



# STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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## ELECTION NEWS

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### **EARLY VOTING BEGINS MONDAY February 27, 2012**

Springfield, IL, February 24, 2012 – Voting by personal appearance at an Early Voting Center begins Monday, February 27, 2012 for the March 20, 2012 Primary Election. Election authorities in each county in the state have announced the locations of Early Voting Centers that will be open through March 15, 2012. Eligible voters will be able to vote at certain times and locations on two weekends during the early voting period. In less populous counties, the County Clerk's office often is the Early Voting location.

There will be approximately 200 Early Voting Centers throughout Chicago, suburban Cook County, and populous counties in the metropolitan Chicago area. Nearly one million people (or 16 percent of the Illinois votes) were cast at an Early Voting Center in the November 2008 Presidential Election.

"Voting early by personal appearance, without having to give a reason, has proven to be a popular option for Illinois voters," said Rupert T. Borgsmiller, Executive Director of the State Board of Elections. "Voters appreciate the convenience of going to the polls on their own schedule."

Another provision expands the no excuse voting concept to absentee voting by mail. Now, absentee voters can vote without an excuse or reason.

State law specifies that a permanent polling place for early voting must remain open on weekdays from 8:30 to 4:30 or from 9:00 to 5:00. The law also states that the permanent polling place for early voting be open for at least 14 hours on the final weekend during the early voting period.

Early voting by personal appearance is one of the three voting options available to eligible voters. Absentee or voting by mail is now available to all registered voters. Grace Period Voting is available to those who wish to register beyond the statutory deadline. Although the traditional voter registration deadline has passed for the primary, eligible voters may register or change their address during the Grace Period Registration which runs through March 13, 2012. Those who participate in Grace Period Registration must vote at the office of the election authority or by mail, at the discretion of the election authority, and are not eligible to vote at an Early Voting Center or at a polling place on Election Day.

The State Board of Elections is an independent state agency charged with the responsibility of having general supervision over the administration of election laws of the State.

Elections are administered locally by the State's 110 election authorities.

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