

Section B

U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION



2008 Election Administration & Voting Survey

Statutory Overview

In order to better understand state laws governing federal elections, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, as part of its biennial Election Administration and Voting Survey, is collecting information on state election laws and procedures. These answers will help us to better understand the quantitative data relating to the 2008 general election that we are collecting from all U.S. states and territories.

We understand that responding to this Statutory Overview may require significant staff time on the part of your office. Please be assured that we have attempted to minimize the burden, and we appreciate your cooperation in this very important project.

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DIRECTIONS AND EXAMPLE

Please provide your state's legal citation for the responses to these questions (where applicable).

Please answer each question to the best of your ability. If terms are ambiguous or not relevant, please explain why. If a question is not applicable to your state, please explain why. If a definition or term lacks legal standing but is widely understood in practice, please explain. If election procedures vary at the local level within your state, please explain to the best of your ability.

If state laws are currently enjoined or otherwise blocked from enforcement by a state or federal court, please specify.

Please put your responses between the red, bracketed text lines. This will help us extract your answers into our central database.

Example:

A1. How does your state define the following terms related to votes and ballots? Please provide your state's legal citation defining these terms, where applicable.

- a. Over-vote

[Begin definition (a) below this line.]

Your answer goes here. You may enter the text directly, or cut and paste from another word processing program.

There is no limit to the length of your response.

[End definition (a) above this line.]

SECTION A: GENERAL

A1. How does your state define the following terms related to votes and ballots? Please provide your state's legal citation defining these terms, where applicable.

a. Over-vote

[Begin definition (a) below this line.]

Voter marks more names or choices than the number of seats to be filled or questions to be answered. (From SEC document "Uniform Definition of What Constitutes a Vote")

[End definition (a) above this line.]

b. Under-vote

[Begin definition (b) below this line.]

Voter votes for no candidates, or fewer candidates than allowed. (From SEC document "Uniform Definition of What Constitutes a Vote")

[End definition (b) above this line.]

c. Blank ballot

[Begin definition (c) below this line.]

This would be widely understood as a ballot with no markings.

[End definition (c) above this line.]

d. Void/Spoiled ballot

[Begin definition (d) below this line.]

An unused ballot. S.C. Code of Laws SECTION 7-13-1150.

[End definition (d) above this line.]

e. Provisional/Challenged ballot

[Begin definition (e) below this line.]

A ballot voted when there is some question as to whether a voter is qualified to vote in the election, which cannot be immediately resolved.

S.C. Code of Laws SECTION 7-13-810, 7-13-820, 7-13-830, 7-13-1880.

[End definition (e) above this line.]

f. Absentee

[Begin definition (f) below this line.]

Absentee voting is the process by which voters who meet one of the qualifications to vote absentee cast a ballot prior to Election Day.

S.C. Code of Laws, Title 7, Chapter 15.

[End definition (f) above this line.]

g. Early voting

[Begin definition (g) below this line.]

N/A.

[End definition (g) above this line.]

h. Active Voter

[Begin definition (h) below this line.]

A voter whose name is on the list of active, registered voters.
S.C. Code of Laws SECTION 7-1-20 (15).

[End definition (h) above this line.]

i. Inactive Voter

[Begin definition (i) below this line.]

A voter whose name is not on the list of active, registered voters.

[End definition (i) above this line.]

j. Other terms (please specify) _____

[Identify each TERM and definition separately and begin below this line.]

[End TERM(s) and definition(s) above this line.]

A2. Please provide the legal citation for any **significant** changes to election laws or procedures that have been enacted or adopted since the previous Federal election. By “significant,” we do not mean routine or technical changes (such as changes to election district boundaries or polling place changes). However, we would like to learn about any new identification requirements for voters or registrants; changes in eligibility for voting or registering; adoption of alternative voting methods; and other changes that you believe represent a significant change in the way your state runs its elections.

[Begin response to above question (A2) below this line.]

N/A.

[End response to above question (A2) above this line.]

SECTION B: VOTER REGISTRATION

B1. Is your state's voter registration database system best described as a bottom-up, a top-down, or a hybrid? (Note: A bottom-up system generally uploads information retained at the local level and compiled at regular intervals to form the statewide voter registration list. A top-down system is hosted on a single, central platform/mainframe and is generally maintained by the state with information supplied by local jurisdictions. A hybrid is some combination of both systems described above.)

[Begin response to above question (B1) below this line.]
Top-down system.

[End response to above question (B1) above this line.]

If your state has a bottom-up or hybrid system, how often do local jurisdictions transmit registration information to the state list?

[Begin response to above clarification question to B1 below this line.]
Daily.

[End response to above clarification question to B1 above this line.]

B2. Please describe the process used in your state to move voters from the active list to the inactive list, and from the inactive list to the active list. Is a different process used for UOCAVA voters?

[Begin response to above question (B2) below this line.]
Voters are placed on inactive status only by the State office.

