

Virginia

Updated Mar. 24, 2006

Registration Deadline

Forms must be received or postmarked 29 days before an election.¹

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Database Implementation Status

Virginia is currently constructing a top-down voter registration system, in which county and municipal officials (collectively, “general registrars”) will have direct access to a centralized statewide database, the “Virginia Election and Registration Information System” (“VERIS”). Virginia retained Unisys and Aradyme Corporation in February 2005 to assist with design and development of the statewide system; Quest Information Systems was later retained as well.²

Entering Voter Registration Information

Who inputs voter registration information? General registrars are responsible for reviewing and entering information from voter registration forms in their jurisdictions into the statewide system.

What happens to voter registration forms submitted at state registration agencies? Forms received by the State Board of Elections, the DMV, or another voter registration agency are bar coded and sent within five days to the appropriate general registrar for review and entry.³

How are most forms submitted? Virginia reported that in 2004, 22% of forms were submitted by mail, 11% were submitted in person to election officials, 67% were submitted at the DMV, and 1% were submitted at other agencies.⁴

Voter Registration Form

Virginia has protected its registration form such that it is not readily possible to highlight information pertaining to this survey, or to attach the registration form itself. The registration form may be downloaded from the Virginia State Board of Elections, at <http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/documents/VirginiaVoterRegistrationApplication.pdf>.

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? Virginia’s form does not clearly state how an applicant should indicate that she has no valid identifying number.

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 rejected.

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 rejected.

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? Virginia requires an exact match of the SSN and date of birth, and a “substantial match” of the name.

How much human intervention is involved in determining whether information is matched? The system will automatically return a list of records with an exact match of the SSN and date of birth; the general registrar has the discretion to determine whether a likely match exists among the possible matches returned. If no record is found with a matching SSN and date of birth, the system will return all possible matches, for the general registrar to review manually.

Description of matching process: Virginia will only attempt to match the information of first-time registrants applying after January 1, 2003, by mail or through a third party. When the information from a voter registration application is entered in the database, the system will seek records with an exact match of the SSN and date of birth; the general registrar then has the discretion to determine whether the record returned matches the applicant’s name under a “substantial match” standard.

What are the consequences if the state cannot find a match? If the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be considered registered, but if uncorrected (see below), 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 up until the voter registration deadline.

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 up until the voter registration deadline.

If information on an otherwise timely application is corrected after the voter registration deadline, is the correction timely? No.⁵

Description of notice and correction process: The general registrar will attempt to notify, first by phone and then by mail, an applicant whose SSN is missing, incomplete, illegible,

or unverified. The mailed notification will include a new voter registration application. The applicant may attempt to resolve the error by phone, mail, or in person.

Identification Requirements at the Polls

Who must provide identification at the polls? Every voter must provide identification at the polls.⁶

What forms of identification are accepted? For federal elections, first-time voters registering by mail after January 1, 2003, without a verified SSN and who have not previously shown identification must provide current and valid photo ID, or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other document that shows the name and address of the voter.⁷ All other voters, and all voters in state elections, must present a Virginia voter registration card, a Social Security card, a valid Virginia driver's license, a Virginia state or local ID card, a federal ID card, a valid employee photo ID card, or for voters who are unable to show such identification, an affidavit affirming the voter's identity.⁸

Forms of ID:

1st-time voters registering by mail without a verified identifying number:	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
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All other voters:	Virginia voter registration card Social Security card valid Virginia driver's license Virginia state or local ID card Federal ID card valid employee photo ID card affidavit
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What are the consequences of failing to show identification? In a federal election, first-time voters registering by mail after January 1, 2003, may vote a provisional ballot, to be counted if the county board of elections determines, on the day following the election, that the voter was a qualified and registered voter in the appropriate precinct.⁹ Any other voter may not vote if she does not at least submit an affidavit affirming her identity.

Statutes and Regulations

VA. CODE ANN. §§ 24.2-400 *et seq.* generally concern registration. VA. CODE ANN. § 24.2-404 directs the State Board of Elections to establish and maintain a single statewide voter registration system. There are no applicable regulations.

End Notes

¹ VA. CODE ANN. §§ 24.2-414, 24.2-416, 24.2-416.4.

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

³ VA. CODE ANN. §§ 24.2-411.1, 24.2-411.2.

⁴ 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%.

⁵ VA. CODE ANN. § 24.2-422.

⁶ *Id.* § 24.2-643. If the general registrar confirms that the voter is properly registered, and the voter signs an affirmation including full SSN, name, birthdate, and address, the voter may instead vote a regular ballot. *Id.* § 24.2-652.

⁷ *Id.* § 24.2-643(E).

⁸ *Id.* § 24.2-643(B).

⁹ *Id.* §§ 24.2-643(E), 24.2-653.