

# Pennsylvania

Updated Apr. 3, 2006

## Registration Deadline

Forms must be received or postmarked 30 days before an election.<sup>1</sup>

M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su

## Database Implementation Status

Pennsylvania has constructed a top-down “Statewide Uniform Registry of Electors” (“SURE”), in which county election officials have direct access to the centralized statewide database.<sup>2</sup> The state engaged Accenture as of July 2002 to assist in developing the statewide system.<sup>3</sup>

## Entering Voter Registration Information

*Who inputs voter registration information?* County commissions review and enter information from voter registration forms in their jurisdictions into the statewide system.

*What happens to voter registration forms submitted at state registration agencies?* Paper forms received by the Secretary of State or another voter registration agency are sent to the appropriate county for review and entry; the Department of Transportation (“DOT”) transmits the information electronically to the appropriate county, using information the applicant enters during the electronic driver’s licensing process, within five days of receipt.<sup>4</sup>

*How are most forms submitted?* Pennsylvania reported that in 2004, 35% of forms were submitted by mail, 5% were submitted in person to election officials, 27% were submitted at the DOT, 2% were submitted at another voter registration agency, and 31% were submitted by other means.<sup>5</sup>

## 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?* If the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be assigned a unique voter registration number, and will be considered registered.

*How will the state treat an application without an identifying number and without an affirmative indication that the applicant has no such number?* If uncorrected (see below), the application will be considered “pending” for 40 days, and the applicant will not be fully registered until she provides an identifying number that can be verified, her driver’s license or non-driver’s identification card, or her Social Security card. After 40 days, the application will be rejected, but these rejections are suspended within 10 days of an

election. In that case (or while the application is “pending”), the voter may vote a provisional ballot, to be counted if the voter supplies the number or documentation above to a county election official by the time the ballot is canvassed.

*How will the state treat an application listing an identifying number that is either incomplete or illegible?* If uncorrected (see below), the application will be considered “pending” for 40 days, and the applicant will not be fully registered until she provides an identifying number that can be verified, her driver’s license or non-driver’s identification card, or her Social Security card. After 40 days, the application will be rejected, but these rejections are suspended within 10 days of an election. In that case (or while the application is “pending”), the voter may vote a provisional ballot, to be counted if the voter supplies the number or documentation above to a county election official by the time the ballot is canvassed.

## **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, name, and date of birth.

*How precise is the match standard?* Pennsylvania will ultimately use a hybrid match standard to match information on forms with a driver’s license number: the number and the first two characters of the last name must match exactly, but discretion is then left to the county commission to determine whether the record returned represents a match. Pennsylvania uses the standard AAMVA criteria to match 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?* For matching information on forms with a driver’s license number, if a match is not found automatically, the system seeks and returns an exact match of the identifying number and the first two characters of the last name; the county official then has the discretion to determine whether the record returned represents a match. The process for matching information on forms with SSN digits is fully automated.

*Description of matching process:* When a new Pennsylvania voter registration application is entered into the county system, the system will automatically send the information to the DMV to check for a driver’s license match or a match of the SSN-4. The match process generally takes a few seconds. For matching information on forms with driver’s license numbers, the system completes two separate match processes. It will first, attempt to match the number, the last name, the first two characters of the first name, and the date of birth. If there is an exact match, the applicant is registered. If there is no match, the system will return the record that exactly matches the number and the first two characters of the *last* name (if such a record exists), for the county official to review. Information on forms listing SSN digits will be automatically checked against the SSA database through the standard AAMVA process: an entered record will be submitted to the DMV database, which will automatically submit the appropriate fields to the SSA and return a code indicating whether the record was successfully matched or not.

Pennsylvania will also mail a voter registration card to each prospective registrant. If, within ten days, that card is returned as undeliverable, and an investigation cannot resolve the issue, the application will be rejected.<sup>6</sup>

*What are the consequences if the state cannot find a match?* If uncorrected (see below), the voter's application will be considered "pending" for 40 days, and the applicant will not be fully registered until she provides an identifying number that can be verified, her driver's license or non-driver's identification card, or her Social Security card. After 40 days, the application will be rejected, but these rejections are suspended within 10 days of an election. In that case (or while the application is "pending"), the voter may vote a provisional ballot, to be counted if the voter supplies the number of documentation above to a county election official by the time the ballot is canvassed.

## **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 within 40 days (or, if notice of an error was sent within 55 days of an election, until the ballots are canvassed).

*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 – including a driver's license, non-driver's identification card, or Social Security card – to the county commission within 40 days (or, if notice of an error was sent within 50 days of an election, until the ballots are canvassed).

*If information on an otherwise timely application is corrected after the voter registration deadline, is the correction timely?* Yes, if the correction concerns the identifying number.

