INSTRUCTIONS FOR
VOTING AN ABSENTEE BALLOT

The law requires that a **witness** must be present for Steps 3 through 7 listed below. Any person can serve as your witness.

**BEFORE VOTING**

1. **IF YOU DECIDE NOT TO VOTE BY ABSENTEE BALLOT, do NOT open Envelope A [BALLOT WITHIN].** If you can vote in person, hand the unused ballot to an election official when presenting your identification, or mail the ballot **unopened** in the pre-addressed envelope to be received by the General Registrar on or before election day.

2. When voting, do not open Envelope A until the person who will be your witness is present. **IF** you vote in the office of a Virginia election official, your witness must be a Registrar or member of the Electoral Board.

**VOTING THE BALLOT**

3. Open Envelope A. **Remove the ballot and mark it in the presence of your witness without assistance and without letting the witness know how you vote.** If you are unable to vote without assistance, see Item 11.

4. **Follow the instructions on your ballot for marking the name of each candidate or question response for which you want to vote. Leave all other choices blank. For each office, vote only for the number of candidates indicated.**

5. **Place your voted ballot(s) inside Envelope B, folding if needed. Place ALL of your ballots in Envelope B [BALLOT(S)] and seal it. Do not put anything else in that envelope.**

6. **Fill in ALL the blank spaces in the STATEMENT OF ABSENTEE VOTER on Envelope B. Your ballots **WILL NOT BE COUNTED** if you fail to complete any blank. You must provide your Virginia residence address NOT the ballot-mailing address in this affidavit. Then, sign and date the statement. If you are unable to sign or make your mark, see Item 11.

7. Your witness also must sign at the bottom of the STATEMENT OF ABSENTEE VOTER on Envelope B; an X or mark is not acceptable.

**VOTING THE BALLOT [continued]**

8. **Place Envelope B in the return envelope pre-addressed to the Secretary of the Electoral Board. Return your ballot using ONE of the following methods:**

- **MAIL IT** (United States Postal Service), OR
- **RETURN IT BY A COMMERCIAL DELIVERY SERVICE** [e.g., Federal Express, UPS, DHL]; OR
HAND DELIVER YOUR OWN BALLOT PERSONALLY

to the General Registrar or to a member of the Electoral Board so that it is received before 7:00 p.m. on election day. Neither a personal courier service nor another individual may deliver it for you. You may not leave your voted absentee ballot at a precinct polling place; doing so will invalidate the ballot.

9. If you lose your ballot, immediately contact the General Registrar or a member of the Electoral Board.

SPOILED BALLOT

10. If you make an error in marking the ballot or if you accidentally damage it, and there is sufficient time to receive it before election day, you may request a new ballot. Return the ballot you received to the General Registrar with a letter, signed by you, stating that your enclosed ballot is spoiled and requesting a new ballot.

ASSISTANCE IN VOTING

11. If you indicated on your application that you need assistance in voting your ballot, a REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE form is enclosed. This form must be completed by the voter and by the person who assists the voter BEFORE assistance is provided. If, upon receipt of this form, assistance is not needed, you do not need to return the form. For blind voters, see Item 12.

Sign the REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE on the form. If you are unable to sign or make your mark, the person assisting you must enter APPLICANT CANNOT SIGN and must print your name on the line provided. Have your assistant sign and print his/her name and address in the ASSISTANT section. Return the REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE form in the envelope pre-addressed to the General Registrar or Electoral Board. Do NOT insert this form in Envelope B with your ballots.

BLIND VOTER

12. BEFORE assisting a blind voter, the person providing the assistance must print the blind voter’s full name and the words “BLIND VOTER” on the Signature of Voter line in the VOTER section. The assistant then must sign and print his/her full name and address in the ASSISTANT section. Return the form in the envelope pre-addressed to the General Registrar or Electoral Board. Do NOT insert this form in Envelope B with your ballots.

13. Remember you can CHECK THE STATUS OF YOUR BALLOT ONLINE and confirm the date it was received by your locality using the Virginia Department of Elections website, ELECTIONS.VIRGINIA.GOV