



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 5122-1-31 Voter registration of consumers and absentee voting assistance in regional psychiatric hospitals.

Effective: April 9, 2013

(A) The purpose of this rule shall be to establish a policy and to set forth procedures for the implementation of voter registration and absentee voting in all regional psychiatric hospitals (RPH) operated by the Ohio department of mental health (ODMH).

(B) The provisions of this rule shall be applicable to all RPHs providing mental health services operated by ODMH.

(C) The following definitions shall apply to this rule in addition to or in place of those appearing in rule 5122-1-01 of the Administrative Code.

(1) "Consumer" means any person receiving services or applying for admission to an RPH.

(2) "Persons qualified to register to vote" means any person over eighteen years of age and any person seventeen years of age who is within six months of his/her eighteenth birthday who has not been specifically adjudicated incompetent for voting purposes.

(D) The following services shall be made available to all consumers with every application for RPH services:

(1) Provide a consumer with a state voter registration application, absentee ballot application, and notice of rights form if requested by the individual;

(2) Assist a consumer in completing the voter registration or absentee ballot application form, if requested. Each consumer who requests assistance shall be provided the same degree of assistance with completion of the forms as is provided with the completion of any other form for which help is given;

(3) Provide all consumers with notification of all elections along with an absentee ballot form if



requested by the individual;

(4) Accept completed voter registration and absentee ballot application forms regardless of whether the application was distributed by the RPH or other entities for transmittal to the appropriate local county board of election; and

(5) Advise consumers that they may mail or otherwise transmit completed voter registrations to the appropriate local county board of elections.

(6) Work with the local board of elections to assist consumers in completing absentee ballots, upon request.

(E) Voter registration and absentee ballot applications and assistance shall be made available to RPH consumers in alternative locations wherever applications, re-applications, and address changes are taken. An example of an alternative location would be an independent residence.

(F) The RPH shall not:

(1) Seek to influence a consumer's political preference or party registration;

(2) Display any political preference or party allegiance;

(3) Make any statement to a consumer or take any action, the purpose or effect of which is to discourage the consumer from registering to vote; or

(4) Make any statement to a consumer or take any action, the purpose or effect of which is to lead the person to believe that a decision to register or not to register has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits.

Information relating to a declination to register to vote may not be used for any purpose other than voter registration.

(G) The RPH shall establish an internal procedure for collection of all voter registration and absentee



ballot application forms. The internal procedure shall include the selection of a designated individual at each RPH to serve as coordinator(s) for all activities related to absentee voting and voter registration.

The coordinator shall have the following responsibilities:

- (1) Collect all voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications;
 - (2) Transmit voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications to the local county boards of election;
 - (3) Advise consumers that they may mail or otherwise transmit completed voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications to the appropriate local county board of elections;
 - (4) Train new RPH employees who will be assisting consumers in completing voter registration and absentee ballot applications;
 - (5) Maintain an adequate supply of voter registration and absentee ballot applications, and notice of rights forms at the RPH;
 - (6) Monitor voter registration and absentee voting activities; and
 - (7) Resolve questions and problems that arise, in coordination with state or county election officials.
- (H) The RPH, with the assistance of the local county board of election shall establish procedures by which voter registration applications shall be transmitted. Transmission of completed voter registration forms shall occur no later than five working days after the date of receipt by the RPH. The voter registration transmission form shall be used for this purpose.
- (I) The identity of the RPH from which voter registration and absentee ballot application forms are received shall remain confidential except as required by the secretary of state and county board of elections for record-keeping purposes.



(J) Completed voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications may be returned to any RPH in person or through another person. When voter registration applications or absentee ballots are accepted, these shall be collected and transmitted through procedures established with the local county boards of election.