

2015 Indiana Voter Registration Guidebook



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2015 Indiana Voter Registration Guidebook

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT USING THIS GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook is a summary of the most recent voter registration requirements set forth in Indiana Code 3-7 with reference also to applicable federal laws. This publication is written primarily for local election officials who process voter registration forms and conduct elections. Others who might find this publication helpful include candidates, political parties, and members of the public and media.

This guidebook is designed to serve as a resource for voter registration issues. Although the Election Division staff has taken every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information in this publication, **where your legal rights and responsibilities are involved, do not rely on this manual. Instead, review the law yourself or consult your attorney.**

We want to emphasize the importance of your compliance with applicable voter registration laws. Handling and processing voter registration applications properly can be the difference for whether someone is eligible to vote or run for office as a candidate. This publication attempts to outline the process for maintaining accurate registration records as well as the more common questions asked on election day regarding voter eligibility issues. County officials who mishandle voter registration issues can expose the county to lawsuits, and anyone who mishandles applications can expose themselves to criminal liability.

As the consequences can be critical, we want to provide you with a clear guide to the most routine voter registration issues. Please contact the Election Division staff for help on any question or issue that may arise. We are happy to assist you and to help you prevent mistakes from happening from the outset.

Feel free to call or e-mail us through our Internet home page listed below.

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VOTER REGISTRATION INTRODUCTION

A. State Administration and Resources

Voter registration issues are governed by federal and state law. The bulk of the work processing voter registration applications and maintaining accurate records is done by the counties in Indiana. The Secretary of State along with the Indiana Election Division maintain Indiana's interactive voter registration database called the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS). The database connects all 92 counties and is accessible by select state and county employees.

Indiana's voter registration laws are substantially affected by two important pieces of federal legislation: The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 ("NVRA") and The Help America Vote Act of 2002 ("HAVA"). The NVRA expanded voter registration opportunities and protected voters from removal unless certain conditions were met. HAVA provided states with federal dollars to update voting systems so that voters with disabilities could vote privately and independently, and established standards for voting systems. The two federal laws act together to require and provide guidance on the regular maintenance of the rolls of registered voters. Also as a result of HAVA, Indiana has implemented a statewide voter registration system (SVRS). SVRS links each county voter registration office to all other county voter registration offices, and to certain state and federal agencies, so that the county's voter registration records can be updated in "real time."

The Secretary of State and the Co-Directors of the Indiana Election Division have developed several resources primarily for local election administrators located in SVRS. These resources include: Build Notes for each new enhancement to SVRS, Step by Step Instructions for certain processes as well as "Standard Operating Procedures" or "SOPs" concerning the use of SVRS. These resources are published on the SVRS County Portal, and should be consulted for direction and guidance.

The content of the SOPs can change frequently due to changes in state law, technical changes made to the design of the system, and new questions being raised by county and state users that require clarification. As a result, the version of the SOPs included in this Guidebook should always be compared with the version published on the SVRS Public Portal to make certain that no later changes have been made.

B. County Administration

In Indiana, a county voter registration office maintains the voter registration records for the county, as part of the statewide voter registration system, and subject to requirements established by federal and state law.

The county official responsible for maintenance of the registration rolls is either the circuit court clerk ("clerk") or a separate board of registration ("board"), including combined boards of elections and registration created in Lake and Tippecanoe counties by state law. The circuit court clerk is an elected official, chosen by the voters to serve a four year term. A board of registration consists of two members, who are appointed by the county chairmen of the major political parties. In Lake County, the board of elections and registration consist of the clerk and four other members. (IC 3-6-5.2; 3-6-5.4; 3-7-12)

The county voter registration office must arrange for a separate listing in each local telephone directory, under the heading of county offices. The listing must be styled "Voter Registration" and include the appropriate addresses and telephone numbers for the office. (IC 3-7-12-24)

Check Standard Operating Procedure GEN 5.1 User Access & Security in SVRS for information on this topic.

Voter Qualifications

In general, a person must be registered in order to vote in Indiana. Ind. Const. Art. 2 § 14.

A person must meet the following requirements to be a registered voter in Indiana: (1) be a citizen of the United States; (2) be at least eighteen (18) years of age on the day of the next general or municipal election; (3) live in a precinct continuously for at least thirty (30) days before the next election; and (4) not currently be in prison following conviction of a crime. (Ind. Const. Art. 2 § 2; IC 3-7-13-1 and 4) There are also "fail-safe" procedures under state and federal law that provide procedures for certain persons to vote even though they do not meet the residency requirement. These fail-safe procedures will be discussed in more detail later.

A. Citizenship

A person who is citizen of the United States at birth or who becomes a citizen of the United States after birth may submit a voter registration application. Pursuant to HAVA, an applicant must answer the question "are you a citizen of the United States of America?" on the voter registration application. Procedures when an applicant leaves this question blank or answers "no" are discussed in more detail later.

B. Age

A person who will meet the age requirements by the date of the next general or municipal election may register even though they do not meet the age requirement at the time of registering. (IC 3-7-13-2) For example, a person born November 1, 1997 may register to vote in the 2015 election even though this person will only be 17 years old at the time of the 2015 primary because the next election is the municipal election on November 3, 2015, at which time this person will be 18 years old.

If a person is 17 years old on the date of the primary but will be 18 years old by the date of the next municipal election, that person may vote for all candidates to be *nominated* at the primary election. **However, a 17 year old voter cannot vote for persons to be elected to *political party* offices (such as state convention delegate or precinct committeeman) or on public questions on the primary ballot.** (IC 3-7-13-3)

Pursuant to HAVA, an applicant must answer the question "Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day?" Procedures to follow when an applicant leaves this question blank or answers "no" are discussed in more detail later.

C. Imprisonment

A person who is convicted of a crime and imprisoned following conviction is not entitled to register to vote *while imprisoned following conviction* of a crime. A person who is already registered to vote before conviction and imprisonment, may be removed from the registration rolls following conviction and imprisonment. (IC 3-7-13-4)

Once an individual is no longer incarcerated following conviction, the individual can reapply to register to vote. The right to vote is not automatically restored. A person on probation, parole, home detention, and a variety of community correction programs following conviction of a crime is eligible to register and vote. A county voter registration office should NOT cancel the registration record of a person sentenced solely to time served, probation, parole, home detention, or a variety of community correction programs. A person who is in jail awaiting trial and not currently serving a sentence following conviction is eligible to apply to register to vote and to vote. This individual's voter registration record should not be cancelled. (IC 3-7-13-5 and 3-7-13-6)

Unlike age and citizenship, there is not a separate question on the voter registration application regarding imprisonment following conviction of a crime. However, the applicant is asked to affirm that the applicant is not currently in prison after being convicted of a crime when the applicant signs the voter registration application.

D. Residence

A person who resides in a precinct continuously before a general, municipal, or special election or at least thirty (30) days may apply to register to vote. (IC 3-7-13-1) A person who will meet the residency requirement on the day of the next general, municipal, or special election, may register and vote in the primary election. (IC 3-7-13-2)

Residence means the place: 1) where a person has the person's true, fixed, and permanent home an principal establishment; and 2) to which the person has, whenever absent, the intention of returning. (IC 3-5-2-42.5) In addition, the election code contains standards used to determine the residency of a voter, candidate or a person holding office. (IC 3-5-5) While this definition and these standards are helpful, there are some recurring issues raised with regard to providing information about a registration applicant's residence for those who are homeless, mobile, in college, or overseas. These issues will be discussed in detail later in the guidebook.

Submitting and Processing VR Applications

A. Applying

Hoosiers can submit a voter registration application in person, by mail, and in certain instances, online. Absent military and overseas voters can also submit a voter registration application by fax or email.

A person may apply to register to vote at the following locations: 1) a Bureau of Motor Vehicles ("BMV" license branch while applying for or renewing a driver's license, permit, or identification card; 2) a public assistance office while applying for services; 3) certain agencies serving persons with disabilities while applying for assistance; 4) armed forces recruitment agencies; 5) county voter registration offices; and 6)

unemployment compensation offices while applying for services. (IC 3-7-14; 3-7-15; 3-7-16; 3-7-19 and 3-7-20.5)

A person may also apply to register using either a state or federal mail-in form.

The state voter registration application can be obtained at a number of places, including: public libraries, license branches, township trustee offices, city and town clerks' offices, county voter registration offices, clerk's offices that are in a separate location from their board of registration office, public secondary schools and the election division. Mail-in registration applications may be downloaded from the Internet from the website of the Indiana Election Division, www.in.gov/sos/elections or www.indianavoters.com. (IC 3-7-23-2; 3-7-31-1)

In addition to state-approved forms, the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) requires states to accept federal voter registration applications, samples of which are in the attached appendix. (IC 3-7-22-2) The most recent version of the federal voter registration form can be accessed on the Election Assistance Commission's web site at www.eac.gov and is attached.

Mail-in registration applications may be mailed or hand-delivered by the voter or a person presenting the form on behalf of the voter. (IC 3-7-22-9) Registration forms are no longer required to be printed on card stock. State Forms: VRG-7; VRG-7 (Spanish version); VRG-11 (mail-in registration form with specific county return address).

Another federal form is the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), also referred to as Standard Form 76, which is a combined registration application/absentee ballot request, available for use only by absent uniform services voters and overseas voters. The FPCA can be accessed on the Federal Voting Assistant Program's web site at: <http://www.fvap.gov/resources/media/fpca.pdf>. *Absent military and overseas voters can submit the FPCA by mail, but can also transmit the form by email or fax.*

A person with a current and valid Indiana driver's license or Indiana BMV identification card for nondrivers can apply to register to vote online at www.indianavoters.com. See Section G for additional information.

B. Deadlines

As a general rule, the voter registration period closes in Indiana 29 days before each primary, general, municipal, or special election. Absent military and overseas voters have an extended registration period that continues through the 8th day before the primary, general, municipal, or special election.

In an election year there are two different registration periods, pre-primary and pre-election. The pre-primary registration period runs from December 1 (or the first Monday in December if December 1 falls on a Saturday or Sunday) through the twenty-ninth day before the primary. The pre-election period runs from fourteen (14) days after the primary through the twenty-ninth day before the election (IC 3-7-13-10). **Certain exceptions apply to overseas or absent uniformed services voters.**

Mail-in voter registration applications must be postmarked on or before the twenty-ninth day before a primary or general election to be processed before an election. Mail-in registration applications may be sent directly to a county or may be sent to the Indiana Election Division. Mail-in applications received by the Indiana Election Division that are postmarked by the twenty-ninth day before the primary or general election will be immediately forwarded to each county voter registration office, and must be processed no matter how late the county voter registration office receives the application, so long as the postmark indicates that the registration application was placed in the U.S. mail by the twenty-ninth day before the primary or

general election. (IC 3-7-33-4) The Indiana Election Division will provide a notice to the county whether the application is timely or not.

If a mail-in registration application contains no postmark, then the application must be processed prior to the election only if the registration application is *received* in the mail by a county registration office, or the election division, not later than the Monday following the close of the registration period before the election. (IC 3-7-33-4)

Voter registration applications completed and turned in to a full-service registration agency (BMV, FSSA, DWD, DOH) up through the twenty-ninth day before the election must also be processed before the election even if the application is received by the county voter registration office after the 29th day before the election.

Online voter registration applications submitted no later than 11:59 pm (local time) on the twenty-ninth day before the election must be processed before the election. SVRS is programmed on Eastern Time. Therefore, counties on Central Time will need to process voter registration application submitted no later than 12:59 a.m. Eastern Time as recorded in SVRS.

