

Voter Registration Efforts by the Kansas Department for Children and Families

- **National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1993**

- Voter Registration Agencies

- “Any office in a covered State that provides either public assistance or state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities must offer voter-registration services.”
- “This includes any of the following federal public assistance programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food-Stamp Program), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program (formerly the Aid to Families with Dependent Children or AFDC program), the Medicaid program, and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).”
- This also includes services for persons with disabilities and state public assistance programs.
- Covered Transactions – When one of these activities occurs, the agency must respond per NVRA requirements.
 - Receipt of benefit application
 - Receipt of review or interim report
 - Notification of change of address or name
- Agency Obligations
 - Distribute voter-registration application forms and provide an information form that contains information on the voter-registration;
 - The voter preference question (“If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to apply to register to vote here today?” Yes No (If you do not check either box, you will be considered to have decided not to register to vote at this time.) is included on the following
 - DCF Application for Public Assistance (TANF, SNAP, Child Care)
 - SUN Bucks Application
 - LIEAP Application
 - KEES Self-Service Portal
 - Interim Report Form
 - Voter preference question response
 - If the question is answered “Yes”, DCF must provide the individual a voter registration form.
 - If the question is answered “No”, DCF takes no action.
 - If the question is left blank, DCF must provide the individual a voter registration form.

*Following the voter preference question is the statement, “If you do not check either box, you will be considered to have decided not to register to vote at this time.” This statement appears to be in direct conflict with our required action if the question is left blank. However, per a judicial ruling, an individual leaving the response blank may not wish to register at this time but may want to register at a later date. Because that possibility, DCF is required to mail the individual a voter registration application.

- provide the same level of assistance to all applicants in completing voter-registration application forms as is provided with respect to every other service or application for benefits (unless the applicant specifically refuses such assistance);

- DCF staff must assist any individual not receiving benefits through DCF requesting voter registration material or assistance in the completion and/or submission of a voter registration application.
- Assistance can include the following
 - Checking to make sure all required fields on the voter registration application are completed
 - Asking the individual about voter registration if the client leaves the preference question blank
 - Checking for a signature
 - Answering basic eligibility questions
 - Contacting the regional voter registration coordinator for assistance with complex questions
 - Providing contact information for the Secretary of State or appropriate county election office
 - Relating registration deadlines
 - Providing language assistance if needed
 - accept completed voter-registration forms from applicants; and
 - transmit each completed voter-registration application to the appropriate county election official within a prescribed time frame.
 - The mailing address for every county election office is printed on the back of the voter registration application. Each DCF office has a procedure to mail completed applications to the appropriate county office.
- DCF staff must not
 - influence the applicant's political preference or party registration
 - display any political preference or party allegiance
 - discourage the applicant from registering to vote (either by word or action)
 - lead the applicant to believe that registering or not registering will affect the availability of services or benefits

KEESM 1731 - Voter Registration – The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 requires voter registration to be available in public assistance offices. The Act also requires that anyone applying for or receiving public assistance, including TANF, Food Assistance, Child Care, Summer EBT and LIEAP, be offered the opportunity to register to vote at the time of initial application, each eligibility review, and each report of a change of address.

Each individual must be informed of this registration service and offered the same level of assistance in completing the voter registration [application](#) or declining the registration activity as the agency provides in completing our benefits applications or other processes. The requirement to provide “equal assistance” in filling out voter registration materials means that staff must understand and be able to answer questions about Kansas’ voting eligibility requirements and must offer assistance in completing a voter registration application.

Application, review, and reporting documents offer everyone the opportunity to register to vote or to decline to register, by answering the “voter preference question.” If an individual does not complete this page of the application, it is considered a declination of voter registration at that time. Completion of the voter registration page of the ES-3100 is not a condition of eligibility for assistance and has no bearing on case processing or eligibility.

The agency is required by law to provide voter registration applications to clients unless they decline in writing. This means that if the individual does not indicate a choice regarding the “voter preference question” on this page (leaving it blank), the agency must provide the individual with a voter registration application.

Those applying on-line are offered the opportunity to link to the State’s voter registration site or to have a voter registration application mailed to them.

DCF staff taking a report of a change of address or name change by telephone or in person should inform the individual that a change of address or name requires new voter registration and DCF staff should ask the individual if they wish to register to vote. Change of address forms developed by local offices must include the same voter registration and declination preference language as is included in application, review, and reporting documents and local staff must react to a “blank” response to the “voter preference question” by providing or mailing the voter registration application. All those who answer "yes" are to be handed or mailed a voter registration application. The individual’s response to the offer to register to vote is to be recorded on a voter preference form.

During in-person transaction, the clients or applicants should complete the voter preference form themselves. During telephone transactions, DCF staff should record the response on the voter preference form. Local offices must keep all voter preference forms for at least two years. See [Web Links](#) for a copy of the Voter Registration Application. (Information on eligibility requirements will be provided to staff and further questions about voter registration can be directed to the Secretary of State’s office at 1-800-262-VOTE (8683).) DCF is also responsible for ensuring that any voter registration applications returned by clients to agency staff or offices are transmitted to the appropriate local county elections officials within five days of receipt.