

**RHODE ISLAND GOVERNMENT REGISTER  
PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

**BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

**Title of Rule:** Rules and Regulations Establishing Vote-by-Mail Ballot Drop Boxes

**Rule Identifier:** 410-RICR-20-00-25

**Rulemaking Action:** Proposed Amendment

**Important Dates:**

Date of Public Notice: 04/14/2021

Hearing Date: 05/04/2021

End of Public Comment: 05/14/2021

**Authority for this Rulemaking:**

R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-16

**Summary of Rulemaking Action:**

The purpose for this Rule and Regulation is to provide mail ballot voters with an alternative method for the submission of ballots to the Board of Elections for tabulation.

**Additional Information and Comments:**

All interested parties are invited to request additional information or submit written or oral comments concerning the proposed amendment until May 14, 2021 by contacting the appropriate party at the address listed below:

patricia chatelle  
Board of Elections  
2000 Plainfield Pike  
Suite A  
Cranston, RI 02921  
patricia.chatelle@elections.ri.gov

**Public Hearing:**

A public hearing, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-35-2.8, to consider the proposed amendment shall be held on May 4, 2021 at 2:00 pm at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83090890994>, 83090890994, 13126266799, cranston, RI 02921 at which time and place all persons interested therein will be heard. The seating capacity of the room will be enforced and therefore the number of persons participating in the hearing may be limited at any given time by the hearing officer, in order to comply with safety and fire codes.

The place of the public hearing is accessible to individuals who are handicapped. If communication assistance (readers/interpreters/captioners) is needed, or any other accommodation to ensure equal participation, please call 401-222-2345 X-1911 or RI Relay 711 at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting so arrangements can be made to provide such assistance at no cost to the person requesting.

**Regulatory Analysis Summary and Supporting Documentation:**

The purpose for these Rules and Regulations is to provide mail ballot voters with an alternative method for the submission of ballots to the Board of Elections for tabulation. The establishing of these Drop Box receptacles in each city and town in the State of Rhode Island addresses the need to offer an alternative method of transmitting the mail ballots to the Board of Elections on a timely basis under the requirements of RI General Laws § 17-20-16.

In development of this rule, consideration was given to: 1) Alternative approaches; 2) Overlap or duplication with other statutory and regulatory provisions; and 3) Significant economic impact.

Due to the increase in mail ballot applications an alternative method needed to be offered for voters to deliver their ballots by the deadline. The addition of Drop Box receptacles in each city and town allows the voter to drop their ballot throughout the state without the fear of missing the deadline by dropping their ballot through the postal service. No alternative approach, duplication or overlap was identified based upon available information.

For full regulatory analysis or supporting documentation see agency contact person above.