

## Registration Deadline

Forms must be received 10 days before an election, or postmarked 15 days before an election.<sup>1</sup>

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## Database Implementation Status

Iowa has built a “top-down” statewide voter registration database, in which client counties will enter data directly into the single statewide system. In January 2005, Iowa engaged Saber Consulting to help build the statewide system (“I-VOTERS”). The system was complete by January 2006.<sup>2</sup>

## Entering Voter Registration Information

*Who inputs voter registration information?* County election officials generally review and enter information from voter registration forms in their jurisdictions into the statewide system.

*What happens to voter registration forms submitted at state registration agencies?* If an application is received by the Department of Transportation (“DOT”), the DOT will enter the information, retain an electronic copy, and send the information electronically to the state, which will send the entered information to the appropriate county.<sup>3</sup> An application that is received by the Secretary of State or other voter registration agency will be sent at least weekly to the appropriate county official for processing.<sup>4</sup>

*How are most forms submitted?* Iowa reported that in 2004, 19% of forms were submitted by mail, 43% were submitted in person to election officials, 25% were submitted at the DOT, 1% were submitted at another voter registration agency, and 12% were submitted by other means.<sup>5</sup>

## Voter Registration Form

The relevant portions of the voter registration form are included at the end of this section.

## Processing of Forms Without Identifying Numbers

*How will the state treat an application with an affirmative indication that the applicant has no valid identifying number?* The applicant will be considered “pending identification.” If the applicant is otherwise eligible, she will be listed in the poll books, but will have to show identification at the polls.<sup>6</sup>

*How will the state treat an application without an identifying number and without an affirmative indication that the applicant has no such number?* If uncorrected (see below), the application will be rejected.<sup>7</sup>

*How will the state treat an application listing an identifying number that is either incomplete or illegible? If uncorrected (see below), the application will be rejected.<sup>8</sup>*

## **Matching Against Motor Vehicle and Social Security Records**

*What fields from the voter registration form will the state seek to match to motor vehicle or Social Security records? Identifying number, first name, last name, and date of birth.<sup>9</sup>*

*How precise is the match standard? Iowa will use a hybrid match standard to match information on forms with a driver's license or state ID number: last name, date of birth, and identifying number must all match exactly, and the first name must be a "substantial match."<sup>10</sup> Iowa uses the standard AAMVA criteria for matching information on forms with SSN digits: exact match of the SSN-4, first name, last name, month of birth, and year of birth. For SSN searches that return a failed match, Iowa policy is to resubmit records using variants of the individual's first name, including nicknames, to attempt to capture some common variations.<sup>11</sup>*

*How much human intervention is involved in determining whether information is matched? For matching information on forms with a driver's license or state ID number, if the individual's first name does not match precisely, the system will return a list of possible matches; election officials have the discretion to determine whether a likely match exists among the possible matches returned. The process for matching information on forms with SSN digits is fully automated.*

*Description of matching process: Iowa will not attempt to verify identifying numbers for applicants registering in person, or for applicants registering through the DOT. When information from a voter registration form with a driver's license or state ID number is entered into the system, it will automatically attempt to check Iowa DOT records for a match of the driver's license or state ID number, last name, and date of birth. If the system finds an exact match on these fields and an exact match of first name, it will return a "verified" flag. If it finds an exact match on these fields and a "substantial match" of first name, it will return a list of probable matches for the election official to review. Information on forms listing SSN digits will be automatically checked against the SSA database through the standard AAMVA process: the county elections official will submit an entered record to the DMV database, which will automatically submit the appropriate fields to the SSA and return a code indicating whether the record was successfully matched or not.*

*What are the consequences if the state cannot find a match? If uncorrected (see below), an application with unverified information will be rejected.<sup>12</sup>*

## Notice and Opportunity to Resolve Errors

*Does the applicant have the opportunity to correct a missing or incomplete identifying number, without submitting a new form?* Yes, but only if the original form was received during the twelve days before the voter registration deadline. The applicant may also correct missing or incomplete information at any point before the voter registration deadline by submitting a new form.

*Does the applicant have the opportunity to resolve a failed match without submitting a new form?* Yes. If the failed match was caused by incorrect information submitted by the applicant, she may submit information to resolve a failed match at any point before the voter registration deadline. If the failed match was caused by other error, the applicant may submit information to resolve the error until the day before the election.

*If information on an otherwise timely application is corrected after the voter registration deadline, is the correction timely?* Yes, but only if the new information corrects an error that was not caused by incorrect information submitted by the applicant.

