

State of California - Department of Rehabilitation
MEMORANDUM

To: District Administrators
Field Managers and Supervisors

From: Bill Moore, Deputy Director, VRED
Joe Xavier, Deputy Director, SSD
Pat Santillanes, Deputy Director, VRPRD

Date: January 14, 2013

Subject: National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) Requirements
Effective January 1, 2013

As required by the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), as a designated voter registration agency, must offer voter registration to all DOR applicants and consumers. This memorandum supersedes the memorandum sent on September 21, 2012, and provides updated information on the DOR's requirements under the NVRA, including changes effective on January 1, 2013.

District Administrators and district managers and supervisors are responsible for clarifying the roles and responsibilities of district staff to comply with the NVRA. All Rehabilitation Counselors, and whoever else may provide voter registration services to an individual upon application or change of name/address, must receive annual training beginning on January 1, 2013. This training can be based on information available from the Secretary of State's office or from this memorandum, which incorporates the information.

General Requirements

The DOR staff must provide an applicant or consumer with a Voter Registration Card (VRC) and a Voter Preference Form (VPF) whenever the individual applies or reapplies for services or notifies the DOR of a change of name or address. The VPF asks whether an individual would like to register to vote. If the individual checks the box on the VPF indicating that they would like to register, the individual should also complete the VRC and provide both forms to the DOR.

DOR staff must:

- offer to assist the applicant or consumer in completing these forms;
- complete the bottom part of the VPF (for Agency use only);
- keep the VPF for two years in a secure location in each office, to be destroyed after that period;
- keep all information on the VPF confidential;
- obtain the VRC in the appropriate languages from the local county elections office, as required;
- mail or otherwise deliver all completed VRCs to the local elections office or to the office of the Secretary of State within ten (10) days of receipt unless within five (5) days of an election in which case it should be mailed or delivered to the local elections office or Secretary of State within five (5) days; and
- DOR staff must not seek to influence an applicant's or consumer's political party preference or party registration, display any political preference or party registration, discourage any of its applicants or consumers from registering to vote, or lead the applicant or consumer to believe that a decision to register or not to register has any bearing on the availability of vocational rehabilitation services.

Effective January 1, 2013, DO NOT use the DR 240 VPF. Instead, use the Secretary of State's standard VPF, which is available from the Secretary of State's (SOS) website in ten languages.

NVRA Coordinators and Staff Training

District Administrators must assign one staff person in each district and branch field office to be the NVRA Coordinator in charge of the NVRA compliance. This includes:

- arranging training for staff responsible for providing information to applicants and consumers;
- ordering supplies of the VRCs from the local county elections office. Contact information can be found at: http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_d.htm or by calling the Secretary of State's Election Division at (916) 657-2166;

- obtaining or downloading the VPFs from the Secretary of State's website at <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/nvra/training/voter-preference-forms.htm>;
- ensuring the VRCs are submitted in a timely manner to the local county elections office or SOS; and
- contacting the local county elections office to determine the languages their field office must provide these forms in to comply with Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act.

VPF and VRC Procedures

In Person or by Mail: The DOR must include a VRC and a VPF in the standard packet of application materials handed or mailed to applicants who apply or reapply for services, and to applicants and consumers who request a change of name or address.

Phone Transactions: DOR staff must ask the following question of applicants who apply for services or applicants and consumers who request a change of name or address by phone: “If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to register today?”

The DOR staff must note the individual’s response on the VPF. If the individual responds “yes,” the DOR must provide an opportunity to register to vote by mailing a VRC to them or by sending a link to the California Online Voter Registration Application at either <http://registertovote.ca.gov/> or <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/register-to-vote>.

Email or Online Applications: The DOR now has a VPF for applicants to complete and submit electronically with their application for services as well as a link to the Secretary of State for individuals visiting our Internet site to register to vote in accordance with changes in the law. Any electronic VPF received with the online application or by email from an applicant must be printed and stored with other completed VPF forms.

Public Counters: The DOR should also offer applicants and consumers an opportunity to register by keeping a supply of the VRCs on public counters.

If you have any questions pertaining to this memorandum, please contact the Centralized Services Unit (CSU) at CentSvs@dor.ca.gov