

# Vermont

Updated Mar. 29, 2006

## Registration Deadline

Forms must be received or postmarked by noon of the second Monday before an election (8 days before a federal general election).<sup>1</sup>

M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su

## Database Implementation Status

Vermont has constructed in-house a new, top-down statewide voter registration system, in which municipal officials have direct access to a centralized statewide database.<sup>2</sup>

## Entering Voter Registration Information

*Who inputs voter registration information?* Municipal clerks generally review and enter information from voter registration forms in their jurisdictions directly into the statewide system.

*What happens to voter registration forms submitted at state registration agencies?* Forms received by the DMV or another voter registration agency are sent within ten days to the Secretary of State and then forwarded to the appropriate municipality for review and entry.<sup>3</sup>

*How are most forms submitted?* Vermont reported that in 2004, 33% of forms were submitted in person to election officials, 18% were submitted by mail, and 49% were submitted by other means.<sup>4</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?* An applicant with neither number will be asked by the town clerk to explain why she has neither; town clerks must submit these explanations to the state Director of Elections before registering the applicant. Upon approval of the Director of Elections, if the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be 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), as long as the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be registered, but will be considered “not validated,” and she must sign an affidavit and provide a valid identifying number or identification at the polls.

*How will the state treat an application listing an identifying number that is either incomplete or illegible?* If uncorrected (see below), as long as the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be registered, but will be considered “not validated,” and she must sign an affidavit and provide a valid identifying number or 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, name, and date of birth.

*How precise is the match standard?* Vermont will use a “substantial match” standard to match information on forms with a driver’s license number. Vermont will use the standard AAMVA criteria for matching information on forms with Social Security 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?* The process for matching information on forms with driver’s license numbers depends entirely on a manual search. The process for matching information on forms with SSN digits is fully automated.

*Description of matching process:* For matching information on forms listing a driver’s license number, the election official will turn to a duplicate copy of the driver’s license database that the elections division regularly receives from the DMV. The official will search this copy of the driver’s license database for the individual on the voter registration form, looking first for an exact match of the driver’s license number, name, and date of birth. If no exact match is found, the official will keep checking for variants and typos, searching manually through the database for partial matches if need be.

Forms listing SSN digits will be automatically checked against the SSA database through the standard AAMVA process. Municipal clerks will e-mail the State Director of Elections, who will relay the e-mail to the Vermont DMV. The DMV will then automatically submit the appropriate fields to the SSA, which will return a code indicating whether the record was successfully matched or not.

*What are the consequences if the state cannot find a match?* If uncorrected (see below), as long as the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be entered but considered “unverified,” and she must sign an affidavit and provide a valid identifying number or 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 the voter registration deadline, and may correct a missing or incomplete identifying number at the polls on Election Day.

*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 the voter registration deadline, and may correct an inaccurate identifying number at the polls on Election Day.

*If information on an otherwise timely application is corrected after the voter registration deadline, is the correction timely?* Yes, but only the identifying number may be corrected after the deadline.

*Description of notice and correction process:* The municipal clerk will attempt to notify, by mail and telephone, an applicant whose identifying number is missing, incomplete, illegible, or unverified. Municipal clerks have also been instructed to reach out to an applicant who provides Social Security digits. If the applicant has a valid driver's license number, the clerk will attempt to obtain that number instead. The applicant may attempt to resolve any errors at any point before the voter registration deadline, by phone, mail, or in person.

## Identification Requirements at the Polls

*Who must provide identification at the polls?* Any first-time voter who registered by mail who has not previously presented a copy of valid identification to a municipal clerk must provide a valid identifying number or identification at the polls.<sup>5</sup> Any voter who has not already taken Vermont's voter oath must take the oath at the polls.<sup>6</sup>

### Forms of ID:

1st-time voters	verifiable number
registering by mail:	current and valid photo ID
	current utility bill w/ name, address
	bank statement w/ name, address
	government check w/ name, address
	paycheck w/ name, address
	other gov't document w/ name, address

*What forms of identification are accepted?* A verifiable identifying number, or a valid photo identification, a copy of a current utility bill, a copy of a current bank statement, or a copy of a government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the voter's name and address.<sup>7</sup> If the voter submitted a voter registration application before the voter registration deadline but the application was not received by the appropriate municipality, the voter may sign an affidavit instead of providing the identification above.

