VOTES ACT AND EV IN VRIS

Changes in the law and how they affect voting and local election officials

Entering EVs in VRIS

Agenda:

- Votes Act Changes:
  - Voter Registration Deadlines
  - Vote by Mail
  - In Person EV
  - Other Changes
- Entering EVs in VRIS
  - EV Search
  - EV Maintenance
  - Additional Reminders
- Commonly Asked Questions

VOTES ACT

Voter Registration Deadlines:

- Voter registration deadline for ALL elections/town meetings: 10 days
- Last Day to Register In-Person Sessions:
  - 1,500 voters or more: 9am-5pm
  - Less than 1,500 voters: 9am-11am and 3pm-5pm

Vote by Mail:

- Overview
- Applications
- SOC Applications and Portal
- Application Deadlines
- Mailing and Receiving Ballots
- Other Vote by Mail Changes

Vote by Mail Overview:

- Early voting by mail is now required for all elections
  - Includes: primaries, state elections, and municipal elections
- Voters may apply to vote by mail for all elections in a calendar year

Vote by Mail Applications:

- Any written communication is sufficient
- Can sign by hand or electronically
  - Electronic signature: written substantially the same way as by hand
- Must include vote by mail applications with all acknowledgment notices to:
  - Newly registered voters
  - Voters who change their address
- Family members can apply for an EV ballot
- Application must be posted on city/town website

Vote by Mail SOC Applications and Portal:

- SOC will mail applications at least 45 days before every regular state primary, state election, and presidential primary
- Applications are pre-addressed to LEO and postage pre-paid
- Include voter ID barcode
- Application is for any election on primary or election date or all elections during the year
- SOC will establish online ballot request portal
  - Additional information will be forthcoming

Vote by Mail Application Deadlines:

- Deadline to receive application for mailed ballot: 5pm on 5th business day before election
- 2022 Deadlines:
    - September 6 – 5pm on Monday, August 29
    - November 8 – 5pm on Tuesday, November 1
- Deadline applies to both AV and EV mail-in ballots
    - Voters who qualify can still request an "emergency" absentee ballot

Vote by Mail Mailing and Receiving Ballots:

- Return ballot envelopes (AV-8s) are pre-addressed and postage pre-paid
  - Used for both AV and EV
- Ballots must be received by close of polls for most elections
  - Biennial state elections: Ballots mailed by Election Day can be accepted until 5pm on 3rd day after election
  - November 8 election deadline: 5pm November 12th
- Ballots can be returned by voter or family member
  - In Person at clerk's office
  - In Person at EV location during EV hours
  - Drop Box
  - Mail

More on mailing and receiving ballots on Thursday, July 21st at 10AM

Vote by Mail Other Changes:

- Advance removal and depositing
- A voter's ballot can be counted as long as the voter was alive when it was cast
- Accessible Vote by Mail
  - Voters with a disability preventing them from marking a paper ballot independently may request accommodation
  - Additional information will be coming soon

In-Person Early Voting:

- EV Dates
- EV Hours
- Locations
- Notice Requirements
- 150 Foot Rule
- Local Elections

In-Person Early Voting Dates:

- In-person EV must be offered for all regular state primaries, state elections, and presidential primaries
- In-person EV for state and presidential primaries: 10th day before through 4th day before primary
  - September 6, 2022 EV Period: August 27th – September 2nd
- In-person EV for state elections: 17th day before through 4th day before election
  - November 8, 2022 EV Period: October 22nd – November 4th

In-Person Early Voting Hours:

- Weekday hours:
  - Under 5,000 voters: at least 25% of usual business hours
  - 5,000 – 40,000 voters:
    - 15th – 11th day: at least 50% of usual business hours
    - 8th – 4th day: during usual business hours
  - Over 40,000 voters: during usual business hours
- Weekend hours:
  - Under 5,000 voters: at least 4 hours a weekend, 1 day per weekend, at least 2 hours when open
  - 5,000 – 24,999 voters: at least 6 hours a weekend, 1 day per weekend, at least 3 hours when open
  - 25,000 – 39,999 voters: at least 4 hours each weekend day
  - 40,000 – 74,999 voters: at least 6 hours each weekend day
  - 75,000+ voters: at least 8 hours each weekend day
- You may provide additional EV hours if desired

In-Person Early Voting Locations:

- Must include local election office, unless determined to be unsuitable or inaccessible
  - If unsuitable/inaccessible, must identify alternative centrally-located, suitable, and convenient public building within city/town as EV location
- City/Town can provide for additional early voting sites
- Each EV location must be accessible
- Must be designated at least 14 days before EV period starts
  - September Primary: August 13
  - State Election: October 8

In-Person Early Voting Notice:

