

# SENATE BILL 925

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By: **Senator Patterson**

Introduced and read first time: February 11, 2022

Assigned to: Rules

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Prince George's County – Special Elections Conducted by Mail – Voting Centers**

3 FOR the purpose of altering requirements for voting centers used in a special election  
4 conducted by mail in Prince George's County; and generally relating to special  
5 elections in Prince George's County.

6 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

7 Article – Election Law

8 Section 9–501

9 Annotated Code of Maryland

10 (2017 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

12 Article – Election Law

13 Section 9–503

14 Annotated Code of Maryland

15 (2017 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

17 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Election Law**

19 9–501.

20 (a) This subtitle applies only to a special election that is not held concurrently  
21 with a regularly scheduled primary or general election.

22 (b) Voting by mail may be utilized in a special election in accordance with this  
23 subtitle.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (c) A special election to fill a vacancy in the Office of Representative in Congress  
2 shall be conducted by mail if the Governor's proclamation issued under § 8-710 of this  
3 article directs that the election be conducted by mail.

4 (d) (1) In this subsection, "local special election" means a special election to:

5 (i) fill a vacancy in the offices of county council member, chief  
6 executive officer, or county executive of a charter county if the charter of that county  
7 provides for special elections;

8 (ii) fill a vacancy in the board of county commissioners of a code  
9 home rule county if a local law enacted by that county provides for special elections;

10 (iii) fill a vacancy in the board of county commissioners of a  
11 commission county if a law provides for special elections;

12 (iv) fill a vacancy in a local board of education if State law provides  
13 for special elections;

14 (v) elect members of a charter board or submit a proposed charter to  
15 the voters for adoption or rejection in accordance with Article XI-A, § 1A of the Maryland  
16 Constitution; or

17 (vi) submit a local law enacted by a code home rule county to the  
18 voters for adoption or rejection in accordance with § 9-313 of the Local Government Article.

19 (2) A local special election shall be conducted by mail if the resolution of  
20 the county council or board of county commissioners establishing the date of the special  
21 election directs that the election be conducted by mail.

22 (e) Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle:

23 (1) provisions of this article relating to absentee voting apply to voting by  
24 mail; and

25 (2) all pertinent State or local laws relating to the conduct of a special  
26 election apply to a special election conducted under this subtitle.

27 (f) Provisions of this article relating to the conduct of elections apply to a special  
28 election conducted under this subtitle, unless a law specifically relevant to a special election  
29 applies.

30 9-503.

31 (a) Each local board shall establish at least one voting center for the use of any  
32 eligible voter who chooses to cast a ballot in person in a special election in accordance with  
33 this section.

1 (b) (1) A voting center shall be located at a local board office or another location  
2 within the constituency where the special election is being held.

3 (2) In Montgomery County **AND PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY**:

4 (i) in a special election held in a single county council district, at  
5 least one voting center shall be established in the county council district where the special  
6 election is being held; and

7 (ii) in a countywide special election, at least one voting center shall  
8 be established in each county council district.

9 (c) A voting center established under this section shall:

10 (1) provide access to a voting system that is accessible to voters with  
11 disabilities in accordance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act and the federal  
12 Help America Vote Act;

13 (2) provide for provisional voting in accordance with Subtitle 4 of this title;

14 (3) satisfy the requirements of § 10–101 of this article; and

15 (4) (i) unless otherwise specified in the proclamation issued by the  
16 Governor that directs that the special election be conducted by mail, and except as provided  
17 in item (ii) of this item, be open for voting each day beginning 6 days before the day of a  
18 special election through the day of a special election during the hours between:

19 1. 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday; and

20 2. 12 noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday; and

21 (ii) in Montgomery County **AND PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY**, be  
22 open for voting during the days and for the hours that the county council directs in the  
23 resolution under § 9–501(d)(2) of this subtitle.

24 (d) If necessary to expedite the conduct of a special election and subject to the  
25 approval of the State Board, a local board may establish a voting center under this section  
26 during a period when a change in polling places is prohibited under § 2–303 of this article.

27 (e) The process for applying in person for an absentee ballot at the office of a local  
28 board under § 9–305 of this title does not apply to a special election conducted by mail.

29 (f) Except as otherwise provided in this section, any provision of this article that  
30 applies to voting at a polling place on election day also applies to voting at a voting center  
31 established under this section.

1           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June  
2 1, 2022.