

COUNTY AUDITOR  
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***NEWS RELEASE***

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**Validity of Black Hawk County Absentee Ballot Requests**

Black Hawk County is not involved in the lawsuits aimed at invalidating the absentee ballot request (ABR) forms sent out by certain counties.

“All of the general election ABRs received by voters in Black Hawk County are legitimate,” said Black Hawk County Auditor Grant Veeder, whose office has received numerous calls asking for clarification. “Whether it came from our office, or a political party, or another organization, like the Center for Voter Information, the form is valid and will result in you getting an absentee ballot mailed to you by our office.”

Johnson, Linn and Woodbury Counties are being sued by the Republican party and the Trump campaign for filling in some of the information required on the ABRs before they were mailed to voters, contrary to instructions provided to county auditors by Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate. In a pandemic-related emergency directive, Pate said his office would send blank absentee ballot request forms to all active registered voters in the state, and that any county auditor mailing ABRs must also send blank forms “to ensure uniformity.”

Several counties had decided to send their own forms when a recently passed law requiring approval of the Secretary of State’s emergency directives by the Iowa Legislative Council led to doubts that Pate would be allowed to mail ABRs to voters for the general election as he had for the primary. When the Council unanimously approved Pate’s directive, counties like Black Hawk that had already begun the process went through with their mailings. Black Hawk’s ABRs went out blank.

“Some of the confusion here stems from the fact that the ABRs sent by the Center for Voter Information had name and address filled in. Organizations like that and the political parties were not covered by Secretary Pate’s directive, so those forms are perfectly all right,” said Veeder.

“In fact, all of the ABR mailings in Black Hawk County that we know about are in compliance with the law and are not being challenged in court,” he went on. “If we receive a ballot request form from you that has any kind of problem, we will contact you.”

Further questions may be addressed to the Black Hawk County Election Office at 833-3007 or [election@co.black-hawk.ia.us](mailto:election@co.black-hawk.ia.us).