



Safe at Home

MINNESOTA SECRETARY OF STATE

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Safe at Home Biennial Voting Report April 2013

January 1, 2011 - December 31, 2012

Safe at Home Program Overview

The Safe at Home address confidentiality program is managed by the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State. The program, which began September 1, 2007, is open to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and those who otherwise fear for their safety. Participants in Safe at Home are assigned a designated address (a P.O. Box in St. Paul) that can be used for all of their interactions with others. The designated address allows the participant to go about their daily life without disclosing their actual home, employment or school address. All private and public entities in the state of Minnesota must accept the Safe at Home address as a participant's actual address. Safe at Home receives participants' mail, forwards all of their First Class Mail to them and assists them with their interactions with third parties should problems arise when giving the Safe at Home address to others. Staff also work with third party stakeholders to ensure legal compliance and that their business practices accommodate the safety needs of Safe at Home participants.

Safe at Home Voting Process Overview

Voting by Safe at Home program participants is governed by *Minnesota Statutes*, section 5B.06 and *Minnesota Rules*, section 8290.1300. The voting experience under Safe at Home is time-consuming and somewhat cumbersome. It is, however, the only way participants can vote safely, without the need to share their name and address with others.

The process works as follows:

- Upon enrollment each applicant is given the opportunity to register as an ongoing absentee voter through Safe at Home.
- At least 45 days before an election, or within two business days after the scheduling of a special election, all registered Safe at Home absentee voters are identified by Safe at Home staff.
- Each registered voter is sent an *Absentee Ballot Request Form* with instructions to complete it and return it to the Safe at Home office if they wish to vote.
- Upon receipt of a completed ballot request form, staff request the ballot for the appropriate jurisdiction without disclosing the voter's name or actual address.
- When Safe at Home receives the blank ballot, it is sent to the voter along with voting instructions, a secrecy envelope, an absentee ballot return envelope and a postage-paid return envelope addressed to Safe at Home.
- The voter returns the ballot to Safe at Home in the envelopes provided.

- When the ballot is received, Safe at Home staff perform name, signature and identification number matches and determine whether the certificate on the absentee ballot signature envelope was properly completed.
- If it is, the envelope with the voter's name and address is separated from the secrecy envelope containing the absentee ballot.
- The secrecy envelope, which remains sealed at all times, is placed in an envelope containing a certification by staff that the ballot was cast by a Safe at Home participant, and that the voter's certification was properly completed statement. The certification envelope does not contain the participant voter's name or actual address, but it does contain the voter's local jurisdiction information.
- The completed certification envelope is sent to the appropriate county auditor, who sends the ballot to the appropriate absentee ballot board. Election judges on the absentee ballot board are required to accept the ballot if the certification indicates the return envelope was properly completed.

Pursuant to *Minnesota Rules*, section 8290.1300, subpart 11, Safe at Home determined by March 31, 2011 and by March 31, 2012 that none of the Safe at Home participants who had cast absentee ballots in any election during the preceding 12 months were also recorded in the statewide voter registration system as having voted using the traditional, non-Safe at Home voting process in that same election.

Because Safe at Home is a newer state program, it continues to grow. As such, the number of absentee voters increases. On the date this report was created, April 29, 2013, there were 372 program participants registered as absentee voters through Safe at Home.

The following is a report of the activities of program voters from January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2012. In all cases, Safe at Home staff followed required procedures at all times.

Safe at Home Voting Activity January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2012

| SPECIAL ELECTIONS 2011 | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Ballots Requested | Total Returned On or Before Election Day | Returned Ballots That Arrived On or Before Election Day: Signature Envelope Completed Accurately? | *Success Rate | Ballots That Arrived Late |
| 13 | 4 | Yes: 3 No: 1 | 75% | 1 |
| PRIMARY ELECTIONS 2011 | | | | |
| Ballots Requested | Total Returned On or Before Election Day | Returned Ballots That Arrived On or Before Election Day: Signature Envelope Completed Accurately? | *Success Rate | Ballots That Arrived Late |
| 4 | 1 | Yes: 1 No: 0 | 100% | 0 |
| GENERAL ELECTIONS 2011 | | | | |
| Ballots Requested | Total Returned On or Before Election Day | Returned Ballots That Arrived On or Before Election Day: Signature Envelope Completed Accurately? | *Success Rate | Ballots That Arrived Late |
| 36 | 15 | Yes: 15 No: 0 | 100% | 0 |
| SPECIAL ELECTIONS 2012 | | | | |
| Ballots Requested | Total Returned On or Before Election Day | Returned Ballots That Arrived On or Before Election Day: Signature Envelope Completed Accurately? | *Success Rate | Ballots That Arrived Late |
| 4 | 0 | Yes: 0 No: 0 | 0% | 2 |
| PRIMARY ELECTIONS 2012 | | | | |
| Ballots Requested | Total Returned On or Before Election Day | Returned Ballots That Arrived On or Before Election Day: Signature Envelope Completed Accurately? | *Success Rate | Ballots That Arrived Late |
| 75 | 32 | Yes: 32 No: 0 | 100% | 0 |
| GENERAL ELECTIONS 2012 | | | | |
| Ballots Requested | Total Returned On or Before Election Day | Returned Ballots That Arrived On or Before Election Day: Signature Envelope Completed Accurately? | *Success Rate | Ballots That Arrived Late |
| 189 | 129 | Yes: 126 No: 3 | 98% | 7 |
| 1 ballot with the signature envelope accurately completed was recalled before Election Day due to participant moving to new residence. | | | | |

*Success Rate = Ballots returned on time with signature envelope completed accurately ÷ total ballots returned on or before Election Day