A county voter registration office may receive voter registration applications during periods when registration is closed and, if they do, the information contained in the late application must be entered into the statewide system when received by the county, but this application cannot be approved and a confirmation notice may not be mailed to a “late applicant” until the voter registration period reopens after the election, and the name of the late applicant must not appear on any certified list of voters prepared for the upcoming election. (IC 3-7-13-12)

A county voter registration office may not issue a certificate of error to an individual whose voter registration application was not timely filed. A county voter registration office may not approve a registration application, or update an **existing** registration record while registration is closed, except for a military voter who qualifies to register under a procedure described below, when an approved absentee ballot application includes a name change, change of address from a voter to another address **within the same precinct** (IC 3-11-4-17.5(e)), or to correct an error or add omitted information identified when a certificate of error is issued (IC 3-7-33-5(h), for example).

The restriction on updating voter registration records when registration is closed does not apply to the county voter registration office processing information provided on precinct poll lists or VRG 4/12 forms, which are returned to the county after the polls close on election day. The poll lists and related documents must be resealed following the processing of this information. (IC 3-10-1-31.1)

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 52.1 Processing VR Applications During Closed Period in SVRS for information on this topic.

C. Military and Overseas Voters

There are special rules relating to registration and absentee voting applicable to certain military voters. State and federal law provide an extended deadline in which to register, special application forms, and additional options for transmitting applications and ballots. A military voter, otherwise known as an “absent uniformed services voter”, is an individual serving away from the individual’s permanent residence who is also:

- A member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, or other uniformed service on active duty who, by reason of active duty, is absent from the place of residence where the member is otherwise qualified to vote.

- A member of the Merchant Marine who, by reason of service in the Merchant Marine, is absent from the place of residence where the member is otherwise qualified to vote.
- A member of the Indiana National Guard deployed or on assignment outside Indiana.

OR

- A spouse or dependent of any of the above who, by reason of the active duty or service of the member, is absent from the place of residence where the spouse or dependent is otherwise qualified to vote.

An absent military voter might also be an overseas voter but could also be stationed stateside somewhere in the United States but outside of Indiana. (See Indiana Code 3-5-2-1.5 for definition of "absent uniformed services voter" and IC 3-5-2-49.3 for definition of "uniformed services.")

An "overseas voter" is defined as any of the following: (1) an absent uniformed services voter who, by reason of active duty or service, is absent from the United States on the date of the election; (2) a person who resides outside the United States and is qualified to vote in the last place in which the person was domiciled before leaving the United States; or (3) a person who resides outside the United States and, but for such residence, would be qualified to vote in the last place in which the person was domiciled before leaving the United States. (IC 3-5-2-34.5)

There are two types of non-military overseas voters, those living overseas who intend to return to the US, and those living overseas whose return to the US is uncertain. Those overseas voters who register using a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), also referred to as Standard Form 76, are asked to check one of the boxes in item #1. See Appendix. The significance of this distinction is covered on page 14.

Extended registration deadlines: All overseas and absent uniformed services persons can register to vote up until the 8th day before the election, and some recently discharged or relocated military persons and their family can register to vote up until noon, election day.

The county voter registration office shall process a registration application received from an overseas voter or absent uniform services voter during the period beginning on the twenty-ninth day before the election and ending on the **eighth day before the election**. (IC 3-7-36-10)

An absent uniform services voter (or the voter's spouse or dependent) who has returned to Indiana may also apply to register to vote beginning on the seventh day before election day and until noon election day if the voter:

- 1) is otherwise entitled to vote in Indiana;
- 2) is absent from Indiana during the previous registration period;
- 3) returns to Indiana no earlier than the seventh day before election day but before noon election day;
- 4) shows the county registration office a discharge dated on or after the beginning of the preceding registration period or a government movement order with a reporting date on or after the beginning of the preceding registration period;
- 5) completes a registration application; and
- 6) signs an affidavit that the voter has not voted at any other precinct in the election. State Form: ABS-13

If an absent uniform services voter (or the voter's spouse or dependent) registers under these conditions then the voter is entitled to vote in the upcoming election **at the office of the circuit court clerk** any time

after the voter registers **but before noon election day**. Many county courthouses are closed on election day itself, and so the county election board may designate another location by resolution for these voters who vote after noon on the day before election and before noon on election day. (IC 3-7-36-14; IC 3-11-10-26)

If the person votes in the upcoming election at the office of the circuit court clerk the voter will cast an absentee ballot and the circuit court clerk will certify that the voter registered under this statute and the circuit court clerk will attach the certification to the voter's absentee ballot envelope. State Form: ABS-11.

The county election board delivers these certificates by courier to the precinct election boards at the polls on election day. The inspector attaches the certificates to the poll list in the presence of the poll clerks and the poll clerks sign a statement indicating that the inspector did so. If the person does **not** vote in the upcoming election, then the circuit court clerk delivers the voter's registration application to the board of registration (if applicable). The voter is then registered effective the first day of the next registration period. (IC 3-5-2-1.5; 3-7-36-14; 3-11-4-3; 3-11-10-16; 3-11.5-4-8; 3-11.5-4-9; 3-11.5-4-24)

In general, a voter may not submit a registration form by fax or by electronic mail. (IC 3-5-4-1.7; 3-7-32-4) However, an absent uniform services voter or an overseas voter may submit a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), also referred to Standard Form 76, by fax or electronic mail. (IC 3-7-32-4; 3-11-4-4)

For more information, see the 2015 Military and Overseas Voters Guide.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 51.1 Handling Ongoing Absentee Applications in SVRS for information on this topic.

D. Completing the VR Application

1. Required Elements

A person is required to provide the following information on a voter registration application:

- (1) The applicant's name;
- (2) Residence address (see below under "Residence");
- (3) Birth date;
- (4) A voter identification number, if the voter has an Indiana driver's license number, Social Security Number (last 4 digits), or Indiana BMV identification card number. (See *below* under "Voter Identification Number" concerning situations when an applicant states on the application that the applicant does not have any of these voter identification numbers, or when an applicant leaves Box #13 of the application totally or partially blank);
- (5) If the person has no residence address with a street number or name, then a description or map indicating where the person's residence is located; and
- (6) The applicant's signature on the statement swearing or affirming the applicant's qualifications to vote and to the truth of the statements on the application.

The applicant's phone number, email address, and gender may also be provided at the voter's option. (IC 3-7-31-5; IC 3-7-34-1)

In addition, under HAVA requirements and state law, all registration applications must include a "yes" in response to the following two questions: 1) Are you a U.S. Citizen? and 2) Will you be 18 years of age on or before the election day? (See Section J for information on Incomplete Applications)

In general, Indiana statute requires county voter registration officials to reject voter registration applications that are not submitted on the most recent version of the form approved by the Indiana Election Commission ("Commission"). (IC 3-7-31-2; IC 3-5-4-8(c)) County registration officials are authorized by statute to make minor modifications to registration forms approved by the Commission so that the forms are compatible with the county's record system. The county is required to file the modified forms with the Election Division prior to use. (IC 3-7-31-2 and IC 3-7-32-3)

In general, a voter is required to execute and file a registration application with an *original* signature. (IC 3-7-32-1; 3-7-32-2) Except as described below, a voter registration application that contains a *copy* of the voter's signature is not acceptable and is incomplete. Applications without a voter's original signature are also incomplete. The county voter registration office is required to make one attempt to contact the voter by phone (if available) and by mail. If the applicant has not provided an original signature by the 10th day prior to the election, the voter registration official shall reject the application. (Procedure for processing incomplete applications is outlined in Section J).

Exceptions to the rule on "original signature"

A voter registration application submitted in the following manner is not required to have a voter's original signature:

- (1) an application transmitted from a BMV branch to a county voter registration office through SVRS;
- (2) an application submitted through the online voter registration process;
- (3) a combined voter registration and absentee application submitted by fax or electronic mail from an overseas or absent uniformed services voter (Federal Post Card Application or "FPCA", also referred to as Standard Form 76); and
- (4) an application submitted by a voter unable to write as described below in Section D-. (IC 3-5-4-1.7; 3-7-32-4; 3-11-4-4)

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 1.3 Incomplete Registrations for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 6.1 Dupes for information on this topic.

2. Voter Identification Number

Generally, an individual who applies to register to vote or applies to update an existing voter registration record must provide a "voter identification number" on the registration application. (IC 3-7-13-13; 3-7-31-5) The voter identification number is the individual's Indiana driver's license number, Bureau of Motor Vehicles ID Card number (which is referenced only on the voter registration forms), or if an individual does not have an Indiana driver's license or BMV ID Card number, the individual must provide the last four (4) digits of the

individual's Social Security number when the individual registers to vote. If an individual does not have a driver's license number, BMV ID Card number or a Social Security number, then the Indiana Election Division, using the statewide system, will assign a number as the individual's voter identification number. (IC 3-7-13-13)

Once the voter has supplied or been assigned a voter identification number, it may not be changed unless: (1) the voter made an error when providing the number when the voter registered to vote; (2) the Indiana Election Division or a county voter registration office made an error when entering the number into the statewide system; (3) the voter obtains or provides an Indiana driver's license number or a partial social security number after the voter was assigned an identification number by the Indiana Election Division (see below); or (4) the voter ceases to have an Indiana driver's license number after the voter provided that number.

Since many voters registered prior to the voter identification requirement, Indiana statute attempts to obtain this voter identification number from such voters during an election. A poll clerk is required to: 1) explain to a voter what a voter identification number is; 2) request that the voter write a voter's identification number on the poll book; and 3) explain that a voter is *not required* to provide a voter identification number at the polls in order to vote. (IC 3-7-29-1; 3-11-8-25.1(g)) If a voter gives a voter's identification number, then the county voter registration office shall update the voter's registration to include this information. (IC 3-10-1-31.1)

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 8.1 Voter Identification Numbers for information on this topic. Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 18.2 Invalid SSN, Expired DLN, and Suspended DLN in SVRS for information on this topic.

3. Age and Citizenship Questions on the Voter Registration Form

As implemented by Indiana law, HAVA requires that all voter registration applications contain the following two questions that the voter must affirmatively indicate on the voter registration application by checking a box "yes" or "no": 1) Are you a U.S. Citizen? or 2) Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day?

Indiana law permits certain persons under the age of 18 to register to vote provided they will be 18 on or before the general, municipal or special election. IC 3-7-13-1. The law also permits a qualified person under 18 to become a registered to vote to vote in a primary election but not on candidates for precinct committeeman or state convention delegate or on a public question held prior to the general election. IC 3-7-13-3.

Care should be taken to review the voter's application to determine if the applicant will turn 18 years old on or before the general, municipal or special election.

When printing a pollbook for a primary or special election held before the general election, the county must identify those voters who are not yet 18, so that these voters are given the correct ballot style.

If the county voter registration office receives a registration application that is incomplete as a result of the failure of the applicant to answer either of the questions, the county voter registration office shall treat the application as "incomplete" and process the registration application if the applicant submits a written statement answering either of these two (2) questions that was not answered on the original application not later than the twenty-ninth day before the date of the next election. (IC 3-7-34-2; 3-7-34-3(a)) Of course, if the applicant answers either or both of these questions "no" the registration application must be rejected. (See Section J for procedures to follow when other information has not been provided by the applicant as voters have different deadlines by which to provide other missing information.)

4. Residence

Residence means the place: 1) where a person has the person's true, fixed, and permanent home and principal establishment; and 2) to which the person has, whenever absent, the intention of returning. (IC 3-5-2-42.5) In addition, the election code contains standards used to determine the residency of a voter, candidate or a person holding office. (IC 3-5-5) While this definition and these standards are helpful, there are some recurring issues raised with regard to providing information about a registration applicant's residence for those who are homeless, mobile, in college, or overseas.

