



Washington Secretary of State

CLEARINGHOUSE

ELECTIONS NOTICE

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Underage Voter Registration

Following the 2008 Presidential Primary, a HAVA complaint regarding underage voter registration was filed and heard at an administrative hearing. The outcome of the administrative process directed the following changes in policy and procedure.

The registration form for a 17-year-old can be processed and entered as an active registration only if:

1. The date of the next election is known at the time the voter registration is processed, **and**
2. The voter will be 18 years of age on or before Election Day.

Processing applications for 17-year-olds can be a problem if there are possible election dates before the voter's eighteenth birthday. For instance, if an application is received on April 1 and the voter turns 18 in July, then the registration must not be activated until the deadline has passed to submit a resolution for the May election date.

When an underage applicant does **not** meet the above requirements:

1. If an applicant is 17 years of age and either the date of the next election is not known, or the applicant will not be 18 on or before the date of the next known election, the registration application may be either pended in the VRDB or set aside to be entered at a later date.
2. **Note:** The voter registration application of any applicant who is **under** the age of 17 on the day of initial processing must be **rejected**. Counties shall notify the applicant of the rejection and when another application may be submitted.

If an ineligible, underage applicant is found in the VRDB, the registration must be either pended or cancelled. The VRDB has a report for listing applicants under the age of 18. Counties shall regularly check this report for any ineligible applicants inadvertently entered into the system.

Procedures for implementing these changes are detailed in "Underage Voter Registration: Policy and Procedures" located on our website.