
District of Columbia

Voter Registration & Voter List Maintenance Guide

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State Guide to Voter Registration & Voter List Maintenance Statutes

This is a guide to your state's laws relating to voter registration and voter list maintenance.

The statutes/codes cited in this guide may not be the most recent version. States may have more current or accurate information. We make no warranties or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the information contained in the individual state guides or the information linked to on the state site.

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Who can I contact with election related questions?

[Link to Elections Official](#)

Chief Elections Office:	District of Columbia Board of Elections
Physical Address:	1015 Half St. SE, Suite 750 Washington, D.C. 20003
Mailing Address:	District of Columbia Board of Elections 1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750 Washington, D.C. 20003
Phone Number:	202-727-2525
Fax Number:	202-347-2648
E-mail:	director@dcboe.org
Webform contact:	https://dcboe.org/contact

How do I register to vote?

[Link to Register](#)

[Link to Statutes](#)

[§ 1-1001.02. Definitions.](#)

(2) The term “qualified elector” means a person who:

- (A) Is at least 17 years of age and who will be 18 years of age on or before the next general election;
- (B) Is a citizen of the United States;
- (C) Has maintained a residence in the District for at least 30 days preceding the next election and does not claim voting residence or right to vote in any state or territory; and
- (D) Repealed;
- (E) Has not been found by a court of law to be legally incompetent to vote.

How do I cancel my voter registration?

[Link to Cancel](#)

[Link to Statutes](#)

Any registered voter may cancel their registration by completing the Online Request to Cancel Voter Registration form.

Alternatively, a PDF form can be printed, completed, and then returned by:

- Scanning and emailing it to voterservices@dcooe.org;
- Mailing it or submitting it in person to:

District of Columbia Board of Elections
1015 Half St, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20003

[§ 1-1001.07. Voter.](#)

(k)

(1) The Board shall cancel a voter registration upon receipt of a signed request from the registrant, upon notification of the death of a registrant upon notification that the registrant has registered to vote in another jurisdiction, or for any other reason specifically authorized in this subchapter.

How is voter list maintenance handled?

§ 1-1001.07. Voter.

(e)

(1) Within 19 calendar days after the receipt of a registration application form from any applicant, an automatic voter registration agency, pursuant to subsection (c)(1) of this section, or a voter registration agency, pursuant to subsection (d) of this section, the Board shall mail a non-forwardable voter registration notification to the applicant advising the applicant of the acceptance or rejection of the registration application by its chief voter registration official.

(2) (A) If the application is accepted, the notification shall include the applicant's name, address, date of birth, party affiliation (if any), ward, precinct and Advisory Neighborhood Commission single-member district ("SMD"), and information on how to vote. The voter registration notification shall state that the applicant shall not vote before the applicant's 18th birthday. The Board may include along with the registration notification any voter education materials it deems appropriate. Registration of the applicant shall be effective on the date the Board determines that the applicant is a qualified elector and eligible to register to vote in the District of Columbia.

(B) For applications received from an automatic voter registration agency, pursuant to subsection (c)(1) of this section, the notification, in addition to the information required under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, shall include information regarding the process to decline voter registration and to change or adopt a political party affiliation, if one was not designated on the application.

(3) If the application is rejected, the notification shall include the reason or reasons for the rejection and shall inform the voter of the voter's right to appeal the rejection pursuant to subsection (f) of this section.

(4) If the voter registration notification is returned to the Board as undeliverable, the Board shall mail the notice provided in subsection (j)(1)(B) of this section.

[Challenge of registration]

(5) (A) Any duly registered voter may file with the Board objections to the registration of any person whom the voter has reason to believe is fictitious, deceased, a disqualified person, or otherwise ineligible to vote (except with respect to a change of residence), or file a request for the addition of any person whose name the voter has reason to believe has been erroneously omitted or cancelled from the voter roll. Application for the correction of the voter roll or the challenge of the right to vote of any person named on the voter roll shall be in writing and include any evidence in support of the challenge that the registrant is not qualified to be a registered voter. The Board shall issue regulations establishing an expedited procedure for its review of a voter registration challenge or an application for correction of the voter roll filed during the period beginning on the 90th day before an election and ending on the 45th day before an election. The Board shall not accept a voter registration challenge or application for correction of the voter roll after the 45th day before an election.