Homeless and Mobile Voters

People who have a non-traditional residence, like those who are homeless, or those who live in a motor home, must still provide a location sufficient to allow local election officials to place the person in a precinct. If the person stays in more than one place, the voter registration official should ask the person to designate the location where the person usually sleeps in the county. If the place has no street address, then have the person indicate the location by drawing a map of the location on an attached paper or writing a description of the location of the person's residence on the VRG-7 or VRG-11 form in the box for indicating residence address. A person with a non-traditional residence must also provide a mailing address. A post office box will not suffice as the residence address for purposes of establishing the precinct in which the voter must vote, but may be used as a mailing address. (See IC 3-7-37)

With the advent of online voter registration, it is not possible to use the diagram for online applications with a non-traditional residence. These applicants are directed to supply the intersections closest to their residence on the line marked "residence address" on the online application. Counties will then use this information to place the voter in the correct precinct.

An applicant with a nontraditional residence must include a mailing address within the county where the applicant resides (such as a post office box or the address of a friend or shelter that will accept mail on the applicant's behalf). The county shall process the application and mail the acknowledgement card or notice of disposition (if the application is rejected) to the mailing address given.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 57.2 Registration Procedures for Homeless or Mobile Voters for information on this topic.

5. College Students

Under Indiana law, each person who applies to register to vote must state the address of their residence. A person can only have one residence under Indiana law. However, where a person's residence is located will depend on the facts of their situation and their intentions.

For some, but not all, college students, their residence will be the address that they traveled from to attend school.

For other college students, who have no intention of returning to that address, their residence will be in the community where they are attending school.

In short, there is no rule on legal residence that applies to all college students. Each case and each individual is different.

It is a violation of election law to challenge a voter on the basis that: 1) the voter is enrolled in an educational institution or; 2) the voter's address on the registration record is at an address which is housing provided for students by an educational institution. (IC 3-5-5-7)

6. Overseas Voters and Federal Office Only Ballots

Although an overseas voter may not have a physical residence in a precinct, that voter is still entitled to vote in a precinct in Indiana. An overseas voter includes: 1) an absent uniformed services voter who, by reason of active duty or service in a branch of the military, is absent from the United States on the date of the election or a member of the Indiana National Guard deployed outside Indiana; 2) a U.S. citizen who temporarily resides outside of the U.S. but intends to return to the U.S. and 3) a U.S. citizen who is residing in another country and their return to the U.S. is uncertain, and, but for such residence, would be qualified to vote in the last place in which the person resided before leaving the United States. (IC 3-5-2-34.5)

If a person is an overseas voter who resides outside of the U.S. but intends to return to the U.S., then this overseas voter is still entitled to vote by mail. When completing the FPCA, box 7, the applicant must provide a "voting residence address" as this determines the jurisdiction where you vote. For overseas citizens this is usually the U.S. address where you last lived. You do not need to have any current physical ties to this address. Applicants shall not use a post office box.

If a person is an overseas voter whose return is uncertain and is residing in another country and, but for such residence, would be qualified to vote in the last place in which the person resided in Indiana before leaving the U.S., then, this overseas voter is a U.S. citizen who is still entitled to vote by virtue of his or her U.S. citizenship. In Indiana, this type of overseas voter is entitled to a ballot for **federal offices only**, and is considered for election purposes to be a registered voter of the Indiana precinct where the county voter registration office is located. (IC 3-11-4-8; 3-5-2-24)

The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), also known as Standard Form 76, is used by overseas voters to apply to register to vote. The third box in item #1 is used for those residing outside the United States temporarily and who plan to return to the US. These voters are entitled to vote a full ballot. The fourth box in item #1 is used for those voters residing outside the United States whose return to the US is uncertain. These voters are entitled to vote a "federal only" ballot. See Appendix for Standard Form 76 also known as the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA).

7.HAVA documentation for certain voters

a. Voters Who Registered to Vote by Mail on or after January 1, 2003 and no later than December 31, 2005

As implemented by Indiana law, HAVA requires that an individual who, on or after January 1, 2003 and no later than December 31, 2005, submitted an application to register to vote by mail and who had not previously voted in a general election (or a special election for federal office) in the *county* as of the date the registration application is received, must provide additional residence documentation to the county voter registration office prior to voting.

The identification documentation required may be either: (1) a current and valid photo identification; or (2) a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or government document that shows the name and address of the voter (at the address shown on the voter's registration). Identification documents may be submitted in the mail with the registration application; in person or by mail at the county voter registration office at a later date; or at the polls on election day. (IC 3-7-22-5(5), 3-7-33-4.5)

Even among this group of first-time voters who register by mail, this HAVA additional documentation requirement does not apply to everyone. Specifically, this documentation requirement does not apply to:

- 1) an absent uniformed services voter;
- 2) an overseas voter; or
- 3) an individual entitled to vote absentee under federal law due to a determination by the Indiana Election Division that a permanent or temporarily accessible polling place cannot be provided for the individual, or for any other reason under federal law

In addition to absent uniformed services voters or overseas voters whose exemptions are described above, this additional HAVA documentation requirement does not apply to an individual who submits a registration application that includes the individual's Indiana driver's license number or the last four digits of the individual's Social Security number if the county voter registration office or Indiana Election Division matches this information with an **existing** Indiana identification record bearing the same number, name, and date of birth set forth in the voter registration application.

b. Voters Who Registered to Vote by Mail on or after January 1, 2006

If an individual submits an application to register to vote by mail on or after January 1, 2006, and has not previously voted in a general election (or special election for federal office) *anywhere within Indiana*, as of the date this application is received, the individual must provide the HAVA additional documentation described above to the county voter registration office before voting.

In addition to absent uniformed services voters or overseas voters whose exemptions are described above, this additional HAVA documentation requirement does not apply to an individual who submits a registration application that includes the individual's Indiana driver's license number or the last four digits of the individual's Social Security number if the county voter registration office or Indiana Election Division matches this information with an **existing** Indiana identification record bearing the same number, name, and date of birth set forth in the voter registration application. (IC 3-7-33-4.5)

c. Additional Documentation Requirements and Processing of Voter Registration Applications

If the county voter registration office determines that the applicant is required to submit additional residence documentation, but has not done so, the office shall process the application but make a notation in the statewide system that additional documentation is required for that voter. Once the voter submits the identification documentation, the county voter registration office shall remove this notation on the voter's registration record and enter the following information about the documentation provided: (1) the date the documentation was provided; (2) whether the documentation was: (a) presented to a precinct election board by a voter voting in person at the polling place; (b) filed with the county voter registration office by the applicant as part of the original filing of the application to register to vote, or in a subsequent filing received by the county voter registration office; or (c) filed with the county voter registration office by the county election board after the person applied to cast an absentee ballot; (3) a brief description of the type of documentation provided. The SVRS provides each county voter registration office with a coding system for identifying the types of documentation. (IC 3-7-33-4.5; 3-7-27-20) This coding system is set forth in the appendix at the end of this Guidebook. To reduce as many problems as possible at the polls, every effort should be made to obtain the identification documentation from voters required to give it prior to Election Day.

d. Additional Documentation Requirements, Printed Poll Lists, and Electronic Pollbooks

The county voter registration office shall indicate on each precinct's poll list or electronic pollbook whether any voter on the list is required to provide additional residence documents before voting in person or by absentee ballot. (IC 3-7-29-1) The county voter registration office may continue to receive identification documentation after the preparation of the poll list or downloading of information into the electronic

pollbook. Each county election board shall prepare a list certified by the circuit court clerk that states the name of each voter subject to the residence documentation requirements who filed the required documents with the county voter registration office after the printing of the poll list and, as a result, is entitled to have the voter's absentee ballot counted if the ballot otherwise complies with Indiana election law. This list shall be delivered to the precinct election boards with the absentee ballots (or with the certified lists in counties that count absentee ballots at a central location). (IC 3-11-10-12; 3-11.5-1-4 (20)) The county voter registration office shall promptly forward information indicating receipt of additional documentation to the electronic pollbook (IC 3-11-8-10.3(b)(3)).

In addition, the county voter registration office shall visit the appropriate post office not later than noon on Election Day to accept delivery of mail containing identification documentation. The county voter registration office shall immediately notify the county election board of the names of voters who have filed additional identification documentation so that the county election board can provide this information to precinct election boards prior to the closing of the polls at 6 p.m. (IC 3-11-10-11)

The county election board shall transmit a supplemental certified list to the appropriate precinct election board identifying any additional voters not on the original certified list delivered with the absentee ballots to the precinct. The supplemental list shall contain the names of voters who have submitted the required documents to the county voter registration office. The county voter registration office must provide the county election board with these names not later than 3 p.m. election day to be included in a supplemental certified list. If the county election board determines that the precinct election board may not receive the supplemental list before the closing of the polls, the county election board shall attempt to contact the precinct election board to advise the board regarding the content of the supplemental list. The county election board shall file a copy of the supplemental list for that precinct as part of the permanent records of county election board. (IC 3-11-10-12)

If a voter offers to vote at the polls on Election Day, and the poll list or electronic pollbook indicates that the voter is required to present this HAVA additional documentation prior to voting, the poll clerk shall advise the voter that the voter must present one of the documents identified above. If a voter presents the required document, the poll clerk shall add a notation to the poll list or in the electronic pollbook indicating the type of document presented by the voter, using the statewide system document coding method described above. (IC 3-11-8-10.3(b)(5); IC 3-11-8-25.2) After an election, the county voter registration office shall unseal the precinct election material and record on the county voter registration record information on the poll list regarding documentation provided by voters at the polling place prior to voting. (IC 3-10-1-31.1) This will remove the flag indicating the need to supply additional documentation for future elections.

If a voter is required to provide HAVA additional documentation, but does not do so at the polling place, the precinct election officials shall allow the voter to vote a provisional ballot after the voter and the officials complete the forms required for casting provisional ballots. The voter's provisional ballot will not be counted unless the voter provides the documents to the county voter registration office prior to the close of the polls on election day at 6:00 p.m. prevailing local time. (IC 3-7-33-4.5; 3-11.7-2-1(b); 3-11.7-5-2(c), 3-11.7-5-3)

e. Additional HAVA Documentation and Absentee Voting

If a voter who is required to provide additional residence documentation prior to voting submits an absentee ballot application to vote absentee by mail, the county election board shall include a notice (ABS-18) in the absentee ballot envelope (inner envelope with the ballots ABS-6 mailed to the voter). The ABS-18 informs the voter that the voter must file the additional documentation with the county voter registration

office not later than the close of polls on election day at 6:00 p.m., prevailing local time, for the absentee ballot to be counted. If the absentee voter is voting before an absentee voter board (either in the clerk's office, a satellite facility, or a traveling board), the absentee voter board, shall, upon accepting the completed absentee ballot from the voter, provide the voter with the ABS-18. If the voter does not present the required residency document before receiving the absentee ballot, the county election board shall add a notation on the absentee ballot application indicating additional HAVA documentation is required. The text of the notation must substantially conform with the language set forth in IC 3-11-10-4.5(c). (See below) (IC 3-11-10-28) If the voter does present the required residency documentation prior to voting absentee in person, the voter's registration record shall be immediately updated to reflect that the residency documentation requirement has been met.

When an absentee voter subject to the additional residence documentation requirement returns a voted absentee ballot by mail, the county election board shall contact the county voter registration office to determine if the additional identification documents have been filed with the county voter registration office by the voter. If the voter has filed the documents, the county election board shall add a notation to the voter's absentee ballot application indicating that the required documents have been filed and that the absentee ballot may be counted if the ballot otherwise complies with this article. If the voter has not filed the documents with the county voter registration office, the county election board shall add a notation on the absentee ballot application substantially as follows: *"Inspector (or absentee ballot counters): As of (insert date the absentee ballot application was approved) this voter was required to provide additional identification documentation with the county voter registration office before this ballot may be counted. Check the poll list and county election board certification to see if the voter has filed this information. If not, process as a provisional ballot if the ballot otherwise complies with Indiana law."* (IC 3-11-10-4.5(c); IC 3-11.4-4-12)

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 50.1 Processing First Time Voters in SVRS for information this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 16.1 Absentee Log for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 36.1 Absentee Ballot Cancelled Due to Cancelled Registration for information this topic.

