

FAQ

Can you explain how OmniBallot is Secure?

OmniBallot is an electronic method of delivering and returning ballots via a secure Web-based portal. The portal is hosted by Amazon's federally approved cloud called AWS. Although the ballot may be transmitted and returned electronically, the ballot that is counted is always a paper ballot. The AWS cloud has been certified for use by federal agencies under FedRamp certification. FedRamp approval allows the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Defense, FBI, CIA, the National Security Agency (NSA) and virtually all other federal security and intelligence agencies to use AWS.

OmniBallot utilizes AWS Object Lock to ensure immutable and encrypted document (ballot) storage. This means the ballot cannot be changed once it is secured in Object Lock. Object Lock meets all NIST and federal requirements for secure electronic document storage of critical agency documents, such as ballots.

Democracy Live technologies have been deployed in over 5,000 elections, across over 2,500 jurisdiction since 2008. OmniBallot has served voters in 96 countries around the world, across every continent. Available to over 20 million voters, OmniBallot is the most deployed balloting portal in the U.S.

Is OmniBallot an “online voting” system?

No. OmniBallot is not an online voting system. Per the EAC, any voting system must 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 a markable document (the ballot). At the end of the voting process, a paper ballot is downloaded by either the voter, or the elections administrator and printed. Tabulation is done on an entirely separate system. A voter verified 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. The majority of those ballots are transmitted by simple email attachments, or even fax machines. OmniBallot has been designed and deployed as a important security upgrade over email and fax balloting.

Who is Democracy Live?

Seattle-based Democracy Live is the largest provider of cloud-based balloting in the U.S. The company has been selected by the United States Department of Defense, the U.S. State Department and deployed in 30 states to deliver secure, accessible electronic balloting, available to over 20 million voters. Democracy Live was awarded the 2019 Accessibility in Voting Award presented at the United Nations, winner of the AWS Civic Tech Innovation Award voted on by State CIO's and CTO's and a two-time winner of the Elections Center Independence Award presented to our counties for leveraging OmniBallot for voters with disabilities.

How does OmniBallot work?

Eligible voters using OmniBallot log into the OmniBallot portal via any smart device, or computer to access, mark and return their ballot. Voters mark their ballot on their device and are offered a choice to print and mail, or electronically return their ballot. If a voter chooses to electronically return their ballot, they are prompted to credential themselves and sign their name on their smart device touch pad. The signature and ballot is then downloaded from the secure portal by the elections authority for signature review. If the signature is approved, the ballot is printed and tabulated in the same conventional manner as every other paper ballot.

Ballot Verification

States may optionally use the *Verifier* ballot confirmation tool where voters may confirm the ballot submitted through the OmniBallot portal was accurately received by the election's office. The *Verifier* is similar to FedEx package tracking, where the voter simply enters the ballot tracking number and is able to view the ballot they submitted, was the ballot received by their local election's authority.

Independent Security Reviews

Democracy Live is the only electronic ballot delivery solution to be reviewed and funded by the U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. State Department. OmniBallot has ongoing penetration testing conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, reviewed by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), multiple state cybersecurity reviews and tested by over 100 vetted cybersecurity researchers.

OmniBallot was tested by the CISA-sponsored Test Laboratory, Idaho National Labs using Apple, Android devices and Window-based machines.

Unparalleled in the elections industry, over 1,000 independent cybersecurity researchers have unlimited access to OmniBallot to test the integrity and security of the OmniBallot platform. Additionally, OmniBallot is independently monitored 24/7 by an independent cybersecurity firm, Critical Insight, to monitor all digital traffic, network activity and application integrity. All monitoring logs, reports and activity are available to Democracy Live customers. This level of independent testing of a voting technology is unprecedented in U.S. elections.

Quote from Synack Cybersecurity:

“Working with cybersecurity researchers from around the world, Synack conducts ongoing tests of the Democracy Live OmniBallot system. In the independent testing from a pool of over 1,500 cybersecurity researchers, OmniBallot and the integrity of the system has never been compromised.” – Synack Cybersecurity