



**Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare**

600 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111

FIELD OPERATIONS MEMO 95-5  
JANUARY 1, 1995

TO: LOCAL OFFICE STAFF

FROM: *Joyce Sampson* JOYCE SAMPSON  
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR FIELD AND ELIGIBILITY OPERATIONS

RE: VOTER REGISTRATION

National Voter Registration Act

State Letter 1048 transmitted policy on the National Voter Registration Act that requires states to provide voter registration services at state and local government agency offices. Voter registration services include:

- (A) Informing applicants and recipients who are (a) U.S. citizens, and (b) age 18 or older, or who will be age 18 on or before the next election, of the availability of Voter Registration Forms (see Attachment A) at each application, redetermination, and when there is a change of address;
- (B) Assisting voter registration applicants in completing a Voter Registration Form unless the voter registration applicant refuses assistance, and
- (C) Accepting completed Voter Registration Forms.

Influencing Voter Registration

Do not:

- (A) seek to influence an applicant's or recipient's political preference or party registration,
- (B) display any political preference or party allegiance,
- (C) make any statement to an applicant or recipient or take any action, the purpose or effect of which is to discourage the applicant or recipient from registering to vote, or
- (D) make any statement to an applicant or recipient or take any action, the purpose or effect of which is to lead the applicant or recipient to believe that a decision to register or not to register has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits.

### Declination Forms

Applicants and/or recipients who are (a) U.S. citizens, and (b) age 18 or older, or who will be age 18 on or before the next election, must be asked to sign the Declination Form (see Attachment B).

Part A of the Declination Form should be checked in the appropriate box by the applicant or recipient to indicate whether he or she:

- (A) would like to register to vote,
- (B) does not want to register to vote, or
- (C) is already registered to vote where he or she currently lives.

The applicant or recipient should sign and date Part A of the Declination Form. An applicant or recipient who refuses to complete and sign the Declination Form will be considered to have decided not to register to vote at this time.

Part A of the Declination Forms must be filed in a designated location in the local welfare office and kept for 22 months. They must be made available to authorized members of a board of registrars or to election commission officers for purposes of monitoring voter registrations and declinations.

Part B does not need to be completed.

Part C of the Declination Form must be given to the applicant or recipient, regardless of whether or not he or she registers to vote.

### Voter Registration Forms

Applicants and recipients who are (a) U.S. citizens, and (b) age 18 or older, or who will be age 18 on or before the next election, who want to register to vote must be given a Voter Registration Form. Assistance must be provided in completing the form unless the applicant or recipient refuses assistance.

When the Voter Registration Form is completed, the original must be given to the director or designee and the copy must be given to the applicant or recipient.

**Note:** Do not use photocopies of the Voter Registration Form. Only an original form may be used.

### Transmitting Completed Voter Registration Forms

The director or designee must ensure that all completed Voter Registration Forms that are submitted to the Department of Public Welfare are transmitted to the appropriate city and town election offices within five days of accepting the completed forms. The list of election offices for the cities and towns is being sent to directors under separate cover.

Mail-ins

An applicant or recipient who is (a) a U.S. citizen, and (b) age 18 or older, or who will be age 18 on or before the next election must be mailed (a) a Mail-In Voter Registration Form (see Attachment C), (b) a Declination Form, and (c) a Multilingual Card, along with any appropriate Department forms whenever he or she applies for assistance by mail, is redetermined or recertified by mail, or notifies the Department of a change of address by mail.

Posters

Violations of Election Laws must be posted in local office reception areas. The director or designee must ensure the posters are displayed.

Forms Supply

The Election Division of the Office of the Secretary of State will send local offices an initial supply of the Voter Registration Forms, Mail-In Voter Registration Forms, and Declination Forms. Additional supplies may be ordered from Schrafft's in the usual manner.

Questions

If you have any questions about the Declination Form or the Voter Registration Form, please call the Elections Division in the Office of the Secretary of State at 1-800-462-8683.

If you have any questions about this memo, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at (617)-348-8478.