E. Assistance with Voter Registration Applications

If a voter is unable to write, the voter may procure another individual to complete the application and write the voter's name on the registration application and the voter shall make the voter's mark on the signature line of the application unless physically unable to do so. (e.g. "X"). (IC 3-7-32-7). The person filling out the registration application on behalf of the voter shall also write the person's own name and address on the registration application in the space provided for that purpose. If an absent uniform services voter or an overseas voter is unable to sign or mark the registration application due to a disability, any person designated by the voter may sign the voter's name on the application as long as it is signed in the presence of the voter. (IC 3-7-36-4)

F.. Handling Completed Voter Registration Applications by Certain Individuals

In 2013, the Indiana General Assembly adopted new laws that govern individuals who assist applicants with the registration process. The new rules also changed how the county voter registration office processes applications filed by certain persons other than the applicant.

A person who receives a completed state-approved voter registration application (VRG-7 or VRG-11) from the applicant, must provide the applicant with a receipt (contained on the application) as well as complete and sign the “Certified Statement of Acceptance” on the bottom of the voter registration application. (New in 2013) (IC 3-7-31-5).

A person who receives a completed voter registration application from the applicant must file the application with the Election Division or the county voter registration office no later than noon ten (10) days from receipt or the close of voter registration, whichever occurs first. (New in 2013) (IC 3-7-32-8) “File” means the document must be presented, accepted and a date and time stamp applied. IC 3-5-2-24.5

The following individuals are exempt from the ten (10) day filing requirement as well as the requirements to provide a receipt and sign the “Certified Statement of Acceptance”:

- (1) A member of the applicant’s household.
- (2) An applicant’s attorney in fact.
- (3) An employee of a license branch who accepts and transmits a VRG-6 or VRG-7 as part of the employee’s official duties.
- (4) An employee of a public assistance agency who accepts and transmits a VRG-6 or VRG-7 as part of the employee’s official duties.
- (5) An employee of an agency serving persons with disabilities who accepts and transmits a VRG-6 or VRG-7 as part of the employee’s official duties.
- (6) An employee of an office designated under IC 3-7-18 who accepts and transmits a VRG-6 or VRG-7 as part of the employee’s official duties.
- (7) An employee of an office designated under IC 3-7-19 who accepts and transmits a VRG-6 or VRG-7 as part of the employee’s official duties.
- (8) An employee of the office of the department of employment and training services (DWD or Work One) who accepts and transmits a VRG-6 or VRG-7 as part of the employee’s official duties.
- (9) An employee of the United State Postal Service or a bonded courier, acting in the individual’s capacity as an employee of the United States Postal Service or a bonded courier company.
- (10) The Indiana Election Division acting in accordance with IC 3-7-33-3.7.
- (11) A state agency or county voter registration office receiving an application through the online voter registration system under IC 3-7-26.7.
- (12) A precinct election official (inspector, poll clerk, poll judge, etc...) acting in accordance with the official’s duties.
- (13) A county voter registration official acting in accordance with IC 3-7.

A county voter registration office may not reject the application solely on the ground that an individual who was required to file the application within 10 days did not comply with the requirement. The county shall process the application if the applicant is otherwise qualified to register. The county shall, not later than

three (3) days after receipt of an application required to be but not filed timely, provide notice of the apparent violation to the county election board for appropriate action. IC 3-7-34-4.5

An application accepted by an individual required to complete the “Certified Statement of Acceptance” is incomplete if the individual does not provide the individual’s name, residence address, date of receipt, or signature. IC 3-7-34-1.5(b). However, the county voter registration office may not reject an application that is incomplete for this reason. The county voter registration office shall promptly make one (1) effort to contact the individual who received the completed application from the voter, if possible, and one (1) effort to contact the voter to obtain the missing information. The county voter registration office must process the application even if unable to obtain the missing information. However, within three (3) days of receipt of an application with missing information on the certified statement, the county voter registration must also provide notice of the failure to the county election board for appropriate action under IC 3-6-5-31. IC 3-7-34-4.5

G. Online Voter Registration

A person who possesses a current and valid Indiana driver’s license or Indiana identification card for nondrivers, and who is otherwise eligible to register to vote, may submit a voter registration application to a county voter registration office by online registration. A secure Internet website has been established by the Secretary of State, with the consent of the Co-Directors of the Indiana Election Division, to permit an individual to submit an application to either register to vote in Indiana for the first time, or to change the voter’s name, address, or other information currently in the voter’s registration record. (IC 3-7-26.7)

When an applicant submits an application using this website, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles compares the information submitted by the applicant with the information in the Bureau’s database listing the individuals with current and valid Indiana driver’s licenses or ID cards. If the Bureau confirms that the applicant has a valid Indiana driver’s license or ID card, the completed application (along with the information compiled by the Bureau and the digital signature of the applicant) is submitted to the appropriate county voter registration office. A registration form submitted through the online process is not required to be signed in indelible ink or indelible pencil (IC 3-7-32-2).

If the Bureau is unable to confirm the number entered by the applicant, the applicant will receive a warning message stating “Please review and correct all errors. There was an error validating the driver’s license or state ID number you entered.” An applicant will NOT be permitted to continue unless the Bureau is able to confirm the number entered belongs to an individual.

A voter registration application submitted online no later than midnight, prevailing local time, on the 29th day before Election Day must be processed prior to the election. (IC 3-7-33-3.5)

Except as described above, the county voter registration office will process an online application in the same manner as other voter registration applications (IC 3-7-26.7-7)

H. Processing Completed Registration Applications

The county voter registration office shall determine from the information on the registration application whether the applicant is eligible to register. When processing the application in SVRS, the county user shall enter the NVRA tracking number into SVRS along with the applicant’s information. The NVRA tracking number is found in the bottom right hand corner of the application form and is used for reporting purposes to Congress.

After determining the applicant is eligible to register, the county voter registration office shall then mail a notice by non-forwardable mail to the applicant at the mailing address provided on the registration application informing the applicant about the disposition of the application. (IC 3-7-33-5) If the application is approved, the notice must state: (1) that the application was received; (2) that the applicant is registered at the address placed on the form; (3) the name of applicant's precinct; and (4) the address of the polling place for the named precinct. (IC 3-7-33-5; State Form: Voter Registration Acknowledgment Notice available through SVRS)

See Merge and Unmerge Step by Step in SVRS

See Transfer and Duplicate Processing Step by Step in SVRS

See Point Address Table Step by Step in SVRS

I. Pending Voters, Active Voters, and Rejected Applications

When a county voter registration office approves a voter registration application, and mails an acknowledgement notice to the voter, the applicant is designated in the statewide voter registration system as a "pending voter", except in one situation described in the next paragraph. **The applicant is not officially a registered voter or added to the voter registration record as an "active voter" until the end of seven (7) days after the notice is mailed.**

If the voter receives the acknowledgment notice by delivery from the U.S. Postal Service and presents that notice to the county voter registration office in person before the expiration of the seven (7) day period, the county voter registration office shall change the record to indicate that the applicant is now an "active voter" and officially registered to vote at that address, even though the seven (7) day period has not yet expired. (IC 3-7-33-5(f))

If the acknowledgement notice is returned by the Postal Service due to an unknown or insufficient address no later than the seven (7) day period after the notice is mailed, the application must be denied by the county voter registration office, and the individual was never considered to be officially registered to vote at that address (IC 3-7-33-5). If the acknowledgement card is returned by the Postal Service due to unknown or insufficient address after the seven (7) day period following the mailing of the notice, the voter may then be mailed an address confirmation or NCOA mailing to the voter at that address; however, the voter's registration may not be cancelled until the procedures for removing inactive voters under federal law have been completed (IC 3-7-38.2).

If the application for registration is denied, the notice must state that the application was received and the notice must state the reasons for denial. State Form: Notice of Disposition available through SVRS. (IC 3-7-33-5) Federal law requires that any rejected registration application be retained for 24 months.

Check Standard Operating Procedure GEN_07.2_Auto-Activate Registrations Functionality in SVRS for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 4.2 USPS for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 10.1 Polling Place for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 13.1 Pending for information on this topic.

J. Incomplete Registrations

A person is required to provide the following information on a voter registration application: (1) the applicant's name, (2) residence address (see below under "Residence"), (3) birth date and (4) a voter identification number (see below under "Voter Identification Number") except where applicant has neither an Indiana driver's license, Indiana BMV ID card, or social security number. The applicant's phone number and email address may also be provided at the voter's option. (IC 3-7-31-5; IC 3-7-34-1) In addition, under HAVA requirements and state law, all registrations application must include a "yes" in response to the following two questions: (1) Are you a U.S. Citizen? or (2) Will you be 18 years of age on or before the election day?

Indiana law (IC 3-7-31-5) requires that the registration application "provide for the residence address and mailing address of the individual completing the forms." The application forms approved by the Commission direct an individual whose mailing address is the same as the individual's residence address to write the word "SAME" in the mailing address box. If the mailing address box is instead left blank, some county voter registration offices may assume that the residence and mailing address of the applicant are in fact the same, and process the application without requiring the applicant to complete the mailing address box.

Although the statewide voter registration system includes information regarding the gender of voters (IC 3-7-26.4-8), county voter registration offices may not require an applicant to provide gender information for the application to be considered complete.

If a registration application is incomplete, so that the county voter registration office is unable to make a determination of the applicant's eligibility for registration, then the county voter registration office shall make at least one (1) attempt to contact the applicant by mail, and one (1) attempt to contact the applicant by phone (if available), in order to obtain the missing information. (IC 3-7-34-2) If the missing information is obtained from the voter then the county voter registration office shall complete and process the application. (IC 3-7-34-3) Certain information can be obtained over the phone but other information must be obtained in writing. **See Standard Operating Procedure VRG 1.3 for additional instructions.**

With two exceptions, voters have until the **tenth** day before the election to provide missing information. Voters only have until the **twenty-ninth** day before the election to supply the answers to the age and citizenship questions. If the missing information is not obtained in a timely manner, then the county voter registration office must reject the application and certify the application, along with any other applications with missing information that have been rejected, to the County Election Board. (IC 3-7-34-4) If an incomplete application is rejected after attempts to cure the defect, a notice describing the reasons for rejection must be sent to the applicant at the mailing address provided on the application.

Registration applications made at a BMV license branch, or other full service agency, must be forwarded by the agency to the county voter registration office within five (5) days of receipt. IC 3-7-18-19); IC 9-24-2.5-4; IC 12-14-1.5-1 (TANF); IC 12-14-25-3 (Food Stamps); IC 12-15-1.5-4 (Medicaid); IC 16-35-1.6-4 (WIC).

If applications accepted at the BMV contain all the information required to be supplied by the voter, but not all the information required to be supplied by the agency, then the county voter registration office shall make one attempt to obtain the missing information from the BMV. If the missing information is not obtained

from the BMV within seven (7) days after the county voter registration office provides notice to the BMV, the county voter registration office must notify the Indiana Election Division. The Election Division will then contact the BMV to request that this information be provided to the county voter registration office, or require the BMV to file a statement with the county voter registration office indicating why the information is not available. (IC 3-7-34-5)

The registration application must be processed whether the information is received from the BMV or not. (IC 3-7-34-6) However, if the BMV agency fails to supply the missing information, then the county voter registration office shall certify this fact to the Indiana Election Division on an "expedited basis" (meaning within 48 hours after the county office receives the incomplete form). (IC 3-5-2-23.2; 3-7-34-7) The Indiana Election Division is then required to notify the BMV that the BMV is required to supply this missing information. (IC 3-7-34-7)

New in 2013, the Indiana General Assembly created additional requirements for certain individuals who assist applicants in the registration process. The latest version of the VRG-7 and VRG-11 registration applications have a place for one who accepts a completed voter registration application from the applicant to complete a "Certified Statement of Acceptance".

