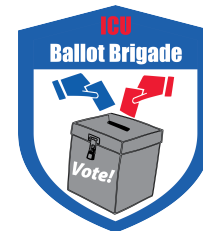




ICU Ballot Brigade Church Ballot Collection Program

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Summary of IL Ballot Collection (Harvesting) Laws

Compiled from Illinois Election Code and reviewed by Claude.ai by Anthropic, reviewed by ICU paralegal, final review by John Fogarty, Jr., Attorney

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DISCLAIMER: This information is for educational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. We recommend consulting with a qualified attorney tailored to your specific situation.

Key findings:

- Illinois law allows "any person authorized by the voter" to collect and deliver ballots
- There are no limits on the number of ballots one person can collect
- Special provisions exist for voters in hospitals or care facilities, where staff can collect ballots and **mail** them in.

NOTE: They cannot harvest (collect) them and take them in unless the voter gives specific authorization to a specific person/entity. If a person has been in a facility not more than 14 days there is a whole procedure that must be followed including an Attending Health Care professional statement.

- All ballot collection requires written authorization using a specific form
- The primary legal authority comes from 10 ILCS 5/19-6

The following summary explains who can legally collect ballots, the required procedures (including the authorization form), what activities are prohibited, and how ballots can be returned to election authorities. We were unable to find specific JCAR regulations that add additional rules beyond the statutory requirements in the Illinois Election Code.

Illinois has relatively permissive ballot collection laws compared to many other states, with the main requirement being written voter authorization rather than restrictions on who can collect or limits on the number of ballots.

Illinois Ballot Collection Laws Summary

What is Ballot Collection?

Ballot collection (sometimes called "ballot harvesting") is when someone other than the voter takes a completed ballot and delivers it to the election office. In Illinois, there are specific rules about who can do this and how it must be done.

Who Can Collect Ballots in Illinois?

Regular Voters

According to 10 ILCS 5/19-6, any person that the voter gives permission to can collect and deliver their ballot. This means:

- Anyone the voter chooses can collect their ballot
- The voter must give written permission using a special form
- There is **no limit** on how many ballots one person can collect

Special Cases for Voters Who Need Help

Voters in Hospitals or Care Facilities

If a *voter is in a hospital or care facility, any employee or person working at that facility can collect and **mail** the voter's ballot (not harvest or collect and deliver) This includes:

- Hospital staff members
- Nursing home employees
- Workers at assisted living facilities

*NOTE: different rules for someone who has been in a facility 14 days or less. See Section 19-3

Voters with Physical Disabilities

For voters who cannot physically handle their ballot due to disabilities, facility staff can help collect and mail their ballots.

Professional Delivery Companies

Licensed motor carrier companies (professional delivery services) that are approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission can also collect and deliver ballots. This company would have to have been give written permission just like an individual.

How Must Ballot Collection Be Done?

Written Permission Required

When someone other than the voter delivers a ballot, both the voter and the person helping must fill out an authorization form that comes with the ballot envelope. This form must include:

- The voter's signature and date
- The printed name of the person who will deliver the ballot
- The signature of the person delivering the ballot
- The date the ballot was delivered to the election office

What the Authorization Form Says

The form printed on the ballot envelope states: "I (voter) authorize to take the necessary steps to have this ballot delivered promptly to the office of the election authority."

What is Against the Law?

Unauthorized Collection

It is illegal for anyone to take a voter's ballot without the voter's permission, except for the special cases mentioned above (hospital staff for hospitalized voters, etc.).

No Limits on Number of Ballots

Unlike some other states, Illinois law does not set a maximum number of ballots that one person can collect. As long as each voter gives written permission, one person could theoretically collect hundreds of ballots.

How Ballots Can Be Returned

By Mail

- Voters can mail their own ballots
- Election authorities must accept vote-by-mail ballots even if they don't have enough postage or no postage at all

Drop-off Locations

- Election authorities may set up secure collection sites where voters can drop off ballots without postage
- These sites must be locked and only election officials can open them
- Ballots are collected daily, and any ballots dropped off after business hours are counted as received the next day (except on election day)

In-Person Delivery

- Voters can deliver their own ballots to the election office
- Authorized people can deliver ballots for voters (with written permission)

Legal Citations

All of these rules come from **10 ILCS 5/19-6** (Section 19-6 of the Illinois Election Code). This law was last updated by:

- Public Act 102-1 (effective April 2, 2021)
- Public Act 102-668 (effective November 15, 2021)

JCAR Regulations

Based on available information, there do not appear to be specific JCAR (Joint Committee on Administrative Rules) regulations that add additional rules beyond what is in the Illinois Election Code for ballot collection. The Illinois State Board of Elections does have authority to create additional security guidelines for ballot collection sites, but these would be internal guidelines rather than formal JCAR regulations.

Summary

In simple terms, Illinois has relatively permissive ballot collection laws compared to other states:

- Almost anyone can collect ballots if the voter gives written permission
- There's no limit on how many ballots one person can collect
- Special rules exist to help voters in hospitals and care facilities
- Both the voter and collector must sign authorization forms
- It's illegal to collect ballots without permission

The main law governing this is found in **10 ILCS 5/19-6** of the Illinois Election Code.