



Jon Husted
Ohio Secretary of State

180 East Broad Street, 16th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Tel: (877) 767-6446 Fax: (614) 644-0649
www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov

DIRECTIVE 2016-18

July 8, 2016

To: All County Boards of Elections
Directors, Deputy Directors, and Board Members

Re: Preparation for the Statewide Mailing of Absentee Ballot Applications for the
November 8, 2016 General Election

SUMMARY

The Ohio General Assembly has appropriated funds for the Secretary of State's Office to conduct a statewide mailing of absentee ballot applications for the upcoming November 8, 2016 General Election.¹ This Directive requires each board of elections to update its voter registration database and resolve duplicate records in preparation for the Secretary of State's statewide mailing of absentee ballot applications for the November 8, 2016 General Election.

INSTRUCTIONS

I. THE STATEWIDE MAILING OF ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS

To ensure fairness and uniformity across counties and to reduce lines at polling places in the November 8, 2016 General Election, the Secretary of State's Office will again mail absentee ballot applications by non-forwardable mail to 1) every registered voter in Ohio in "active-active" status as of August 1, 2016, and 2) every registered voter in Ohio who voted in the 2012 Presidential General Election or the 2014 General Election as reflected in the Statewide Voter Registration Database (SWVRD), regardless of voter status.

The absentee ballot application will be pre-populated with the voter's name and current address, and the local voter ID number, represented numerically and as a barcode. The applications will be mailed to the voter's residential address unless the board of elections has provided to the SWVRD an alternate mailing address associated with the voter's record. The voter must complete the application by providing the voter's date of birth, a form of identification, and signature before sealing the application in the reply envelope provided and submitting it to the voter's county board of elections in person or by mail, with the voter affixing a first-class stamp.²

¹ R.C. 3501.05

² R.C. 3509.03

Delivery of the applications by USPS is expected during the first two weeks of September 2016.

II. DATA PREPARATION BY COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS

To facilitate this mailing, each county board of elections must:

- Enter into its county voter registration database all new voter registrations and changes of address/name, including information from returned confirmation notices received through July 29, 2016, and ensure that those new registrations and changes have been transmitted to the SWVRD. Do not wait until July 29, 2016 to enter new voter registrations, changes of address/name, or information from returned confirmation notices. You must enter this information into your county voter registration database on at least a weekly basis throughout July.
- Resolve all in-county and cross-county duplicate records that exist as of July 27, 2016 no later than July 29, 2016. Remember, it is *never* an acceptable practice for any county board of elections to simply “keep” a voter registration record to avoid resolving duplicate records.
- No later than July 27, 2016, each board of elections must review all alternate mailing addresses in the SWVRD (e.g., P.O. Boxes) for that county to ensure that all alternate mailing addresses associated with the voter’s record in the SWVRD are current and relevant to the elector’s voter registration rather than some other election administration purpose (i.e., if the board has populated the elector’s alternate mailing address with the address for a previous election’s absent voter ballot and that alternate mailing address was sent to the SWVRD as the elector’s alternate mailing address, that address should be removed since it is associated with absentee balloting rather than voter registration).

III. SUPPLEMENTAL MAILING

In early October, the Secretary of State’s Office will supplement the first mailing by sending absentee ballot applications to individuals who have registered or changed their address/name between July 29, 2016 and October 7, 2016.

To facilitate this mailing, each board of elections must:

- Enter into its county voter registration database all new voter registrations and changes of address/name, including information from returned confirmation notices received through October 7, 2016, and ensure that those new registrations and changes have been transmitted to the SWVRD. Do not wait until October 7, 2016 to enter new voter registrations, changes of address/name, or information from returned confirmation

notices. You must enter this information into your county voter registration database on at least a weekly basis throughout September.

- Resolve all in-county and cross-county duplicate records that exist as of October 5, 2016 no later than October 7, 2016.

IV. MANDATORY POSTING AT VOTING LOCATIONS ON ELECTION DAY

All county boards of elections must post a copy of the statewide absentee ballot application mailing at each voting location on Election Day as a reference for voters who are marked in the signature poll book as having to cast a provisional ballot on account of having requested an absentee ballot. A prescribed posting will be provided to you under separate cover at a later date.

If you have any questions about this Directive, please contact the Secretary of State's election counsel assigned to your county at (614) 466-2585.

Sincerely,


Jon Husted