



DIRECTIVE 2018-18

July 6, 2018

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

Re: Preparation for the Statewide Mailings of Absentee Ballot Applications for the
November 6, 2018 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 6, 2018 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 mailings of absentee ballot applications for the November 6, 2018 General Election.

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

To ensure fairness and uniformity across counties and reduce lines at polling places in the November 6, 2018 General Election, the Secretary of State's Office again will mail an absentee ballot application by non-forwardable mail to every registered voter in Ohio in "active" or "confirmation" status.

The absentee ballot application will be pre-filled with the voter's name, current address, and local voter identification number (represented numerically and as a barcode). The application will be mailed to the voter's residential address, unless the board of elections has provided to the Statewide Voter Registration Database (SWVRD) an alternate mailing address associated with the voter's record. The voter must complete the absentee ballot 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 Delivery of the initial applications by United States Postal Service (USPS) is expected during the first two weeks of September 2018.

INSTRUCTIONS

I. PREPARATION FOR INITIAL MAILING

To facilitate the initial mailing of absentee ballot applications, each county board of elections must:

¹ R.C. 3501.05.

² R.C. 3509.03.

- 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 27, 2018, and ensure that those new registrations and changes have been transmitted to the SWVRD. **Do not wait until July 27, 2018 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 25, 2018 no later than July 27, 2018. 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 25, 2018, review all alternate mailing addresses in the SWVRD (e.g., P.O. Boxes) for your county and make sure that all alternate mailing addresses associated with a 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 absentee 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).

II. PREPARATION FOR SUPPLEMENTAL MAILINGS

In early October, the Secretary of State’s Office will supplement the first mailing by sending an absentee ballot application to any individual who has registered to vote or changed his/her name or address between July 27, 2018 and October 5, 2018.

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 5, 2018, and ensure that those new registrations and changes have been transmitted to the SWVRD. **Do not wait until October 5, 2018 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 3, 2018 no later than October 5, 2018 by 5:00 p.m.

The Secretary of State’s office will conduct a second supplement mailing for any individual who has registered to vote or changed his/her name or address between October 6 and October 12, 2018.

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 12, 2018, and ensure that those new registrations and changes have been transmitted to the SWVRD. **Do not wait until October 12, 2018 to enter new voter registrations, changes of address/name, or information from returned confirmation notices.**
- Resolve all in-county and cross-county duplicate records that exist as of October 10, 2018 no later than October 12, 2018 by 5:00 p.m.

III. 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 polling location on Election Day as a reference for voters who are marked in the pollbook as having to cast a provisional ballot on account of having requested an absentee ballot. The prescribed posting will be provided to county boards of elections 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