OMNIBALLOT

From DEMOCRACYLIVE

What is OmniBallot from Democracy Live?

OmniBallot is a web portal used by election offices to make ballots accessible to registered, eligible voters who would otherwise not be able to access their ballots. Similar to Docusign, or other electronic document transmission tools, OmniBallot is a Web portal that allows voters to access and print their ballot documents. No ballots are tabulated via OmniBallot; all ballots are returned, reviewed and processed at the voter's local elections office.

OmniBallot is currently used by more than 2,500 election jurisdictions in the United States and around the world. It has been independently tested by more than 800 cybersecurity experts.

The OmniBallot portal has been deployed without incident in over 5,000 elections since 2008. OmniBallot is currently used by U.S. military and overseas voters, and voters living with disabilities. Registered voters have used OmniBallot to return their ballots from submarines, from off-grid military bases, from all seven continents, and from parts of the United States impacted by natural disasters. OmniBallot makes it possible for eligible, registered voters to access their ballots and participate in our democratic system.

How does OmniBallot work?

Ballots accessed via OmniBallot are reviewed and processed in the same manner as other vote-by-mail ballots. All ballot documents accessed from OmniBallot must be returned to the voters' local elections office, where they are reviewed for approval by the voters' local elections authority *before* processing and tabulating any ballots. Just like with any vote-by-mail ballot, ballots accessed via OmniBallot are checked to confirm signatures, eligibility, and registration status before being counted. Like all vote-by-mail systems, credentialing of the ballot packages is conducted on the *return* of the ballot documents to the elections office. No ballots are processed for tabulation until the local elections' authority approves the voter (typically by signature comparison and other credentialing requirements; this varies state to state). All ballot documents hosted in OmniBallot are printed on paper before being processed for tabulation.

This means that if someone decides to falsify a ballot via OmniBallot and send it into their local election office, it will be flagged as fraudulent by the local election office before being counted. It is a felony to falsify the ballot return documents.

Can you explain how OmniBallot is secure?

OmniBallot is an electronic method of delivering and returning ballots via a secure online portal, hosted by Amazon's secure cloud (AWS.) No ballots are processed for tabulation until the voter credentials are returned, reviewed, and approved by the voter's local elections authority, like all vote-by-mail ballots.

The technical details: Democracy Live is fully SOC 2 Type II and ISO 27001 certified. OmniBallot undergoes nearly daily independent testing, with over 800 independent cybersecurity tests in 2024

alone. OmniBallot undergoes ongoing 24/7 independent monitoring. The OmniBallot cloud infrastructure has been certified for use by federal agencies under FedRamp certification. FedRamp approval allows Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Defense, FBI, the National Security Agency (NSA) and virtually all other federal security and intelligence agencies to use AWS for securely transmitting critical documents.

Does OmniBallot count ballots?

No. OmniBallot is not a voting/tabulation system. Voting/tabulation systems create ballots, tabulate ballots and report ballot totals. OmniBallot does none of these. Similar to DocuSign℠ and other document transmission tools, OmniBallot simply hosts and transmits markable documents (in this case, the ballot documents). The documents are printed and tabulation is done on an entirely separate system at the elections office. A voter-verified paper ballot is always available for a hand recount if necessary.

Did you know?

Each of the nearly 8,000 elections jurisdictions in the United States are required by federal law to transmit ballots electronically to military and overseas voters. Unless they use a secure portal such as OmniBallot, a majority of those ballots are transmitted by less secure email attachments (or fax machines). OmniBallot has been designed and deployed as a security upgrade to help election officials comply with federal law by replacing less secure methods of ballot transmission.

Who is Democracy Live?

Seattle-based Democracy Live is the largest provider of cloud-based elections solutions in the U.S. The company has been selected by the United States Department of Defense, U.S. State Department and deployed in over 30 states to deliver secure, accessible electronic balloting to nearly 20 million voters. Democracy Live was awarded the 2019 Accessibility in Voting Award presented at the United Nations and winner of the AWS Civic Tech Innovation Award voted on by State CIOs and CTOs. Multiple U.S. election jurisdictions have won national innovation awards for deploying OmniBallot.

Independent Security Reviews

Over 800 cybersecurity researchers have tested OmniBallot in 2024 alone. Additionally, OmniBallot is independently monitored 24/7 by an independent cybersecurity firm to monitor all digital traffic, network activity, and application integrity.

Since 2020, Democracy Live has engaged Synack to conduct continuous, independent testing of the OmniBallot balloting portal. Synack researchers put the OmniBallot portal through ongoing rigorous security testing. Synack researchers conduct 365 testing on OmniBallot and its networks, searching for potential vulnerabilities. Our testing process draws on a pool of over 1,500 trusted cybersecurity researchers who are incentivized to find vulnerabilities.

*Findings from a recent Synack security report showed nearly 400 independent researchers tested OmniBallot for vulnerabilities over 980 hours. The security testing found **zero vulnerabilities in OmniBallot**. - Synack*