

Kathryn Santo

My health and safety were put at risk due to the negligence of the NYC Board of Elections. As per the guidance issued by the governor's office and numerous health officials, I have been maintaining proper social distancing at all times and, because I am considered a [high-risk candidate according to CDC guidelines](#), my preference has been to remain safely indoors unless absolutely necessary. In accordance with the [NYS Board of Elections](#), I submitted my absentee ballot request to my local BOE. This was submitted on Monday, May 25, 2020, and I received a confirmation 36 hours later from the NYC BOE. Unfortunately, I never received my absentee ballot and I also received no response when I emailed the NYC BOE the day before the election asking about my options for the coming election. I checked my mail almost every day leading up to the election, I checked it the Monday the day prior and I checked it Tuesday the day of, all in the hopes that I would receive the absentee ballot I had a legal right to. I understand the importance of participating in elections and, after spending most of the election day weighing the risks of voting in-person or not voting at all, I felt that it was my civic duty to vote and hope that I would be able to take necessary precautions to protect my personal health and safety. My in-person polling location had changed, a fact that I was only made aware of by my roommate who not only received her absentee ballot shortly after submitting her request (just a few days before my own) but she also received written notice of the change in the polling location. When I arrived at the YMCA on 9th St in Park Slope, while there was no long line, those present were not following proper safety protocols. Some people waiting in line did not stay the directed 6 feet apart and others were not wearing masks. I did my best to shield myself from those not following safety precautions. This brings me to today, Friday, June 26, 2020... the day I finally received not only my absentee ballot but written notice that my polling location had changed as well. Days after the primary election was over, I was given my right to vote. It is absurd to think that the NYC BOE is capable of performing their duties when they failed to deliver my absentee ballot prior to the mail-in ballot deadline and failed to give me proper notice of my polling location change. Additionally, since my interactions at the in-person polling location have put me, a high-risk candidate for contracting COVID-19 if I find that I have become ill as a result of my actions on election day, I am holding every single member of the NYC BOE and their employees personally responsible.

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