An application accepted by an individual required to complete the "Certified Statement of Acceptance" is incomplete if the individual does not provide the individual's name, residence address, date of receipt, or signature. IC 3-7-34-1.5(b). However, the county voter registration office may not reject an application that is incomplete for this reason. The county voter registration office shall promptly make one (1) effort to contact the individual who received the completed application from the voter, if possible, and one (1) effort to contact the voter to obtain the missing information. The county voter registration office must process the application even if unable to obtain the missing information. However, within three (3) days of receipt of an application with missing information on the certified statement, the county voter registration must also provide notice of the failure to the county election board for appropriate action under IC 3-6-5-31. IC 3-7-34-4.5

The following individuals are exempt from the ten (10) day filing requirement as well as the requirements to provide a receipt and sign the "Certified Statement of Acceptance":

- (1) A member of the applicant's household.
- (2) An applicant's attorney in fact.
- (3) An employee of a license branch who accepts a VRG-6 or VRG-7 in furtherance of the employee's official duties.
- (4) An employee of a public assistance agency who accepts a VRG-6 or VRG-7 in furtherance of the employee's official duties.
- (5) An employee of an agency serving persons with disabilities who accepts a VRG-6 or VRG-7 in furtherance of the employee's official duties.
- (6) An employee of an office designated under IC 3-7-18 who accepts a VRG-6 or VRG-7 in furtherance of the employee's official duties..
- (7) An employee of an office designated under IC 3-7-19 who accepts a VRG-6 or VRG-7 in furtherance of the employee's official duties.(8) An employee of the office of the department of employment and training services (DWD) who accepts a VRG-6 or VRG-7 in furtherance of the employee's official duties. .
- (8) An employee of the United State Postal Service or a bonded courier, acting in the individual's capacity as an employee of the United States Postal Service or a bonded courier company.

- (9) The Indiana Election Division acting in accordance with IC 3-7-33-3.7.
- (10) A state agency or county voter registration office receiving an application through the online voter registration system under IC 3-7-26.7.
- (11) A precinct election official acting in accordance with IC 3-6-6.
- (12) A county voter registration official acting in accordance with IC 3-7.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 1.3 Incomplete Registrations in First Tuesday for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 20.1 Date Received for Incomplete VR Application for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 50.1 Processing First Time Voters in SVRS for information this topic.

K. Updates to an Existing Voter Registration Record

If the registration application is an update to an existing voter registration record for that voter, an acknowledgment notice must still be sent as described above. If the notice sent out in response to a registration update is returned within seven days by the United States Postal Service due to “unknown or insufficient address”, then the county voter registration office must reject the application to update the existing voter registration record.

The Co-Directors have encountered a disagreement regarding whether what action, if any, must be taken by the county voter registration office when an acknowledgment notice is returned by the United States Postal Service due to “unknown or insufficient address” The Co-Directors have agreed to present both interpretations to the counties to be considered in these situations:

Co-Director Trent Deckard believes that if an applicant submits an updated voter registration application (with a new address, name, date of birth, or any other new or corrected information) and application is subsequently rejected because the acknowledgement card is returned due to “unknown or insufficient address” within the seven (7) day pending period, that the county should manually reinstate the voter’s prior registration record to active status. Co-Director Deckard believes that if an application is rejected due to a returned acknowledgement card, the rejected application should NOT serve as a request by a voter to cancel the voter.

Co-Director J. Bradley King believes that Indiana Code 3-7-39-6 requires that if the voter has completed the previous address section of the update, indicating that the voter’s registration should be cancelled at a prior address, then the prior registration should be cancelled. If the application for an update does not indicate that the prior registration is to be cancelled, then the prior registration remains in effect unless removed pursuant to an otherwise authorized registration maintenance procedure.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 53.2 Handling VR Updates on Poll Book without a VRG 4/12 Form in SVRS for information this topic.

L. Mailing and Residence Addresses

The acknowledgement notice is sent to the mailing address on the voter registration application and not to the registration address. One explanation as to why statute requires the notice to be sent to the mailing address is that the registration address could not be used to mail notices to those with non-traditional residences (e.g. homeless). Other people, such as voters who live in small towns which do not have residential mailing delivery by the Postal Service, but instead use Post Office boxes, military voters, college students, and nursing home patients, may only receive a notice if it is sent to their mailing address. (IC 3-7-33-5)

An inadequate residence address should become evident when the registration official attempts to place the applicant into a precinct. If the residence address on the application is inadequate, state statute requires the county voter registration office to attempt to process the application in the same manner as an incomplete application in an effort to cure the defect. If the effort to cure the defect is unsuccessful by the end of the tenth day before the election, the county voter registration office must reject the incomplete applications and certify a list of rejected incomplete applications to the County Election Board. (IC 3-7-34-4)

M. Registrations Mistakenly Received by Incorrect County

If a county voter registration office receives a voter registration application from a voter that contains a registration address in Indiana, but not in the county of the voter registration office receiving the application, then the county voter registration office shall forward the application to the voter registration office of the county indicated by the residence address listed on the application on an “expedited basis” (meaning within 48 hours of receiving the incorrectly delivered form). (IC 3-7-34-9) The county voter registration office can fulfill this requirement by forwarding an optically scanned image of the registration to the correct county voter registration office and by forwarding the original copy to the correct county later. (IC 3-7-34-9)

The county voter registration office of the county where the voter resides must process the forwarded registration application if the county voter registration office in the incorrect county (or the full service voter registration agency) received the application before the close of voter registration. If the incorrect county mistakenly received the form by mail, then the same deadlines that apply to mail-in forms received by the correct county apply in this case. If the registration was not received in a timely manner, the registration is processed by the correct county voter registration office in the same manner as other applications that are not timely filed. (IC 3-7-33-4)

If a timely voter registration is received by the correct county after the poll lists have been printed, or if electronic poll books are being used, after the information has been downloaded into the electronic poll book for use on election day, then the county voter registration office is required to issue a certificate of error if the county voter registration office approves the application (assuming that the voter’s registration has become active and no longer “pending”). (IC 3-7-34-13)

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 5.1 Applications Outside the County for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 34.2 VR Transfers and Timely Scanning of VR Cards in First Tuesday for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 38.1 BMV Hopper Items Sent to Wrong County for information on this topic.

N. Procedures Followed By Full Service Agencies

The National Voter Registration Act requires that certain federal, state, local and nongovernmental agencies (with the agreement of the federal or nongovernmental offices) provide the following voter registration services:

- 1) Distribution of mail-in voter registration applications;
- 2) Assistance in filling out voter registration application with each transaction in which a person applies for assistance, renewal or recertification of assistance, or a change of address, unless the applicant declines in writing; and
- 3) Transmission of all completed applications to the appropriate county voter registration within a timely manner (Indiana law requires 5 days).

Indiana has designated the following as full service voter registration agencies:

- (1) License branches (IC 3-7-14)
- (2) Each county office that administers TANF (IC 3-7-15-2)
- (3) Each county office that administers Medicaid (IC 3-7-15-2 and IC 12-15)
- (4) Each county office that administers Food Stamps (IC 3-7-15-2 and IC 12-14)
- (5) Each office of the Department of Health that administers WIC (IC 3-7-15-2 and IC 16-35)
- (6) Agencies that serve persons with disabilities as identified by the Co-Directors of the Indiana Election Division (IC 3-7-16) (Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services and Bureau of Rehabilitative Services)
- (7) Each unemployment compensation office (IC 3-7-18-2 and IC 3-7-20.5)
- (8) Each county board of voter registration office (IC 3-7-18-2 and IC 3-7-19)
- (9) Any federal or non-governmental entities designated by unanimous vote of a county election board (or which was designated in the county's NVRA implementation plan before July 1, 2013) (IC 3-7-21)

State and federal law require that anyone who applies for assistance, renews an application for assistance or submits a change of address application at any of the above entities, shall also be provided with a voter registration form, assistance in completing the form, and transmittal of the form to the county voter registration office, unless the applicant declines to register to vote in writing. A slightly different process applies at license branches.

A person must be offered the opportunity to apply to register to vote while applying for a new motor vehicle driver's license, permit, or identification card, or a renewal of any such license, permit, or identification card, at a BMV license branch. (IC 3-7-14-5)

The BMV license branch forwards the registration applications and declinations directly to the county voter registration office electronically then forwards a paper copy of the registration form to the appropriate voter registration office.

Local branches of some other agencies that perform registration activities, for example, local offices of the Department of Workforce Development ("DWD"), forward all voter registration applications and declinations to a central clearing house in DWD's state office and from there the applications are forwarded to the counties. State Forms: VRG-6 (registration application at "full service" voter registration agencies).

Indiana law requires a full service voter registration agency to transmit completed applications and declinations to the county voter registration office within 5 days of receipt. If a county voter registration office is not receiving a packet of applications and declinations in a timely manner, please contact the NVRA officials (both Co-Directors of the Indiana Election Division).

The agencies and county voter registration office use state prescribed transmittal and receipt forms to document the transfer and acceptance of voter registration applications. State Forms: VRG-8 and VRG-9.

If a person applies to register to vote at a full service agency before the voter registration deadline (even if a county VR office receives it after the deadline) the application should be processed as timely.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 09.2 BMV Registrations in SVRS for information on this topic.

O. Common Questions about Voter Registration Applications

The following is a list of frequently asked questions concerning voter registration applications.

Question 1: *Is the county voter registration office or the agency that sent in the application (for example, the “BMV”) responsible for attempting to obtain the missing information on the application?*

Answer 1: If a county voter registration office receives an incomplete voter registration form from the BMV that does not contain information required to be supplied by the BMV, the county voter registration office shall promptly make one (1) effort to contact the BMV to obtain the information. If the information is not obtained from the BMV not later than seven (7) days after the county voter registration office contacts the BMV, the county office must notify the Indiana Election Division. The Indiana Election Division shall contact the BMV to request that the information be provided to the county voter registration office or that the BMV file a statement with the county voter registration office indicating why the information is not available. (IC 3-7-34-5) If the county voter registration office obtains the information required to complete the form from the BMV, the county voter registration office shall process the form as a completed registration application. (IC 3-7-34-6) If the county voter registration office cannot obtain the information from the BMV, and the form is otherwise complete, the county voter registration office shall process the form as an incomplete registration application. (IC 3-7-34-6)

The county voter registration office shall certify to the Indiana Election Division on an “expedited basis” (meaning, within forty-eight (48) hours, as defined by IC 3-5-2-23.2) a list of the registration forms from “full-service” voter agencies that have been processed but do not contain information required to be supplied by the agencies. The Indiana Election Division shall notify the agency that the agency is required to supply the omitted information on an expedited basis to the county voter registration office. (IC 3-7-34-7)

With regard to hand-delivered or mailed applications, a county voter registration office is responsible for obtaining information from incomplete registration applications using the procedures described in Section J.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 1.3 Incomplete Registrations for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 20.1 Date Received for Incomplete VR Application for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 9.2 BMV Hopper for information on this topic.

Question 2: *Which information is essential to be provided on a voter registration application and must be completed prior to processing?*

Answer 2: An application is considered “incomplete” if any of the following information has not been provided by the applicant: the name of the applicant; residence address (other than the ZIP code); date of birth; the statement that the applicant is a U.S. citizen; the statement that the applicant will be at least 18 years of age on or before election day; an attached map/or written description if the voter has no residence address with a street number or name; the voter identification number or a statement that the applicant has no voter identification number; the signature of the applicant on the statement swearing or affirming the applicant’s qualifications to vote and to the truth of the statements on the application. Checking a box on the application (indicating that the applicant has no voter identification number, or that one meets the age and citizenship requirements) meets the legal standards for “making a statement”.

