

Introduced: Ms. Mach  
1<sup>st</sup> Reading: October 25, 2021  
Passed: October 25, 2021  
Posted: October 26, 2021  
Effective: October 25, 2021

ORDINANCE NUMBER 1383

An Ordinance to Amend Article I "In General", "Section 8-4 "Absentee Voting" of Chapter 8, Elections" of the Greenbelt City Code

WHEREAS, Section 31 of the Greenbelt City Charter provides for runoff elections, in certain circumstances, but the City Council has approved no ordinances regarding runoff elections; and

WHEREAS, Section 27a of Charter and Section 8-13 of the City Code provide for early voting in municipal elections, but not in runoff elections; and

WHEREAS, in election year 2021, the governments of the City of Greenbelt and State of Maryland are facing a continuing public health emergency caused by Covid-19, a highly infectious disease commonly spread by face-to-face human contact; and

WHEREAS, in order to allow City voters to avoid such face-to-face contact, the City has encouraged early voting, prior to election day; and

WHEREAS, Council has determined that if, in or after election year 2021, a runoff election is required, under Section 31 of Charter, then early voting should be authorized in the runoff; and

WHEREAS, Attachment A hereto sets out the present Section 8-13 of the Code, regarding early voting, and Attachment B sets out, by underlining and brackets, the Council's amendments to Section 8-13; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, in view of the public health emergency, and to implement provisions in Sections 27a and 31 of Charter, has determined that Section 8-13 of the Code should be amended to provide for early voting in runoff elections, in and after the election of 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Greenbelt, Maryland, that Chapter 8, "Elections," be amended to read as follows:

**Chapter 8**  
**ARTICLE I.**  
**IN GENERAL**

Sec. 8-13. Early voting.

(a) Residents of the City who are qualified voters registered with the Prince George's County Board of Elections have the right to vote by early voting in municipal elections, as provided in this Section.

(b) For purposes of this Section, the "Board" is the Greenbelt Board of Elections; an "early voting ballot" is a ballot used for early voting prior to election day, but not used for mail-in voting or in a polling place on election day; "election day" is the day of a municipal election, other than a runoff election; a "runoff ballot" is a ballot used in a runoff election; and "runoff election day" is the day of a runoff election.

(c) Early voting is authorized during the period from the fourth Saturday to the first Friday prior to election day, as follows:

(1) During the period, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on all Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on all Tuesdays, in the Municipal Building;

(2) From 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the first Saturday and from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the first Sunday during the period, at the Municipal Building;

(3) From 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the second Saturday and from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the second Sunday during the period, in Greenbelt West; and

(4) From 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the third Saturday and from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the third Sunday during the period, in Greenbelt East.

(d) Early voting ballots shall be cast and counted as follows:

(1) The voter must obtain and complete an early voting ballot on the designated premises; seal it in a blank envelope; place and seal the blank envelope in an early voting envelope, signed by the voter, with the name as registered printed on it; and then place the envelope in a designated ballot box.

(2) Ballots in early voting envelopes that contain more than one blank, sealed envelope shall be kept by the City Clerk but may not be counted.

(3) If a ballot is submitted in a properly signed and sealed early voting envelope but not contained within a blank, sealed envelope, then the Board shall decide by majority vote whether the ballot may be counted and whether the voter's privacy has been violated. If such a ballot is to be counted, it shall be placed in a blank, sealed envelope and then included with all other envelopes containing early voting ballots. The City Clerk shall notify by mail every voter whose privacy the Board determines has or might have been violated.

(4) The City Clerk shall deliver the early voting sealed, blank envelopes to the Clerks appointed

by the Board for the counting of early voting ballots. The City Clerk shall advise them of the number of ballots cast and shall keep the same record of early voting ballots as is kept by the Clerks of election at their polling places.

(5) Upon receipt of the early voting sealed, blank envelopes, the Early Voting Clerks shall open them and determine whether any contain more than one ballot. A ballot in an envelope containing more than one ballot may not be counted.

(6) If the City Clerk or an Early Voting Clerk challenges a ballot for noncompliance with the Code, then the Board shall decide whether it may be counted. All such Board decisions, by majority vote, shall be final.

(e) For runoff elections, the Board shall decide the form of runoff ballots and how, where, and when runoff ballots may be cast, in accordance with the requirements of Charter and applicable provisions of the Code. The conduct of runoff election day, the counting of runoff ballots, and the certifying of runoff election results shall be as determined by the Board.

(f) In general, the Board shall conduct runoff elections in substantially the same way it conducts other municipal elections. The Board for a runoff election day may provide for voting by paper ballot, machine ballot, or any other means the Board deems fit and proper.

(g) The Board is authorized to conduct runoff early voting. Such voting shall be substantially the same as early voting in other municipal elections.

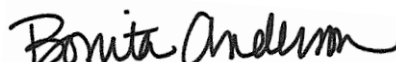
(h) Prior to a runoff election day, the Board may allow runoff early voting at such times, dates, and locations and in such manner as it deems fit and proper. Runoff early voting ballots shall be in the same format as those used on runoff election day.

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PASSED by the Council of the City of Greenbelt, Maryland, at its regular meeting of October 25, 2021.

  
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Colin A. Byrd, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Bonita Anderson, City Clerk

Key:

Underscoring indicates language added to existing law.

[Brackets] indicate language deleted from existing law.

Asterisks \*\*\* indicate intervening existing Code provisions that remain unchanged.