*What are the consequences of failing to show identification?* The voter may cast a provisional ballot, but only for federal candidates.<sup>8</sup> That ballot will be counted if the municipal clerk, after "such investigation as she or she deems proper," determines that the voter attempted to register to vote and was in fact eligible to vote.<sup>9</sup> If the voter's identifying number has not been verified, the voter must show administrative error preventing a match before the provisional ballot will be counted.

## Statutes and Regulations

VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 17, ch. 43 generally concerns registration. VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 17, § 2154 directs the Secretary of State to establish and maintain a single statewide voter registration system. There are no applicable regulations.

## End Notes

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<sup>1</sup> VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 17, § 2144.

<sup>2</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 23; electionline.org, *Statewide Voter Registration Database Status*, at <http://www.electionline.org/Default.aspx?tabid=288>.

<sup>3</sup> VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 17, §§ 2145a, 2145b.

<sup>4</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>5</sup> VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 17, § 2563.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* tit. 17, § 2121(3).

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* tit. 17, § 2563.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* tit. 17, §§ 2555, 2556, 2563.

<sup>9</sup> *See id.* tit. 17, § 2557.

**VERMONT Application for Addition to the Checklist (VT VOTER REGISTRATION FORM)**

17 V.S.A. § 2145

(Please print clearly, use ballpoint pen, and bear down hard.)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby make application  
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Initial)  
to have my name added to the checklist of the Town or City of \_\_\_\_\_.

**By checking the boxes below, I swear or affirm that these are true statements:**

- Yes  No Are you a citizen of the United States?
- Yes  No Will you be eighteen years of age or older on or before the day of election?
- Yes  No Are you a resident of Vermont?

**If you checked "No" in response to any of the three questions above, DO NOT complete this form.** You are not qualified to vote in Vermont -- Please contact the Secretary of State for more information at (800) 439-8683.

**ONLY** if you are registering to vote for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in Vermont, **AND** you are mailing this to your town clerk individually, you must submit a photocopy of one of the following: current & valid photo identification OR bank statement, utility bill, or government document with your name and current address. (You do not need to submit I.D. if you have been previously registered in VT, if this form is submitted as part of a voter registration drive, or if you return this form to the clerk's office in person.)

I was born on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month/Day/Year) (Town or City) (State)

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Tel. # (Optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**My principal dwelling is located at:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(E911 street address including number or exact physical location, if no E911 address)

By checking the boxes below, I swear or affirm that these are true statements:

- I am a resident of the Town or City of \_\_\_\_\_.
- I have taken the Voter's Oath OR  I will take the Voter's Oath before I vote in Vermont.

**My VT Driver's License or Personal I.D. # (PID#) issued by VT DMV is \_\_\_\_\_.** This # is **REQUIRED.** **IF you do not have a VT PID# issued by VT DMV you must enter the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_.** **If you do not have a VT PID#, or SSN, the Secretary of State will assign a unique number to you. You cannot register to vote without completing this information.**

The last place I was registered to vote was: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Physical location – include number, street, town, state and zip code)

By registering to vote in the above named town in Vermont, I authorize my name to be removed from the list of registered voters in any previous place where I was registered to vote. I was registered there under a maiden or different last name, which was: \_\_\_\_\_

**I meet all of the eligibility requirements to vote in this municipality. I hereby swear, or affirm, under penalty of perjury and other potential federal or state criminal penalties of up to a \$10,000 fine, or imprisonment for not more than fifteen years, or both, that the statements made by me in this application are true. (13 V.S.A § 2901; 42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-10).**

Today's Date: Month/Day/Year \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**VOTER'S OATH** (Vermont Constitution, Chapter II, Section 42): You solemnly swear or affirm that whenever you give your vote or suffrage, touching any matter that concerns the state of Vermont, you will do it so as in your conscience you shall judge will most conduce to the best good of the same, as established by the Constitution, without fear or favor of any person.

FOR OFFICIAL USE – VOTER'S OATH

I hereby certify that on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, I administered the Voter's Oath to the applicant.