- Must publish notice of locations and schedules for EV:
  - At least 5 business days before EV starts
    - State Primary: August 22
    - State Election: October 17
  - At least once during EV period
- Notice must be posted:
  - In your office or on city/town bulletin board
  - Any other public building considered necessary
  - On city/town website
  - On SOC website – must enter into VRIS (or email if VRIS is locked)

In-Person Early Voting 150 Foot Rule:

- 150 ft. rule prohibiting campaigning at polling places is extended to EV locations as of September 6 primary
- No campaigning for or against candidate or question on ballot within 150 feet of entrance to EV location during EV hours
- No signature gathering of any kind allowed within 150 feet during EV hours

In-Person Early Voting Local Elections:

- Cities and towns can choose to have in-person EV for local elections
  - If on same date as state primary, state election, or presidential primary, must have in-person EV for same hours
  - At least 2 registrars must recommend it
  - Board of selectmen, town council, or city council must vote to authorize
- Opt-in vote must be at least 5 days before start of EV and must include EV schedule
  - EV can't start before 17th day before and can't end after 2 business days before
  - Hours: usual business hours unless vote specifies otherwise
  - Location and EV schedule must be posted at least 48 weekday hours before start of EV

Other Changes:

- Poll workers:
  - Vacancies 6 weeks before election: appointing authority appoints
  - Vacancies 3 weeks before election: clerk appoints
  - Can fill vacancies without regard to party, voter registration status, or residence
- Police Officer Assignments
  - Board of selectmen, town council, or city council assigns police officers or constables to polling places
- Jail-Based Voting – Starting 2023
- Back-end Automatic Voter Registration – Starting 2023

EV AND VRIS

EV and VRIS:

- EV Search
- EV Maintenance
- Additional Reminders

EV and VRIS EV Search:

- Select 9/6/2022 from 'Election Date' dropdown
- Search voter one of two ways:
  - Scan barcode:
    - Click into 'Voter ID' field. Cursor must be in 'Voter ID' field before scanning
    - Scan barcode
    - Search results display with voter information and voter highlighted
  - Search manually:
    - Enter at least one character for last name or street name, then 'enter' or 'Search'
    - Search results display with matching voters
    - Select voter record matching application to highlight record
  - Once record is highlighted, select 'Create EV' to open EV Maintenance

EV and VRIS EV Maintenance:

- Date App Received: Auto-populate date EV created

- Mailing Address: Auto-populates with voter record mailing address
  - Can be edited or added based on application
  - If left blank, labels will automatically print using residential address

- State Election Checkbox: to create EV for state election, make sure box is checked
  - Current default: checked
  - Upcoming deployment default: unchecked

- Party
  - Voters in party: populates with voter party
  - Unenrolled/designations: select party from dropdown

EV and VRIS Additional Reminders:

- EV Search with barcode:
  - After closing EV Maintenance, select 'Search' or 'Clear' before next scan
- EV Scan
  - EV scan should ONLY be used to update ballot information or to create in-person EVs.
  - EV Scan doesn't allow you to:
    - Create EV for both state primary and election at same time
    - Verify residential address from application
    - Update mailing address

Commonly Asked Questions:

- Can a voter enrolled in a party request a different party ballot?
  - NO. You can send them the ballot for the party they are registered in OR
  - Contact the voter and have them submit an updated voter registration for the other party
- An unenrolled voter indicated they want a primary ballot but did not check a party box. How do we process it?
  - If a voter is unenrolled/in a designation and did NOT indicate a party, you cannot send them a ballot
  - You can attempt to contact the voter directly to clarify

Commonly Asked Questions:

- What if the voter didn't sign the application?
  - Can NOT send them a ballot
  - If not an AV or EV for November election, they will be sent another application in September
- Do we need to attach registrars certification to each application?
  - NO. When you receive applications by mail, you should timestamp them
  - When entering into VRIS, we recommend adding the initials of the person entering it and the date they entered it on the application itself

Commonly Asked Questions:

- What if voter is listed as inactive?
  - The voter will be automatically activated when you process the application for the voter

- What if the voter is flagged to show identification?
  - You must send the requested ballot to the voter, but you need to include notice to the voter that they must return a copy of their identification with the completed ballot

Upcoming Classes:

- Thursday, July 7th at 10AM: UOCAVAs – Entering UOCAVAs in VRIS and Sending Ballots
- Thursday, July 14th at 10AM: Common Questions on UOCAVAs and EV Applications
- Thursday, July 21st at 10AM: Mailing and Receiving EV Ballots
- Additional Classes to be Scheduled:
  - In-person EV
  - Advance Processing and CTFs
  - Mail-in Application Portal and Accessible Vote by Mail
  - Tallying the Primary and Election

Questions?

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