



## Ohio Revised Code

### Section 3503.10 Voter registration programs.

Effective: September 26, 2003

Legislation: House Bill 95 - 125th General Assembly

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(A) Each designated agency shall designate one person within that agency to serve as coordinator for the voter registration program within the agency and its departments, divisions, and programs. The designated person shall be trained under a program designed by the secretary of state and shall be responsible for administering all aspects of the voter registration program for that agency as prescribed by the secretary of state. The designated person shall receive no additional compensation for performing such duties.

(B) Every designated agency, public high school and vocational school, public library, and office of a county treasurer shall provide in each of its offices or locations voter registration applications and assistance in the registration of persons qualified to register to vote, in accordance with this chapter.

(C) Every designated agency shall distribute to its applicants, prior to or in conjunction with distributing a voter registration application, a form prescribed by the secretary of state that includes all of the following:

(1) The question, "Do you want to register to vote or update your current voter registration?"-- followed by boxes for the applicant to indicate whether the applicant would like to register or decline to register to vote, and the statement, highlighted in bold print, "If you do not check either box, you will be considered to have decided not to register to vote at this time.";

(2) If the agency provides public assistance, the statement, "Applying to register or declining to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance that you will be provided by this agency.";

(3) The statement, "If you would like help in filling out the voter registration application form, we will help you. The decision whether to seek or accept help is yours. You may fill out the application form in private.";

(4) The statement, "If you believe that someone has interfered with your right to register or to decline



to register to vote, your right to privacy in deciding whether to register or in applying to register to vote, or your right to choose your own political party or other political preference, you may file a complaint with the prosecuting attorney of your county or with the secretary of state," with the address and telephone number for each such official's office.

(D) Each designated agency shall distribute a voter registration form prescribed by the secretary of state to each applicant with each application for service or assistance, and with each written application or form for recertification, renewal, or change of address.

(E) Each designated agency shall do all of the following:

(1) Have employees trained to administer the voter registration program in order to provide to each applicant who wishes to register to vote and who accepts assistance, the same degree of assistance with regard to completion of the voter registration application as is provided by the agency with regard to the completion of its own form;

(2) Accept completed voter registration applications, voter registration change of residence forms, and voter registration change of name forms, regardless of whether the application or form was distributed by the designated agency, for transmittal to the office of the board of elections in the county in which the agency is located. Each designated agency and the appropriate board of elections shall establish a method by which the voter registration applications and other voter registration forms are transmitted to that board of elections within five days after being accepted by the agency.

(3) If the designated agency is one that is primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities under a state-funded program, and that agency provides services to a person with disabilities at a person's home, provide the services described in divisions (E)(1) and (2) of this section at the person's home;

(4) Keep as confidential, except as required by the secretary of state for record-keeping purposes, the identity of an agency through which a person registered to vote or updated the person's voter registration records, and information relating to a declination to register to vote made in connection with a voter registration application issued by a designated agency.



(F) The secretary of state shall prepare and transmit written instructions on the implementation of the voter registration program within each designated agency, public high school and vocational school, public library, and office of a county treasurer. The instructions shall include directions as follows:

(1) That each person designated to assist with voter registration maintain strict neutrality with respect to a person's political philosophies, a person's right to register or decline to register, and any other matter that may influence a person's decision to register or not register to vote;

(2) That each person designated to assist with voter registration not seek to influence a person's decision to register or not register to vote, not display or demonstrate any political preference or party allegiance, and not make any statement to a person or take any action the purpose or effect of which is to lead a person to believe that a decision to register or not register has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits offered, on the grade in a particular class in school, or on credit for a particular class in school;

(3) Regarding when and how to assist a person in completing the voter registration application, what to do with the completed voter registration application or voter registration update form, and when the application must be transmitted to the appropriate board of elections;

(4) Regarding what records must be kept by the agency and where and when those records should be transmitted to satisfy reporting requirements imposed on the secretary of state under the National Voter Registration Act of 1993;

(5) Regarding whom to contact to obtain answers to questions about voter registration forms and procedures.

(G) If the voter registration activity is part of an in-class voter registration program in a public high school or vocational school, whether prescribed by the secretary of state or independent of the secretary of state, the board of education shall do all of the following:

(1) Establish a schedule of school days and hours during these days when the person designated to assist with voter registration shall provide voter registration assistance;



(2) Designate a person to assist with voter registration from the public high school's or vocational school's staff;

(3) Make voter registration applications and materials available, as outlined in the voter registration program established by the secretary of state pursuant to section 3501.05 of the Revised Code;

(4) Distribute the statement, "applying to register or declining to register to vote will not affect or be a condition of your receiving a particular grade in or credit for a school course or class, participating in a curricular or extracurricular activity, receiving a benefit or privilege, or participating in a program or activity otherwise available to pupils enrolled in this school district's schools.";

(5) Establish a method by which the voter registration application and other voter registration forms are transmitted to the board of elections within five days after being accepted by the public high school or vocational school.

(H) Any person employed by the designated agency, public high school or vocational school, public library, or office of a county treasurer may be designated to assist with voter registration pursuant to this section. The designated agency, public high school or vocational school, public library, or office of a county treasurer shall provide the designated person, and make available such space as may be necessary, without charge to the county or state.

(I) The secretary of state shall prepare and cause to be displayed in a prominent location in each designated agency a notice that identifies the person designated to assist with voter registration, the nature of that person's duties, and where and when that person is available for assisting in the registration of voters.

A designated agency may furnish additional supplies and services to disseminate information to increase public awareness of the existence of a person designated to assist with voter registration in every designated agency.

(J) This section does not limit any authority a board of education, superintendent, or principal has to allow, sponsor, or promote voluntary election registration programs within a high school or vocational school, including programs in which pupils serve as persons designated to assist with



voter registration, provided that no pupil is required to participate.

(K) Each public library and office of the county treasurer shall establish a method by which voter registration forms are transmitted to the board of elections within five days after being accepted by the public library or office of the county treasurer.

(L) The department of job and family services and its departments, divisions, and programs shall limit administration of the aspects of the voter registration program for the department to the requirements prescribed by the secretary of state and the requirements of this section and the National Voter Registration Act of 1993.