

the oath on the ballot envelope, any person may, at the request and in accordance with the direction of the voter, mark the ballot, sign the name of the voter on the line provided for the voter's signature, and complete the oath on the face of the ballot envelope; and the following affidavit shall be executed and enclosed in the Return Envelope—not in the Ballot Envelope. No such person shall, in any manner, request, suggest, or seek to persuade or induce any such voter to vote for or against any particular ticket, candidate, or question.

"State of .....,  
City or County of ....., to wit:

I hereby declare, under the penalty for perjury, that on this ..... day of ....., 19...., ....., a qualified voter entitled to vote pursuant to Article 33 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, who is unable by reason of blindness or physical disability, without assistance, to mark a ballot and sign the oath on the ballot envelope, authorized me to mark the ballot, sign his name on the line provided for the voter's signature and complete the oath on the face of the ballot envelope. I have marked the enclosed ballot in accordance with his instructions and have not attempted to influence him to vote for or against any political party, any candidate or any question appearing on the ballot.

.....  
(Name and address of person assisting the voter)

(If the above form is used, detach it, fill in the blanks, and enclose in the Return Envelope.)"

**27-9. Canvassing of ballots.**

(a) The Board shall not open or unfold any absentee ballot at any time prior to the closing of the polls and the beginning of the canvass of the absentee ballots.

(b) At any time after the closing of the polls and not later than the canvass of the votes cast at the regular voting places in this State at any election, the several boards shall meet at the usual place for holding the circuit court for the county or at the usual offices of the board and shall proceed to count, certify and canvass the absentee ballots contained in the ballot envelopes, received by them prior to the closing of the polls on election day. No ballot shall be rejected by the board except by the unanimous vote of the entire board. This canvass shall be conducted in accordance with the applicable provisions of Section 14-1 of this Article. All voters' applications, medical certificates, notarial affidavits, certifications, ballot envelopes and ballots shall be kept separate and apart from ballots cast at the regular voting places and retained for six (6) months after the date of election at which they were cast, unless prior to that time, the board shall be ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction, to keep the same for any longer period. The several boards are hereby granted authority to appoint such numbers of temporary judges as said boards may deem necessary to adequately and promptly carry out the provisions of this section.

(c) Any absentee ballot voted for a person who has ceased to be a candidate shall not be counted for such candidate but such vote shall not invalidate the remainder of such ballot.