Elections Division

Voter Registration Updates

Elections Clearinghouse Notice Issue #25-02 June 26, 2025

This notice is reissued to reflect legislative changes in <u>House Bill 1962 (2024)</u> concerning updating a voter's registration record after being notified of their residential address change. It replaces Clearinghouse Notice #21-03, Voter Registration Transfers, issued April 3, 2021.

The following guidance is specific to handling change of address that indicates the **voter moved out of the county**. This includes both within the state and outside of the state. When the change of address indicates the **voter has moved within the county**, the County Auditor must update the voter's registration.

Deadlines

The voter may **update their voter registration by mail, online, phone, or email** no later than 8 days prior to Election Day to be eligible to vote at their new address.

The voter may **update their voter registration in person** at a County Auditor's Office, voting center or location designated by the County Auditor under <u>RCW 29A.08.410</u> no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

The earliest date a voter registration update is received by an election official is used as the registration date for determining if a voter met the registration deadline. This includes confirmation notice responses forwarded from another county elections office. (RCW 29A.08.020; WAC 434-324-028, 434-324-076)

Processing Voter Registration Updates

<u>RCW 29A.08.410</u> provides authorization for the County Auditor to process certain in-state address changes without notification of the new county. These include:

- In-person
- Voter Registration Applications

To register to vote in person, the voter must be present at a time when the facility is open and complete the voter registration application by providing the information required by RCW 29A.08.010. (RCW 29A.08.140)

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Note: To update a voter's address in person, counties may use an address change form.

Voter Registration Applications may be accepted and processed by the county that receives the application.

The election management system will automatically route voter registration updates to the new county if received electronically through the online voter registration system or from the department of licensing, health benefit exchange, or any other state agency designated under RCW 29A.08.365.

See Clearinghouse Notice *Voters Without Traditional Addresses* for how the County Auditor should process registrations without traditional residential addresses, such as residing in a shelter, motor home, marina, or other identifiable location.

Notification Required and Processing by County Auditor of New County

- United States Postal Service (USPS) Change of Address
- Confirmation Notices
- Phone
- Email
- Requests including the voter's name and new and former addresses

United States Postal Service (USPS) Change of Address

When the change of address information indicates the **voter has moved out of the county but within the state**, <u>RCW 29A.08.620</u> requires the county auditor of the voter's new county of residence update the registration.

If received electronically, the election management system will automatically route USPS change of address information to the new county and provide notification as a record to be processed.

If received physically, the county auditor must forward the change of address information to the voter's new county by mail or electronically for processing.

When the change of address indicates the **voter has moved out of state**, the County Auditor should place the voter registration on Inactive status and send a confirmation notice to the address indicated and to any other address at which the County Auditor could reasonably expect mail to be received by the voter in order to confirm the voter's residence address.

Confirmation Notices (RCW 29A.08.635, 29A.08.640; WAC 434-324-087)

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When the returned confirmation notice indicates the **voter has moved out of the county but within the state**, RCW 29A.08.620 requires the county auditor of the voter's new county of residence update the voter's registration record. The county auditor must forward the confirmation notice to the voter's new county by mail or electronically for processing. For in-state address changes, the signature is not required.

When the returned confirmation notice indicates the **voter has moved out of state**, verify that the signature provided on the confirmation notice matches the signature(s) in the voter's registration record, then cancel the voter's registration record. If the signature provided on the returned confirmation notice does not match the signature(s) in the voter's registration record or is missing, the voter remains on inactive status. The county auditor may mail the voter a cancellation form or attempt to contact the voter by phone, email, or other means.

Phone or Email Update

When the change of address indicates the **voter has moved out of the county but within the state**, the county auditor must direct the voter to call or forward the email to the voter's new county to process the change of address.

If speaking with a family or household member, the county auditor may request additional identifying information before processing a voter registration update. (WAC 434-324-076(2))

Request Received from Voter

When the registered voter provides a request that indicates that the **voter has moved out of the county but within the state**, the county auditor of the voter's new county of residence will update the voter's registration record. RCW 29A.08.410 requires that the request include the voter's present address and former address. The County Auditor must forward the request to the voter's new county by mail or electronically for processing. For in-state address changes, a signature is not required.

Mailing Address Only

If the county auditor receives a change of mailing address without any indication of residential address, the county auditor may issue a custom notice (similar to a confirmation notice) to the registered voter by first-class forwardable mail at the address indicated on the voter's registration record and any other address at which the County Auditor could reasonably expect mail to be received by the voter in order to confirm the voter's residential address. The notice must include a postage prepaid, pre-addressed return form by which the registrant may verify the address information.

If the registration is in Active status, the voter registration should remain active until any requirements for assignment of voter to Inactive status under RCW 29A.08.620 have been met, such as undeliverable mail or indication of a change of address out of state.

Special Handling of Issued Ballots

If a ballot has been received but not yet accepted and a change of residential address has been made, that ballot issuance must be suspended. The county of residence will reissue a ballot based on the voter's current ballot type and precinct.

Best Practice: Contact the previous county of registration to notify the ballot processing staff of the voter's registration update.

18 Before the Election to Seven Days After the Election: The voter's previous county of registration must mail via expedited shipping the suspended received ballot packet **within two business days** to the new county of registration. (<u>WAC 434-250-110(3)(b)(ii)</u>)

Seven Days After the Election: The voter's previous county of registration must mail via expedited shipping the suspended received ballot packet **within one day** to the new county of registration. (WAC 434-250-110(3)(b)(ii))

See Clearinghouse Notice Same Day Registration for how the County Auditor should process suspended ballots received from other counties.

If the voter's **ballot has already been accepted**, process the voter registration update; however, it will be effective after the election and the voter will not be issued another ballot for that election.

Address Confidentiality Program Protected Records Voters

If a protected records voter wants to update their voter registration, they should provide the update on the Protected Voters Registration Form. This can be done in person at the county elections office or by mail through the Address Confidentiality Program.

If the county elections office does not have Protected Voters Registration Forms available, call the Address Confidentiality Program at (360) 753-2972.

Upon receipt of the updated information, the authorized county auditor personnel will verify the ACP participant's authorization number with ACP personnel, update the voter's registration record, and provide the voter with information specific to being a Protected Records Voter.

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