

United States Code Annotated

Title 52. Voting and Elections (Refs & Annos)

Subtitle II. Voting Assistance and Election Administration

Chapter 209. Election Administration Improvement

Subchapter III. Uniform and Nondiscriminatory Election Technology and Administration  
Requirements

Part A. Requirements

52 U.S.C.A. § 21083  
Formerly cited as 42 USCA § 15483

§ 21083. Computerized statewide voter registration list requirements and requirements for voters who register by mail

Currentness

(a) Computerized statewide voter registration list requirements

(1) Implementation

(A) In general

Except as provided in subparagraph (B), each State, acting through the chief State election official, shall implement, in a uniform and nondiscriminatory manner, a single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list defined, maintained, and administered at the State level that contains the name and registration information of every legally registered voter in the State and assigns a unique identifier to each legally registered voter in the State (in this subsection referred to as the “computerized list”), and includes the following:

(i) The computerized list shall serve as the single system for storing and managing the official list of registered voters throughout the State.

(ii) The computerized list contains the name and registration information of every legally registered voter in the State.

(iii) Under the computerized list, a unique identifier is assigned to each legally registered voter in the State.

(iv) The computerized list shall be coordinated with other agency databases within the State.

(v) Any election official in the State, including any local election official, may obtain immediate electronic access to the information contained in the computerized list.

(vi) All voter registration information obtained by any local election official in the State shall be electronically entered into the computerized list on an expedited basis at the time the information is provided to the local official.

(vii) The chief State election official shall provide such support as may be required so that local election officials are able to enter information as described in clause (vi).

(viii) The computerized list shall serve as the official voter registration list for the conduct of all elections for Federal office in the State.

(B) Exception

The requirement under subparagraph (A) shall not apply to a State in which, under a State law in effect continuously on and after October 29, 2002, there is no voter registration requirement for individuals in the State with respect to elections for Federal office.

(2) Computerized list maintenance

(A) In general

The appropriate State or local election official shall perform list maintenance with respect to the computerized list on a regular basis as follows:

(i) If an individual is to be removed from the computerized list, such individual shall be removed in accordance with the provisions of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 ([42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.](#)), including subsections (a)(4), (c)(2), (d), and (e) of section 8 of such Act ([42 U.S.C. 1973gg-6](#)).

(ii) For purposes of removing names of ineligible voters from the official list of eligible voters--

(I) under section 8(a)(3)(B) of such Act ([42 U.S.C. 1973gg-6\(a\)\(3\)\(B\)](#)), the State shall coordinate the computerized list with State agency records on felony status; and

**(II)** by reason of the death of the registrant under section 8(a)(4)(A) of such Act ([42 U.S.C. 1973gg-6\(a\)\(4\)\(A\)](#)), the State shall coordinate the computerized list with State agency records on death.

**(iii)** Notwithstanding the preceding provisions of this subparagraph, if a State is described in section 4(b) of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 ([42 U.S.C. 1973gg-2\(b\)](#)), that State shall remove the names of ineligible voters from the computerized list in accordance with State law.

**(B) Conduct**

The list maintenance performed under subparagraph (A) shall be conducted in a manner that ensures that--

**(i)** the name of each registered voter appears in the computerized list;

**(ii)** only voters who are not registered or who are not eligible to vote are removed from the computerized list; and

**(iii)** duplicate names are eliminated from the computerized list.

**(3) Technological security of computerized list**

The appropriate State or local official shall provide adequate technological security measures to prevent the unauthorized access to the computerized list established under this section.

**(4) Minimum standard for accuracy of State voter registration records**

The State election system shall include provisions to ensure that voter registration records in the State are accurate and are updated regularly, including the following:

**(A)** A system of file maintenance that makes a reasonable effort to remove registrants who are ineligible to vote from the official list of eligible voters. Under such system, consistent with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 ([42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.](#)), registrants who have not responded to a notice and who have not voted in 2 consecutive general elections for Federal office shall be removed from the official list of eligible voters, except that no registrant may be removed solely by reason of a failure to vote.

(B) Safeguards to ensure that eligible voters are not removed in error from the official list of eligible voters.

(5) Verification of voter registration information

(A) Requiring provision of certain information by applicants

(i) In general

Except as provided in clause (ii), notwithstanding any other provision of law, an application for voter registration for an election for Federal office may not be accepted or processed by a State unless the application includes--

(I) in the case of an applicant who has been issued a current and valid driver's license, the applicant's driver's license number; or

(II) in the case of any other applicant (other than an applicant to whom clause (ii) applies), the last 4 digits of the applicant's social security number.

(ii) Special rule for applicants without driver's license or social security number

If an applicant for voter registration for an election for Federal office has not been issued a current and valid driver's license or a social security number, the State shall assign the applicant a number which will serve to identify the applicant for voter registration purposes. To the extent that the State has a computerized list in effect under this subsection and the list assigns unique identifying numbers to registrants, the number assigned under this clause shall be the unique identifying number assigned under the list.

(iii) Determination of validity of numbers provided

The State shall determine whether the information provided by an individual is sufficient to meet the requirements of this subparagraph, in accordance with State law.

(B) Requirements for State officials

(i) Sharing information in databases

The chief State election official and the official responsible for the State motor vehicle authority of a State shall enter into an agreement to match information in the database of the statewide voter registration system with information in the database of the motor vehicle authority to the extent required to enable each such official to verify the accuracy of the information provided on applications for voter registration.