Convictions are made inactive based on a match with a file we receive from the State and Federal courts. The file is compared to the statewide database and voters receive a letter that they were placed on inactive status and what steps they need to take to re-register.

Deaths are placed on inactive status based on a file from Vital Statistics. The file is matched on full SSN, birthdate, and Name (same for convictions).

Voters who move are placed on inactive status based on returned mail or information we receive from county offices or the voter.

Written requests are when voters send a written request to be removed.

Confirmation mailings - voters who do not respond to the mailing are placed on inactive status for failure to respond to the mailing.

All removals are made at the state level and the process is the same for UOCAVA.

[End response to above question (B2) above this line.]

B3. Please describe your state's process for removing voters from the voter registration rolls (not merely moving them from active to inactive). Please include information regarding notices and confirmations. Are these procedures the same for UOCAVA voters?

[Begin response to above question (B3) below this line.]

A purge is done once per year. Moves and conviction status voters are purged every 2 years. Deaths are purged every year. Confirmation mailing voters are purged after 2 consecutive general elections.

[End response to above question (B3) above this line.]

B4. Can your state's voter registration database (or equivalent) share information electronically with your state's drivers license agency (for example, to match records or trace changes in address)? Can your voter registration database be similarly linked with databases in any other state or federal agencies? Please describe these links, including any use of database matching to verify voter registration applications.

[Begin response to above question (B4) below this line.]

The database can be used to match records at DMV but we do not currently do so. We receive electronic records from DMV and other agencies of new registrants only.

[End response to above question (B4) above this line.]

B5. Please describe how your state uses National Change of Address (NCOA). What has been your state's experience with using NCOA?

[Begin response to above question (B5) below this line.]

We have not used the NCOA option but it is currently under review.

[End response to above question (B5) above this line.]

B6. Please describe your state's voting eligibility requirements as they relate to individuals with a felony conviction. (For example, are convicted felons allowed to vote while in prison or while on parole or probation? Are voting rights automatically restored or does the individual have to apply for a pardon, certificate of eligibility or other similar certificate? Does an individual whose voting rights have been restored have to produce documentation of his/her status when registering to vote?)

[Begin response to above question (B6) below this line.]

Any person who is convicted of a felony or an offense against the election laws is not qualified to register or to vote, unless the disqualification has been removed by service of the sentence, unless sooner pardoned. Service of sentence includes completion of any prison/jail time, probation, parole, and payment of restitution. Felons must re-apply for registration. The law does not require proof of service of sentence, but does require the person to be qualified. A voter registration board may require proof of service of sentence in some situations.

[End response to above question (B6) above this line.]

B7. Does your state currently use the Internet in any way to facilitate voter registration? If yes, please describe how your state allows voters to use the Internet in the registration process (e.g., entire registration completed online; completed online but then must be printed, signed, and mailed by voter, etc.).

[Begin response to above question (B7) below this line.]

The voter registration application is available online at scvotes.org, where it can be printed, completed, and mailed to the voter's county voter registration office.

[End response to above question (B7) above this line.]

SECTION C: ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

C1. Please describe how all votes cast at a place other than the voter's precinct of registration are tabulated (for example, please include descriptions of such votes as absentee ballots, mail-in ballots, votes cast at vote centers, provisional ballots, early voting locations, etc.).

a. Are the votes counted centrally or at the precincts?

[Begin response to above question (a) below this line.]

Centrally.

[End response to above question (a) above this line.]

b. If centrally tabulated, are the votes redirected to the appropriate precinct for reporting in the canvass?

[Begin response to above question (b) below this line.]

No.

[End response to above question (b) above this line.]

c. Are the absentee, mail, etc., votes reported separately for each precinct, or are they added to the in-precinct results and reported as just a single number?

[Begin response to above question (c) below this line.]

They are reported as a single number in a virtual "absentee" precinct.

[End response to above question (c) above this line.]

d. How are UOCAVA ballots counted and reported?

[Begin response to above question (d) below this line.]

They are included in the absentee precinct.

[End response to above question (d) above this line.]

C2. Does your state require a reason for voting absentee, or does your state allow no-excuse absentee voting? (If a reason is required, please provide the legal citation.)

[Begin response to above question (C2) below this line.]

S.C. requires a reason for voting absentee.
7-15-310.

[End response to above question (C2) above this line.]

C3. Does your state provide for in-person early voting? If so, how is early voting defined? When early voting is used, are the ballots counted at the precinct or at a central location? How are these votes reported?

[Begin response to above question (C3) below this line.]

S.C. does not have early voting.

[End response to above question (C3) above this line.]

C4. Do any jurisdictions in your state use a vote-by-mail system to replace (and not merely supplement) at-the-precinct voting in any elections?

[Begin response to above question (C4) below this line.]

No.

[End response to above question (C4) above this line.]

C5. Please list each of the situations that require a provisional ballot in your state. Please provide the relevant legal citation for each situation.