(B) The Board shall send notice to any person whose registration has been challenged along with a copy of any evidence filed in support of the challenge. The notice shall be sent to the address listed on the Board's records. The notice shall state that the registrant must respond to the challenge not later than 30 days from the date of the mailing of the notice or be cancelled from the voter roll.

(e)(5)

(C) The Board's chief voter registration official shall make a determination with respect to the challenge within 10 days of receipt of the challenged registrant's response. The determination shall be sent by first class mail to the challenged registrant and the person who filed the challenge. Within 14 days of mailing the notice, any aggrieved party may appeal, in writing, the chief voter registration official's determination to the Board. The Board shall conduct a hearing and issue a decision within 30 days of receipt of the written notice of appeal.

§ 1-1001.07. Voter. Cont.

(D) With respect to a request for the addition of a person to the voter roll, if the Board's records do not evidence that the individual named has been erroneously omitted or cancelled, the Board shall send notice to the individual named in the request and to the person who filed the request. The notice shall state that the named individual must file a completed voter registration application in order to become a registered voter in the District.

(6) An individual whose registration has been cancelled under this section shall not be eligible to vote except by re-registration as provided in this section.

(f) In the case where a voter registration application is rejected pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, the Board shall immediately notify the individual of the rejection by first class mail. The individual may request a hearing before the Board on the rejection within 14 days after the notification is mailed. Upon the request for a hearing, the Board shall hold the hearing within 30 days after receipt of the request. At the hearing, the applicant and any interested party, may appear and give testimony on the issue. The Board shall determine the issue within 2 days after the hearing. Any aggrieved party may appeal the decision of the Board to the Superior Court of the District of Columbia within 3 days after the Board's decision. The decision of the Court shall be final and not appealable. If any part of the process is pending on the date of any election held under this subchapter, the person whose registration is in question shall be permitted to cast a ballot in such election which is designated "challenged". The ballot shall be counted in the election if the applicant is ultimately deemed to be a qualified registered elector.

[\[public review of list of qualified electors\]](#)

(h)

(1) No later than 45 days preceding any election held under this subchapter, the Board shall cause a District-wide alphabetical list of qualified electors registered to vote in the District to be placed in the main public library and shall cause an alphabetical ward list of qualified registered electors for each ward to be placed in each branch library located within the respective ward. Such lists shall be current as of the 60th day preceding such elections.

(2) The Board shall cause a copy of the list of qualified electors registered to vote as of the date the voter registry closed to be placed in public buildings of the District of Columbia for a period of not less than 14 days preceding each election held under this subchapter as follows:

(A) A District-wide list shall be placed in the main public library; and

(B) A ward list for the ward shall be placed in every branch library located within the respective ward.

(3) The provisions of this subsection shall not apply when a special election is held to fill a vacancy in an Advisory Neighborhood Commission single-member district.

[\[voter roll maintenance program\]](#)

(j)

(1) The Board shall develop a systematic program to maintain the voter roll and keep it current. This program shall include the following:

(A) By March 31 of each odd-numbered year, the Board shall confirm the address of each registered voter who did not confirm the registrant's address through the voting process or file a change of address at the polls in the preceding general election by mailing a first class nonforwardable postcard to the address listed on the Board's records.

(B) (i) If the United States Postal Service returns the notice and provides a new address for the registrant within the District of Columbia, the Board shall change the address on its records and mail to both the old and new addresses of the registrant a forwardable notification that the address has been changed to reflect the information obtained from the United States Postal Service.

(ii) If the United States Postal Service returns the notice and provides a new address outside the District of Columbia, the Board shall mail a forwardable notice to both the old and new address informing the registrant how to register to vote in the new jurisdiction or correct the address information obtained from the United States Postal Service.

