



Minnesota Voter Registration Overview & FBI Investigation Recap

The Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon

Agenda

- Voter Registration Overview
- Verification Process
- Voter List Maintenance
- Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)
- Post-Election Work
- Voter Registration Fraud Investigation

Voter Registration – Roles & Responsibilities

- Secretary of State
 - Chief election official
 - Responsible for defining, maintaining, and administering the statewide voter registration system (SVRS)
- County Auditor
 - Chief registrar of voters and chief custodian of the official registration records in each county
- Municipal Clerks
- Election Judges

Who Can Register to Vote?

To register to vote in Minnesota, you must be:

- A U.S. citizen
- At least 16 years old
 - 16- and 17-year-olds are pre-registered
 - Set in a "pending" status until they turn 18
- A resident of Minnesota for 20 days
- Not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction
- Not under a court order that revokes your right to vote

Everyone must register before they can vote

Read And Sign Only If All Parts Apply To You.

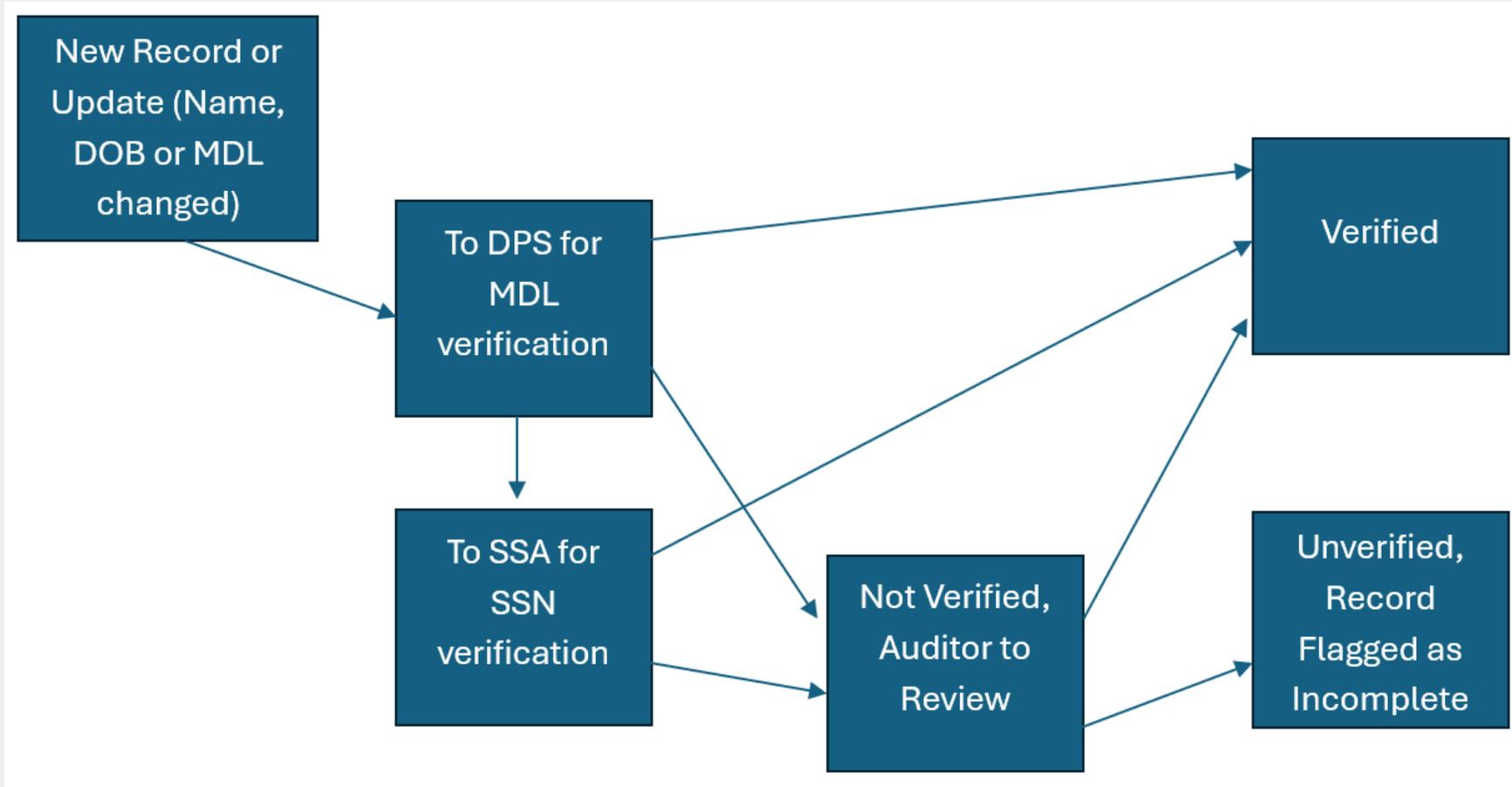
- 7** I certify that I:
- am at least 16 years old and understand that I must be at least 18 years old to be eligible to vote;
 - am a citizen of the United States;
 - will have maintained residence in Minnesota for 20 days immediately preceding election day;
 - maintain residence at the address or location given on the registration form;
 - am not under court-ordered guardianship in which the court order revokes my right to vote;
 - have not been found by a court to be legally incompetent to vote;
 - am not currently incarcerated for a conviction of a felony offense; and
 - have read and understand this statement, that giving false information is a felony punishable by not more than 5 years imprisonment or a fine of not more than \$10,000, or both.