An application is NOT considered “incomplete” if any of the following information has not been provided by the applicant: the applicant fails to state whether the application is a new registration, address change, or name change; the Indiana county where the applicant lives; gender; zip code; a previous registration address; a telephone number; an email address; information regarding a change of name; or the date the applicant signed the application. If an applicant leaves box # 5 (Mailing Address) blank and doesn’t write the word “Same” indicating the mailing address is the same as the registration address, the county should nevertheless process the application if the registration address provided is one to which the United States Postal Service can deliver mail. These applications should be processed by the county voter registration office and either accepted or rejected, notwithstanding any of this information not being provided by the applicant.

Question 3: *What if a registration is submitted on the most recent registration application approved by the Commission but the applicant leaves Box #12 of the application (which requests a voter identification number or a statement indicating that the applicant has no voter identification number) blank? What if the applicant indicates that the applicant has a voter identification number, but the number is missing from Box #12?*

Answer 3: The application is incomplete and must be processed in accordance with the guidance provided in SOP VRG 8.1, which includes contacting the voter to supply the missing information (IC 3-7-34).

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 18.2 Invalid SS or DLN Numbers for information on this topic.

Question 4: *What if a registration is submitted on the most recent registration application approved by the Commission but the age or citizenship questions have not been answered?*

Answer 4: If the age and citizenship questions were not answered on the original registration application, then the application is incomplete and the county voter registration office shall contact the voter to supply the missing information. The county voter registration office must process the registration application only if the applicant submits a written statement answering the age or citizenship questions that was not answered on the original application not later than the twenty-ninth day before the date of the next general election.

Question 5: *Can any information that is deemed essential but missing on a voter registration application be filled in by the applicant over the phone?*

Answer 5: Yes, some missing information can be provided by the applicant over the phone. If a voter registration official is able to obtain the following information from an applicant over the phone, it can be filled in, initialed by the official, and then processed: first or last name of applicant, residence address of applicant, mailing address of applicant if USPS cannot deliver mail to the residence address, date of birth or voter identification number or indication that voter has no voter identification number.

Question 6: *Does a voter who registers at a full-service site like a license branch have to provide this HAVA additional documentation?*

Answer 6: No, this requirement only applies to individuals who registered by mail, not individuals who registered with a full service voter registration agency even if the full service voter registration agency later delivers the original voter registration application to the county voter registration office by mail.

Question 7: *Does this HAVA additional documentation requirement apply to a voter who fills out a registration application as part of a registration drive performed by a party or organization when the party or organization representative hand-delivers the registration applications to the county voter registration office?*

Answer 7: **No.** The additional documentation applies only to voter registration applications received in the mail. The Election Division uses a stamp reading "Application Received in person by the Indiana Election Division. Copies of ID DOCUMENTS NOT REQUIRED" to indicate when a registration application has been hand-delivered to the Election Division for mailing to a county voter registration office. A county voter registration office may want to use a similar stamp to identify these applications, particularly when the application has been hand-delivered to the incorrect county, and must be mailed to another county.

Question 8: *What if a voter registration application is received by the county voter registration office by mail and then, before the close of registration, the voter either registers in person at the county voter registration office or at some full service registration site like the license branch?*

Answer 8: In that case, the voter has registered in person prior to the close of registration. Therefore, the HAVA additional documentation requirement would no longer apply to the voter.

Question 9: *Do county voter registration officials have to keep a copy of the identification documents provided to the voter registration office?*

Answer 9: Yes, if the voter provides a copy of the documentation to the voter registration office. The county voter registration office would keep copies of identification documents provided by voters for 24 months. If documents are presented by a voter at the poll site or at the county

voter registration office, for example, the poll workers or voter registration officials would document the type of document presented using the statewide system coding method discussed above. This information would then be recorded on the voter's registration record.

Voter List Maintenance

A. Disfranchisement of Persons Imprisoned Following Conviction

A person who is ***imprisoned following conviction*** of a crime (a felony or a misdemeanor) is ineligible to vote while in prison and must be removed from the registration rolls. (IC 3-7-46-2; 3-7-13-4) To be disfranchised, the person must satisfy both conditions: 1) the person must be convicted of a crime; and 2) the person must be imprisoned following the conviction.

A person who is in prison awaiting trial is not disfranchised because the person is imprisoned before conviction not following conviction. In addition, while a person may be subject to an order issued by a court, some orders are not considered “imprisonment” for purposes of this statute. More specifically, a person who is:

- 1) on probation;
- 2) on parole;
- 3) subject to home detention under IC 35-38-2.5; or
- 4) placed in a community corrections program under IC 35-38-2.6;

is eligible to register and to vote. (IC 3-7-13-5; IC 3-7-13-6) Some types of community corrections programs include: work release, electronic monitoring, substance abuse programs, and day reporting. Applicants in these programs are eligible to apply to register to vote.

If a person has been removed from the registration rolls because of their imprisonment following conviction, the person may once again register as soon as the person is released from prison provided that it is during an open registration period. (IC 3-7-13-5)

NVRA requires that the Office of each U.S. Attorney provide the Indiana Election Division with information about Indiana residents imprisoned following conviction of a federal crime. The Election Division must forward this information to the appropriate county. (IC 3-7-46-3)

State law requires that SVRS permit the state Department of Correction to provide the Indiana Election Division with an electronic list of Indiana residents who have been convicted of a crime, and placed in a Department of Correction facility during the previous month. The list is made available through SVRS to county voter registration offices to permit the county offices to cancel the registration records of disfranchised individuals on an expedited basis. (IC 3-7-46-4.1)

In addition, each county sheriff is required to provide the county voter registration office with quarterly lists of Indiana residents who have been convicted of a crime and placed in the county jail during the previous quarter. (IC 3-7-46-6) These lists are to be provided no later than January 31, April 30, July 31 and October 31 of each year and must contain a list of each Indiana resident who was imprisoned after conviction at anytime during the previous quarter. The county voter registration office shall provide any voter registration office in another county of the name and last known addresses of each person on the list from the sheriff whose last known address is in another county. (IC 3-7-46-7)

The county voter registration office shall prepare a notice to be mailed to the last known address of each person within the county who has been disfranchised. (IC 3-7-46-8) The county voter registration office shall mail the notice to the disfranchised person not later than the day following the day that the voter's registration has been canceled. (Notice of Disfranchisement available through SVRS; IC 3-7-46-9)

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 12.1 DOC Matches in SVRS for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 56.2 Notice to Disenfranchised Voters for information on this topic.

B. Death

A county voter registration office may cancel a voter's registration due to death when notified in one of the following ways:

- (1) through the DOH hopper in SVRS (populated by information provided by the Indiana Department of Health);
- (2) by receiving a copy of a death certificate;
- (3) by receiving a copy of a notice of estate administration or other notice of death published in a newspaper that meets the qualifications to publish legal notices under state law.
- (4) by receiving notice from the Indiana Election Division (IED) of death notices from the Social Security Administration;
- (5) by receiving notice from the IED of out of state deaths.

A county voter registration office may request additional written information before cancelling a voter under (2) or (3) above if the information contained in the initial notification is not sufficient to identify the person whose registration is to be cancelled. If additional information is not given or is still insufficient to identify the person whose registration is to be cancelled, the county is not required to cancel the person's registration.

State law requires that the State Department of Health provide the Indiana Election Division with an electronic list of deceased individuals through SVRS so that a county voter registration office can cancel the voter registration records of deceased individuals on an expedited basis. (IC 3-7-45-2.1) The State Department of Health is also required to obtain information regarding death of Indiana residents occurring outside of the state and transmit those records to the county no less than on a monthly basis. (IC 3-7-45-5) Each county voter registration office shall cancel the registration of each deceased person listed in these reports. (IC 3-7-45-3)

On a monthly basis, the Indiana Election Division is required to obtain information regarding Indiana residents who have been identified as deceased by the federal Social Security Administration and to provide this information to a county voter registration office. (IC 3-7-45-6.1)

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 3.1 Processing Deaths for information on this topic.

C. Cancellation by Voter

A voter may choose to cancel the voter's registration. A voter who requests cancellation should be provided with an "Authorization to Cancel Registration" available through SVRS. When this authorization is signed

and returned by the voter to the appropriate county voter registration office, the registration must be cancelled.

The Indiana Election Division shall forward voter registration cancellation requests received by the Division to the appropriate county voter registration office on an “expedited basis” after the Election Division receives the cancellation. The Election Division may send an optically scanned image of the cancellation to the county and forward the original copy of the cancellation to the county at a later date. (IC 3-7-34-10)

A county voter registration office that receives an authorization from a voter to cancel a voter’s registration in another county is not required to forward a paper copy of the authorization to another county if the authorization of cancellation has been transmitted to the county listed on the voter’s registration record via SVRS. The county voter registration that received the original authorization to cancel shall retain the paper copy of the authorization for 2 years following the election immediately following the date of cancellation. (IC 3-7-43-6)

D. Voter Registration Maintenance Programs

The NVRA and Indiana statute requires that any program for the maintenance of an accurate voter registration roll...“shall be uniform, nondiscriminatory, and in compliance with the Voting Rights Act of 1965.” (52 USC § 20507, IC 3-7-38.2-2)

Most voter registration maintenance programs will be conducted using the statewide voter registration system established under IC 3-7-26.3. A county voter registration officer shall perform voter list maintenance on a regular basis (IC 3-7-26.3-11), and must document that required voter list maintenance activities have been performed in accordance with the law. An Affidavit of County Voter Registration Officer Concerning Voter List Maintenance (State Form VRG-21) must be filed with the Indiana Election Division no later than seventy-seven (77) days before each primary, general or municipal election. (IC 3-7-12-27)

The required voter list maintenance activity includes removal of an individual from the list when required: (1) following the death of the individual; (2) the individual’s confirmation that the individual resides outside of the county in which the individual is currently registered; (3) an inactive voter who fails to respond to a notice or otherwise act in accordance with law (52 USC § 20507) within the period prescribed by NVRA so that a county voter registration office must change the voter’s registration status from inactive to active.

The Indiana Election Division is required to conduct a state-funded residency address confirmation and outreach during each even-numbered year. As part of this program, the state sent a mailing to each active voter in Indiana followed up by a second mailing sent to those whose first mailing was returned as undeliverable. Those who did not respond to the second mailing or for whom the second mailing was also returned as undeliverable were marked as “inactive”.

No later than January 31 of each even-numbered year, the state requests information from the clerks of the Northern and Southern federal district courts regarding federal jury notices returned due to unknown or insufficient address and passes along that information to the appropriate county. The county shall send an address confirmation notice (NCOA notice) to the voter identified in the report. (IC 3-7-38.2-16)

At least once each year, the Indiana Election Division is also required to obtain information from a number of other states “the Kansas program”, determine if voters on the out of state lists are also registered in Indiana, and pass that information along to the counties. The county voter registration official is then required to determine whether the individual: (1) identified in the report provided by the Indiana Election Division is the same individual who is a registered voter of the county; (2) registered to vote in another state on a date following the date that voter registered in Indiana; and (3) authorized the cancellation of any

previous registration by the voter when the voter registered in another state. If the county voter registration office determines that a voter is described in items 1-3 above, the county voter registration office shall cancel the voter registration of that voter. If the county voter registration office determines that a voter is described in items 1 and 2 above but has not authorized the cancellation of any previous registration, the county voter registration office shall send an address confirmation notice to the Indiana address of the voter. (IC 3-7-38.2-5)

The Indiana Election Division is required to submit the names of all registered voters in Indiana to the USPS National Change of Address Service and to notify the county voter registration offices at least once each month regarding any address changes reported by the NCOA program. (IC 3-7-38.2-5; IC 3-7-38.2-8).