CHECK ONE:

Town Clerk of (town or city) \_\_\_\_\_

Notary Public (county) \_\_\_\_\_

Justice of the Peace (town) \_\_\_\_\_

Other Official (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Official's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print your name legibly)

**FOR TOWN OR CITY CLERK USE:**  The Town Clerk, has reviewed the application OR  the Board of Civil Authority has reviewed the application AND the applicant  was added to the checklist. The applicant's usual polling place is: \_\_\_\_\_  
OR the applicant  was rejected and NOT added to the checklist. The reason(s) for rejection are: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of town clerk \_\_\_\_\_

**KEEP THE YELLOW COPY OF THIS APPLICATION FORM.** Contact your Town or City Clerk to make sure your application has been received. Bring your yellow copy to the polls when you go to vote. This is your proof you have submitted an application to the checklist before the deadline for registration.

[SOS-VR-9/05]

**VERMONT VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION**  
(HOW TO FILL OUT THE Vermont "APPLICATION FOR ADDITION TO THE CHECKLIST")

**To be eligible to vote in Vermont you must:**

(Eligibility requirements are in 17 V.S.A. § 2121, 2122)

1. be a citizen of the United States;
2. be a resident of Vermont and a resident of the town in which you apply to be added to the checklist; (OR be a military or overseas voter qualified under the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act whose last place of residence in the United States immediately prior to moving overseas was in a Vermont town or city);
3. take, or have previously taken, the Voter's Oath; and
4. be 18 years of age or older or will be eighteen on the day of election.

**IF you are registering to vote for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in Vermont, and you are mailing this application to your town clerk individually, you must also submit a photocopy of one of the following forms of identification: current & valid photo identification or bank statement, utility bill, or government document that contains your name and current address.**

**You must include your Vermont DMV-issued Driver's License No. or Personal I.D. No. (VT PID#) on the voter application.** If you do not have a VT PID# issued by DMV, then you must include the last 4 digits of your Social Security No. (SSN). **If you do not have either, you must check the box swearing under oath and penalty of perjury that you do not have either a VT PID# or SSN and the Office of the Secretary of State will issue you a unique identifying number.**

**Where to File:** Keep the yellow copy for yourself, and submit the original(s) of the form to the Town or City Clerk in the town or city in which you reside. Addresses are on the Secretary of State's web site, <http://www.sec.state.vt.us>, or call your town clerk, or call the Elections Division at (802) 828-2363 or (800) 439-8683.

**When to File:** The application must be received by 12:00 noon on the second Monday before the day of an election in order to vote in that election. Town clerks' offices are open from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on this Monday. If this Monday is a legal holiday for the State of Vermont, you can submit your application up until 12:00 noon on the Tuesday prior to the election. If you apply through the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) or another voter registration agency, your application must be postmarked or accepted before the second Monday before the election.

**Getting on the Voter Checklist:** You are not automatically registered to vote by filing this application. If the Town Clerk or the Board of Civil Authority finds that you meet the eligibility requirements you will be added to the checklist and become a registered voter. You will be notified in writing whether or not your application has been approved. If you have not received notification, call your town clerk. If you are not eligible, the Board must state the reason in writing and give you a chance to be reconsidered. If you are still denied, you can appeal in writing informally to a superior or district judge in your county. (No filing fee or lawyer is required.)

**Voter's Oath:** If you have previously voted in Vermont, do not take the voter's oath again. If not, take the oath in front of a person authorized to administer oaths. (Any notary public, town clerk, justice of the peace, or any person authorized to administer oaths in Vermont.) If you do not take oaths you may take it as an affirmation. Be sure the official completes the certification. If the filing deadline is close, you can file your application without taking the oath, and take the oath on Election Day. If you intend to request an early or absentee ballot, you must take the oath before requesting the ballot.

**SERIOUS PENALTIES FOR FALSE INFORMATION ON AN APPLICATION TO THE CHECKLIST**

**It is unlawful to give false information concerning your qualifications to be a registered voter of a town or city in Vermont. The penalties are serious, including penalties of up to a \$10,000 fine or imprisonment for not more than fifteen years, or both.**

**Note to Town and City Clerks:** The applicant retains the yellow second page copy when the application is completed. After the Town Clerk or Board of Civil Authority acts, complete the bottom of the application form and mail a copy to the applicant.

The laws relating to voter registration are in 17 V. S. A. §§2121-2150. If you have questions, call your town clerk or call the Elections Division, Office of the Secretary of State at (802) 828-2363, or (in Vermont) (800) 439-8683.

**Note:** If you were provided this form when you applied for or renewed a motor vehicle driver's license or by a voter registration agency you may decline to register. If you decline to register your failure to register will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes. The fact that you may have submitted this application in connection with a motor vehicle driver's license application or renewal, or through a voter registration agency will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes.