

# Durbin, Duckworth Urge Usps To Prioritize Election Mail Ahead Of November General Election

August 26 2020 9:16 AM



SPRINGFIELD – U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) sent a letter to U.S. Postal Service (USPS) and Illinois State Board of Elections (SBOE) leaders following their call last week to discuss constituent concerns about voting by mail. In the letter, Durbin and Duckworth urged officials to ensure that election mail is processed expeditiously and to immediately enact an official policy to ensure that all vote-by-mail applications and ballots are treated as First-Class Mail. The letter was sent to USPS Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, USPS Director of Election Mail Justin Glass, SBOE Chair Chuck Scholz, SBOE Vice Chair Ian Linnabary, and SBOE Executive Director Steve Sandvoss.

The letter follows up on suggested vote-by-mail deadlines discussed in Durbin and Duckworth's [call with SBOE and USPS staff](#) last week. According to SBOE, in Illinois, election authorities will begin mailing ballots to voters who have requested mail-in ballots on September 24, and Illinois voters can continue to request a mail-in ballot up to five days before the November general election. Voters must ensure their ballot is postmarked by November 3 and their local election authority must receive their ballot within 14 days after Election Day for it to be counted under Illinois law.

However, USPS officials on the call recommended that Illinois voters should request ballots as early as possible and no later than October 19, which marks 15 days before the election. USPS officials also recommended that Illinois voters should return their ballots by mail no later than October 27, which marks seven days before the election.

“According to both the USPS and SBOE officials on the call, adhering to these USPS recommendations will give Illinois voters the best chance of ensuring that their ballots are counted. SBOE officials also noted that Illinois voters will be able to check on the status of their mailed ballots with their local election authorities and that, under Illinois law, election authorities will contact voters to address any problems that are discovered with completed ballots, such as a missing signature,” the Senators wrote.

“While we are encouraged by the efforts that SBOE is taking to ensure that our constituents in Illinois—from all political persuasions—are able to safely and successfully participate in the election, we remain deeply concerned about the detrimental changes at USPS that have led to significant delays in mail delivery and necessitated this conversation,” they continued.

Full text of the letter is available [here](#) and below: