

# INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS AND AEROSPACE WORKERS



**OFFICIAL CIRCULAR NO. 891**


**Absentee Ballots**


**UPDATED: January 1, 2023**

9000 Machinists Place, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

## **TO THE MEMBERSHIP EVERYWHERE, GREETINGS:**

 **SUBJECT** Policy on the use of absentee ballots in local and district lodge elections.

 **PURPOSE** To update and bring into compliance Official Circular 868 and previous circulars concerning absentee ballots consistent with the 40<sup>th</sup> Grand Lodge Convention, and to clarify that these procedures apply in Local Lodge and District Lodge elections. The procedures for Grand Lodge elections will be provided in advance of each Grand Lodge election.

 **INFORMATION/INSTRUCTIONS** The IAM Constitution, in Article II, Section 3, lists the reasons that members may be entitled to vote by absentee ballot and the specific procedures that must be followed when absentee ballots are requested. Article XXII, Section 7, and Article B, Section 4, of the IAM Constitution, in turn, govern nominations and elections for local and district lodge office and provide for the use of absentee ballots in accordance with the provisions of Article II, Section 3. It is essential that these provisions, as well as applicable local or district lodge bylaws, be strictly adhered to in conducting lodge elections. Failure to apply these provisions consistently is one of the most common reasons that lodge elections are challenged by the U. S. Department of Labor. Accordingly, in order to avoid the cost of a re-run election and/or court challenge, the provisions of the IAM Constitution and this circular must be followed.

### **A. Eligibility to Vote by Absentee Ballot**

1. Members who reside in outlying areas more than 25 miles from the designated balloting place.
2. Members who are at work during the times of the local lodge balloting.
3. Members who are either confined because of illness or injury.
4. Members who are on leave qualifying under U.S. and/or Canadian family leave laws.
5. Members who are on vacation and retired members more than 25 miles from their residence on election day.
6. Members who are on official IAM business approved by the local, district, or Grand Lodge.

7. Members who are on an employer travel assignment.
8. Members who are on reserve military leave.

**B. Absentee Ballot Procedures**

1. Pre-printed applications for absentee ballots, listing the aforementioned qualifications, shall be mailed by the local or district lodge. Candidates running for office also may make forms available.
2. A written request for an absentee ballot must be delivered by the requestee either in person or by official government mail to the recording secretary not later than fifteen (15) days prior to the election.
3. The recording secretary and secretary-treasurer shall verify the reason indicated by the member for requesting an absentee ballot at the time the request is received. Within 5 business days from receipt of any such request or receipt of printed ballots, whichever is later, the recording secretary and secretary treasurer shall mail the ballot if the member is eligible to vote by absentee ballot. In the event the recording secretary or secretary-treasurer determines that the member is not eligible to vote by absentee ballot, he/she shall advise the member that the request for an absentee ballot has been denied and the reason for that determination within five (5) business days of the receipt of the request, so that the member has adequate notice of the need to vote in person.
4. When an eligible member receives an absentee ballot, that ballot must be executed in accordance with the terms of the IAM Constitution and mailed by official government mail to the recording secretary so that it will be received by or prior to the closing of the polls, as specified in the notice of election. The absentee ballots shall then be turned over to the tellers.
5. Under no circumstances may absentee ballots be bundled or returned together. The absentee ballot must be returned by the member through official government mail in its own envelope.

Fraternally yours,



Dora Cervantes  
GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER



Robert Martinez, Jr.  
INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT