

Date Printed: 06/16/2009

JTS Box Number: IFES_80
Tab Number: 43
Document Title: Deputy Registrar Guidelines
Document Date: 1997
Document Country: United States --
Illinois
Document Language: English
IFES ID: CE02186



Deputy Registrar Guidelines



Issued by the
STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

PREFACE

This Deputy Registrar Guidelines booklet has been designed to provide information to election officials, labor organizations, civic organizations and other individuals and organizations participating in the Illinois Deputy Registrar Program.

The booklet describes who is eligible for appointment as deputy registrars, the terms of appointment of deputy registrars, and the duties and responsibilities of deputy registrars. General information about the training of deputy registrars and the proper completion of the voter registration forms is also included. These guidelines also recommend procedures important to the continued administration of Public Act 83-1059. All citations are from 10 ILCS 5/1-1, et seq.

Additional information can be obtained from either our Springfield or Chicago office or from your election authority (County Clerk or Board of Election Commissioners).

May 1997

APPOINTMENTS

Illinois statutes provide that county clerks shall appoint all municipal, township or road district clerks (or their deputies) as deputy registrars who may accept the registration of all qualified residents of their respective municipalities, townships and road districts. Registration at these offices is closed during the **28 day period before any election.** [4-6.2(a), 5-5, 5-16.2 (a), 5-19]

Municipal clerks, or an authorized deputy of a municipal clerk, of a municipality which lies in more than one county, may accept the registration of any qualified resident of the municipality regardless of which county the resident lives in. (4-6.2) Municipal and township clerks (in Cook County only) and their deputies are allowed to accept the registration of any qualified resident of the county or counties in which the municipality or township is located. (5-16.2)

Illinois law also provides that election authorities (county clerks and boards of election commissioners) appoint all precinct committeepersons as deputy registrars. Precinct committeepersons may take registrations of individuals residing anywhere within the election authority's jurisdiction. Registration is closed, however, during the **28-day period before any election.** [4-6.2(a), 5-16.2(a), 6-50.2(a)]

Election authorities are also authorized to appoint a reasonable number of employees of the Secretary of State at driver's license examination stations as designated by the Secretary of State who may accept the registration of residents (of the county in which the registrar is registered) at such driver's license examination stations. (4-6.2, 5-16.2, 6-50.2 and 625 ILCS 5/2-105)

All deputy registrars **must be registered voters** in the jurisdiction of the election authority, except that municipal and township clerks appointed as deputy registrars by the county clerk, may register voters in the jurisdiction of a city board of election commissioners.

UPON WRITTEN REQUEST, the following may make application to their election authority to become deputy registrars: [4-6.2(a), 5-16.2(a), 6-50.2(a)]

- Chief librarian or a designee
- Principal or a designee of a high school, elementary school or vocational school
- President or a designee of a university, college, community college, academy or other institution of learning
- Members of bonafide labor organizations
- Members of bonafide state civic organizations as certified by the State Board of Elections
- Illinois Department of Public Aid Director or designated employees
- Illinois Department of Employment Security Director or designated employees
- President of any corporation as defined by the Business Corporation Act or designated employees

Election authorities shall require that any designee requesting to be appointed as a deputy registrar file a letter or signed statement of authorization from the designating officer of the organization. This letter is to be kept on file in the election authority's office.

With the exception of precinct committeemen, labor organizations, corporations, and civic organizations, deputy registrars are authorized to take registrations only at the institution or facility in which they are serving as a registrar. Precinct committeemen and deputy registrars from labor organizations, corporations, and civic organizations, however, are not limited to taking registrations at fixed locations.

Deputy registrars may accept the registrations of qualified residents only of the county in which they are appointed as deputy registrars. Registration is closed during the 28 days before any election.

Civic organizations seeking to engage in voter registration activities must file an application with the State Board of Elections for certification as bona fide State civic organizations. Those organizations seeking certification must make application no later than 90 days prior to the election for which they wish to register voters. All organizations meeting the qualifications will be certified within seven days from the date the application was received by the SBE. A certification letter is sent to the organization and a copy of the certification is sent to the appropriate election authority. A listing of all certified organizations is sent to all election authorities every two years. [4-6.2(a), 5-16.2(a), 6-50.2(a) and SBE Rule 207.50]

Certified organizations seeking to have members appointed as deputy registrars must submit the request in writing to the appropriate election authority. A copy of the organization's certification should be attached to the letter.

Labor organizations seeking to engage in voter registration activities must make application with the appropriate election authority. The request must be in writing. Labor organizations DO NOT need to be certified by the State Board of Elections. Only **bona fide** labor organizations are authorized to participate in voter registration activities. A bona fide labor organization is one in which employees participate and which exists at least in part to deal with employers concerning wages, working conditions, labor disputes, grievances, or related matters.

Organized Voter Registration Events

Organizations intending to conduct a major voter registration drive or "shopping mall" type registration event should contact the election authority to coordinate such events. **Political parties** having certified civic organization status must **NOT** conduct voter registration activities at political functions. Voter registration activities must be organized as separate and distinct functions by **all** organizations. **Any type of electioneering or campaigning while conducting voter registration activities is STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**

As with all other deputy registrars, registration by labor organizations and civic organizations is closed during the 28 days before any election.

Counties With Municipal Boards of Election Commissioners

In any county in which there is a municipality under the jurisdiction of a board of election commissioners, the county clerk and his appointed deputy registrars shall accept the registration of qualified persons residing within such municipality and shall transmit the completed registrations to the board of election commissioners prior to the close of registration. The board of election commissioners and its appointed deputy registrars shall accept the registration of any qualified person residing in the county in which the municipality under the jurisdiction of such board is situated and shall transmit such registrations to the county clerk prior to the close of registration before an election. (4-31, 5-25.1, 6-59.1)

Appointments Limited to Reasonable Number

Each election authority must appoint all individuals who qualify, except that an election authority may limit the appointments of individuals affiliated with **labor organizations** and **civic organizations** to a "reasonable number". [4-6.2(a), 5-16.2(a), 6-50.2(a)]

In no event may an election authority fix an arbitrary number applicable to every labor or civic organization requesting appointment of its members as deputy registrars. The number of registrars from a labor organization or a State civic organization will vary across the State depending upon the number of unregistered citizens among the voting age population in the jurisdiction and other factors as listed on the next page.

In determining what is a “reasonable number” to appoint from any labor or state civic organization, there are a number of factors which the election authority should consider. Some of these include:

- population of the jurisdiction
- size of the organization
- geographic size of the jurisdiction
- convenience to the public
- the location of existing deputy registrars
- existing number of deputy registrars in the jurisdiction
- existing number of registrars in the organization
- the need to appoint deputy registrars to assist with the registration of non-English speaking individuals
- the goal, in terms of registration activities, of the organization

If any request to be appointed as a deputy registrar is denied, the election authority shall, **within 10 days** after the date the request is submitted, provide the affected individual or organization with written notice, setting forth the specific reasons or criteria relied upon to deny the request.

Additional deputy registrars appointed by the election authority must be appointed from lists of applicants furnished by the chairmen of the political party county central committees. Each county party chairman must submit a list of applicants to the election authority by November 30 of each year. When additional deputy registrars are appointed by the election authority, their selection must be made in such a manner that the convenience of the public is served and so that there are an **equal number of deputy registrars appointed from each of the two major political parties.** [4-6.2(a), 5-16.2(a), 6-50.2(a)]

Election authorities may also establish **temporary places of registration.** A notice of the times of operation and locations of temporary places of registration must be published not less than 3 nor more than 15 days before the holding of such registration. These temporary places of registration must be staffed by employees of the election authority or deputy registrars. (4-6.1, 4-6.3, 5-16.1, 5-16.3, 6-50.1, 6-50.3)

The **term of appointment** for most deputy registrars is **two years.** With the exception of precinct committeemen and civic organizations, the term of office ends on November 30 after each general election. Precinct committeemen serve as deputy registrars throughout their term of office. The term for civic organization deputy registrars ends on the first business day of the month following each general election. Organizations need to re-apply for their members if they want their members to continue serving as deputy registrars. **It is suggested that election authorities notify the organizations of the need to re-apply.** (4-6.2, 5-16.2, 6-50.2)

TRAINING OF DEPUTY REGISTRARS [4-6.2(b), 4-9, 5-8, 5-16.2(b), 6-36, 6-50.2(b)]

Illinois statutes provide that the training of deputy registrars be under the direction of the election authority (county clerk or board of election commissioners). All training programs are designed to inform deputy registrars of their duties and responsibilities and include instructions relevant to the proper completion of the voter registration forms.

Only the registration forms authorized by Illinois statute are to be used by deputy registrars. See page 13 for more detailed information about the proper forms to use and guidelines for distributing the forms to deputy registrars.

Proper training is crucial to the success of any voter registration program. All deputy registrars should be aware that **accuracy, neatness, and timeliness** are of utmost importance. Registration forms which are completed accurately and submitted to the election authority when they are due will help to ensure a successful registration program and save valuable time on the part of election officials and deputy registrars alike.

Training programs should also include an explanation of the office procedures involved for processing registration applications, as well as an explanation concerning changes of addresses and name changes (e.g., any registered voter who changes his or her name must re-register). All information provided in any training program must be consistent with the Illinois Election Code (10 ILCS 5/1-1, et seq.).

All training programs include the following:

1. Instructions as to the duties and limitations of deputy registrars.
2. Instructions as to the proper completion of the registration forms.
3. The dates when registration is NOT allowed and when completed forms must be returned for processing. **Completed registration forms must be returned for processing within 7 days of completion.**

NOTE: Deputy registrars must return all registration materials (new registrations/cancellations) to the election authority within 48 hours of registration/cancellation if such registration/cancellation was accepted/cancelled between the 35th and 29th day preceding an election.

Registrars must return all materials (new registrations/cancellations within 24 hours if the registration/cancellation was received on the 29th day preceding an election. (4-8.03, 5-7.03, 6-35.03)

4. The dates when materials must be returned and accounted for. [4-6.2(c), 4-9, 5-8, 5-16.2(c), 6-36, 6-50.2(c)]

Registrars affiliated with labor organizations and civic organizations are required to return unused voter registration materials no later than the next working day after the close of registration.

5. An explanation of the office procedures for processing cards.
6. Procedures on changes of address and name changes. [4-8.03, 4-16, 5-7.03, 5-23, 6-35.03, 6-53, 6-54]
7. An explanation of local guidelines or rules adopted by the election authority which are consistent with the Election Code. (6-26)
8. General information regarding the actual statutory requirements for registering to vote in Illinois which include:
 - **Must be a U. S. Citizen**
 - **Must be a resident in the precinct for 30 days**
 - **Must be 18 years old by next election day**

The applicant is required to show two forms of identification with one form showing the current residence address.

Upon completion of training, the election authority issues a **certificate** to each deputy registrar. The election authority also maintains a file of all appointed deputy registrars and must make a list of these appointments available for public inspection. [4-6.2(a and b), 5-16.2(a and b), 6-50.2(a and b)]

All deputy registrars are required to take and subscribe to the following **oath or affirmation**:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm, as the case may be) that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of deputy registrar to the best of my ability and that I will register no person nor cause the registration of any person except upon his personal application before me."

Signature

The oath is administered by the election authority or his/her deputy and is filed with the election authority.

IDENTIFICATION

Voter registration applicants are required to show the deputy registrar or officer of registration two forms of identification, and except in the case of a homeless individual, one of the pieces of identification must include the applicant's current residence address. These forms of identification include, but are not limited to, any of the following: driver's license, social security card, public aid identification card, utility bill, employee or student identification card, credit card, or a civic, union or professional association membership card. The registration officer must require a homeless individual to furnish evidence of his use of the mailing address stated. This use may be demonstrated by a piece of mail addressed to that individual and received at that mailing address. The registration officer shall require each applicant to read or have read to him the affidavit of registration before completing and signing the application.

