

NVRA Voter Registration in Colorado

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

VOTER REGISTRATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENS IN COLORADO UNDER THE
NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT



Wayne Williams
Colorado Secretary of State
1700 Broadway, Suite 200
Denver, Colorado 80290
Phone: 303-894-2200
elections@sos.state.co.us

INTRODUCTION

The Colorado Secretary of State's office is responsible for implementing the requirements of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). This report describes the Secretary of State's ongoing implementation and outlines how Colorado will continue to offer voter registration opportunities to all eligible citizens. The report consists of the following sections:

- NVRA Compliance
- Reporting Methods
- Process Improvements
- Outreach Opportunities

COMPLIANCE

NVRA VOTER REGISTRATION

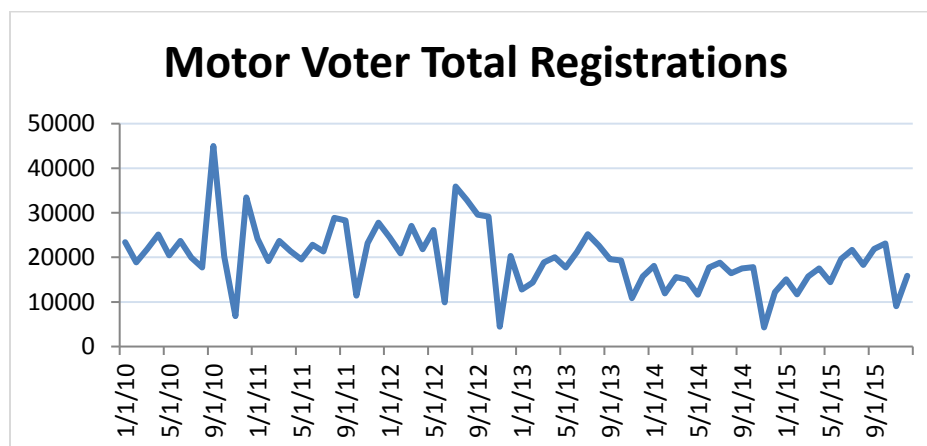
The NVRA requires each state to establish procedures to ensure that a voter registration application is available:

- simultaneously with an application for a driver's license;
- at all offices in the state that provide public assistance; and
- at all offices in the state that administer state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities.

The Secretary of State's office commits to ensuring that every citizen who applies for a driver's license, or requests an eligibility determination for a public benefit, is offered the opportunity to register to vote. This report refers to applications made at a driver's license office as "Motor Voter" transactions, and applications made at a public assistance office, or an office that provides services to persons with disabilities, as "Section 7" transactions.

MOTOR VOTER

In 2015, the majority of Colorado's NVRA voter registration applications—215,413—were Motor Voter transactions. The monthly Motor Voter totals from 2010 through 2015 are shown below.



This data reflects NVRA voter registration transactions initiated via the Colorado Department of Revenue.

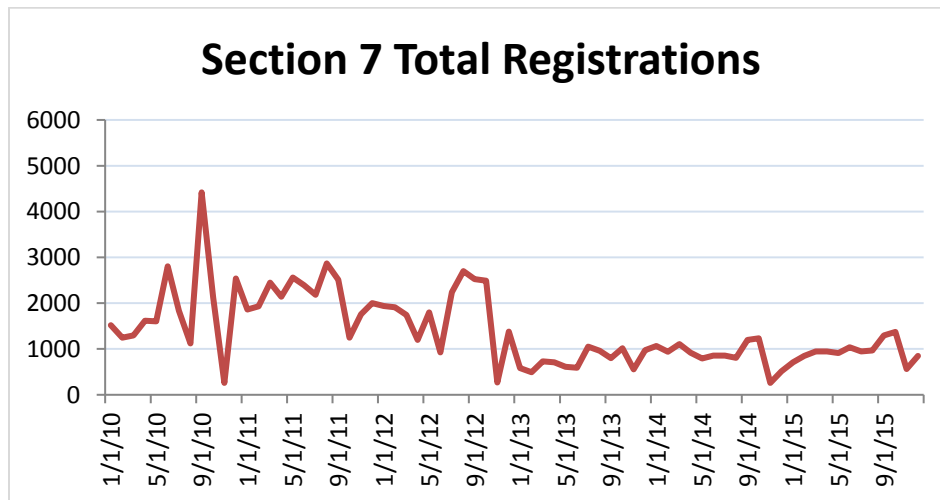
SECTION 7 VOTER REGISTRATION AGENCIES

Section 7 of the NVRA uses the term “Voter Registration Agency” to describe state offices that provide public assistance and services to people with disabilities. Voter Registration Agencies serve a vital role because they provide voter registration opportunities for this segment of the population.

The following are services provided by Voter Registration Agencies—categorized by the state agencies responsible for regulating the services.

- Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF)
 - Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+)
 - Medicaid
- Department of Human Services (DHS)
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE)
 - Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Colleges and Universities
 - Programs for people with disabilities

The Secretary of State’s office provides training to Voter Registration Agencies and surveys the agencies monthly to track their activity. Colorado has over 250 Voter Registration Agencies, which were responsible for 11,407 voter registration applications in 2015. The monthly Section 7 totals from 2010 through 2015 are displayed below.



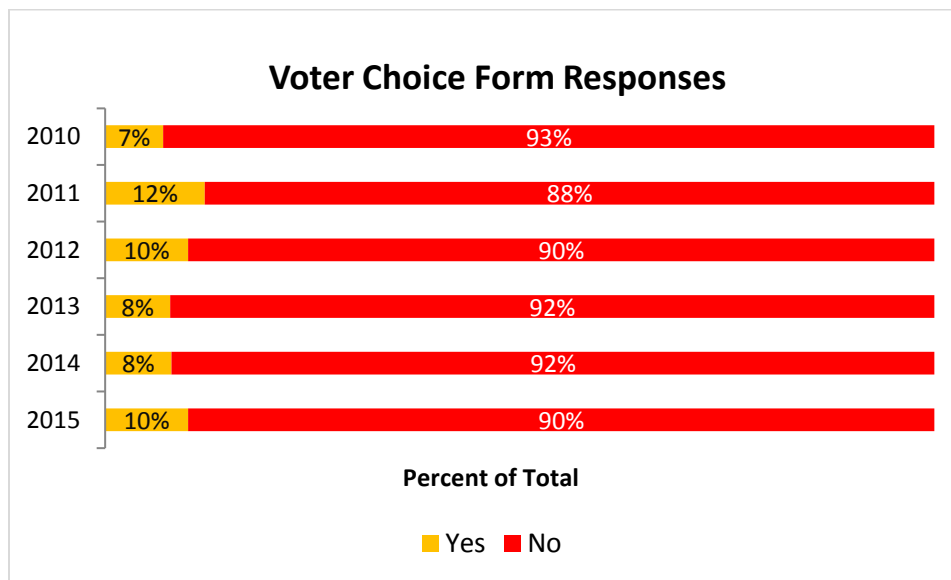
REPORTING METHODS

MOTOR VOTER REPORTING

The Secretary of State's office tracks motor voter registration activity through the statewide voter registration system (SCORE). When an individual registers to vote at a driver's license office, the application is forwarded to the county clerk and recorder. The county clerk and recorder is responsible for registering the individual in SCORE and the registration is tagged with a transaction source indicating that the registration occurred at a driver's license office. The Secretary of State's office runs reports that show the number of registrations by transaction source. The motor voter numbers used in this report were collected from that data.

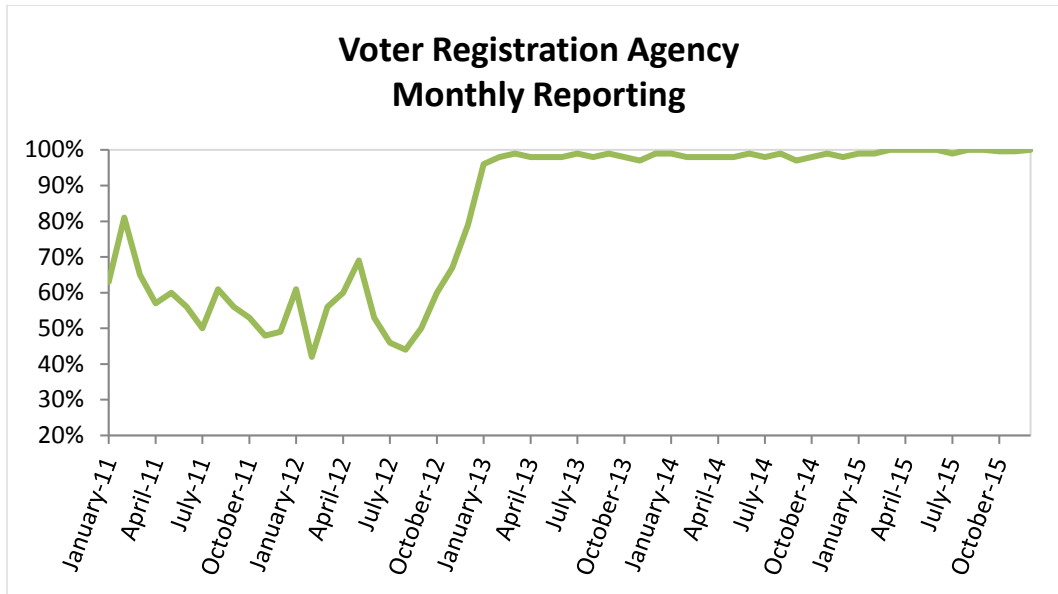
SECTION 7 REPORTING

Before an applicant receives a voter registration application at a Voter Registration Agency, he or she either accepts or declines the opportunity to register to vote by filling out the *Voter Registration Choice Form*. Voter Registration Agencies collect the voter-response data from the *Voter Registration Choice Form* and report it through a monthly survey tool, and the Section 7 agencies track the response. The following chart displays the cumulative percentage for each answer category from 2010 to 2015.