[Begin response to above question (C5) below this line.]

A ballot voted when there is some question as to whether a voter is qualified to vote in the election, which cannot be immediately resolved. A challenge can be made by a poll manager, a qualified watcher, or an elector.

S.C. Code of Laws SECTION 7-13-810, 7-13-820, 7-13-830, 7-13-1880.

[End response to above question (C5) above this line.]

C6. Does your state count provisional ballots of voters who are registered in different precincts, or are those ballots automatically rejected? Please describe the process used by local election officials in determining whether to count a provisional ballot.

[Begin response to above question (C6) below this line.]

These ballots are not counted at the provisional ballot hearing. State law requires voters to vote in their precinct. **SECTION 7-5-120 and 7-7-910.**

[End response to above question (C6) above this line.]

C7. Please describe your state's laws regarding post-election audits, if any.

[Begin response to above question (C7) below this line.]

There are no state laws regarding post election audits, but there are procedures.

[End response to above question (C7) above this line.]

C8. Please describe any state requirements for poll worker training.

[Begin response to above question (C8) below this line.]

Poll managers must complete a training program approved by the State Election Commission. S.C. Code of Laws Section 7-13-72.

[End response to above question (C8) above this line.]

SECTION D: ELECTION DAY ACTIVITIES

D1. Please describe your state's process for capturing "over-vote" and "under-vote" counts.

[Begin response to above question (D1) below this line.]

S.C. does not capture this information.

[End response to above question (D1) above this line.]

D2. What identification does your state require from voters in the following situations:

a. registering to vote;

[Begin response to above question (a) below this line.]

A current valid photo ID or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck or other government document that shows your name and address in this county.

[End response to above question (a) above this line.]

b. casting an in-person ballot;

[Begin response to above question (b) below this line.]

Voter registration card, drivers license, or DMV-issued ID card.

[End response to above question (b) above this line.]

c. casting a mail-in or absentee vote;

[Begin response to above question (c) below this line.]

No ID required.

[End response to above question (c) above this line.]

d. casting a ballot under UOCAVA;

[Begin response to above question (d) below this line.]

No ID required.

[End response to above question (d) above this line.]

e. any other stage in registration or voting process in which identification is required (please specify).

[Begin response to above question (e) below this line.]

In person absentee voting would require same ID as casting an in-person ballot.(b).

[End response to above question (e) above this line.]

D3. Please describe your state's laws regarding access to the polling place for election observers. Election observers are people allowed inside the polling place who are not poll workers, election officials or voters. If decisions on access to observers are left to local jurisdictions, please explain.

[Begin response to above question (D3) below this line.]

Watchers:

Each candidate in a primary election, or a non-partisan or announced write-in candidate in a general election, may appoint one watcher at a time for any voting place where this candidate's name is on the ballot. However, in any general or special election, all candidates of the same political party shall be jointly represented at any one polling place by not more than 2 watchers for each 1,000 registered voters or fraction thereof registered at such polling place. (7-13-860)

Observers:

Since elections are public functions, individuals representing organizations or themselves may observe the election process. These observers may stay inside the polling place if they do not talk to voters or interfere with the election process. Because of a polling place size, observers may be limited in number. Observers, as with anyone inside the polling place, may not display any type of campaign literature including a badge or item of clothing. Observers must conduct themselves in an orderly manner. Observers who are disorderly or unruly may be removed from the polling place (*Section 7-13-140*).

[End response to above question (D3) above this line.]

SECTION E: OTHER

E1. Under HAVA, Section 402, states are required to have in place administrative complaint procedures to remedy grievances. Has your state revised its administrative complaint procedures since they were first implemented? If so, how?

[Begin response to above question (E1) below this line.]

No.

[End response to above question (E1) above this line.]

E2. Please add any additional comments or information about your state's election administration processes that would help to inform the EAC's interpretation of your data.

[Begin response to above question (E2) below this line.]

[End response to above question (E2) above this line.]

* The information collection associated with the Election Administration and Voting Survey is required for the EAC to meet its statutory requirements under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 15301), the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) (42 U.S.C. 1973gg-1 et seq.), and the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voters Act (UOCAVA) (42 U.S.C. 1973ff-1). Respondent's obligation to reply to this information collection is mandatory as required under NVRA (42 U.S.C. 1973gg-1 et seq.) and UOCAVA (42 U.S.C. 1973ff-1). This part of the information collection is being requested to help the EAC to better understand state laws governing federal elections. Respondents include the fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories. This information will be made publicly available on the EAC website (www.eac.gov). According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is OMB Control No. 3265-0006 (expires 3/31/09). The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 59 hours per state response. This estimate includes the time for reviewing the instructions, gathering information, and completing the form. Comments regarding this burden estimate should be sent the U.S. Election Assistance Commission – 2008 Election Administration and Voting Survey, 1225 New York Avenue, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005.