

Voter Registration

Policy

Iowa Law 48A.19

1. The following state agencies are responsible for voter registration:
 - a. All state offices that have direct client contact and provide applications for public assistance, including but not limited to offices administering the following programs:
 - (4) The special supplemental food program for women, infants, and children.
2. Agencies designated to provide voter registration services shall provide the following services:
 - a. Distribution of a voter registration form either on paper or electronic medium.
 - b. Assistance to registrants in completing voter registration forms, unless the registrant refuses assistance.
 - c. Acceptance of completed voter registration forms for transmittal as required in section 48A.21.
3. The voter registration agency shall provide voter registration services with each application for services or assistance and with each recertification, renewal, or change of address form completed relating to the agency's services.

NVRA Q&A:

32. The NVRA requires that voter registration opportunities be provided with respect to all application, renewal, recertification and change of address transactions regarding service and assistance with Section 7 offices. Many Section 7 designated agencies/offices routinely provide services/assistance such as application for, or renewal of, services or change-of-address notification through the internet, by telephone, or by mail. States should ensure the availability of voter-registration opportunities to individuals using such remote service/assistance opportunities from designated agencies. Thus, for all such internet transactions, States should advise of the opportunity to register to vote, and should provide some online capability to download or request a voter-registration form. For phone transactions, designated-agency personnel should advise applicants of the opportunity to register to vote and to request a voter registration form. Materials sent by mail to individuals completing phone or internet transactions (such as statements confirming a phone transaction, or renewal or change-of-address forms) should contain a voter-registration form.

Iowa Law 48A. 21

All completed voter registration applications in the possession of a voter registration agency, a driver's license station, or a county treasurer's office that is participating in county issuance of driver's licenses at 5:00 p.m. on the last workday of each week shall be transmitted to the location designated by the state registrar of voters by rule.

Iowa Administrative Code 721-23.5(48A)

Declination forms shall be retained by the agency receiving them for 22 months after the next general election following receipt of the form. Declination forms signed during the ten days before a general election, when registration is closed, shall be retained for 22 months after the general election to be held in two years. The forms shall be stored in a secure location where the safety and confidentiality of the records can be protected. If the applicant's responses are stored electronically, the declination record shall be retained by the agency for the same period of time required for paper declination forms.

Iowa Administrative Code 721-23.7(48A)

Agencies which permit applicants to be represented by another person shall offer the opportunity to register to vote to each applicant. The declination form and registration form shall be given to the applicant's representative. If the applicant registers to vote, the applicant shall sign the form. The declination form and registration form shall be returned to the agency.

Authority

Iowa Law 48A.19 (1)(a)(4)

Iowa Law 48A.19 (2)(a-c)

Iowa Law 48A. 19 (3 excerpt)

National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) Q&A (excerpt)

<https://www.justice.gov/crt/national-voter-registration-act-1993-nvra>

Iowa Law 48A. 21 (excerpt)

Iowa Administrative Code 721-23.5(48A)

Iowa Administrative Code 721-23.7(48A)

Procedures

Order Voter Registration brochures from the ISU Distribution Center.

The applicant, not the WIC agency, is responsible for determining the applicant's eligibility to register to vote. The agency must accept a registration application even if it is submitted by an

applicant the agency believes is ineligible to register to vote. No one is required to register to vote in order to receive services or assistance. It is the applicant's decision whether to register.

Never:

- a. Influence a registrant's choice of party affiliation.
- b. Display any political preference or party affiliation.
- c. Discourage any applicant from registering to vote.
- d. Lead any applicant to believe that registering to vote (or not registering to vote) has any affect upon services or assistance.

Declination forms: An agency must receive a signed declination form from every applicant when they are asked if they would like to register to vote at certifications, recertifications and reports of address changes.

Check yes or no on the declination section of the form based on if they would like to apply to register to vote or not. In cases of teleWIC or address changes over the phone, check "no", even if they would like to register to vote and an application is mailed to them.

- Have the applicant sign and print their name and date on the declination. The client should be the one to sign or print their name. If they refuse to do so, the staff person should print the client's name, note the circumstances and initial or sign the declination as the person completing the form. In cases of teleWIC, clinic staff will print the participant's name, sign their own name and add teleWIC next to it in place of the participant's signature.
- The local agency must file them by date or scan the signed declination form into the participant's record in the WIC data system.
- They must be kept until 22 months after the next general election.

Note: Declination forms are confidential records. Keep them in a secure location until 22 months after the next general election:

Date declination signed	Election date	Earliest destruction date
10/27/24 – 10/24/26	11/03/26	09/03/28
10/25/26 – 10/28/28	11/07/28	09/07/30
10/29/28 – 10/26/30	11/05/30	09/05/32
10/27/30 – 10/23/32	11/02/32	09/02/34

Voter Registration forms:

Agency staff will complete the following in regards to voter registration at each certification/recertification appointment.

- Ask the question found on the Voter Registration panel in the WIC data system "Are you registered to vote where you currently live?" and record the participant/parent/guardian's

response.

- Ask the participant if they would like to apply to register to vote and answer the question found on the Voter Registration panel in the WIC data system “Was a voter registration form completed today?” based on the participant/parent/guardian’s response.
 - Select Yes if a voter registration form was completed in clinic that day.
 - Select No if the participant declines registering to vote when asked or in cases of teleWIC if the client would like to register to vote and the voter registration form is mailed.
- Offer assistance in completing the form as appropriate.
- For in person appointments, separate the voter registration information and declination segments along the perforations. Give the voter registration information section to the client and file/scan the declination form as described above in the Declination Forms section. Leave the “Instructions Stub” attached to the completed registration application and send to the county auditor following normal procedure.

Note: Send the entire section to the right of the dotted line of the application. The (03) at the bottom of the form must be received by the auditor’s office to appropriately track applications. If mailing the form in cases of teleWIC, ask the participant to return the completed declination and entire form (less the voter registration information) back to you or explain what to mail and where to send it to the participant.

Agency staff will complete the following in regards to voter registration when a participant notifies the agency of an address change.

- If the participant notifies the agency in person, follow the same steps as at a certification/recertification appointment (listed above).
- If the participant notifies the agency of an address change by telephone
 - Ask the question found on the Voter Registration panel in the WIC data system “Are you registered to vote where you currently live?” and record the participant/parent/guardian’s response.
 - Ask the participant if they would like to apply to register to vote. If they would, tell them you will mail a voter registration form to them and ask the participant to return the completed declination and the entire form (less the voter registration information) back to you or explain what to mail in and where to send it to the participant. Answer the question found on the Voter Registration panel in the WIC data system “Was a voter registration form completed today?” with a “No” either way, as a form was not completed that day in clinic.
 - Write an alert in the WIC data system to follow-up with voter registration at the participant/parent/guardian’s next WIC appointment.

The WIC agency is responsible for ensuring that the form is completely filled out if completed in person. The following information must be on all voter registration applications (if the applicant chooses to register to vote).

- Qualifications checkboxes
- ID Number (see instructions on form)

- Date of birth
- Gender
- Full name
- Address where the applicant lives
- Signature of applicant, and
- Date signed

Required if applicable

- Mailing address if different from home address
- Previous registration information
- Homeless applicants describe place where they regularly return to

The following information is optional to include on voter registration applications.

- Party affiliation
- Telephone number
- Email

Send all completed Voter Registration Applications to the county auditor no later than 5 p.m. the Friday of the week the forms were completed.