(iii) If the United States Postal Service returns the notice to the Board as undeliverable, the Board shall mail to the registrant at the registrant's last known address the notice prescribed in sub-subparagraph (ii) of this subparagraph.

§ 1-1001.07. Voter. Cont.

(C) The notices prescribed in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of this paragraph shall include a pre-addressed and postage paid return notification postcard to enable the registrant to correct any address information obtained from the United States Postal Service. In addition, the notices shall include the following information:

“If you did not change your residence, or changed residence but remained in the District, you should return the card not later than the deadline for mail registration for the next federal election (the 21st day before the election). If the card is not returned, affirmation of your address may be required before you are permitted to vote in any election during the period beginning on the date of the notice and ending on the day after the date of the second general election for federal office that occurs after the date of the notice, and if you do not vote in an election during that period, your name will be removed from the list of eligible voters.”.

(D) The Board may, in addition, utilize information obtained from the United States Postal Service, the National Change of Address System (“NCOA”), the DMV (subject to the provisions of subsection (c)(1)(D) of this section, which identifies registrants who have moved from the addresses listed on the Board’s records. In these cases the Board shall issue the notices prescribed in subparagraph (B) of this paragraph.

(2) (A) Upon receipt of the United States Postal Service–returned notices described in paragraph (1)(B)(ii) and (iii) of this subsection, the Board shall designate the registrant’s voter registration status as inactive on the voter roll.

(B) Where a registered voter is designated as inactive on the voter roll pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this paragraph and the registrant provides the Board with a current residence address, or votes in any election in accordance with subsection (i) of this section by the date established in subparagraph (C) of this paragraph, the inactive designation shall be removed from the registrant’s record.

(2) (C) Where the Board mails the forwardable notice required in paragraph (1)(B) of this subsection, and the registrant fails to respond to the notice and fails to vote during the period beginning on the date the notice was mailed and ending on the day after the second general election for federal office, the registrant’s name shall be removed from the voter roll.

(3) As part of its systematic voter roll maintenance program, the Board may, by regulation, develop additional procedures to identify and remove from the voter roll registrants who are deceased and no notification was received from the Vital Records Division of the Department of Health, who have moved from the District and no notification was received from the registrant or the United States Postal Service, or who otherwise no longer meets the qualifications as duly registered voters.

(4) Any systematic program conducted by the Board to identify individuals who do not reside at the address listed on the Board’s records shall be completed not less than the 90th day immediately preceding any primary, general, or District-wide special election.

(5) The voter registrations of individuals whose registrations are designated as inactive on the voter roll, pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection:

(A) Shall not be utilized in the calculation of the number of signatures required for qualification of candidate, initiative, referendum, and recall petitions;

(B) Shall not be counted as valid in the verification of signatures pursuant to §§ 1-1001.08(o), 1-1001.16(o), and 1-1001.17(k);

(C) Shall not be included where the Board is required: (i) Repealed. (ii) To calculate or report the number of registered voters for an administrative purpose; or (iii) For the issuance of information mailings; and

(D) Their names shall not be sold by the Board either in hard copy form or electronic media, except upon specific request of the purchaser and the fact that the registrations are designated as inactive is made known to the purchaser.

(6) The Board may use reliable information obtained from the Department of Corrections or the Federal Bureau of Prisons to update the address information of incarcerated voters.

§ 1-1001.07. Voter. Cont.

[cancellation of registrations]

(k)

(1) The Board shall cancel a voter registration upon receipt of a signed request from the registrant, upon notification of the death of a registrant upon notification that the registrant has registered to vote in another jurisdiction, or for any other reason specifically authorized in this subchapter.

(2) The Board shall request at least monthly, and the Mayor shall furnish, the name, address, and date of birth, if known, of each District resident 18 years of age and over reported deceased within the District, together with the name and address of each District resident who has been reported deceased by other jurisdictions since the date of the previous report.

