

Michigan

Registration Deadline

Forms must be received or postmarked 30 days before an election.¹

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Database Implementation Status

Michigan has had a centralized voter registration system in place since 1998.² Indeed, this system – the Qualified Voter File (the “QVF”) – was one of the models for HAVA’s database provisions. The larger cities and townships (“localities”) have direct access to the single state database; smaller localities have access via county election officials, who also have direct access to the statewide database.

Entering Voter Registration Information

Who inputs voter registration information? Department of State employees generally review and enter information from voter registration applications as part of a driver’s license transaction. Registration forms received outside of the driver’s license process are reviewed and entered by local election officials in the larger cities and townships; in smaller jurisdictions, officials either enter data directly into the statewide system using remote access software, travel to the county clerk’s office to enter data, or send a copy of the form to the appropriate county clerk for data entry.

What happens to voter registration forms submitted at state registration agencies? Forms received as part of the driver’s license process are entered directly into the statewide database; data is then electronically transmitted to the appropriate locality.³ Forms received by local elections officials in hard copy are retained or transmitted, as above, to the appropriate county.⁴ Forms received by other government agencies are forwarded to the appropriate locality for review and entry.⁵

How are most forms submitted? Michigan reported that in 2004, 7% of forms were submitted by mail, 12% were submitted in person to election officials, 80% were submitted at the DMV, and 2% were submitted at another voter registration agency.⁶

Voter Registration Form

The relevant portions of the voter registration form are included at the end of this section.

Processing of Forms Without Identifying Numbers

How will the state treat an application with an affirmative indication that the applicant has no valid identifying number? The applicant will be assigned a unique voter registration number. If the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be considered registered, but if uncorrected (see below), she will have to show identification at the polls.

How will the state treat an application without an identifying number and without an affirmative indication that the applicant has no such number? If the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be considered registered, but if uncorrected (see below), she will have to show identification at the polls.

How will the state treat an application listing an identifying number that is either incomplete or illegible? If the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be considered registered, but if uncorrected (see below), she will have to show identification at the polls.

Matching Against Motor Vehicle and Social Security Records

What fields from the voter registration form will the state seek to match to motor vehicle or Social Security records? Identifying number, first name, last name, and date of birth.

How precise is the match standard? For matching information on forms with a driver's license or state ID number, Michigan requires an exact match of the number, the last name, and the first initial of the first name, and a "substantial match" of the first name. Michigan uses the standard AAMVA criteria for matching information on forms with SSN digits: exact match of the SSN-4, first name, last name, month of birth, and year of birth.

How much human intervention is involved in determining whether information is matched? Michigan's match process is fully automated. Clerks can manually change an applicant's verification status if the applicant provides a physical copy of an identification card.

Description of matching process: Every night, new records entered into Michigan's Qualified Voter File are sent to the state's database of motor vehicle records. The motor vehicles database attempts to pair these new voter records with existing driver's license records or records from the SSA database, and returns a code indicating whether the record was successfully matched or not. The QVF creates a report for every voter record with this code; when an election official logs onto the QVF in the morning, she will receive the reports created the night before.

Michigan also attempts to match information on each new voter registration to existing information in the QVF, to determine whether the new application is a duplicate.⁷

Finally, Michigan will mail each first-time registrant a voter identification card, and if the card is returned as undeliverable, the registration will be rejected.⁸

What are the consequences if the state cannot find a match? If the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be registered, but if uncorrected (see below), and if the applicant is a first-time voter registering by mail, she must show identification at the polls.

Notice and Opportunity to Resolve Errors

Does the applicant have the opportunity to correct a missing or incomplete identifying number, without submitting a new form? Yes. The applicant may correct missing or incomplete information at any point before voting.

Does the applicant have the opportunity to resolve a failed match, without submitting a new form? Yes. The applicant may submit information to resolve a failed match at any point before voting.

If information on an otherwise timely application is corrected after the voter registration deadline, is the correction timely? Yes.

Description of notice and correction process: An applicant whose identifying number is missing, incomplete, illegible, or unverified will be notified by means at the discretion of the local clerk, and may correct the error at any point before voting. If the applicant does not do so, she will still be registered, but will need to provide identification at the polls.