*Description of notice and correction process:* The county elections official will attempt to notify, by mail or phone, an applicant whose identifying number is missing, incomplete, illegible, or unverified. The applicant may correct the information by phone, mail, or in person within 40 days (or, if notice of the error was sent within 50 days of an election, until the ballots are canvassed). If the error is resolved before the pollbooks are printed, the applicant will be considered fully registered and may vote a regular ballot; if not, she must vote a provisional ballot, and must provide a verifiable identifying number, driver's license or non-driver's identification card, or Social Security card to the county commission before the ballots are canvassed. Because the applicant must contact the county commission to resolve any error, she may not resolve errors with the identifying number by showing identification at the polls.

## Identification Requirements at the Polls

*Who must provide identification at the polls?* All first-time voters.<sup>7</sup>

*What forms of identification are accepted?* Pennsylvania or federal identification (including driver's licenses), student photo ID card, employee photo ID card, firearm permit, current utility bill or bank statement, paycheck, or government check.<sup>8</sup>

### Forms of ID:

1st-time voters:	Pennsylvania or federal identification student photo ID card employee photo ID card firearm permit current utility bill bank statement government check paycheck
------------------	---

*What are the consequences of failing to show identification?* The voter may cast a provisional ballot.<sup>9</sup> The ballot will be counted for all races for which the voter was eligible if the voter provides identification to county election officials before the Friday after an election, if it is determined that the individual was registered and entitled to vote in that county, if the signature matches the signature on the voter's registration form, and if the individual did not cast any other ballot.<sup>10</sup>

## Statutes and Regulations

PA. CONS. STAT. ANN. tit. 25, part IV and PA. STAT. ANN. tit. 25, ch. 14, art XII generally concern registration. 25 PA. CONS. STAT. ANN. directs the Department of State to establish and maintain a single statewide voter registration system. 4 PA. CODE ch. 183 comprises the applicable regulations.

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> 25 PA. CONS. STAT. §§ 1324(b), 1326(b).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* §§ 1102, 1222(C).

<sup>3</sup> electionline.org, *Assorted Rolls: Statewide Voter Registration Databases Under HAVA*, June 2005, available at <http://www.electionline.org/Portals/1/EB11.FINAL1.pdf>, at 21; electionline.org, *Statewide Voter Registration Database Status*, at <http://www.electionline.org/Default.aspx?tabid=288>.

<sup>4</sup> 25 PA. CONS. STAT. §§ 1323(c), 1325(f); 4 PA. CODE § 183.15(a)(9).

<sup>5</sup> 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](http://www.eac.gov/NVR_Spreadsheets/NVRA_table_2.html).

Due to rounding, the percentages listed may exceed 100%.

<sup>6</sup> PA. CONS. STAT. § 1328(c)(5).

<sup>7</sup> 25 PA. STAT. § 3050.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* § 3050. Voters with photo ID are required to present photo ID of the forms specified in the text; those who do not have photo ID may present one of the other IDs specified in the text. *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> 25 PA. STAT. § 3050(a.2), (a.4).

<sup>10</sup> *Id.* § 3050(a.4)(4)-(7).



## Pennsylvania Voter Registration Application Form General Instructions

1. Please provide all information on the application as required. Read all instructions carefully before you fill out the application.
2. If you are currently registered, you do not need to re-register unless you have moved or changed your name since you last registered to vote.
3. In order to vote at the next election, this application must be received by your county voter registration office 30 days before the election, or postmarked no later than the thirtieth day before the election. Military electors may apply at any time.
4. Print out, fill in completely, sign and date the form. Place completed application in an envelope addressed to your local county voter registration office (addresses are available on the web at [www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us)) and affix the proper postage.
5. You are not registered to vote until your application has been processed and accepted by the county voter registration office. If accepted, the county voter registration office will send you, via nonforwardable mail, a Voter Identification Card. If you do not receive a Voter Identification Card within 14 days of the date you submit this application, contact your county voter registration office.
6. If you decline to register to vote, your decision will remain confidential. If you register to vote, the office at which you register will remain confidential.

### IDENTIFICATION WHEN YOU VOTE

Pennsylvania law requires that registered voters who appear to vote for the first time in an election district after December 9, 2003 must present a form of identification. A list of the acceptable forms of identification may be obtained from your county voter registration office or from the Pennsylvania Department of State at its website, [www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us)

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT THIS FORM (PLEASE READ CAREFULLY)

**Box 1. Citizenship and Age:** If the answer to either question is "No", do not complete this form because you are not eligible to register to vote.

**Box 2. Application Type:** Please check the appropriate box. If you are a Federal or State employee and wish to retain your voting residence in the county where you last resided, please check the appropriate box.

