

## New legislation requires application for mail-in vote

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With the municipal election set for Tuesday, April 8, many will notice changes to this year's voting policies.

Due to recent legislative changes in election laws in Colorado, the permanent mail-in status has been eliminated. Those who had been receiving ballots by mail can pick up an absentee voter application if wanting to handle the 2014 municipal election ballot through the mail. Applications must be received by Friday, April 4.

Colorado House Bill 14-1164 was signed into law by Gov. John Hickenlooper Feb. 18 and may affect the voter turnout for the upcoming municipal election.

City of Holyoke Clerk/Treasurer Kathy Olofson noted that in the 2012 election, 300 of the 385 ballots the city received were by mail. Eliminating the permanent mail-in voter status may cause the number of voters to dip with the inconvenience of making it to polls or attaining absentee voter applications.

While the voter turnout may drop, Olofson noted that the new bill may make counting the ballots more timely. She explained that opening the mailed ballots and counting them was very time-consuming. Olofson also stated that only about half of the permanent mail-in voters actually submitted ballots in 2012.

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