Identification Requirements at the Polls

Who must provide identification at the polls? Any first-time voter who registered by mail, whose identifying number has not been verified, and who has not previously presented a copy of valid identification to the local election board, must provide identification at the polls.⁹

Forms of ID:

1st-time voters	current and valid photo ID
registering by mail	current utility bill w/ name, address
without verified	bank statement w/ name, address
identifying number:	government check w/ name, address
	paycheck w/ name, address
	other gov't document w/ name, address

What forms of identification are accepted? A current and valid photo ID, or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the voter's name and address.

What are the consequences of failing to show identification? The voter may cast a provisional ballot. The ballot will be counted if the local clerk determines within 6 days of the election that the voter's valid registration record exists, or if within 6 days of the election the voter presents, faxes, or mails to the local clerk a copy of a photo identification card issued by the government or a Michigan postsecondary institution, along with a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the voter's name and current address.¹⁰

Statutes and Regulations

MICH. COMP. LAWS ch. 168 generally concerns registration. MICH. COMP. LAWS §§ 168.509m-509o direct the Secretary of State to establish and maintain a single statewide voter registration system. There are no applicable regulations.

End Notes

¹ MICH. COMP. LAWS §§ 168.497(1), 168.509x.

² electionline.org, *Assorted Rolls: Statewide Voter Registration Databases Under HAVA*, June 2005, available at <http://www.electionline.org/Portals/1/EB11.FINAL1.pdf>, at 19.

³ MICH. COMP. LAWS §§ 168.509w(2)-(3).

⁴ *But see id.* § 168.500b(1) (providing that county clerks will forward forms to the townships, not vice versa).

⁵ *Id.* §§ 168.500a(2), 168.509w.

⁶ Election Assistance Commission, *The Impact of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 on the Administration of Elections for Federal Office 2003-2004*, June 30, 2005, tbl. 2, available at http://www.eac.gov/NVR_Spreadsheets/NVRA_table_2.html. Due to rounding, the percentages listed may exceed 100%.

⁷ The system will search for:

first, an exact match on first name, last name, month of birth, and date of birth, and the year of birth \pm 12 years;

second, an exact match of last name, first initial, month of birth, and date of birth, and the year of birth \pm 12 years;

third, an approximate phonetics-based match of first name and last name, an exact match on month of birth and date of birth, and the year of birth \pm 12 years;

fourth, an approximate phonetics-based match of first name and last name.

At each stage, the system returns all possible matches for the municipal official to determine whether there exists a duplicate entry. Mich. Dep't of State, Bureau of Elections, *Qualified Voter File Desktop Reference*, available at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/QVF_Desktop_Reference_042402_20603_7.pdf.

⁸ MICH. COMP. LAWS §§ 168.499(3), 168.500c. Some local jurisdictions may also check whether the street address is zoned for business use only.

⁹ MICH. COMP. LAWS § 168.509t(2). MICH. COMP. LAWS § 168.523(1), *as amended by* 2005 Mich. Pub. Acts 71, requires that each other voter either provide a “generally recognized picture identification card” or sign an affidavit that she has no such card, but a 1997 Attorney General’s Opinion found the requirement unconstitutional. Mich. Att’y Gen., Op. No. 6930 (Jan. 29, 1997), available at <http://www.ag.state.mi.us/opinion/datafiles/1990s/op10001.htm>. The requirement remains on the books, but has not been enforced.

¹⁰ MICH. COMP. LAWS §§ 168.523a(7), 168.813(1).

State of Michigan



Voter Registration Application and Michigan Driver License/ Personal Identification Card Address Change Form

1 You can use this form to:

- Register to vote in Michigan.
- Change your name or address on your voter registration.

If you have never voted in Michigan and choose to submit this form by mail, **you must appear in person to vote in the first election in which you wish to participate.** This requirement does not apply if (1) you personally hand deliver this form to your county, city or township clerk's office instead of mailing the form (2) you are 60 years of age or more (3) you are disabled or (4) you are eligible to vote under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

2 To register to vote in Michigan you must be:

- A resident of Michigan and the city or township where you are applying to register to vote.
- A citizen of the United States of America.
- At least 18 years of age (by election day).
- Not serving a sentence in jail or prison.