A county voter registration office is also authorized by state law (IC 3-7-38.2-2(b)) to conduct a voter list maintenance program administered solely at the county level. A county voter list maintenance program conducted under this state law is optional, not required, but must comply with both federal and state laws.

In general, the first step in a county administered voter list maintenance program is for the county to determine that a voter's residence address, as listed in the voter registration record, is not current. To make this determination, the county can use only the following information: (1) returned notices sent to all "active" voters in the county; (2) returned jury notices; (3) information from the National Change of Address (NCOA) program; or (4) information from the BMV that a voter has turned in the voter's driver's license in another state to obtain a driver's license there.

Other sources concerning voter addresses **cannot** be used in a county voter list maintenance program conducted under this law. These sources include returned mail from other government offices; returned mail received by political parties or candidates as a result of campaign activity, or information provided by a precinct committeeman or poll workers.

To conduct a county voter list maintenance program, the county must send the voter a mailing that complies with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). The precise format of this mailing (usually a postcard), and how the mailing is used in the overall voter list maintenance program, depends on the type of information used to determine that a voter's registration address is not current, and whether or not the voter responds to the mailing. For further information regarding how to conduct a county voter list maintenance program, and to receive assistance in preparing the content and format of this mailing, please contact the Election Division.

Another simple method to conduct voter registration maintenance permitted under NVRA and state law is to include a request to cancel a registration as part of a jury questionnaire. An example of such a jury questionnaire is included in the attached appendix.

E. Posting the Vote

Each day after absentee voting concludes at the circuit court clerk's office, a satellite office, or a vote center, the county election board shall direct that absentee vote history be uploaded from each electronic poll list into the SVRS. (IC 3-11-10-29.5) Counties that do not use electronic poll books must keep a record of absentee voting activity in the SVRS. (IC 3-11-4-17)

A county is also required by law to update a voter's vote history in SVRS within 60 days following each election, unless the county is subject to a post-election recount or contest. If a county experiences a post-election recount or contest, the county shall update SVRS no later than 60 days following the conclusion of the recount or contest and the issuance of the order. IC 3-10-1-31.2

If after a primary election the poll list indicates that a voter voted in the primary election but the poll list does not indicate which party's ballot the voter requested then the county voter registration shall enter vote history into the voter's voter registration records in one of the following ways:

- 1) After a primary that has more than one party ballot in an election district or a non-partisan ballot, the county voter registration office shall record the voter cast an "unknown" ballot.
 - 2) After a primary that has only one party ballot and no non-partisan ballot the county voter registration office shall record that the voter cast a ballot in that party's primary.
- (IC 3-10-1-31.3)

F. Updating SVRS when Precincts or Election Districts Change

Every voter record is assigned to a precinct, and from there, assigned to the appropriate election districts. Over time, the precinct and election district boundaries will change, and voter records will need to be updated in SVRS.

The county commissioners can alter precinct boundaries pursuant to IC 3-11-1.5. The Indiana General Assembly is required to reapportion the Congressional Districts and redraw the legislative districts every 10 years, in the first year following the decennial census. With the exception of Marion, Lake and St. Joseph County, the county executive is required to reapportion the 4 single member county council districts and 3 county commissioner districts, or certify that the current districts comply with state statute, every 10 years in the first year following the decennial census. With the exception of Marion County, city and town councils are required to reapportion city or town council districts, or certify current districts comply with state statute, every 10 years in the second year following a decennial census. School corporations are required to divide or recertify the school board districts every 10 years in the first year following a decennial census if the school has districts where only voters who reside in the district may vote for a district representative.

When new precinct boundaries are established or election districts are modified or recertified, the appropriate body is required to file the ordinance or plan with the circuit court clerk.

The county voter registration official is required to update a voter's record in SVRS to reflect any change to precinct or election district assignment.

Check Standard Operating Procedure EM 10.2 Posting the Vote in SVRS for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 53.2 Handling VR Updates on Poll Book without a VRG 4/12 Form in SVRS for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 58.2 Voter List Maintenance for information on this topic.

Fail Safe Procedures

Fail safe provisions of federal and state law permit a person to vote in specific circumstances even though the person's name does not appear on the poll list or the person's name or address is different than the name or address that appears on the poll list. These specific circumstances are described below.

A. Fail safe procedures where the voter's name does not appear on the poll list

1. Mistake by County: A voter whose name does not appear on the poll list because of an error made by the county may nonetheless vote after the county “issues” a certificate of error. The voter is not required to wait until the certificate of error arrives at the polling place. In a county using an electronic poll list, the county voter registration official can transmit the certificate of error to a precinct through the electronic poll list. In a county using traditional, paper poll lists, the county voter registration official can confirm the issuance of the certificate of error by phone or electronic communication with a poll worker. (IC 3-7-48-1; 3-7-48-2; 3-7-48-3; 3-7-48-4) (Certificate of Error available through SVRS)

A county voter registration office may issue a certificate of error at any time after the poll list for the precinct has been printed or data has been downloaded into an electronic poll book for use on election day. The certificate must be executed by the county voter registration officer (the circuit court clerk, or by both members of the board of registration in a county where a separate board exists). The certificate of error must be numbered in the method prescribed by the state for entry in the statewide voter registration system.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 35.2 Certificates of Error for information on this topic.

2. The voter’s name is not on poll list but the county has a record of the voter at the address the voter claims to now live but the record shows the registration has been cancelled: This voter must be allowed to vote in the precinct if the voter is willing to sign a written statement on the poll book in the presence of the inspector or one of the judges that the voter continues to reside at the address in the precinct that was formerly shown on the county’s voter registration record. This is so even if the registration records show that the voter’s registration at the address was cancelled at the voter’s request! The voter is also allowed to make an oral affirmation instead of signing a written statement. If this occurs, the poll clerks must write down the information on the poll book for the voter and initial the statement. (IC 3-7-48-5) In a county using electronic pollbooks, the written affirmation by the voter is made on the VRG 4/12 and an oral affirmation by the voter may be documented by the poll clerks on the VRG 4/12. If the electronic pollbook can accommodate the addition of a voter’s information, the VRG 4/12 is not necessary and the poll workers can add the voter’s information, and the voter will sign the electronic pollbook. If this procedure is used the precinct election board should contact the County Election Board so that the County Election Board can contact any other precinct where the voter’s name may be incorrectly included on the poll list. (IC 3-7-48-6)

3. The voter’s name is not on the poll list but the voter appears at polling place with a receipt from the BMV or other “full service” registration agency (VRG-6) indicating that the voter submitted a registration application at the agency before registration closed: If the person is not on the poll list but produces a receipt of registration from an agency (like the BMV, FSSA or DWD office) they have a right to vote a regular ballot (unless otherwise challenged) if: 1) The date on the receipt indicates the voter applied to register before registration closed (29 days before the election); **AND** 2) the county registration office either has no record of the registration application or shows that the application was received and approved. (IC 3-7-48-7) The voter may not vote a regular official ballot if the county’s records show that the registration was received and rejected unless the county voter registration office determines that the rejection was a mistake. If the county voter registration office determines that the registration application was properly rejected, the voter must be offered the opportunity to cast a provisional ballot (IC 3-7-48-7.5).

If the county records show that the registration application **was approved**, but the voter is not on the poll book, the county voter registration office must issue a certificate of error. If the voter produces a timely receipt of registration and the county voter registration office has no record of the registration application being received, the inspector and judge must write the name and address of the voter in the poll book and require the voter to sign the poll list. The inspector and judges **MUST** add a note on the poll list to the effect:

“Permitted to vote after producing receipt per IC 3-7-48-7. Receipt stated date of application as March 4, 2015, which was within the registration period. Receipt stated

registration office address or ID # as Springfield Branch #13, and agency employee as Selma Bouvier.”

Before the voter casts a ballot using this procedure, the voter must complete a registration application form (State Form VRG-7 or VRG-11, for example), and provide the completed voter registration form to the precinct election board. Each precinct election board is required to be furnished with blank voter registration applications for this purpose. The completed voter registration application is then attached to the poll list for processing later by the county voter registration office. (IC 3-7-48-7)

If the voter is allowed to vote under this procedure because the county registration office has no record concerning the person’s registration application, the county voter registration office is required to notify the Indiana Election Division within seven (7) days after the election so that the election division can investigate to try and determine why the voter has a receipt but the county received no registration application. (IC 3-7-48-9)

B. Fail safe procedures where the voter’s name appears on the poll list but the voter’s name or address has changed

1. Voter is on poll list but has moved within the same precinct or the voter’s name has changed:

The voter should sign the poll book with the new address or new name (for example, a new married name) and the voter’s registration record must be updated to include the new address or new name after the election. In counties using electronic poll books, the voter shall use a VRG 4/12 to update the voter’s name or indicate a change of address within the same precinct. (IC 3-7-39-7; IC 3-7-41-2; IC 3-10-1-31.1(e))

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 41.1 Transfer Within Precinct on Absentee Ballot Application for information on this topic.

2. For those who Move Less than 30 Before Election (VRG 4/12 Affidavit of Request for Transfer of Voter Registration form process): If the voter moved outside of the precinct to any other precinct in Indiana less than 30 days before the election, the voter must produce, or sign before the inspector or a judge, an *Affidavit of Request for Transfer of Registration* (VRG-4/12 form) and then the voter may proceed to vote a regular ballot, unless otherwise challenged. (IC 3-10-11-6) However, in a municipal election year, a person who moves from outside a municipality to a location inside a municipality or from within a municipality to outside the municipality may not vote in the precinct of the person’s former residence in an election held entirely within the municipality. (IC 3-10-11-4).

If the voter completes a VRG 4/12 under this fail safe provision, the inspector shall provide the voter with a voter registration application (VRG 7 or 11, for example) and request that the voter complete and sign the application. If the voter completes the voter registration application, the inspector shall return application to the county voter registration office.

NOTE 1: If the voter indicates that the voter’s current residence is located within another county in Indiana, the voter is considered to have directed the county voter registration office of the county where the precinct is located to cancel the voter registration record within the county. The precinct election board shall provide the voter with a voter registration application for the voter to complete and file with the county voter registration office of the county where the voter’s current residence address is located. (IC 3-11-8-25.1)

NOTE 2: The county that administered the election must mail the transfer affidavit (VRG-4/12) used for this purpose for a person who has moved to a precinct in another county, together with the

original affidavit of registration (and any new registration application if submitted), to the county in Indiana where the person now resides within 30 days after registration opens after the election. (IC 3-7-43-4) A transfer affidavit (VRG 4/12) used to transfer registration within the county must be processed after the election. (IC 3-7-39-5; IC 3-10-1-31.1(e); IC 3-11-8-25.1)

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 37.1 Handling VRG 4/12 of Affirmation for information on this topic.

3. For those who Move Within the Same County and Same Congressional District (Affidavit of Request for Transfer of Voter Registration form VRG 4/12 process): In general election years, if the voter moved outside of the precinct to another precinct that is still in the same county and congressional district, the voter must produce, or sign before the inspector or a judge, an *Affidavit of Request for Transfer of Registration* (VRG-4/12 form), and then the voter may proceed to vote a regular ballot, unless otherwise challenged. Federal law also allows the voter to make an “oral affirmation” of this information in the presence of the precinct election board. If this happens, the poll clerks shall reduce the substance of the affirmation to writing at an appropriate location on the poll list and initial the affirmation. (IC 3-10-12-3.4(e))

In a county using an electronic poll book, the voter may complete the VRG 4/12 or make an oral affirmation that the poll clerks document the oral affirmation on the VRG 4/12 and initial the VRG 4/12. If the electronic poll book has the ability to do so, the oral affirmation may also be captured on the electronic poll book instead of on the VRG 4/12.

