

Department of Health and Social Services

DHSS Policy Memorandum 25

August 5, 2002

Subject: Voter Registration for Individuals with Disabilities

I. POLICY STATEMENT—PHILOSOPHY

It is the policy of the Department of Health & Social Services (DHSS) to ensure that all divisions that provide public assistance and/or federally funded programs engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities promote the fundamental right to vote as detailed in the National Voter Registration Act of 1993.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all eligible Delaware citizens with disabilities and/or those whom receive public assistance services from DHSS are provided the opportunity to register to vote, and to establish procedures that will increase the number of eligible citizens who register to vote in elections for local, state and federal offices.

III. SCOPE

This policy applies, but is not limited to, all divisions that receive federal funds in order to provide services to individuals with disabilities or those who receive public assistance.

IV. PROCEDURE

The Division will ensure that the procedures set forth within this policy memorandum are incorporated within the Division's version on this subject. The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 should also be used as a guide. However, this guide is not intended to narrow the scope of the Division's policy.

Whether at a Division location or in a client's home, the following voter registration services shall be made available:

- a. Provide voter registration forms
- b. Assist the applicants in completing voter registration application form, unless the applicant refuses such assistance.
- c. Accept a completed voter registration application form for transmittal to the appropriate state election official. When mailing the voter registration application, the form must also include a statement that:

- i. specifies each requirement (including citizenship);
- ii. contains an attestation that the applicant meets each such requirement; and
- iii. requires the signature of the applicant under penalty of perjury.

The employee carrying out voter registration responsibilities shall not:

- d. Seek to influence an applicant's political reference or party registration;
- e. Display any such political preference or party allegiance;
- f. Make any statement to an applicant or take any action the purpose or effect of which is to discourage the applicant from registering to vote; or
- g. Make any statement to an applicant or take any action the purpose or effect of which is to lead the applicant to believe that a decision to register or not to register has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits.

V. EFFECT

It will be each affected Division's responsibility to develop policy that conforms to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. Written policies must be in place no later than 90 days from the date of this policy memorandum. The Division will submit its final draft to the Office of the Secretary, Chief Policy Advisor, within the designated time.

This Department Policy supersedes all other policies, directives, or rules related to the subject.

Vincent P. Meconi August 5, 2005

Vincent P. Meconi, Secretary