3 Voter registration and driver license address must be the same

Michigan law states that **the same address must be used for voter registration and driver license purposes.** Therefore, if the residence address you provide on this form differs from the address shown on a driver license or personal identification card issued by the State of Michigan, the Secretary of State will automatically change your driver license or personal identification card address to match the residence address entered on this form. If an address change is made, the Secretary of State will mail you an address update sticker for your driver license or personal identification card.

4 Identifying the city or township where you live

Every person residing in Michigan lives in either a city or a township. If you do not know the name of your city or township, please describe your location in the space provided for *If no house or street address.* Providing cross streets/roads and landmarks will help the clerk correctly identify your city or township.

5 Mailing address option provided

If you would prefer to receive mail related to your voter registration or driver license/personal identification card at an address other than your residential address, provide a mailing address where indicated on the form. If you provide a mailing address, it will not appear on your voter I.D. card or driver license/personal identification card.

6 Mail or hand deliver this form to your city or township clerk

If you live within the city limits of one of the cities listed on the reverse side of this sheet, mail or hand deliver the application directly to the clerk of that city. If you do not live within one of the listed cities but you know or can locate the address of your city or township clerk, mail or hand deliver the application directly to that clerk. Otherwise, mail or hand deliver the application to your county clerk. (The addresses of Michigan's 83 county clerks are also listed on the reverse side of this sheet.) The county clerk will forward it to your city or township clerk. Completed applications must be received or postmarked by the close of registration for an election in order to be effective for that election.

Are you registering to vote in Michigan for the first time?

If you have never voted in Michigan and choose to submit this form by mail, you must meet a new identification requirement provided under federal law. To comply with the identification requirement, you must:

- (1) accurately enter your state issued driver license number or personal ID card number where requested on this form.

or

- (2) send one of the following forms of identification when mailing this form to your county, city or township clerk: a COPY of a current and valid photo identification (such as a driver license or personal ID card) or a COPY of a paycheck stub, utility bill, bank statement or a government document which lists your name and address.

DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS BY MAIL.

If you are subject to the identification requirement and do not meet the requirement as explained above, an acceptable form of identification will be requested before you vote in the first election in which you wish to participate.

Note: The identification requirement does **not** apply if (1) you personally hand deliver this form to your county, city or township clerk's office instead of mailing this form (2) you are disabled or (3) you are eligible to vote under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

Contact your city or township clerk if you have any questions

Your application is not valid until accepted by the clerk of the city or township in which you reside. If you do not receive a voter I.D. card within three weeks or have any questions, contact your clerk.

State of Michigan Voter Registration Application and Michigan Driver License/Personal Identification Card Address Change Form

1 answer Are you a citizen of the United States of America? Yes No
Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day? Yes No

If you responded **No** to either of these questions, do NOT complete this form.

2 complete application

Last Name First Name Middle Name

Address where you live — house number and street/road Apt. No./Lot No.

City Zip Code Telephone *optional*

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If you do not have a house or street address, describe location where you live — cross streets or roads, landmarks, etc.

City *or* Township where you live County where you live School District *if known*

Mailing Address *if different* For use on Driver License/Personal ID and Voter Registration For use on Voter Registration only

Date of Birth Male Female

ID Number *check applicable box and provide appropriate number*

I have a state issued driver license or personal ID card # _____ State _____

I do not have a state issued driver license or personal ID card. The last four digits of my Social Security Number are _____

I do not have a state issued driver license, a state issued personal ID card or a Social Security Number.

An ID number will be assigned to you for voter registration purposes.

Are you still registered to vote at your last address? Yes No Don't Know *If "Yes" or "Don't Know" enter previous address*

Previous Street Address City *or* Township of County

State Zip Code Registered under name of *if different than above*

3 read, sign and date

I certify that:

- I am a citizen of the United States.
- I am a resident of the State of Michigan and will be at least a 30-day resident of my city or township by election day.
- I will be at least 18 years of age by election day.
- I authorize cancellation of any previous registration.
- The information I have provided is true to the best of my knowledge under penalty of perjury. If I have provided false information, I may be subject to a fine or imprisonment or both under federal or state laws.

X _____
Signature of Applicant Date

X _____
Signature of Applicant Date

Sign and date both spaces provided above.

BEFORE MAILING, REMOVE TAPE AND FOLD IN HALF TO SEAL CLOSED.