*Description of notice and correction process:* The county election official will attempt to notify an applicant whose identifying number is missing, incomplete, or illegible; the official will first attempt to contact the applicant by phone, and will also notify the applicant by mail, within seven days.<sup>13</sup> The applicant will be sent a new application form to submit, by mail or in person. If the original form was received during the twelve days before the voter registration deadline, the voter may correct information on the original form instead of submitting a new form.<sup>14</sup> The county election official will attempt to notify by mail an applicant whose identifying number is unverified; the applicant may provide additional information to resolve the problem without submitting a new form.

## Identification Requirements at the Polls

*Who must provide identification at the polls?* A first-time voter registering by mail without a verified identifying number, and any voter not listed on the poll lists as an active voter, must show identification at the polls.<sup>15</sup> A precinct election official may also require that any voter unknown to the official show identification with the voter's signature.<sup>16</sup>

### Forms of ID:

1st-time voters	current and valid photo ID
registering by mail	current utility bill w/ name, address
without verified	bank statement w/ name, address
identifying number:	government check w/ name, address
	paycheck w/ name, address
	other gov't document w/ name, address

*What forms of identification are accepted?* Current and valid photo ID, or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the voter's name and address.<sup>17</sup>

*What are the consequences of failing to show identification?* The voter may cast a provisional ballot,<sup>18</sup> but the ballot will not count unless the voter either shows identification or provides an identifying number that can be verified, either at the polls, or by bringing or mailing a copy of the ID to the county commissioner's office.<sup>19</sup> The ballot may then be counted at the discretion of the county Special Precinct Board.<sup>20</sup>

## Statutes and Regulations

IOWA CODE ch. 48A generally concerns registration. IOWA CODE § 47.7 directs the state commissioner of elections to establish and maintain a single statewide voter registration database. IOWA ADMIN. CODE regulations for agencies 721 and 821 comprise the applicable regulations.

## End Notes

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<sup>1</sup> IOWA CODE § 48A.9.

<sup>2</sup> electionline.org, *Assorted Rolls: Statewide Voter Registration Databases Under HAVA*, June 2005, available at <http://www.electionline.org/Portals/1/EB11.FINAL1.pdf>, at 17; electionline.org, *Statewide Voter Registration Database Status*, at <http://www.electionline.org/Default.aspx?tabid=288>; *Iowa Leads Nation in Vote Act Compliance*, FT. MADISON DAILY DEMOCRAT, Jan. 10, 2006, at <http://www.dailydem.com/articles/2006/01/10/news/news2.txt>.

<sup>3</sup> IOWA CODE § 48A.36, IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 821-11.7(48A).

<sup>4</sup> IOWA CODE §§ 48A.21, 48A.26(8); IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 821-8.5(48A).

<sup>5</sup> Election Assistance Commission, *The Impact of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 on the Administration of Elections for Federal Office 2003-2004*, June 30, 2005, tbl. 2, available at [http://www.eac.gov/NVR\\_Spreadsheets/NVRA\\_table\\_2.html](http://www.eac.gov/NVR_Spreadsheets/NVRA_table_2.html). Due to rounding, the percentages listed may exceed 100%.

<sup>6</sup> IOWA CODE § 48A.37(2), IOWA ADMIN. CODE rr. 821-2.8(48A)(7), 821-2.14(48A)(3)(a). Note: there is an apparent conflict between IOWA CODE § 48A.26(2), which provides that the voter will be registered “[i]f the registration form appears on its face to be complete and proper,” and IOWA CODE § 48A.25A, which direct election officials to reject an application with unverified information.

<sup>7</sup> IOWA CODE § 48A.11(8), *as amended by* 2005 Iowa Legis. Serv. H.F. 19 (H.F. 227); IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 821-2.8(2).

<sup>8</sup> IOWA CODE § 48A.25A, *as amended by* 2005 Iowa Legis. Serv. H.F. 19 (H.F. 227); IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 821-2.15(48A)(3).

<sup>9</sup> IOWA CODE § 48A.25A, *as amended by* 2005 Iowa Legis. Serv. H.F. 19 (H.F. 227).

<sup>10</sup> Iowa regulations state that “[a]ll digits and numerals” in the identifying number must match exactly, and that name and date of birth must also match. IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 821-2.15(48A)(2).

<sup>11</sup> Iowa also requires that any data processing system used for voter registration implement several standard database standardizing techniques in order to screen out common errors. IOWA ADMIN. CODE rr. 821-6.1(47)(7)-(9), (10).

<sup>12</sup> IOWA CODE § 48A.25A; IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 821-2.15(48A)(3).

<sup>13</sup> IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 821-2.8(4)-(5).