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND REPORTING RESPONSE RATE

2015 reporting compliance held steady at over 99 percent monthly. The following graph shows the Voter Registration Agency reporting rate as a percentage for each month from 2011 to 2015.



OUTREACH STRATEGIES

The Secretary of State's office commits to making voter registration opportunities available to all eligible citizens. Leveraging the partnership between Voter Registration Agencies and the Secretary of State is crucial to compliance. The Secretary of State's office voter registration outreach focuses on building these partnerships with Voter Registration Agencies by identifying covered agencies, training them and communicating with covered agencies to collect data.

IDENTIFICATION

To comply with the NVRA, a state must identify Voter Registration Agencies. The Secretary of State's office recognizes that building relationships with Voter Registration Agencies and state agency personnel overseeing those Voter Registration Agencies is vital to compliance. Each Voter Registration Agency appoints a coordinator responsible for NVRA activities at that office. Although each office has a coordinator, employee turnover is a barrier to maintaining the relationship between the Voter Registration Agency and the Secretary of State's office.

State agencies are very helpful with mitigating the effects of coordinator turnover. The state agencies are now able to quickly identify a replacement coordinator because NVRA coordinator duties are part of the job function for the vacant position. Additionally, state agency personnel that oversee Voter Registration

Agencies serve as liaisons that provide new coordinator contact information and encourage compliance through accountability.

TRAINING

The Secretary of State's office provides an online training class that covers required NVRA activities for Section 7 agencies. Agencies prefer the convenience of the online training. The training resource was enhanced to allow for verification that an individual completed the training. State agency liaisons requested this enhancement so they can hold Voter Registration Agency coordinators accountable for completing NVRA training. 423 individuals completed the online training in 2015.

The Department of Health Care Policy & Financing's Staff Development Center, the primary source of statewide training for HCPF and CDHS public assistance eligibility workers, reached out to our office to collaborate on an NVRA training for the workers that determine public assistance eligibility for CHP+, Medicaid, SNAP and TANF programs. This training will be available on the HCPF website and provide greater exposure to the NVRA requirements at these offices statewide. The training will be launched in 2016.

In addition to the online training, the Secretary of State's office sends a quarterly newsletter called *Registration Connections* to all NVRA coordinators. Registration Connections provides updates and information about NVRA activities and compliance.

SECTION 7 DATA COLLECTION

The Secretary of State's office tracks Section 7 NVRA data through surveys and SCORE.

- The surveys are used to collect the information from the voter choice forms. Each month Voter Registration Agencies receive and return a survey. They are asked to respond by the 15th of each month with data from the month before. The Secretary of State's office continues to incentivize participation through a gift card raffle. Each coordinator who submits a survey by the 15th of the month will be entered into a raffle to win a \$20 gift card.
- 2015 Raffle Winners:

Front Range Community College – Larimer
Evans Clinic
Parkview Medical Center MA
Colorado Mountain College LV
Jefferson County DHS
Denver County DHS
Fraser/Kremmling Clinics
DVR Steamboat Springs
DVR Boulder
Morgan Community College
Stout Street Health Center

Salud Family Health Centers PE – Frederick

- The actual number of voter registration applications from Section 7 activity is tracked in SCORE. Voter registration applications at NVRA agencies are printed on green paper, and county clerk and recorders assign the NVRA transaction source to every green voter registration form that they process.

The online voter registration address for NVRA Section 7 registrations (www.govotecolorado.com/NVRA) continues to be a source for offering voter registration. NVRA Section 7 agencies advertise the site to citizens accessing services. The web address is also provided to those using a computer station at a Voter Registration Agency. The Secretary of State's office and the Department of Human Services worked together to include this web address in the Human Services web-based benefit application service called PEAK, but not without challenges. Specifically at the early stages of implementation the PEAK site underwent significant redevelopment, which resulted in a period of time that hits to the voter registration site went unreported. In 2015, 1,598 applicants visited the online voter registration site by clicking the link on the PEAK site.

The redevelopment of the PEAK site and the development of the PEAK Health mobile app. prompted a review of each for NVRA compliance. The Secretary of State's office, the Department of Human Services, and the Office of Information Technology reviewed the sites, identified compliance issues, and began a business requirements planning for development to the sites with an anticipated roll-out mid 2016.

CONCLUSION

The Secretary of State's office continues to work closely with Voter Registration Agencies and driver's license offices to ensure that Colorado complies with the NVRA. In 2016, the Secretary of State's office will continue efforts to identify all offices in the state that need to comply with the NVRA. The office strives to offer training that is comprehensive and easy to access. And the office will maintain the agency relationships that are responsible for the high reporting and compliance rate from Voter Registration Agencies.