DEMOCRACY RENEWAL GROUP

ELECTION SEASON TOOLKIT

Your Ballot Cure Checklist

Steps to find out whether your ballot has a fixable problem and how to correct it before the deadline. Cure windows are short, so it helps to know the process ahead of time.

Curing a ballot means fixing a problem, like a missing or mismatched signature, so your ballot can be counted. Not every state offers a cure process, and the steps and deadlines vary.

01 Before You Vote: Know Your State's Process

✓ Check whether your state has a **cure process**. About two-thirds of states require election officials to tell you about a missing or mismatched signature and give you a chance to fix it. Check out Ballotpedia's absentee/mail in ballot cure guide. If you voted provisionally, you can check out your state's laws to see if you might need to cure your ballot.

✓ In states without a cure process, a ballot with a missing or mismatched signature is generally **not counted**.

✓ Find out **which problems** your state lets you fix. Signature issues are the most common. Some states also allow fixes for missing witness information or a missing ID number.

✓ Note the **cure deadline**. Some states close the window on Election Day. Others allow several days after.

✓ Make sure your election office can **reach you**. If your registration or ballot application has space for a phone number or email, fill it in. Notices may come by mail, phone, email, or text.

✓ If you have questions about what the cure process is in your state, if your state allows it, call **866-OUR-VOTE**, where trained volunteers can help you find some answers.

02 Avoid Common Ballot Problems That May Require a Cure

✓ Sign **exactly** as you're registered. Election officials compare your signature to the one on file, which may come from your driver's license or an old registration form.

✓ If your signature has changed a lot over the years, ask your election office whether you can **update the signature** on file before you vote.

✓ If you are mailing in your ballot, check carefully before you seal the envelope to verify your signature, the date if your state requires one, and any **witness, ID, or notary** steps that might be required.

03 Watch for a Notice

✓ After you return your ballot, check your state's **ballot tracker**. Look for a status like “rejected,” “challenged,” or “needs attention.” The exact wording varies by state.

✓ Keep an eye on your mail, phone, email, and texts in the days around Election Day. Cure notices usually come from your **county or local election office**.

✓ If your tracker still doesn't show your ballot as **accepted** in the days after Election Day, contact your election office directly rather than waiting.

✓ Not sure a notice is real? Call your election office using the number on its **official website**, not a number listed in the message.

04 If Your Ballot Needs a Cure

- ✓ Act the **same day** if you can. Cure windows are often only a few days long.
- ✓ Read the notice for four things: what the problem is, what you need to submit, **how** to submit it, and the **deadline**.
- ✓ Most cures involve signing a form, often called a **cure affidavit**, confirming the ballot is yours. Some states also ask for a copy of your ID.
- ✓ Use the fastest return method your state allows. Depending on where you live, that may be in person, by email, fax, or mail, or through an online portal. If mail is your only option, send it right away.
- ✓ Some states handle it differently. They may send a **replacement ballot** or let you vote in person instead. If that's your option, act before the deadline.
- ✓ Keep a copy or photo of what you submitted, and write down when and how you sent it.
- ✓ Check your tracker again to confirm your ballot now shows as **accepted** or **counted**.

05 If You Voted a Provisional Ballot

- ✓ A **provisional ballot** is used when your eligibility can't be confirmed at the polls. Some need a follow-up step from you before they can count.
- ✓ If you voted provisionally because you didn't have the **required ID**, find out your deadline to show proof at your election office. In states that require this step, the deadline is usually a few days after Election Day.
- ✓ Keep the written information you were given when you voted. **Federal law** requires election officials to give you a way to find out whether your provisional ballot was counted and, if not, why.
- ✓ Use that phone number or website to check your status, and contact your election office if anything is unclear.

06 Precautions Worth Taking

- ✓ Get cure instructions and forms from your **election office**. Do not rely on a forwarded text or a social media post.
- ✓ You may hear from campaigns, parties, or volunteer groups about curing your ballot. Many of these contacts are legitimate, but confirm the details with your election office before you send anything.
- ✓ An official cure notice will never ask you for **payment**.
- ✓ If you hear that ballots in your area are being “thrown out,” verify it with an official source before you act on it. Sudden, unverified claims are usually wrong.
- ✓ If anything about the process feels confusing, contact your election office or call **866-OUR-VOTE** to check.

Got a cure notice, or not sure your ballot was accepted?

866-OUR-VOTE

Trained, nonpartisan volunteers can help you to find your cure deadline and figure out how to submit a fix. Call as soon as you hear about a problem. Cure windows are short.

Additional resources: National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) (state-by-state cure notice and correction rules) · US Vote Foundation (state-by-state absentee and mail rules) · CanIVote.org (run by the National Association of Secretaries of State, with ballot tracking by state)

Cure rules, deadlines, and methods vary by state and sometimes by county. Always confirm specifics with your state or county election office.

Watch for a notice. Act fast. Confirm it counted.