Sign Here X _____ Date: ____ - ____ - 20 ____

Verification - Identity

- A record is verified when:
 - Voter record matches with an existing record in the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Driver & Vehicle Services database
 - Potential matches are queued for county auditor to review and determine whether the voter record and the DPS record are the same person
 - Voter record matches with an existing record in the Social Security Administration (SSA) database
 - If a record cannot be verified in the DPS database and contains the last four digits of the voter's social security number, record is sent to the SSA database for verification.
 - Records that are sent to the SSA are returned as either verified as exact matches or returned as no-match because they did not exactly match a record in the SSA database.
 - County auditors have 10 days to review instances where records are not verified through DPS or SSA
 - Must attempt to investigate and resolve the discrepancy
- If record cannot be verified, the registration is considered “incomplete”

Verification Workflow Summary



Incomplete Registrations

- Notice is queued for the county to mail to the registrant
- Incomplete registrations for first-time voters registering by mail and who have not voted in a federal election must either:
 - Complete their registration with the county auditor before the election, or
 - Provide proof of residence when registering on Election Day
 - A voucher cannot be used as a proof of residence for these voter registrations.
 - These registrants will be marked with “See ID” on the polling place roster
- All other incomplete registrations must have their record marked as “Challenged—Unverifiable” and must complete the challenge process at the polling place before being permitted to vote
- Any evidence of voter ineligibility is referred to the county attorney

Verification - Residence

- Once registered to vote, a non-forwardable postcard is sent to the voter's residence to verify their address
- If the postcard is returned as undeliverable, voter record is challenged
- If a second postcard sent at least 60 days after the return of the first non-forwardable mailing is also returned as undeliverable, voter record is inactivated

Maintaining Accurate Voter Data

- Sources for Updates to Voter Records:
 - Department of Corrections
 - Department of Health
 - State Court Administrator
 - Department of Public Safety
 - Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)
- Annual List Maintenance
- Potential Duplicate Voter Reports

Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)

Mission:

- Help states improve the accuracy of America's voter rolls, increase access to voter registration for all eligible citizens, reduce election costs, and increase efficiencies in elections

Member funded & member controlled

- 25 states + Washington D.C. are members

- Members submit voter registration data and licensing and identification data from motor vehicle departments at least once every 60 days.
 - Minnesota submits data monthly
- ERIC utilizes data matching software to compare data from all member states + data from other sources like the Social Security Administration, to create list maintenance reports.

