



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2013 Wisconsin Act 149
[2013 Senate Bill 548]

**Four-Year Voter Registration
List Maintenance**

Wisconsin Act 149 relates to maintenance conducted on the state voter registration list by mailing notices to voters who have not voted within the last four years and changing the registration status of those who fail to respond. This process of updating the registration list is commonly referred to as “four-year maintenance.”

Transferring Responsibility for Reviewing Registrations and Mailing Notices

Act 149 transfers responsibility for reviewing the voter registration list and mailing notices to voters from municipal clerks and boards of election commissioners (“local clerks”) to the Government Accountability Board (GAB). Under prior law, local clerks were required to examine the voter registration records for their municipalities within 90 days of a general election to identify any voter who had not voted within the last four years. The clerk was then required to mail a notice to each identified voter informing the voter that his or her voter registration would be suspended unless the voter applied for continuation of registration within 30 days. If the voter failed to do so, the clerk was required to change the voter’s registration from eligible to ineligible.

Act 149 provides that GAB must examine the voter registration records and mail notices to voters who have not voted in the previous four-year period, rather than local clerks. As under prior law, a voter who receives a notice but wishes to continue his or her registration will return the application for continuation to the local clerk.

Transferring Responsibility for Changing Registration Status

Act 149 also transfers responsibility for changing registration status to GAB, unless delegated back to local clerks. Voters who receive notices but fail to apply for continuation of registration will have their status changed from eligible to ineligible on the registration list 30

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature’s Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

days after the notices are mailed. Act 149 provides that GAB must change the registration status of such voters. However, the Act further provides that GAB may delegate this responsibility to a local clerk.

Deadline for Mailing Notices

Act 149 extends the deadline for reviewing registrations and mailing notices to voters who have not voted within the last four years. The Act provides that GAB must mail notices no later than June 15 following each general election, rather than within 90 days of the election.

Required Posting on the GAB Website

Act 149 requires GAB to compile and post certain statistics on its Internet site relating to the mailing and return of notices. The GAB must post the following information as soon as practicable, but no later than August 1 following completion of the four-year list maintenance: (a) the number of notices mailed; (b) the number of notices returned as undeliverable; (c) the number of notices returned requesting continuation of registration; (d) the number of notices returned requesting cancellation of registration; (e) the number of notices returned with an indication that the named voter is deceased; (f) the number of notices that were not returned; (g) the number of voters who received notices and whose status changed from eligible to ineligible; and (h) any other information requested by the Legislature or that GAB considers relevant.

Effective date: March 29, 2014.

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