

**SB373 INTRODUCED**



1 SB373  
2 CXU8UJQ-1  
3 By Senator Coleman-Madison  
4 RFD: Judiciary  
5 First Read: 19-Mar-26



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SYNOPSIS:

Under existing law, the only way for an elector to vote before election day is to vote by absentee ballot, provided the elector meets one of the excuses that allows for absentee voting.

This bill would provide a process for in-person early voting in general and special elections, other than municipal elections.

This bill would prescribe minimum days and hours of operation of early voting centers.

This bill would allow an elector, without excuse, to cast his or her vote using a paper ballot and tabulator at an early voting center.

This bill would require each county commission to establish early voting center locations in the county and establish a communications plan to publish notice of early voting in the respective county.

This bill would provide that staffing, reimbursement of election expenses, and election day conduct would apply to early voting.

This bill would also require the Secretary of State to adopt rules to ensure the process does not permit electors to vote more than once in any election.



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29 A BILL  
30 TO BE ENTITLED  
31 AN ACT

32  
33 Relating to elections; to provide a process for early  
34 voting in certain elections; to prescribe the number,  
35 location, and hours of operation of early voting centers in  
36 each county; to authorize electors to cast a vote, without  
37 excuse, by paper ballot and tabulator at an early voting  
38 center; to provide for the conduct of early voting; and to  
39 require the Secretary of State to adopt rules.

40 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

41 Section 1. (a) This section shall apply to all general  
42 and special elections other than municipal elections.

43 (b) Beginning in the election cycle for the November  
44 2028 General Election, qualified electors of this state may  
45 obtain and cast an in-person ballot in advance of election  
46 day, without excuse, at an early voting center in accordance  
47 with this section.

48 (c) (1) The early voting period shall begin the Saturday  
49 10 calendar days before election day and extend until close of  
50 business on the Thursday five days before election day. Early  
51 voting centers shall have the following hours of operation:

52 a. On weekdays and Saturdays, early voting centers  
53 shall be open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

54 b. On Sundays, early voting centers shall be open 1:00  
55 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

56 (2) The early voting election officials may establish



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57 hours of operation where the early voting centers are open  
58 longer than the required times under subdivision (1). Nothing  
59 in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit a county  
60 commission from establishing a greater number of hours for  
61 voting during the early voting period beyond the number of  
62 hours required by this subsection.

63 (d) (1) Notwithstanding Section 17-8-1, Code of Alabama  
64 1975, not more than 20 nor less than 15 days before the date  
65 early voting begins pursuant to this section, the appointing  
66 board of each county shall appoint necessary early voting  
67 election officials, including at least one inspector and three  
68 clerks at each center. During the early voting period,  
69 election officials shall carry out the roles, duties, and  
70 functions prescribed by law to election officials on election  
71 day, as further provided by rules adopted by the Secretary of  
72 State. Election officials shall be compensated for their  
73 services as provided in Section 17-8-12, Code of Alabama 1975.

74 (2) Poll watchers shall be allowed at each early voting  
75 center as provided in Section 17-8-7, Code of Alabama 1975, or  
76 as otherwise provided by law.

77 (e) (1) Each county shall operate at least one early  
78 voting center for every 100,000 residents, according to the  
79 most recent federal decennial census. The county commission  
80 shall determine the location of each early voting center and  
81 the geographical area the center serves using the most recent  
82 federal decennial census tract and block map. The boundaries  
83 shall coincide with existing precinct boundaries. An early  
84 voting center may be located in any branch of the county



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85 courthouse or courthouse annex, a government building  
86 generally accessible to the public, or a location that is used  
87 as an election day polling place.

88 (2) Notwithstanding subdivision (1), for any special  
89 election, the county commission, by majority vote, may reduce  
90 the number of early voting centers when the commission  
91 determines a lesser number of centers is sufficient to meet  
92 the needs of early voters.

93 (f) The process for voting at an early voting center  
94 shall be conducted in the same manner as set forth in state  
95 law for voting in person on election day. Each early voting  
96 center shall be equipped with at least two tabulator machines  
97 with which electors may cast their paper ballot. When the time  
98 arrives for closing the early voting centers each day, all  
99 qualified voters who are waiting in line to vote shall be  
100 permitted by the election officer to cast their vote. Upon the  
101 daily closing of an early voting center, the election officers  
102 shall secure all ballots cast, the poll lists maintained at  
103 the location, and all other voting materials, whether used or  
104 unused, as provided by rules adopted by the Secretary of State  
105 as necessary to comply with state law.

106 (g) Each county commission shall create a communication  
107 plan to inform eligible electors of the opportunity to vote  
108 early. The plan may use any media outlet, including social  
109 media and the official county website, and shall publicize the  
110 designation of voting precincts to assigned early voting  
111 centers, along with the location, date, and hours of operation  
112 of each early voting center. Each county shall provide the



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113 Secretary of State's Office with elector polling place  
114 information for early voting, and the Secretary of State shall  
115 integrate the early voting polling place information in its  
116 voter information poll locator website.

117 (h) All expenses and costs incurred to comply with this  
118 section shall be reimbursed in accordance with Article 1 of  
119 Chapter 16 of Title 17, Code of Alabama 1975.

120 (i) The Secretary of State shall adopt rules to  
121 implement this section. The rules shall include, but not be  
122 limited to, provisions that do all of the following:

123 (1) Ensure that ballots cast early, by any method  
124 allowed under state law, are counted and canvassed as if cast  
125 on election day.

126 (2) Ensure an efficient and fair early voting process  
127 that respects the privacy of the voter.

128 (3) Ensure that electors who vote during the early  
129 voting period are not permitted to vote more than once in the  
130 same election.

131 Section 2. This act shall become effective on July 1,  
132 2026.