile (home address):

25 _____

26 (Street Number) (Street Name) (Apt/Unit) (City/Town) (Ward) (Zip Code)

27 Mail the ballot to me at this address (if different than the home address):

28 _____

29 (Street Number) (Street Name) (Apt/Unit) (City/Town) (Ward) (Zip Code)

30 Applicant's Phone Number : _____

31 Applicant's Email Address : _____

32 Applicant's Signature: _____

33 Date Signed: _____

34 (MM/DD/YYYY)

35 I attest that I assisted the applicant in executing this form because he or she has a disability.

36 Signature _____ Print Name _____

1 If your absentee ballot application or affidavit envelope has the printed name and signature of a
2 person who assisted you with voting, your signature will not be compared to your signature on the
3 absentee ballot affidavit to verify your identity. Otherwise, if your signatures do not appear to be
4 made by the same person, your absentee ballot may not be counted.

5 The applicant must sign ***and notarize*** this form to receive an absentee ballot. Any person who
6 witnesses and assists a voter with a disability in executing this form shall print [~~and~~], sign, ***and***
7 ***notarize*** his or her name in the space provided on the application form. The moderator will not
8 compare the voter's signature on the application with the signature on the absentee ballot affidavit
9 when a person assisting the voter has signed ***and notarized*** the statement on the absentee ballot
10 application or affidavit envelope that assistance was provided. ***If the applicant does not have the***
11 ***application form notarized, the applicant's ballot application will be rejected, subject to***
12 ***the applicant appearing before their city or town clerk to cure their defective application***
13 ***under RSA 657:6. The applicant must provide a color copy of a valid government issued***
14 ***photo identification with this form to receive an absentee ballot. If the applicant does not***
15 ***include a color copy of a valid government issued photo identification, the applicant's***
16 ***ballot application will be rejected, subject to the applicant appearing before their city or***
17 ***town clerk to cure their defective application under RSA 657:6.***

18 2 Elections; Absentee Voting; Procedure by Applicant. Amend RSA 657:6 to read as follows:

19 657:6 Procedure by Applicant.

20 ***I.*** An application form for an absentee ballot shall be mailed or delivered to any person who
21 applies therefor to the secretary of state or to any town or city clerk. It shall be filled out by the
22 applicant and sent to the clerk of the town or city in which he or she desires to vote. Alternatively, a
23 person may apply for an official absentee ballot by sending to said clerk a written statement
24 containing the information required by RSA 657:4, I or by the federal official post card form.

25 ***II.*** ***Any applicant whose application form does not comport with the requirements***
26 ***of RSA 657:4 may appear before their city or town clerk, subject to their ability to verify***
27 ***their domicile with the clerk, and amend their application form to cure any and all***
28 ***defects.***

29 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

LBA
25-0502
Revised 1/28/25

**HB 686-FN- FISCAL NOTE
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AN ACT requiring a voter to provide identification when requesting an absentee ballot.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Budget Assistant states this bill has no fiscal impact on state, county and local expenditures or revenue.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of State