To register to vote in Massachusetts you must be: a U.S. citizen, a resident of Massachusetts and at least 18 years old on or before the next election. If you are registering to vote at an agency, the fact that you register or refuse to register to vote will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes and the office at which you register will remain confidential and be used only for voter registration purposes. *Penalty for Illegal Registration:* Fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than five years or both (MGL c56 s8).

# Massachusetts Official Voter Registration Form



Secretary of the Commonwealth

**1 Full name:**  
Miss Ms. Mrs. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ Jr. Sr. II III IV  
*last name first name middle name or initial (circle one if appropriate)*

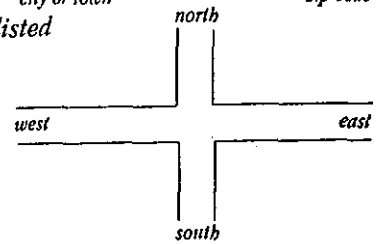
**2 Former name (if applicable):**  
Miss Ms. Mrs. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ Jr. Sr. II III IV  
*last name first name middle name or initial (circle one if appropriate)*

**3 Address where you live now\* (street number, street name, rural route number and box number):**  
\_\_\_\_\_ zip code + 4-digit  
*street number / street name / rural route number and box number apartment number city or town*

**4 Address where you receive all your mail (if different from #3):**  
\_\_\_\_\_ zip code + 4-digit  
*street number / street name / rural route number and box number / post office box apartment number city or town*

**5 Date of birth:**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*month day year*

**6 Telephone (optional):**  Check if unlisted  
( ) -



\*Using landmarks, draw the location of the place where you live if you cannot describe that location as a number and street or as a rural route and box number.

**7 Party enrollment or designation (check one):**  
 Democratic  Republican  Libertarian  No Party (unenrolled)  
 Political Designation (not a political party): \_\_\_\_\_

**8 Address at which you were last registered to vote:**  
\_\_\_\_\_ state zip code + 4-digit  
*street number / street name / rural route number and box number / post office box apartment number city or town*

**9 If the applicant is unable to sign this form, give the name, address and telephone number (optional) of the person helping the applicant:**  
\_\_\_\_\_ telephone number (optional)  
*name address*

**10 I hereby swear (affirm) that I am the person named above, that the above information is true, that I am a citizen of the United States, that I am not a person under a guardianship which prohibits my registering to vote, that I am not temporarily or permanently disqualified by law from voting because of corrupt practices in respect to elections and that I consider this residence to be my home. Signed under the pains and penalties of perjury.**

**11 Today's date:**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*month day year*

**12 Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ AAB  
*Sign your name here.*  
Mail to local election office within 5 days!

# Declination Form



Attachment B  
William Francis Galvin  
Secretary of the Commonwealth

CONFIDENTIAL - NOT A PUBLIC RECORD

## PART A

If you are not registered to vote where you live now and you are eligible to register to vote would you like to apply to register to vote here today?

Yes       No       Already registered where I live now

*(If you are registered to vote where you live now and have not changed your address it is **not** necessary to register to vote again.)*

Please, sign your name here: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 1995

**If you do not check any box, you will be considered to have decided not to register to vote at this time.**

OPTIONAL AGENCY RECORD

## PART B: Use is optional

Registered to vote       Did not register to vote       Already registered where I live now

*For agency use only:*

Agency staff signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 1995

*Tear along this perforated line and give to applicant.*

## PART C / APPLICANT COPY: Please keep this for your personal records.

- Applying to register or declining to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance that you will be provided by this agency.
- If you would like help filling out the voter registration application form, we will help you. The decision whether to seek or accept help is yours. You may fill out the application form in private.

If you believe that someone has interfered with your right to register or to decline to register to vote, your right to privacy in deciding whether to register or in applying to register to vote, or your right to choose your own political party or other political preference, you may file a complaint with the Secretary of the Commonwealth, Elections Division, One Ashburton Place, Room 1705, Boston, MA 02108; telephone 617-727-2828 or toll free 1-800-462-8683.