

Election Day Procedures

January 25, 2017

Presented by Mary Zimmerman

Election Day Procedures

Items for Review

- Poll watchers and election day challenges of voters
- No-fault absentee voting, early voting and vote by mail
- Emergency absentee ballots
- Prison voting
- Straight-party voting option
- Internet voting

Poll Watchers and Election Day Challenges of Voters

- Poll watchers observe the election process from inside the polling place
- Appointed by political parties or candidates
- Keep a list of who has voted and communicate information to GOTV workers
- Can challenge a voter's right to vote to a poll worker
- Must be a registered voter in the county of the election district where they are observing
- No formal training required.

No-fault Absentee Voting, Early Voting and Vote by Mail

- LWVPA supports no-excuse necessary absentee voting.
- Do we want to add in-person early voting at satellite voting locations?
- How about vote by mail?

Emergency Absentee Ballots

- Process for voters who find at last minute that they cannot vote in person.
- The current process is difficult to navigate especially for people who are homebound or hospitalized.
- Option is not widely known or advertised.

Prison Voting

- In PA people in prison who have not been convicted of a felony can vote.
- No formal process for making voting accessible to those who qualify.
- State law allows heads of major and minor political parties to help institutionalized people to vote.
- Does institution include prisons?

Straight-Party Voting Option

- PA voters can cast ballots for all candidates of one party by checking one box or pushing one button.
- Ticket splitting also possible but difficult to understand because of ballot design.
- Some states have abolished straight party voting.

Internet Voting

- PA allows overseas and military voters to apply for an absentee ballot on line and receive a ballot electronically but must send voted ballot by mail.
- Paper application can be signed by an adult member of his/her immediate family.
- Internet voting would allow voters to cast ballot via email or a web portal.
- Opposed by most election integrity professionals because of internet security concerns.
- To accommodate timing concerns, military voters have until a week after election day for their ballots to arrive at Election Divisions.

Provisional Ballot Voting



Help America Vote Act of 2002:

- ✓ If an individual declares that he / she is registered but name does not appear on voting list or official says individual is not eligible to vote
 - The individual shall be permitted to cast a provisional ballot

- ✓ If general register shows voter is registered to vote in another district in the county, the individual has the right, under HAVA and the PA Election Code to cast a provisional ballot. Official should:
 - direct voter to the proper polling place,
 - advise the voter that it is illegal under PA law to vote in a district in which he or she is not properly registered and eligible, and
 - inform the elector that his or her vote cast on a provisional ballot in an improper election district might not be counted by the county board of elections.

- ✓ If general register does not show voter is registered in another district in the county, official should determine if registration can be found by inspector of elections or elections board. If registration cannot be confirmed the individual has the right, under HAVA and the PA Election Code to cast a provisional ballot.

Election Day Procedures

Current Positions-LWVPA

- Intensified voter education in methods of splitting a ticket
- Nonpartisan election of school directors
- Voting systems that employ a voter-verifiable paper ballot
- Simplified procedures for all qualified absentee electors
- Guarantees against fraud
- Protection of the secrecy of the ballot, including the counting of absentee ballots at the county level
- No excuse necessary absentee voting

Election Day Procedures

Current Positions-LWVPA

- State administered elections
- Appointment of district election officers
- Use of public buildings as polling places wherever practical
- Wearing of identification badges by election officials
- Increased use of the provision that watchers may be appointed to serve in districts other than their own
- Extension of election hours

Election Day Procedures: Current Positions-LWVUS

- Provisional voting
- No excuse needed absentee voting
- Voting equipment standards
- Election funding
- Accessibility
- Standards for polling places and poll workers