**Box 3. Name, Driver's License and Social Security Number:** Print your last name, first name and middle name or initial. Circle Jr., Sr., II, III, IV *if applicable*. You must supply a Driver's License Number, if you have one. If you not have a Driver's License Number, you must supply the last four digits of your Social Security Number. If you do not have a Social Security Number, please write None in the boxes.

**Box 4: 4a. Address of Residence:** Fill in your complete address of residence. **P.O. boxes may not be used here unless there is no physical address.** Print street address, city and zip code. (If the residence is only a portion of the house, include the location or number of the room, apartment or floor, which is occupied.) In Box 4b include your telephone number. (Optional)

In Box 4c fill in the name of the municipality (**city, borough or township**) and county where you live. Use the map in the box below if you cannot otherwise identify your address

	NORTH
WEST	EAST
	SOUTH

If your address of residence listed in Box 4a has no street number or street name (for example, Schoolhouse Road or RR2 Box 3) use the box above to draw a map of where you live. Include landmarks and roads.

**Box 5. Mailing Address:** Fill in your mailing address, *if different* from Box 4a.

**Box 6. Date of Birth:** Fill in the month, day and year of your birth.

**Box 7. Race:** Fill in your race. (Optional)

**Box 8. Prior Registration:** If you were registered before, fill in the name used on previous registration in Box 8a and address, county and year of previous registration in Box 8b.

**Box 9. Political Party:** Check block for political party or no affiliation. *You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary.*

**Box 10.** If you were assigned a Voter Identification Number, which appears on your Voter Identification Card, place that Identification Number here. If you are applying to register to vote for the first time, leave this box blank.

**Box 11. Registration Declaration:** You must be a citizen of the United States to register to vote in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Please read the registration declaration carefully. Please sign and print your name and date the application.

#### PENALTY FOR FALSIFYING REGISTRATION

**DECLARATION WARNING:** If a person signs an official registration application knowing a statement declared in the application to be false, makes a false registration, or furnishes false information, the person commits perjury. Perjury is punishable, upon conviction, by a term of imprisonment not exceeding seven years, or a fine not exceeding \$15,000, or both, at the discretion of the court. Submitting an application containing false information may also subject a person to other penalties, including loss of the right of suffrage, under state or federal law.

**Box 12. Name of Assistant:** If the applicant is unable to sign the application, the person who assisted the applicant must provide his or her name, address and telephone number.

# VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION

**DO NOT WRITE IN SHADED AREAS**

<b>1</b>	Are you a citizen of the United States of America? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		}	If you checked "No" in response to either of these questions, do not complete this form.	
<b>2</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> New Registration <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Name <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Address <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Party <input type="checkbox"/> I am a Federal or State employee and wish to retain my voting residence in the county where I last resided.			Place either Driver's License # or Social Security # here DL # <input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/> OR SS# (last 4 digits) <input style="width: 40px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>	
<b>3</b>	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name/Initial		
<b>4 a</b>	Address of residence, include street and city (Use map above if no street number or name) (If only P.O. box, see above)			Apt #	State
<b>4 c</b>	Municipality where you live	County where you live	City		State   Zip Code
<b>6</b>	Date of Birth	<b>7</b> Race (Optional)	<b>8 a</b> Name on previous registration		<b>9</b> In which party do you wish to register?
<b>8 b</b>	Address of previous registration		County of previous registration	Year of previous registration	<input type="checkbox"/> Democratic <input type="checkbox"/> No affiliation <input type="checkbox"/> Republican <input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>Please Specify</i> ): <input type="checkbox"/> Libertarian <input type="checkbox"/> Green
<b>10</b>	Voter Identification Number <input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>		Place signature with full name (or mark) below. (Please see Penalty for Falsifying Declaration.)		
<b>11</b>	I HEREBY DECLARE THAT: (1) On the day of the next election I will have been a <b>United States citizen</b> for at least one month, I will be <b>at least 18 years of age</b> , and I will have <b>resided in Pennsylvania</b> and in my election district for at least 30 days; (2) I am legally qualified to vote. AND I HEREBY AFFIRM THAT the information I have provided in this registration declaration is true. I understand that this registration declaration will be accepted for all purposes as the equivalent of an affidavit; and if the registration contains a materially false statement, I will be subject to penalties for perjury.			X	
<b>12</b>	Name of person who assisted in the completion of this application		Telephone No.	DATE OF REGISTRATION	REGISTRAR
	Address			YEAR	PARTY AFFILIATION
NAME	CITY, BORO, OR TWP.		WARD	DISTRICT	COUNTY VOTER I.D.#

SAMPLE