OATH (or Affirmation)

" You do solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will fully and truly answer all such questions as shall be put to you touching your name, place of residence, place of birth, your qualifications as an elector and your right as such to register and vote under the laws of the State of Illinois. "

REGISTRATION RECORD CARDS

Distribution: All voter registration materials are provided by the election authority. In determining the number of forms to be issued to a deputy registrar, consideration should be given to the plan or goal of the registrar or organization and also to the size of the jurisdiction of the registrar. A history of the performance of the registrar or group may also be used as a basis for determining the number of blank forms to issue. The election authority is NOT required to provide additional forms to any deputy registrar having more than 200 registration forms unaccounted for during the preceding 12-month period.

Deputy registrars are required under Illinois law to use the two or three-part form in taking registrations. As part of the registration process the registrar must see two forms of identification, witness the signature of the applicant, and sign the application in the space provided.

In Illinois, a **one-part** form is also used for voter registration. **This form is NOT to be used by deputy registrars.** The one-part form is an application for registration. It is used in some State agencies and can be used as a mail-in application for registration. In some situations a person who uses the one-part form when applying for registration is not yet considered a registered voter because no identification was given and his signature on the application was not witnessed by a deputy registrar as required by Illinois law. Unless the one-part form was processed through a State agency, persons applying for registration using this form may be required to vote in person the first time voting.

Required information: The registration record cards, which shall include an affidavit of registration, shall contain the following information and such other information as the election authority may think it proper to require for the identification of the applicant:

NAME. The name of the applicant, giving surname, first or Christian name in full, and middle name or initial.

SEX. Male or female.

RESIDENCE. The name and number of the street, avenue, or other location of the dwelling, including the apartment, unit or room number, if any, and in the case of a mobile home, the lot number, and such additional clear and definite description as may be necessary to determine the exact location of the dwelling of the applicant. Where the location cannot be determined by street and number, then the section, congressional township and range number may be used, or such other description as may be necessary, including post-office mailing address. In the case of a homeless individual, the individual's voting residence that is his or her mailing address shall be included on his or her registration record card.

TERM OF RESIDENCE in the State and precinct.

NATIVITY. The state or country of birth.

CITIZENSHIP. Whether the applicant is native born or naturalized. If naturalized, the court, place, and date of naturalization.

DATE OF APPLICATION for registration.

AGE. Date of birth by month, day, year.

PHYSICAL DISABILITY of applicant, if any, at the time of registration, which would require assistance in voting.

COUNTY AND STATE in which the applicant was last registered.

SIGNATURE OF VOTER. The applicant, after the registration and in the presence of a deputy registrar or other officer of registration must sign his or her name in ink to the affidavit on both the original and duplicate registration record cards.

Applicant not able to sign?

In case the applicant is unable to sign his name, he may affix his mark to the affidavit. In such case the officer giving the registration oath shall write a detailed description of the applicant in the space provided on the back or at the bottom of the card or sheet; and shall ask the following questions and record the answers on the card:

Father's first name.

Mother's first name.

From what address did the applicant last register?

Reason for inability to sign name.

SIGNATURE OF DEPUTY REGISTRAR OR OFFICER OF REGISTRATION. The individual acting in his or her official capacity as the deputy registrar or officer of registration must sign the application.

REVOCATION OF APPOINTMENT [4-6.2(b), 5-16.2(b), 6-50.2(b)]

Election authorities are responsible for certifying and supervising all appointed deputy registrars. Deputy registrars are **subject to removal for cause**.

Grounds for dismissal could be, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- Failure to attend training session
- No longer affiliated with sponsoring group
- Suspension of registrar's own registration
- Moved out of the jurisdiction
- Knowingly furnishing false information
- Repeated failure to properly execute registration forms such as:
 - Failure to complete forms **LEGIBLY**
 - Failure to fully complete forms
 - Failure, through negligence, to obtain correct information
- **ELECTIONEERING** on behalf of a candidate or party or working for or against a proposition while conducting the voter registration activity.

- Acting as a registrar in any area where liquor and alcoholic beverages are served, sold or consumed
- Failing to register an individual who fulfills the necessary requirements for registration
- Repeated failure to return completed forms when they are due
- Failure to register an individual based on a bias of the registrar
- Failure to retain registration materials in the registrar's possession
- Failure by the registrar to properly account for all registration forms
- Failure to follow lawful instructions given by the election authority

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Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois
97-9-3000-5-97