

**For Release Saturday, 10/30/2021**

## County of Berks – Press Release

*Berks County Board of Elections reminds voters of proper procedure to return mail-in ballots following incorrect information sent from local legislator*

**Reading, PA— 10/30/2021** — Yesterday the Berks County Board of Elections became aware of an email sent from state Representative Manny Guzman that contained misinformation about how to return mail-in ballots. The email incorrectly stated that mail-in ballots can be returned to a voter's polling location on Election Day. Mail-in ballots **cannot** be returned to polling locations to be counted.

The Board of Elections wants to make it clear that mail-in ballots can **only** be returned the following three ways: Through the mail, by placing the ballot in either of the County's two secure drop boxes, or by hand delivering the ballot to the Office of Election Services. Due to the proximity of the upcoming election, the Board encourages voters to return mail-in ballots to a County drop box or the Office of Election Services to ensure timely receipt. The drop boxes are located at the Berks County Government Services Center and the Berks County Agriculture Center and are available Saturday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday, November 1 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on Election Day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. All mail-in/absentee ballots must be received by 8 pm on November 2.

Again, mail-in ballots **CANNOT** be dropped off at a voter's polling location for the purpose of being counted in the election. Voters who requested mail-in/absentee ballots but instead wish to vote in-person at their polling place on Election Day can surrender and void their unvoted mail-in ballot at their precinct and vote on the machine. If a voter who requested a mail-in or absentee ballot goes to a precinct to vote in person but does not have their unvoted mail-ballot to surrender, the voter will only be allowed to vote by provisional ballot to ensure they did not vote twice. Please note, a second email from Representative Guzman incorrectly stated that surrendered mail-in ballots are destroyed and incorrectly said a voter who surrenders a ballot can only vote by provisional ballot.

In short, Representative Guzman's assertion that mail-in/absentee ballots can be counted if returned to a polling place and his explanation of the process for surrendered ballots are not only inaccurate but also unfortunate as the County continues to work tirelessly to ensure a fair and secure election for Berks County. If voters have questions, they should contact the Berks County Office of Election Services at 610-478-6490.

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**For more information, press only:**

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