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- <sup>14</sup> IOWA CODE § 48A.26(3), IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 821-2.8(4)-(5).
- <sup>15</sup> IOWA CODE §§ 48A.8(2), 49.77(3), IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 721-21.3(49)(2).
- <sup>16</sup> IOWA CODE § 49.77(3), IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 721-21.3(49)(1).
- <sup>17</sup> IOWA CODE § 48A.8(2), IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 721-21.3(49)(3).
- <sup>18</sup> IOWA CODE §§ 48A.8(4), 49.81, IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 721-21.3(49)(4).
- <sup>19</sup> IOWA CODE § 49.81; IOWA ADMIN. CODE r. 821-2.15(48A)(5).
- <sup>20</sup> *Id.* § 50.22, as amended by 2005 Iowa Legis. Serv. H.F. 19 (H.F. 227). State officials claim that if the information on the provisional ballot matches information on the submitted voter registration application, the ballot will usually count, even if the registration was rejected for lack of a match. There seems to be no official policy in this regard, however.

# Instructions

## Qualifications:

- To register to vote in Iowa, you must:
- Be a citizen of the United States.
  - Be a resident of Iowa.
  - Be at least 17 ½ years old (you must be 18 to vote).
  - Not have been convicted of a felony (or you must have had your rights restored).
  - Not currently be judged by a court to be "incompetent to vote."
  - Give up your right to vote in any other place.

Use this form to apply to register to vote or to make changes in your registration.

## Filling out the form – Use a pen and print neatly.

**Required: ID number, date of birth, sex, name, address and signature.** If you do not include these, your registration will be rejected. Your name, birth date and ID number will be checked. If they don't match, your registration will be rejected and you will be notified by mail.

**ID number:** Iowa driver's license number (DL#) is required, if you have one. If not, put the number of your Iowa non-driver ID card. If you have neither of these, put the last 4 numbers of your social security number.

If your DL# is your social security number, you are required to give it. Social security, driver's license and ID numbers are not printed on voter registration lists sold to candidates and others. But those numbers may be on original records in county auditor's offices and open for public viewing. Iowa law (Sec. 48A.11) requires the state to ask for your DL# on this form.

**Name:** Put your name on the form the same way it is on your ID.

**Address where you live:** This is the address that is used to decide where you go to vote. If you do not have a street address, describe where you live in the box below your signature.

Read the form carefully before you sign it.

Tear off the Registration Form, fold it, tape it together and mail it to your county auditor. You must put a postage stamp on the form.

Within two weeks you should get a notice in the mail that your registration was received. If you don't, contact your county auditor.

## Deadlines

10 days before a primary or general election and 11 days for all others. You may register after a deadline, but the registration will not be effective until after that election. A registration form postmarked at least 15 days before an election will be accepted for that election even if it is received after the deadline to register to vote. Registration is permanent. After you register, you do not have to register again unless you move.

# Iowa Voter Registration Form

Are you a citizen of the United States of America?  Yes  No  
 Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day?  Yes  No

NOTE: If you checked "No" in response to either of these questions, do not complete this form.

\* Please print information on form.

ID Number, see Instructions	Date of Birth / / Mo/Day/Year	Sex <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	Iowa county where you live
Full Name - Last	First	Middle	Suffix
Address where you live	Number	Street Apt, Lot, etc.	City, State, Zip
Mailing address (if different from above)	Number	Street Apt, Lot, etc.	City, State, Zip
Party Affiliation <input type="checkbox"/> Democratic <input type="checkbox"/> Republican <input type="checkbox"/> No Party	Telephone number (Optional) ( )	School District	
Read the following and sign below: I swear or affirm that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am the person named above.</li> <li>• I am a United States citizen.</li> <li>• I live at the address listed above.</li> <li>• I am at least 17 1/2 years old.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have not been convicted of a felony.</li> <li>• (or have received a restoration of rights).</li> <li>• I am not currently judged by a court to be "incompetent to vote".</li> <li>• I do not claim the right to vote anywhere else.</li> </ul>			
X	Signature		Date
WARNING: If you sign this form and you know it is not true, you can be convicted of perjury and fined up to \$7,500 and/or jailed for up to 5 years.			
If you have no street address because you use a rural route address, or because you are homeless, please list your township and section number: _____ Or describe where you live: _____			
(Mi. or Blks) (N, S, E, W) and (Mi. or blks) (N, S, E, W) of _____ (Landmark or highway junction)			
If you have ever been registered to vote before, complete this section: Your name then: _____ Your address then: _____ City, State, Zip Code: _____ Name of the County: _____			