



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

Family Investment Administration
INFORMATION MEMO

Control Number #08-06

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**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF ADMINISTRATION / FINANCE OFFICERS
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

FROM: KEVIN M. MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FIA

RE: NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT OF 1993 UPDATE

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: ALL PROGRAMS

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

SUMMARY:

The National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1993 became effective on January 1, 1995. The intent of NVRA is to increase the number of citizens registered to vote and establish safeguards that ensure voter's rights for all citizens. State and Federal laws require all state agencies to offer every customer who will be 18 years of age on or before the next general election an opportunity to register to vote. These laws require the Family Investment Administration (FIA) to record and track every response given by a customer when voter registration is discussed.

POLICY UPDATE:

FIA Information Memo #02-04 dated August 10, 2001 required local departments to offer voter registration opportunities to all customers who apply for benefits or complete a recertification in person or by mail. A CARES migration that occurred April 24, 2004 modified the system so that completion of the Motor Voter fields on the DEM2 screen is no longer required by CARES during interim changes or redeterminations. CARES only requires updating of the Motor Voter fields on the DEM2 screen for pending customers during application (new or reopen), add-a-person or add-a-program.

However, case managers are still required to offer customers who are 16 years of age or older the opportunity to apply to register to vote at each:

- Application (new or reopen),
- Add-a-person,
- Add-a-program,
- Address change, and
- Redetermination.

This requirement applies to the above listed case actions whether they are completed in person or by mail. NOTE: The Client Information Form (CIF) used for mail-in redeterminations includes a question that asks if any eligible person in the household wants to register to vote. If a customer checks that he or she is interested in voter registration information, the local department must mail a Voter Registration Application and DHR 784 Voter Registration Agency Certification to the customer. The local department must also send a Voter Registration Application and DHR 784 Voter Registration Agency Certification to any customer age 16 or over who was not present at an interview for one of the case actions listed above.

Case managers are required to document the action taken and the customer's decision at each of the above case actions in the case record by:

- Ensuring that a current Voter Registration Agency Certification form (784) or the system generated voter registration form on the Eligibility Determination Document (EDD) is completed for each customer age 16 and over. This current documentation must be in the case record;
- Reviewing the Motor Voter fields on the CARES DEM2 screen for each customer age 16 or over, and updating the CARES DEM2 screen if necessary, to ensure that the Motor Voter fields match the information on the current 784 or EDD forms (the absence of a hard edit in CARES does not eliminate this responsibility); and
- Documenting in the case narrative, as appropriate, that the Voter Registration Application and DHR 784 forms were mailed or sent to customers 16 or over who were not present at the interview or who are completing their case updates by mail.

Note: Although case managers are required to document that a voter registration form or 784 was sent home or mailed to the customer, the customer is not required to return the documents. Do not request return of voter registration forms on the Request for Verification form (1052).

INQUIRIES:

Please direct CARES questions to Fern Parson at 410-767-7064 and questions about the National Voter Registration Act to John Murray at 410-767-7940.

cc: FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
DHR Help Desk