



Administrative Policy No 8.12

Subject: Voter Registration Assistance

Information contact: Chief Risk Officer
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Authorizing sources: Governor's Executive Order [07-04](#)
[RCW 29A.08.310](#) – 360

Resources: [National Voter Registration Act](#)

Effective date: August 1, 2013

Revised: New

Approved by: Original signed by Dana Phelps
Senior Director, Policy & External Relations

Purpose

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) requires that individuals be given the opportunity to register to vote (or to change their voter registration name and/or address) when applying for or receiving services or assistance at any office in the state that provides public assistance.

Scope

This policy applies to all DSHS organizational units that provide public assistance services.

Definitions

Designated Agency – An office or agency in the state that provides public assistance or that provides state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities, and that is required by the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to implement a program designed and administered by the Secretary of State for registering voters.

National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) – requires states to offer voter registration opportunities at state offices that provide public assistance and state offices that provide state-funded programs primarily engaged in serving persons with disabilities.

Voter Registration Assistance Officer – The person designated within an agency that is responsible for administering all aspects of the voter registration program for that agency as prescribed by the Secretary of State.

Policy

DSHS must:

- A. Provide the same level of service for voter registration assistance as is provided with eligibility of services, recertification, or an address change.
- B. Appoint a Voter Registration Assistance Officer who will monitor and be responsible for compliance with state and federal voter registration assistance laws.
- C. Analyze how best to use technology to efficiently and effectively provide voter registration assistance for in-person services as well as tele-centers and web portals.
- D. Partner with the Secretary of State (SOS) to ensure voter registration assistance services are delivered in a manner that allows the SOS to register voters efficiently.

Administrations must:

- A. Designate a Voter Registration Assistance Coordinator to manage the voter registration assistance activities within their administration to ensure:
 - i. Voter registration posters are in all local office waiting areas.
 - ii. Voter registration applications are in all local office client waiting areas and with contractors who provide eligibility services.
 - iii. Instruction and training on Voter Registration Assistance occurs.
 - iv. Tracking and reporting of Voter Registration Assistance.
 - v. Voter registration applications are sent to the Office of the Secretary of State.

The Voter Registration Assistance Officer must:

- A. Monitor compliance with state and federal voter registration assistance laws.
- B. Serve as the liaison between the Secretary of State and DSHS regarding voter registration assistance.
- C. Report on voter registration statistics to the Secretary of State.

Administration employees must not:

- A. Attempt to influence a person's political preference.
- B. Display political posters or demonstrate any political preference or party allegiance.

- C. Make any statement or take any action which may discourage a person from registering to vote.
- D. Make any statement or take any action which would lead a person to believe that a decision to register or not has any effect on their ability to receive or continue to receive services or benefits.
- E. Use any person's voter registration information for any purpose other than voter registration.

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