(3) The Board shall request at least monthly, and the Superior Court of the District of Columbia shall furnish, the name and address of each person incarcerated as a result of a felony conviction since the date of the previous report, and the former and present names and address of each person whose name has been changed by decree or order of the Court since the date of the previous report.

(4) The Board shall request from the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, at least monthly, the name and address of each person incarcerated as a result of a felony conviction since the date of the previous report.

(4A) At least monthly, the Board shall request from the Bureau of Prisons the name, location of incarceration, and contact information for each qualified elector in the Bureau of Prisons' care or custody.

(4B) At least monthly, at the request of the Board, the Department of Corrections shall provide the Board with the name and date of birth of each person transferred from the Department of Corrections to the Bureau of Prisons.

(5) Any individual whose registration has been cancelled shall not be permitted to vote except by re-registration as provided in this section.

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993

Congress enacted the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (also known as the “NVRA” and the “Motor Voter Act”), to enhance voting opportunities for every American. The Act has made it easier for all Americans to register to vote and to maintain their registration. Section 8 of the NVRA contains requirements with respect to the administration of voter registration by States and requires States to implement procedures to maintain accurate and current voter registration lists.

For more information about the NVRA, please visit the [Department of Justice website](#).

List of voter registration statuses and their definitions

Registration Statuses	
Active - The term “qualified elector” means a person who: Is at least 17 years of age and who will be 18 years of age on or before the next general election; Is a citizen of the United States; Has maintained a residence in the District for at least 30 days preceding the next election and does not claim voting residence or right to vote in any state or territory; and has not been found by a court of law to be legally incompetent to vote.	§ 1-1001.02
Inactive - After each general election, as part of its statutory biennial address confirmation program, DCBOE mails a non-forwardable postcard to each registered voter who did not confirm their address by voting in the last election. If the United States Postal Service returns the postcard as undeliverable or with an address that is outside of the District, the voter’s record is made inactive.	§ 1-1001.07
Canceled. - The Board shall cancel a voter registration upon receipt of a signed request from the registrant, upon notification of the death of a registrant upon notification that the registrant has registered to vote in another jurisdiction, or for any other reason specifically authorized in this subchapter. . . .Any individual whose registration has been cancelled shall not be permitted to vote except by re-registration as provided in this section.	§ 1-1001.07

How do I file a HAVA complaint?

[Link to Complaint Process](#)

[Link to HAVA Plan \(pp 50-51\)](#)

Complainants alleging a violation of title III of HAVA by the District of Columbia's Chief Election Official (CEO) shall file notarized complaints with the District of Columbia Board of Elections and Ethics.

How do I file a non-HAVA election complaint?

[Link to Statutes](#)

[Link to Complaint Process](#)

The General Counsel of the Board shall, following approval by the Board, issue and revise complaint and petition forms and instructions to ensure presentation of adequate information required for the understanding and processing of complaints and petitions.

The Board has the discretion to hear any case brought before it under the District of Columbia Election Act or the Campaign Finance Act of 2011 by a one-member panel, pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 1-1001.05(g) (2016 Repl.).

If someone interferes with your right to vote through threats, intimidation, or coercion, or you become aware of any interference with the right of D.C. residents to vote, dial 911 or the Metropolitan Police Department. You can also contact OAG at (202) 442-9828 or email us at consumer.protection@dc.gov.

Who can I contact regarding an election related complaint?

District of Columbia Board of Elections	
Physical Address:	1015 Half St. SE, Suite 750 Washington, D.C. 20003
Mailing Address:	District of Columbia Board of Elections 1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750 Washington, D.C. 20003
Phone Number:	202-727-2525
Fax Number:	202-347-2648
E-mail:	director@dcboe.org
Webform contact:	https://dcboe.org/contact

Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia	
Mailing Address:	Office of the Attorney General Office of Consumer Protection 400 6th Street, NW Washington, DC 20001
Phone Number:	202-727-3400
Fax Number:	202-347-8922
E-mail:	oag@dc.gov