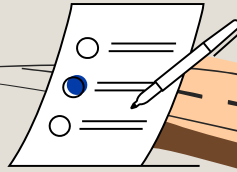# Life of an Absentee Ballot

1 — Voter Requests Ballot

1. Voter requests an absentee ballot by completing an absentee application.
2. Application is processed and ballot is mailed before the start of Early Voting.
3. Voter returns voted ballot via USPS, commercial mail services, or at one of three ballot drop boxes.

2 — Receipt of the Ballot

1. The City of Richmond mail services delivers ballots to the Office of Elections in the mornings to the Office of Elections.
2. USPS delivers mail in the afternoon.
3. During the 45 days of Early Voting, two designated staff members collect ballots from the three drop box locations daily in the mornings and afternoons. These two staff members complete the chain of custody documents for ballots retrieved from the ballots drop boxes.
4. The absentee office receives all ballots and date stamps on a daily basis.
5. Ballots will continue to be delivered to the Office of Elections until the day of election. The Absentee coordinator will collect ballots at our USPS mailbox at 7 PM on Election Day.

3 — Intake Processing

1. The intake station is the first station that the ballots received from city mail services, USPS, and drop boxes. Ballots are counted and chain of custody forms are completed. The AB team member stamps each outer envelope with "Received by City of Richmond Electoral Board" date stamp.

4 — Sorting (1st Pass)

1. After intake the ballots are sorted to be processed or Return Postage Mail. The ballots that will be processed are sorted and filed in precinct/alpha number order and given to an AB team member.

5 — Scanning/VERIS input (2nd pass)

AB team member counts ballots received and completes chains of custody form.
1. Scan the envelopes into VERIS
2. Verify voters address and name
3. Open outer envelope
4. Verify signature and witness signature on ballot envelope
5. Enter preprocessing/marked/unmarked in VERIS
6. Ballot is refiled in precinct/alpha order

6 — Filed/Stored

1. Ballots are processed in VERIS, ballots are filed in a locked ballot room until Central Absentee Precinct pre-processing.

7 — Preprocessing (3rd pass)

1. Ballots are received by the Central Absentee Precinct (CAP). Chain of custody forms are completed.
2. Ballot officer completes the ballot receipt form for CAP
3. Ballots are distributed to a 3 person team of designated precincts with assigned precinct numbers
4. A CAP team will do a visual inspection
5. Required signatures are checked, and voter's name and address are compared to the poll book. If signature or address is missing, ballot is eligible for the cure process.
6. Once voter's information is verified by the poll book, an Election Officer will remove envelope B from the already opened outer envelope
7. If all information is correct, ballots will be removed from the envelope and scanned to be counted on Election night.
8. If information needs to be researched, ballots will be returned to the AB team

8 — Ballots Are Scanned

1. Ballots are scanned and counted by either the DS200 or the high speed scanner known as the DS450.
2. Any ballots that cannot be scanned because it's either a military or overseas ballot that was emailed to the voter, or because the scanner can't read it, will be hand counted on Election Day.
3. All ballots are removed from the scanner and placed in envelopes that will delivered to the Office of the Clerk of the Court, where they will remain for two years.
4. Voters are given voter credit in VERIS, which provides historical proof that a voter cast their ballot in the election.