If the voter completes a VRG 4/12 under this fail safe provision the inspector shall provide the voter with a voter registration application (VRG 7 or 11, for example) and request that the voter complete and sign the application. If the voter completes the voter registration application the inspector shall return application to the county voter registration office.

NOTE: A voter who moved outside of a city or town may not return to the precinct where the voter formerly resided to vote in a municipal election. (IC 3-10-12-3.4(c))

Likewise, a voter who moved from a location outside of a city or town to a location within a city or town before a municipal election may not vote in the precinct of the person’s former residence. (IC 3-10-12-3.4(d)) There would be no precinct election board to administer an election in municipal election years in a location outside of a city or town.

This fail-safe provision may also apply for certain types of public questions if the voter continues to reside within the jurisdiction in which the public question applies.

Contact the County Election Board or Indiana Election Division for more information.

4. Voting for President and Vice-President Only (VRG-15 form): If the voter moved from an Indiana precinct to a new residence outside of Indiana and moved less than 30 days before the general election day in presidential election years, the voter must produce, or sign before the inspector or a judge, an *Affidavit for Presidential Voting Only* (VRG-15) and then the voter may proceed to vote in their precinct of their former residence. However, the voter may only be given a ballot to vote for electors for president and vice-president. (IC 3-10-10)

NOTE: If the person is allowed to vote with a VRG-15, then this affidavit constitutes authorization to cancel the person’s registration. (IC 3-7-43-5) When a voter indicates at the polls that the voter’s current residence is located outside Indiana, the voter is considered to have directed the county

voter registration office of the county where the precinct is located to cancel the voter registration record within the county. (IC 3-11-8-25.1(m))

Although, in general, election records are to be maintained under seal until the time for the filing of a recount or contest has expired, or if a recount or contest is filed until the recount or contest is completed, the county voter registration office may unseal the envelopes containing the poll lists and transfer affidavits to update the registration records of the county beginning immediately after the election. The county voter registration office should also use the poll lists to update the registration record to include the voter's voter identification number if the voter's voter identification number is not already included in the registration record. The poll lists must be resealed after updating the registration records as describe above. (IC 3-10-1-31.1) See "Retention of Election Records" tab of the Election Administrator's Manual for additional discussion of public access to election records.

Public Records

A. Public Records Requests

In general, voter registration records are public records and are subject to examination and copying by the public pursuant to IC 5-14-3. Documents that are confidential and not subject to examination and/or copying by the public include: 1) records concerning declinations to register; 2) records that indicate the identity of a voter registration agency where a person registered; and 3) voter registration records of participants in the attorney general's confidentiality program for abused persons. (IC 3-7-27-6) In addition, though voter registration applications do not request a full social security number, to the extent a voter registration application or record contains a full social security number the number must be redacted except for the last four digits. (IC 5-14-3-4(a)(12))

A county voter registration office shall, with regard to voter registration information concerning voters of the county in SVRS, act in accordance with the non-discriminatory uniform policy adopted by the county election board regarding providing duplicate copies of a computer disc or other similar record that contains voter registration information. The policy must either permit a person to obtain a duplicate copy in electronic form or not. If the policy does allow duplicate electronic copies then it must do so according to the non-discriminatory uniform policy. (IC 3-7-27-6(c); 5-14-3-3(g)) **The policy should be in written form in the minutes of the county election board.**

A person requesting this information must submit that request on State Form VRG-24. This form requires the requesting person to agree that the information will not be used to solicit merchandise, goods, services or subscriptions. The person must also agree not to sell, loan, give away or otherwise deliver the information to any other person for a purpose other than political activities or political fund-raising activities. In addition, if there is a cost for providing copies for records, the charge must be uniform to all purchasers IC 5-14-3-8(d).

A county voter registration office is not required to create and provide a list or record that has not otherwise been created unless state statute imposes a duty on the county voter registration office to create the list or record. However, if a list has been created, whether required by statute or not, it is a public record and must be provided unless it is subject to some exception under the Public Records Act. (IC 5-14-3-4)

The statewide voter registration system laws (IC 3-7-26.3; 3-7-26.4) contain several provisions regarding requests made to the county or to the state for records or reports from the system. Certain persons (state

major political party committees, for example), may purchase an annual subscription for the unrestricted voter registration file from the Indiana Election Division for all the information contained in the statewide voter registration system. All other persons may obtain a restricted copy of the list, after certain information such as date of birth and gender, have been redacted by the Division. All persons (except the Chief Justice of Indiana and the clerks of the Northern and Southern District Courts, who are entitled to purchase the list without charge for jury management) are required to pay a fee of \$5,000 to the Indiana Election Division for the annual subscription to the unrestricted voter registration file.

The Indiana Election Division is permitted to provide parts and reports from the voter registration information maintained on the statewide voter registration system to confirm a voter's registration status, and for certain purposes listed in IC 3-7-26.3-29.

However, these reports may not include the date of birth, gender, telephone number, voting history, or registration date of individual voters, except when the part or report is to be provided to a person who has already paid for an annual subscription for this data. The Election Division can also provide reports which include this restricted information, but do not permit the identification of any individual voter as the result of providing the compilation. (IC 3-7-26.4-4; 3-7-26.4-8)

Check Standard Operating Procedure GEN 1.1 for information on this topic.

B. Public Records Retention

A county voter registration office receives many documents in the performance of its duties. These records must be retained for a period of time specified by the NVRA and Indiana statute. Also, a county commission on public records may have adopted a retention schedule pursuant to IC 5-15-6 that may apply to the retention and destruction of public records. However, this retention schedule could not provide for the destruction of records earlier than dates specified by federal or state statute applicable to the records in question.

It is critically important to always keep the voter registration application for any voter who is “active”, and for an “inactive voter” until the registration of the inactive voter is either cancelled or reclassified as “active”. Once cancelled for any reason (death, request for cancellation, voter list maintenance programs, imprisonment following conviction), the cancelled registration must be kept for 2 years **after** the cancellation.

Other documents that must be kept for 2 years are: (1) rejected registration applications; (2) declinations; (3) reports regarding persons who have been imprisoned following conviction from the county sheriff, Department of Correction or any court; (4) reports regarding the death of any person used to cancel that person's registration received from the State Department of Health or any local health official; (5) any postcard, list or other information received or created during the course of a voter list maintenance program; (6) any affidavit used to cancel or transfer a registration, including the VRG 4/12 and 15; (7) certificates of error; and (8) any report from the Indiana Election Division or other source from out of state regarding the cancellation of a registration due to a voter moving out of state. (IC 3-7-27-6)

County voter registration offices must keep the poll lists after Election Day once they are used to update voter registrations based upon activities occurring on Election Day. Poll lists must be retained at least 22 months after the election before they are destroyed. However, for convenience sake, these records may be batched with the records that may be destroyed after 24 months. Further, it may be easier to batch

records for destruction according to the year to which they pertain. For example, all documents that pertain to 2014 may be destroyed on January 1, 2017.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 27.1 Maintaining Voter History for information on this topic.

Check Standard Operating Procedure VRG 48.1 Storage and Retainage of VR Records for information on this topic.

See also the *2015 Election Administrator's Manual* on "Retention of Election Records".

Processing Candidate Petitions

Certain candidates, like minor party candidates and school board candidates for example, gain access to the ballot by gathering signatures of registered voters on petitions. These candidates are required to submit the petitions to the county voter registration office. Counties are required to certify the number of valid signatures on the petition. In doing so, counties apply the standards for certifying signatures set forth in IC 3-5-6. The SVRS contains a "petition module" counties can set up for each candidate who submits a petition.

See **Master Petition Step by Step** in SVRS for instructions with candidate petitions.

Violations and Penalties

A. Investigations and Enforcement

A county election board may investigate and rule on questions concerning reported voter registration law violations. If the county election board has substantial reason to believe that a violation of the voter registration laws has or will occur, the board may conduct an evidentiary hearing to resolve the issue. The county election board has the power to subpoena witnesses, and question those witnesses under oath. If, after affording due notice and an opportunity for a hearing, the county election board believes that an act constitutes or will constitute a violation, the board may take whatever action it deems proper under the circumstances. This includes referring the matter to the attorney general for civil action, or to the county prosecuting attorney for criminal prosecution. (IC 3-6-5-31; 3-14-5-3)

With one exception, Indiana law requires that a county election board forward all challenge affidavits returned by precinct election officers following the close of the polls to the prosecuting attorney who will forward the affidavits to the foreman of the grand jury when the jury is next in session. Those challenge affidavits issued due to a voter needing to provide additional HAVA documentation for certain first time voters need not be transmitted to the grand jury. The grand jury is required to inquire into the truth or falsity of the affidavits, and to file a report of the results of its inquiry with the court. **Indiana law requires that a county election board also mail a copy of these affidavits to the Secretary of State of Indiana. (IC 3-14-5-2(b)(2))**

B. Penalties

Indiana election law provides that the following offenses are Level 6 felonies, which subjects a person to up to two and one half years of imprisonment, a \$10,000 fine, or both, upon conviction. The laws cited below should be studied carefully, since they may contain requirements or exemptions that are not set forth in detail here:

- (1) Refusing to receive and record a petition of nomination when presented in accordance with the election laws, or suppressing such a document that has been duly filed. (IC 3-14-1-1)
- (2) Conspiring with an individual for the purpose of encouraging the individual to submit a false application for registration. (IC 3-14-2-1)
- (3) Paying or offering to pay an individual for doing any of the following: (A) applying for an absentee ballot; (B) casting an absentee ballot; (C) registering to vote; or (D) voting.
- (4) Accepting payment of property for doing any of the following: (A) applying for an absentee ballot; (B) casting an absentee ballot; (C) registering to vote; or (D) voting.
- (5) Knowingly voting or offering to vote at an election when the person is not registered or authorized to vote. (IC 3-14-2-9)
- (6) Except when permitted under certain "fail safe procedures", knowingly voting or offering to vote in a precinct except the one in which the person is registered and resides or knowingly making a false statement to a pollworker or when signing a poll list concerning the voter's name, residence address or voter identification number. (IC 3-14-2-11)
- (7) Knowingly voting or applying to vote in a name other than the person's own. (IC 3-14-2-12)
- (8) Having voted once at an election, knowingly applying to vote at the same election in the person's own name, or any other name. (IC 3-14-2-12)
- (9) Knowingly hiring or soliciting another person to go from one precinct to another for the purpose of voting at an election when the person hired or solicited is not a voter in the precinct. (IC 3-14-2-13)
- (10) Allowing a person to vote who is not entitled to vote, or by use of an unauthorized procedure, if a precinct election officer or public official. (IC 3-14-2-14)
- (11) Knowingly omitting to perform a duty imposed by the election code, if a precinct election officer or public official. (IC 3-14-4-3)

Appendix

Sample Notice to Certain Voters Required to Provide Additional Documentation

Sample Jury Questionnaire with Voter Registration Questions

Fail Safe Decision Diagrams for Voters Moving Within or Out of State

Affidavit of Request for Transfer of Voter Registration (VRG-4/12)

Indiana Voter Registration by Mail Application (VRG-7)

Indiana Voter Registration Material Receipt (VRG-8)

Indiana Voter Registration Material Transmittal (VRG-9)

Affidavit of Voter List Maintenance (VRG-21)

Application for County Voter Registration Data (VRG-24)

Uniformed Service Voter Registration Certificate (ABS-11)

Affidavit for Late Voter Registration by Absent Uniformed Services Voter (ABS-13)

Federal Registration Form

Federal Registration and Absentee Ballot Request (Standard Form 76)

NOTE: The Voter Registration Acknowledgment Notices (VRG-10 and VRG-13a); the Request to Cancel (formerly VRG-14); the Notice of Disfranchisement (VRG-17); and the Certificate of Error (VRG-22) are available in an electronic format within SVRS.