(ii) Agreements with Commissioner of Social Security

The official responsible for the State motor vehicle authority shall enter into an agreement with the Commissioner of Social Security under [section 405\(r\)\(8\) of Title 42](#) (as added by subparagraph (C)).

(C) Omitted

(D) Special rule for certain States

In the case of a State which is permitted to use social security numbers, and provides for the use of social security numbers, on applications for voter registration, in accordance with section 7 of the Privacy Act of 1974 ([5 U.S.C. 552a](#) note), the provisions of this paragraph shall be optional.

(b) Requirements for voters who register by mail

(1) In general

Notwithstanding [section 6\(c\) of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 \(42 U.S.C. 1973gg-4\(c\)\)](#) and subject to paragraph (3), a State shall, in a uniform and nondiscriminatory manner, require an individual to meet the requirements of paragraph (2) if--

(A) the individual registered to vote in a jurisdiction by mail; and

(B)(i) the individual has not previously voted in an election for Federal office in the State; or

(ii) the individual has not previously voted in such an election in the jurisdiction and the jurisdiction is located in a State that does not have a computerized list that complies with the requirements of subsection (a).

(2) Requirements

(A) In general

An individual meets the requirements of this paragraph if the individual--

(i) in the case of an individual who votes in person--

(I) presents to the appropriate State or local election official a current and valid photo identification; or

(II) presents to the appropriate State or local election official a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the voter; or

(ii) in the case of an individual who votes by mail, submits with the ballot--

(I) a copy of a current and valid photo identification; or

(II) a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the voter.

(B) Fail-safe voting

(i) In person

An individual who desires to vote in person, but who does not meet the requirements of subparagraph (A)(i), may cast a provisional ballot under [section 21082\(a\)](#) of this title.

(ii) By mail

An individual who desires to vote by mail but who does not meet the requirements of subparagraph (A)(ii) may cast such a ballot by mail and the ballot shall be counted as a provisional ballot in accordance with [section 21082\(a\)](#) of this title.

(3) Inapplicability

Paragraph (1) shall not apply in the case of a person--

(A) who registers to vote by mail under section 6 of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 ([42 U.S.C. 1973gg-4](#)) and submits as part of such registration either--

(i) a copy of a current and valid photo identification; or

(ii) a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or government document that shows the name and address of the voter;

**(B)(i)** who registers to vote by mail under section 6 of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 1973gg-4) and submits with such registration either--

**(I)** a driver's license number; or

**(II)** at least the last 4 digits of the individual's social security number; and

**(ii)** with respect to whom a State or local election official matches the information submitted under clause (i) with an existing State identification record bearing the same number, name and date of birth as provided in such registration; or

**(C)** who is--

(i) entitled to vote by absentee ballot under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (42 U.S.C. 1973ff et seq.);

(ii) provided the right to vote otherwise than in person under section 20102(b)(2)(B)(ii) of this title; or

(iii) entitled to vote otherwise than in person under any other Federal law.

**(4) Contents of mail-in registration form**

**(A) In general**

The mail voter registration form developed under section 6 of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 1973gg-4) shall include the following:

(i) The question "Are you a citizen of the United States of America?" and boxes for the applicant to check to indicate whether the applicant is or is not a citizen of the United States.

(ii) The question “Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day?” and boxes for the applicant to check to indicate whether or not the applicant will be 18 years of age or older on election day.

(iii) The statement “If you checked ‘no’ in response to either of these questions, do not complete this form.”

(iv) A statement informing the individual that if the form is submitted by mail and the individual is registering for the first time, the appropriate information required under this section must be submitted with the mail-in registration form in order to avoid the additional identification requirements upon voting for the first time.

(B) Incomplete forms

If an applicant for voter registration fails to answer the question included on the mail voter registration form pursuant to subparagraph (A)(i), the registrar shall notify the applicant of the failure and provide the applicant with an opportunity to complete the form in a timely manner to allow for the completion of the registration form prior to the next election for Federal office (subject to State law).

(5) Construction

Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require a State that was not required to comply with a provision of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.) before October 29, 2002 to comply with such a provision after October 29, 2002.

(c) Permitted use of last 4 digits of social security numbers

The last 4 digits of a social security number described in subsections (a)(5)(A)(i)(II) and (b)(3)(B)(i)(II) shall not be considered to be a social security number for purposes of section 7 of the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a note).

(d) Effective date

(1) Computerized statewide voter registration list requirements

(A) In general

Except as provided in subparagraph (B), each State and jurisdiction shall be required to comply with the requirements of subsection (a) on and after January 1, 2004.

(B) Waiver

If a State or jurisdiction certifies to the Commission not later than January 1, 2004, that the State or jurisdiction will not meet the deadline described in subparagraph (A) for good cause and includes in the certification the reasons for the failure to meet such deadline, subparagraph (A) shall apply to the State or jurisdiction as if the reference in such subparagraph to “January 1, 2004” were a reference to “January 1, 2006”.

(2) Requirement for voters who register by mail

(A) In general

Each State and jurisdiction shall be required to comply with the requirements of subsection (b) of this section on and after January 1, 2004, and shall be prepared to receive registration materials submitted by individuals described in subparagraph (B) on and after the date described in such subparagraph.

(B) Applicability with respect to individuals

The provisions of subsection (b) shall apply to any individual who registers to vote on or after January 1, 2003.

**CREDIT(S)**

(Pub.L. 107-252, Title III, § 303, Oct. 29, 2002, 116 Stat. 1708.)

Notes of Decisions (5)

52 U.S.C.A. § 21083, 52 USCA § 21083

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