ERIC Reports & Workflow

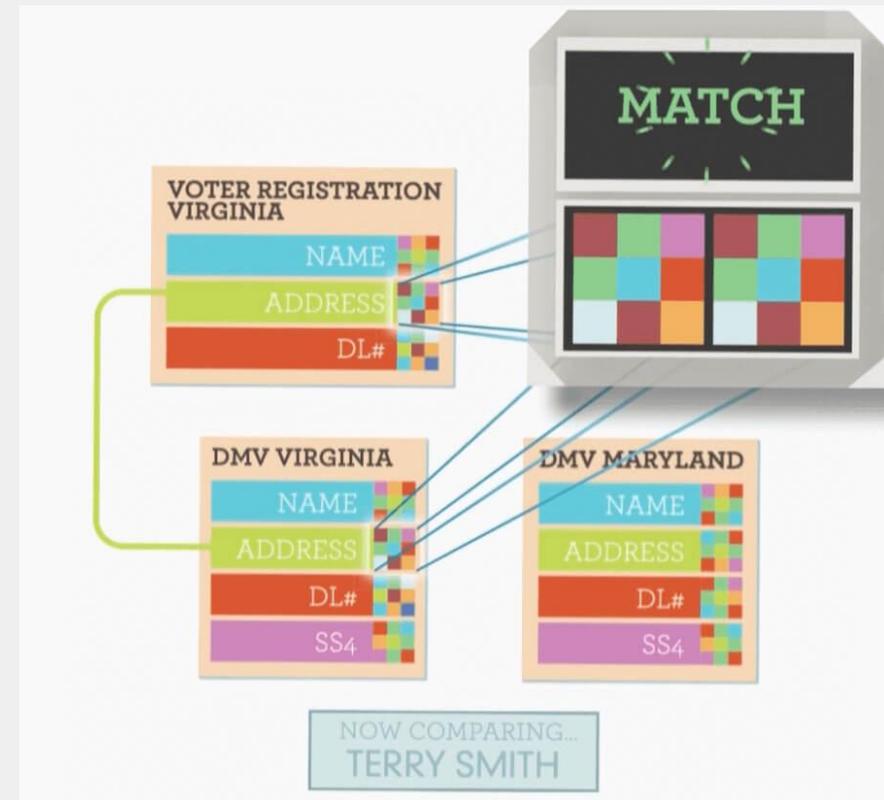
Cross State
Movers Report

In-State
Movers Report

Duplicate
Report

Deceased
Report (SSA)

National
Change of
Address Report



ERIC Data Security

- Secure transmission of data
- Data management, matching, and report delivery
- Governing board reviews and approves Information Security Management Plan, risk assessment, and associated information security policies
 - Robust review: SOC-2 audit, DHS/CIA cyber-hygiene review, independent cyber security external evaluation
 - “ERIC has strong data security practices” and identified “no critical findings.”
- ericstates.org/security

Post-Election

- Entry of voting history
- Entry and verification of voters registering on Election Day
- Mailing of postal verification cards
 - Random sampling
 - Providing report listing reasons for returned PVCs
 - Referring potentially ineligible voters for investigation

Timeline: Records Flagged for Investigation

2021-22

Counties identify potentially suspicious voter registrations; referred to county attorney and local law enforcement for investigation

November 2022

Applications received at OSS matching pattern of flagged applications; Photocopied and provided to FBI, originals sent to counties

October 2022

FBI contacts OSS and counties as part of investigation into reports of potentially fraudulent voter registrations

Timeline: Collaboration with Counties, FBI

November 2022

OSS communicates
FBI guidance to keep
applications
separated, handle
with gloves

2022-25

FBI works with county elections officials
and law enforcement;
Collects voter registration applications
and conducts fingerprint analysis;
Works with OSS to gather additional
details supporting federal charges

November 2022

Counties review applications
Some not processed due to
material errors or deficiencies;
Others processed – failed
verification and challenged;
Referred to local and federal
law enforcement

June/July 2025

Charges Filed
Defendants
plead guilty

Actions Taken by OSS

- Coordination with FBI, county election officials
 - Contacted all 87 counties
 - Provided FBI up-to-date information on potentially impacted counties
 - Provided guidance to counties about handling suspicious registrations to maintain potential evidence
- Reviewed voter records and voting history
- Provided additional information over multiple years as the investigation progressed

Actions Taken by Counties

- Reviewed address discrepancies
- Attempted to reach using contact information provided
- Reviewed previous paper voter registration applications for potential issues
- Segregated flagged voter registration applications
- Safe handling of documents to allow for FBI fingerprinting
- Referred suspicious voter registration applications to county attorney's office/local law enforcement/FBI

Outcome

“Today’s guilty plea underscores our commitment to protecting the integrity of the electoral process,” said Acting U.S. Attorney Joseph H. Thompson. “Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of our democracy. Any attempt to undermine that process through fraud will be investigated and prosecuted. This case sends a clear message—election fraud will not be tolerated in Minnesota.”

This case is the result of an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The U.S. Attorney’s Office wishes to thank the Justice Department’s Public Integrity Section for partnering with the U.S. Attorney’s Office on this case. The U.S. Attorney’s Office also wishes to thank the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State and the Carver County Sheriff’s Office for their assistance and full cooperation with this investigation.

The background of the image is the official seal of the State of Minnesota. It features a central illustration of a cardinal perched on a branch, with a five-pointed star above it. The cardinal is facing right. The seal is surrounded by a circular border containing the text "SEAL OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA" and "MNI SÓTAMAKOCE" at the top. The entire seal is set against a dark blue background with a pattern of small white dots.

Questions?