



CDSS

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

April 2, 2018

ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) NO. 18-39

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL CONSORTIA REPRESENTATIVES
ALL QUALITY CONTROL SPECIALISTS

SUBJECT: NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT (NVRA) PRE-REGISTRATION FOR MINORS, FORWARDING VOTER REGISTRATION CARD (VRC) CHANGE, AND TRAINING UPDATES

REFERENCE: [SECRETARY OF STATE \(SOS\) 2018 NVRA UPDATES](#), DATED JANUARY 2018; ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE ([ACIN NO. I-04-13](#)); [ACIN NO. I-04-13E](#); SENATE BILL 35 (CHAPTER 50, STATUTES 2012); [THE CALIFORNIA VOTER'S CHOICE ACT](#); AND [THE NVRA OF 1993](#)

<u>REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Law Change
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Federal Law or Regulation Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Court Order
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
<input type="checkbox"/>	Initiated by CDSS

The purpose of this letter is to inform County Welfare Departments (CWDs) of recent changes to the NVRA and to transmit information regarding updated NVRA training materials. The SOS, recently issued a notice, dated January 2018, advising NVRA agencies of recent changes to voter pre-registration for eligible 16 and 17 year olds, and a change in the timeframe for forwarding VRCs to the County Elections Office.

The updated SOS NVRA notice provides information regarding the release of the new VRC, and the California Voter's Choice Act.

Background

In 2013, the California Department of Social Services issued ACIN No. I-04-13 to inform CWDs of the NVRA requirements, as they apply to the CalFresh and California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) programs. Federal law requires states to provide voter registration opportunities at all offices that

provide public assistance, and at all offices that provide state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities. For purposes of the NVRA, these public assistance agencies are designated as voter registration agencies and include CWDs that administer CalFresh and CalWORKs.

In 2014, Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 113 which allowed voter pre-registration for eligible 16 and 17 year olds once the California's state voter registration database, VoteCal, was certified. VoteCal was certified in September 2016.

Additionally, the NVRA once required voter registration agencies to transmit completed VRCs to the County Elections Office within ten days of receipt. In January 2018, the SOS informed agencies of the new three calendar day submission timeframe.

Pre-Registration

The SOS issued a "2018 NVRA Updates" notice on January 2018. This notice provides information regarding new voter pre-registration for eligible 16 and 17 year olds. Pre-registration can be completed online at <http://registertovote.ca.gov/> or by filling out a VRC. Pre-registration does not change the voting age, which is still 18. California youth who pre-register to vote will receive a confirmation postcard after turning 18 years old, stating that their voter registration is active.

Pre-registration is available to California youth who are 16 or 17 year olds and meet the following criteria:

- A United States citizen,
- A resident of California,
- Not currently imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony, and
- Not prohibited from voting by a court because of mental incompetency.

For more information regarding pre-registration, please refer to the SOS website at: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/pre-register-16-vote-18/>.

New CWD Responsibility

Changes to the NVRA now require that CWDs provide all eligible 16 and 17-year-old clients with a VRC at the time of application, recertification, or when the CWD is notified of an address change. The Voter Preference Form and VRC shall be provided regardless of whether the client indicates they want to register to vote or not. The CWD must provide assistance in completing the form, if requested, and provide the same degree of assistance to all clients.

Note, CWDs must fulfill this responsibility whether the client transaction occurs in-person, online, over the telephone, or through the mail.

Change in Timeframe for Forwarding VRCs to the County Elections Office

If a VRC is completed and returned to the CWD, it is the CWD's responsibility to accept and transmit the completed VRC to the appropriate County Elections Office within three calendar days. This is a change to the previous ten-day timeframe. The SOS's NVRA team is in the process of updating the NVRA Manual to reflect this change.

As a best practice, the SOS advises agencies to forward VRCs on a daily basis.

New California Voter Registration Card and Voter's Choice Act (SB 450)

Beginning April 2018, the SOS will issue a new version of the VRC. Training materials provided by SOS will be updated to include the new VRC.

Additionally, the California Voter's Choice Act passed in 2016 expanding voters' options for how, when, and where they cast their ballots. Select counties will mail every voter a ballot. Voters may mail back the ballot, return it in the secure envelope to one of the county ballot drop boxes, or at any vote center in the county.

