WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §3-3-5C

§3-3-5c. Procedures for voting an emergency absentee ballot by qualified voters.

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, a person qualified to vote an emergency absentee ballot, as provided in §3-3-1(c) of this code, may vote an emergency absentee ballot under the procedures established in this section. The county commission may adopt a policy extending the emergency absentee voting procedures to: (1) Qualified voters in hospitals or other duly licensed health care facilities within an adjacent county or within 35 miles of the county seat; (2) qualified voters in nursing homes within the county; or (3) qualified voters who become confined, on or after the seventh day preceding an election, to a specific location within the county because of illness, injury, physical disability, immobility due to advanced age, or another medical reason: Provided, That the policy is to be adopted by the county commission at least 90 days prior to the election that will be affected and a copy of the policy is to be filed with the Secretary of State.

(b) On or before the 56th day preceding the date on which any election is to be held, the official designated to supervise and conduct absentee voting shall notify the county commission of the number of sets of emergency absentee ballot commissioners which he or she determines necessary to perform the duties and functions pursuant to this section.

(c) A set of emergency absentee ballot commissioners at-large shall consist of two persons with different political party affiliations appointed by the county commission in accordance with the procedure prescribed for the appointment of election commissioners under the provisions of §3-1-1 et seq. of this code. Emergency absentee ballot commissioners have the same qualifications and rights and take the same oath required under the provisions of this chapter for commissioners of elections. Emergency absentee ballot commissioners are to be compensated for services and expenses in the same manner as commissioners of election or poll clerks obtaining and delivering election supplies under the provisions of §3-1-44 of this code.

(d) Upon request of the voter or a member of the voter’s immediate family or, when the county commission has adopted a policy to provide emergency absentee voting services to nursing home residents within the county, upon request of a staff member of the nursing home, the official designated to supervise and conduct absentee voting, upon receiving a proper request for voting an emergency absentee ballot no earlier than the seventh day next preceding the election and no later than noon of election day shall supply to the emergency absentee ballot commissioners the application for voting an emergency absentee ballot and the balloting materials. The emergency absentee ballot application is to be prescribed by the Secretary of State and is to include the name, residence address and political party affiliation of the voter, the date, location and reason for confinement in the case of an emergency, and the name of the attending physician.

(e) The application for an emergency absentee ballot is to be signed by the person applying.

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If the person applying for an emergency absentee ballot is unable to sign his or her application because of illiteracy or physical disability, he or she is to make his or her mark on the signature line provided for an illiterate or disabled applicant, the mark is to be witnessed. The person assisting the voter and witnessing the mark of the voter shall sign his or her name in the space provided.

(f) A declaration is to be completed and signed by each of the emergency absentee ballot commissioners, stating their names, the date on which they appeared at the place of confinement of the person applying for an emergency absentee ballot, and the particulars of the confinement.

(g) At least one of the emergency absentee ballot commissioners receiving the balloting materials shall sign a receipt which is to be attached to the application form. Each of the emergency absentee ballot commissioners shall deliver the materials to the absent voter, await his or her completion of the application and ballot and return the application and the ballot to the official designated to supervise and conduct absentee voting. Upon delivering the application and the voted ballot to the official, the emergency absentee ballot commissioners shall sign an oath that no person other than the absent voter voted the ballot. The application and the voted ballot are to be returned to the official designated to supervise and conduct absentee voting prior to the close of the polls on election day. Any ballots received by the official after the time that delivery may reasonably be made but before the closing of the polls are to be delivered to the canvassing board along with the absentee ballots challenged in accordance with the provisions of §3-3-10 of this code.

(h) Upon receiving the application and emergency absentee ballot, the official designated to supervise and conduct absentee voting shall ascertain whether the application is complete, whether the voter appears to be eligible to vote an emergency absentee ballot, and whether the voter is properly registered to vote with the office of the clerk of the county commission. If the voter is found to be properly registered in the precinct shown on the application, the ballot is to be delivered to the precinct election commissioner pursuant to §3-3-7 of this code. If the voter is found not to be registered or is otherwise ineligible to vote an emergency ballot, the ballot is to be challenged for the appropriate reason provided for in §3-3-10 of this code.

(i) If either or both of the emergency absentee ballot commissioners refuse to sign any application for voting an emergency absentee ballot, the voter may vote as an emergency absentee and the ballot will be challenged in accordance with the provisions of §3-3-10 of this code, in addition to those absentee ballots subject to challenge as provided in that section.

(j) Any voter who receives assistance in voting an emergency absentee ballot shall comply with the provisions of §3-3-6 of this code. Any other provisions of this chapter relating to absentee ballots not altered by the provisions of this section are to govern the treatment of emergency absentee ballots.

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