



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

Family Investment Administration ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: #01-48

Effective Date: Immediately

Issuance Date: June 6, 2001

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS AND VOTER
REGISTRATION COORDINATORS**

FROM: CHARLES E. HENRY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: NEW VOTER REGISTRATION FORM (SBE 03-202-1 Rev 3/00)

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: ALL

**ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

SUMMARY: After the past election, all states are taking a hard look at their voter registration and voting process. In Maryland, this includes a renewed effort to promote voter registration through the agencies mandated to offer their clients the opportunity to apply to register to vote by the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), of which the Department of Human Resources is one. The Secretary of State continues to hold meetings with NVRA agencies to assure compliance with the Act.

Issues from the last election:

1. There were complaints from citizens who thought they had registered to vote, but who were not registered when they arrived at the polling booth. For the most part, these were individuals who had completed an application and left it with an NVRA agency to be mailed, but the agency did not mail the applications. The Department of Human Resources (DHR) staff are to be commended that no such criticism was made by anyone who left an application at one our offices. We must continue to be vigilant about this.

Action: It is imperative that we offer individuals the opportunity to register to vote, offer to assist in completing the application, offer to mail the application, and mail any applications received on Fridays or the last workday of the week if Friday is a holiday. **Under no circumstances should completed Voter Registration Application Forms be kept in the local department for a period of more than five consecutive working days.**

2. Some individuals assumed that when they changed the address on their driver's license, that information would be automatically forwarded to their voter registration.

Action: When you become aware that individuals served by DHR have changed their address, advise them that they should complete another voter registration application to update their address with the local Board of Elections Office.

3. Some individuals were upset when they went to vote only to find out they were not registered. They did not understand that completing the application to vote is not the same as being registered to vote.

Action: DHR staff should advise customers that if they do not receive their Voter Notification Card in the mail within three weeks, they should contact the State Board of Elections Office at 1-800-222-8683.

4. In an effort to track and increase the number of applications from NVRA agencies, the State Board of Elections has produced a separate Voter Registration Application for use by NVRA agencies. The application does not identify whether the application came from DHR, MVA, or any other specific mandated agency: it only identifies it as coming from an NVRA agency. (This was important for agencies such as DHR which are bound by strict confidentiality laws and regulations.) See attached copy of the new Voter Registration Application.

An initial supply of the new VRAs is being forwarded with this memo. They are to be used immediately.

Once the enclosed supply of new VRA's is exhausted, subsequent distribution to local offices will be done through your Local Board of Election offices.

Immediate Action:

Immediately package and mail all **Old VRA Forms to:**

Joe Torre
Maryland State Board Of Elections
151 West Street, Suite 200
Annapolis, MD 21401-0486

Your District Office Voter Registration Coordinators are responsible for contacting the local election board to request additional supplies of Voter Registration Application forms in a timely manner so that a supply is always available. (A copy of Local Election Board contacts, addresses and phone numbers is attached).

ACTION: Please implement these procedures immediately. Share this information with all DHR staff who may assist customers with applying to register to vote.

Inquiries: John S. Murray, NVRA Coordinator
Bureau of Continuous Improvement
(410) 767-7940

Attachments

c: DHR Executive Staff
FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
Help Desk
CTF