Traditional polling places will be replaced by vote centers. Voters will be able to cast a ballot in-person at any vote center in their county instead of being tied to a single polling location.

At any vote center in a participating county, a voter may:

- Vote in-person
- Drop off their ballot
- Get a replacement ballot
- Vote using accessible voting machine
- Get help and voting material in multiple languages
- Register to vote or update their voter registration

Selected counties include Madera, Napa, Nevada, Sacramento, and San Mateo. Beginning in 2018, these counties will implement the changes outlined above. For more information about the Voter's Choice Act, visit: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voters-choice-act/>.

Updated Training Materials

To access newly updated training materials, refer to the SOS' NVRA training webpage at: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/nvra/training/>.

The CWDs must comply with the NVRA requirements or the county and state may be subject to a civil action by the United States Department of Justice or a private party.

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The SOS has authority to conduct a review of each voter registration agency's compliance on NVRA.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact your CalFresh county consultant or call the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 654-1896.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

TODD R. BLAND

Deputy Director

Family Empowerment and Engagement Division

Attachment

2018 NVRA UPDATES

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE



January 2018

Attention NVRA Agencies:

- [NEW CALIFORNIA VOTER REGISTRATION CARD](#)
- [VOTER'S CHOICE ACT](#)
- [PRE-REGISTRATION NOW AVAILABLE](#)
- [REVIEW UPDATES TO TRAINING MATERIALS](#)
- [KNOW YOUR UPCOMING LOCAL ELECTIONS](#)

NEW CALIFORNIA VOTER REGISTRATION CARD

Starting in April of 2018, the Secretary of State will release a new version of the Voter Registration Card. In April, be sure to check out the newly updated NVRA training materials including the new VRC at <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/nvra/training/>.

VOTER'S CHOICE ACT (SB 450)

The California Voter's Choice Act is a new law passed in 2016 that will modernize elections in California. The Voter's Choice Act establishes a new model for counties to allow voters to choose how, when, and where to cast their ballot by: mailing every voter a ballot, expanding in-person early voting, and by opening vote centers for all voters within their county. For the 2018 elections, Madera, Napa, Nevada, Sacramento, and San Mateo counties will kick start this process of modernizing the elections process in California. For more information about the Voter's Choice Act, please visit <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voters-choice-act/>.

PRE-REGISTER AT 16. VOTE AT 18.

Voter pre-registration is now available for eligible 16 and 17 year olds by visiting RegisterToVote.ca.gov or by filling out a paper voter registration application. California youth who pre-register to vote will be automatically registered to vote on their 18th birthday. Pre-registration does not change the voting age, which is 18 years old. Instead, it allows eligible Californians ages 16 or 17 to pre-register, providing sufficient time and opportunity to get ready to vote.

Be sure to provide the voter registration application to any applicant or participant 16 years old or older. Follow the same process as you would for any other voter registration application to ensure your office site will receive NVRA credit for these transactions. Like typical registrations, it is not the responsibility of local agency staff to determine voter eligibility. Rather, inform the applicant of the voter registration requirements. If completed, simply collect the voter registration application and submit it to your County Elections Office within 3 calendar days. For more information regarding pre-registration please visit www.sos.ca.gov/elections/pre-register-16-vote-18 or find contact information for your County Elections Office contact at www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/county-elections-offices.

REVIEW UPDATED TRAINING MATERIALS

All staff at NVRA reporting agencies must participate in annual NVRA training. We encourage all NVRA coordinators to visit the Secretary of State's resources page to access the newly updated training materials, FAQs, NVRA Basics Quick Reference Sheet, and many more useful tools. If assistance with providing annual training to local agency staff is necessary, please contact the Secretary of State's NVRA Team or the County Elections NVRA Coordinator. Training materials can be found at www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/nvra/training.

WHEN IS MY NEXT LOCAL ELECTION ?

To find information about upcoming elections in your area please visit <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/upcoming-elections/>.

For more information please contact the Secretary of State's NVRA Team via email at nvra@sos.ca.gov or call 916-657-2166.