Early Voting FAQs for Registrars of Voters and Town Clerks

Office of the Secretary of the State of Connecticut
Legislation and Election Administration Division

March 22, 2024

Early Voting Locations

1. **Can my town establish more than one early voting location?**

    Municipalities with a population of 20,000 or more may designate one or more additional early voting locations. While additional locations are optional, municipalities meeting the population threshold must make the determination and report that information to the Secretary of the State. Additional locations may be designated in one of two ways. First, the legislative body may hold a public hearing on designating additional early voting locations. Second, the legislative body may make the determination on its own.

2. **Must early voting locations have an IVS System (or a replacement system)?**

    Yes, an early voting location must have an IVS System or a replacement system.

3. **When must tabulator testing take place?**

    Tabulator testing must take place no more than 10 days before the election or primary. This is not altered for early voting since tabulators are not used during the early voting period.

Early Voting Plans

4. **What is the deadline for certifying and finalizing our early voting plan?**

    Registrars of voters must certify the early voting location in writing to the Secretary of the State at least 120 days before an election or primary and finalize the location at least 31 days prior. Registrars must certify the location at least 20 days before the presidential preference primary (PPP) or a special election and finalize it at least 11 days prior.

    As part of this written certification, registrars must submit a plan for effectively conducting early voting. For the April 2nd PPP, we ask that you submit your plan as soon as possible.

5. **To whom do I submit my early voting plan?**

    Send your early voting plan to your assigned Elections Officer (EO) for review and copy Laura Thompson (thompson.l.laura@ct.gov).

EOs are assigned as follows:

- Congressional District 1: Moriah Moriarty, moriah.moriarty@ct.gov

- Congressional District 2: Mark Severance, mark.severance@ct.gov

- Congressional District 3: Lori Magora, lori.magora@ct.gov

- Congressional Districts 4: Tim De Carlo, timothy.decarlo@ct.gov

- Congressional Districts 5: Heather Augeri, heather.augeri@ct.gov

Materials

6. Will the state provide towns with early voting envelopes?

Yes, we are printing early voting envelopes.

7. May we order 8.5x11 envelopes to avoid folded ballots? If so, where do we get the language for what to print on the envelope?

Yes, you can order your own 8.5x11 envelopes. If you do this, you must cover the costs. We will send you the language.

Registration and Enrollment Before a Primary

8. What is the deadline for new voters to register and enroll and then vote during early voting before a primary?

Individuals who are not registered but want to register and enroll in a political party, and then vote during early voting before a primary, may do so if their voter registration application is filed with the registrars of voters by noon on the business day immediately before the day when they want to vote.

9. What is the deadline for unaffiliated voters to enroll and then vote during early voting before a primary?

Unaffiliated voters who want to vote during the early voting period before a primary may do so if their enrollment application is filed with the registrars of voters by noon on the business day immediately before the day when early voting begins.

10. May someone register during the early voting period and then immediately go to the town clerk's office to request an absentee ballot, and then vote by absentee ballot?

A new voter who registers in person during the early voting period is eligible to fill out an absentee ballot application once their registration has been processed and entered into CVRS by the registrars.

Same-Day Registration (SDR)

11. When must we make same-day registration (SDR) available?

SDR applies only to regular general elections. It must be available (1) during the early voting period and (2) on Election Day.

12. Does SDR apply to primaries?

No, SDR does not apply to primaries. It applies only to regular general elections. However, the law does provide an opportunity for unaffiliated voters to enroll, and unregistered people to register and enroll, and then later vote during the early voting period before a primary.

13. May moderators or other election or primary officials register voters during SDR?

Under the early voting law, registrars may delegate to appointed election or primary officials any of the responsibilities assigned to the registrars of voters. Thus, moderators or other election or primary officials may register voters during SDR.

Primary and Election Officials

14. Where can I find early voting training information?

In addition to this document and the Early Voting Handbook, the following resources are available:

1) EMS Training: [Webinars for Election Officials](#)
2) UConn ROV Training Registrar of Voters Training Program (ROV) | School of Public Policy (uconn.edu)
3) Early Voting User Guide for CVRS (emailed on March 12)
4) Online learning management system moderators and poll workers

To access the online learning management training, you will need to create user account files for each person who plans to take it. Please fill out the user file template emailed to you on March 14 as soon as you can and return it to Lori Magora at lori.magora@ct.gov.

Include the following required information for each person who should have access to the training:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Username (This must be unique for each person. We do not recommend using the first letter of a first name and last name, as you may run into a "Beth Smith" and a "Bob Smith," both of which would be "bsmith.")
- Password
- Group (For example, this will be either **Andover Staff** for administrators (e.g., registrars) or **Andover Poll Worker** for moderators and poll workers. The group names must be spelled and capitalized in this way for the upload to LMS and account creation to be successful.);
- Email (This is not mandatory but recommended. LMS does have an automatic email notification feature that can be turned on. When an account is created in the LMS with an email address, the system can email the person with the URL to the training site, along with their login credentials.)

15. What is the suggested staffing for early voting locations?

Parts 5 and 6 of the Model Plan in the Early Voting Handbook describe the minimum and suggested staffing. In addition, the early voting report for Connecticut by the Center for Election Innovation and Research describes other states' experiences in terms of the percentage of voters who vote early (see pages 19-21 of the report).

The total number of staff used is at the discretion of the local election official, and you are not required to have a full complement of poll workers. However, sufficient staffing is necessary at the early voting location to (1) verify voters, (2) ensure voters receive the correct ballot and an envelope, and (3) collect voted ballots and check to confirm that the voter has signed the early voting envelope.

16. May a town clerk serve as moderator during early voting?

Yes, a town clerk may serve as moderator during early voting, provided they (1) are still able to accomplish their statutory duties and (2) are not a candidate on the ballot.

17. May a town clerk register voters?

Yes, by law, the town clerk is an admitting official.

18. May a registrar of voters serve as moderator during early voting?

A registrar of voters may not serve as a moderator during early voting. However, if the registrars agree, a deputy or assistant registrar may serve as a moderator.

19. If the town clerk is not available to handle the daily affidavit of early voting ballot delivery, may someone from the town clerk's office fill in? (Please note: this question assumes that at the end of the early voting day, registrars of voters transport the receptacles containing the day's early voting ballots to the municipal clerk for storage.)

Please take note of C.G.S. Sec. 7-19, which states the following: "Each town clerk may, unless otherwise provided by charter or ordinance, appoint assistant town clerks, who, having taken the oath provided for town clerks, shall, in the absence or inability of the town clerk, have all the powers and perform all the duties of the town clerk." Please also note C.G.S. Sec. 7-20, which states the following: "When any town clerk is unable to discharge the duties of his office and has omitted or is unable to appoint an assistant town clerk, the selectmen may appoint one, who, having been sworn, shall act as town clerk during such inability or until the next town election."

We suggest that you contact your town attorney for more specific guidance.

20. Will we need to allow for unofficial checkers during early voting?

No, the law authorizing unofficial checkers, C.G.S. Sec. 9-235, applies only to the day of the election. It does not apply to the early voting period.

21. During early voting, may registration happen at the early voting location, or must it be done in the registrars' office?

For regular general elections when SDR must be available, the law requires registrars to conduct registration at the early voting location. For primaries and special elections, registrars may conduct registration at the early voting location or in their office. In the case of the former, registrars should post ample signage directing prospective registrants to the early voting location.

22. Must registrars be in their office during the early voting period, both before a general election and before a primary?

The law does not require that the registrars' office be open during all early voting hours. However, it is important to be mindful that options for registration should be kept accessible to people at times that are consistent with new early voting timelines.

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23. Does each election official need a unique username and password for CVRS?

Yes, but you can use generic usernames like guest1, guest2, etc. as you have done in the past so long as the username and password are not shared with another user during the early voting period or election/primary day.

24. How do I add users in CVRS?

Log on to CVRS under your SSVR account. Select "Maintain User" then "Add User" and create the account. You must do this before the start of early voting.

Early Voting Process

25. How will we show on the official voter registry list that a person has voted early?

The system will allow election officials to put an "EV" next to a voter's name indicating that they voted early. In addition, registrars should use the paper registry list, cross off the person's name, and put an "EV" and the date next to it.

