

## Voter Registration

### Policy

**NVRA:** “Public assistance” offices that must offer voter-registration services under Section 7 of the NVRA include each agency and office in a State that administers or provides services or assistance under any public assistance programs. This includes any of the following federal public assistance programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food-Stamp Program), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program (formerly the Aid to Families with Dependent Children or AFDC program), the Medicaid program, and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). This also includes state public assistance programs.

Each office designated as a voter registration agency under Section 7 that provides service or assistance in addition to conducting voter registration must do the following:

- distribute voter-registration application forms
- provide an “information” form that contains information on the voter-registration process. This form, which may be part of or separate from the voter-registration form, must include the following information:
  - the question, “If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to apply to register to vote here today?”
  - boxes for the applicant to check to indicate whether the applicant would like to register to vote or declines to register to vote
- provide the same level of assistance to all applicants in completing voter-registration application forms as is provided with respect to every other service or application for benefits (unless the applicant specifically refuses such assistance)
- accept completed voter-registration forms from applicants; and
- transmit each completed voter-registration application to the appropriate State election official within a prescribed time frame.

Designated agencies must provide the opportunity to register to vote to persons when:

- applying for the agency’s assistance or services
- seeking recertification or renewal of those services; and
- changing address for the assistance or services.

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

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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.

The designated agency must submit the completed voter-registration application to the appropriate State or local election official within a prescribed period of time unless the applicant desires to submit it himself or herself. The agency providing voter-registration services may not require a registrant to mail in the form himself or herself or discourage him or her in any manner from submitting the form to the agency. When an applicant submits a completed voter-registration application to an agency, the agency must transmit the form to the appropriate State or local election official within ten days. However, if the agency receives a completed voter-registration application within five days before the last day to register to vote in an election, the application must be transmitted to the appropriate State or local election official within five days.

## **Authority**

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

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

## **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.

An agency must receive a signed declination form from every applicant when they are asked if they would like to register to vote. Declination forms are confidential records and must be kept in a secure location.

- Check yes or no on the form,
- Then have the applicant sign, print and date the form.
- A local agency may file them by date or scan the signed declination form into the participant record in the WIC MIS.
- They must be kept until 22 months after the next general election.

Agency staff will complete the following in regards to voter registration at each certification

appointment.

- Ask the question found on the Voter Registration panel in the WIC data system and record the participant/parent/guardian's response: "Are you registered to vote where you currently live?"
- Document electronically whether a copy of the Voter Registration Information brochure was completed.
- Offer assistance in completing the form as appropriate.
- Send only the section of the brochure with the completed application to the county auditor following normal procedure. Note: Send the entire completed 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.

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 appointment.
- If the participant notifies the agency by telephone
  - Ask the question and offer to mail a brochure if they would like to register, or
  - Write an alert in the WIC data system to follow-up with the voter registration documentation at the participant/parent/guardian's next WIC appointment.

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

- Qualification's 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

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- 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.