

1071.0.0 VOTER REGISTRATION ACT

1071.1.0 Purpose

This policy is established to comply with Act 964 of 1995, which requires voter registration agencies to distribute voter registration applications, provide assistance to applicants in completing voter registration application forms, unless the applicant refuses assistance, and to accept completed voter registration application forms for transmittal to the appropriate permanent registrar via the Secretary of State. Effective January 1, 1996, the Department of Human Services (DHS) will implement the provisions of the Act.

1071.2.0 Scope

Voter registration agencies include the following:

- A. The Office of Driver Services of the Revenue Division of the Department of Finance and Administration and all State Revenue Offices
- B. Public assistance agencies, which shall mean those agencies that provide services under the Food Stamps, Medicaid, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and the special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) programs
- C. Disabilities agencies, which shall mean agencies that offer state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities
- D. Public libraries
- E. The Arkansas National Guard

1071.3.0 Procedures

1071.3.1 Provisions

- A. The Act specifies that public assistance agencies and disabilities agencies must provide a mail voter registration application form with each recertification, renewal, or change of address or name relating to such assistance. Public assistance agencies and disabilities agencies shall provide voter registration application forms as part of the intake process. If the disabilities agency provides services in a person's home with the intent of taking an application, reapplication, or name or address change, the agency shall also provide voter registration services at the person's home. Public assistance and disabilities

agencies shall also provide declination forms that shall be retained for two years if the applicant declines to apply to register to vote.

- B. Mail voter registration application forms shall serve for purposes of initial application to register and also serve for changes of name, address or party affiliation. Bilingual (Spanish/English), Braille and large print forms shall be available upon request.

1071.3.2 Confidentiality

DHS employees shall not:

- A. Seek to influence an applicant's political preference or party registration
- B. Display any such political preference or party allegiance
- C. Make any statement to an applicant or take any action for the purpose or effect of discouraging the applicant from registering to vote
- D. Make any statement to an applicant or take any action for the purpose or effect of leading the applicant to believe that a decision to register or not register has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits
- E. Disclose any applicant's voter registration information, except as necessary for the administration of voter registration

1071.3.3 Training

DHS employees in the affected divisions will be trained in the provisions of the Voter Registration Act, completion of the voter registration application, completion of the declination form and the reporting requirements associated with the forms. Each agency required to implement the voter registration provision shall train employees to provide the same degree of assistance in completing the voter registration application as is provided in completing the agency's forms for services. Ongoing training will be provided to employees who assist persons with voter registration applications.

1071.3.4 Reporting

- A. Each DHS county office and affected institution will be provided envelopes to mail the voter registration applications to the Secretary of State's Office. Applications for Voter Registration will be mailed on the day they are received in the county office. For each mailing, the office will complete a report that

shows the number of applications that are being mailed and the number of declinations the county received that day. A copy will be retained in the office.

- B. DHS is required to report to the Legislative Council at six month intervals. The report will provide statistical information and recommendations for improvements in procedures, forms, and other matters affected by the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. To assist with this requirement, each DHS office that mails Applications for Voter Registration will complete a report form that shows the number of voter registration applications and declinations received during the report month. The report form will be submitted to the Office of Chief Counsel by the tenth of the month. Each division will maintain a report of each mailing which shows the number of voter registration applications mailed on a given day. Also, the report must show the number of declinations received for that day. Each division is responsible for devising a method of collecting data so that the report of declinations can be completed.

1071.4.0 Originating Section/Department Contact

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