26. In terms of the paper registry list, should we use the same one for the duration of early voting, or print a new one each day?

The paper registry list will serve as a shadow system and security measure. Registrars should maintain the same list for the duration of the early voting period and manually put an "EV" and the date next to a voter's name. Registrars should print a supplemental list after early voting to use for the day of the primary or election.

27. If a voter has been issued an absentee ballot and wishes to vote early, what must they do?

The voter must go to the town clerk and request that their absentee ballot be pulled. The clerk will void the absentee ballot in CVRS and issue the voter an affidavit, which they should present to the moderator at the early voting location and be allowed to vote. If the voter has not done this, CVRS will have a pop-up that prevents the registrar from issuing the early voting ballot to the voter.

28. How will I know if the voter has been issued an absentee ballot?

There is a pop-up in CVRS that prevents you from issuing the early voting ballot.

29. Can a voter leave with an early voting ballot?

Voters should not leave the early voting location with their ballot. We recommend stationing a ballot tender near the area where the ballots are returned to prevent this. The ballot tender should scan in the ballots or perform the required update to the voter record.

30. Is there a recommended scanner to use?

Yes, we are recommending that you use the Wasp WDI4200 2D USB Barcode Scanner.

31. What if we are not using a label?

If you are not using a label on the early voting envelope, then an election official with good penmanship should write the voter's name, street number, street name, town, and zip code. We recommend that you also write the voter ID on the envelope. The voter must sign the envelope.

32. What happens if the voter does not sign the envelope?

If the voter has not signed the early voting envelope, it will be rejected. Election officials receiving the ballots should make a good faith effort to ensure the voter has signed the envelope upon accepting it.

33. Why do we need to have the voter ID on the early voting envelope?

We recommend having the voter ID on the early voting envelopes so that you can pull up the voter record expeditiously.

34. What happens if the voter spoils the EV ballot and wants a new ballot?

The procedure for a spoiled ballot on Election Day should be applied. The issued ballot should be marked as returned in CVRS with a note entered that the ballot had been spoiled. The voter should then be issued a duplicate ballot.

35. Is there a separate early voting head moderator's return?

No, there is not a separate head moderator return for early voting. EMS is used only on the night of the election or primary. The Head Moderator's return has been updated in EMS to include early voting. You should not enter anything in EMS during the early voting period. The head moderator should not log in to EMS to create a return in advance of the primary or election—this will cause an error.

Chain of Custody and Ballot Storage

36. What is your recommendation for storing early voting ballots during the early voting period?

At the end of each day of early voting, registrars of voters must transport the receptacles containing the day's early voting ballots, and SDR ballots in the case of a general election, to

the municipal clerk who must secure and store them in a manner as similar as possible to the security and storage of absentee ballots.

If this type of storage is not practical, the registrars must prepare an alternate plan and submit it to the Secretary of the State for approval. At a minimum, the registrars must store the ballots under lock-and-key in a tamper-proof, fire-proof receptacle pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 7-27. The receptacle must be locked in a secure room that is not generally accessible.

Because the number of ballots will vary from town to town, we recommend that the registrars and town clerk work together to determine the appropriate storage containers and location.

37. Must early voting ballots be kept separately for each day of the early voting period?

Yes.

38. Can we use the side slot of a tabulator as the ballot receptacle for EV at the PPP if the top of the tabulator is covered and the unit is not plugged in?

Yes.

Voted Ballots

39. If someone votes during the early voting period but then dies, is the vote counted?

Yes, the vote is counted because an early voting ballot is considered "voted" when it is completed. This is different than the requirement for absentee ballots under which the ballot must be pulled and is not counted.

40. May a voter pull their early voting ballot in the same way they can pull their absentee ballot and then vote in person on Election Day?

No. As stated above, an early voting ballot is considered "voted" when it is completed.

Reporting Results

41. At a general election, will we report results by in-person, early voting, absentee, SDR, and unknown votes?

Yes, you will report the results for each type of ballot. EMS and the new TotalVote system both have individual columns for each ballot type.