

1411

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

(PREFILED)

January 7, 2009

Introduced by M. of A. WRIGHT, GABRYSZAK, CARROZZA -- Multi-Sponsored by
-- M. of A. PHEFFER, REILLY, SCHIMEL, ZEBROWSKI -- read once and
referred to the Committee on Election Law

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to absentee ballots for
patients or inmates of Veteran Administration medical facilities

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEM-
BLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Section 8-404 of the election law, the opening paragraph of
2 subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 359 of the laws of 1989 and para-
3 graph (b) of subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 373 of the laws of
4 1978, is amended to read as follows:
5 S 8-404. Absentee voting; hospitalized veterans, special provisions.
6 1. UNITED STATES VETERANS' (V.A.) MEDICAL FACILITIES USUALLY ARE CLASSI-
7 FIED AS MEDICAL CENTERS FOR ACUTE-CARE FACILITIES AND AS EXTENDED CARE
8 CENTERS FOR LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES. After entering upon the registra-
9 tion records, the application for registration of an inmate or patient
10 of a [veterans' administration hospital] V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTER as to
11 whom the medical superintendent or medical head of such hospital has
12 attested that he OR SHE expects that he OR SHE will not be discharged
13 prior to the day following the next general or special village, primary,
14 special, general or New York city community school board district or
15 city of Buffalo school district election, and the application for regis-
16 tration by the spouse, parent or child of such inmate or patient, accom-
17 panying or being with him or her, if a qualified voter and a resident of
18 the same election district, the board of elections, without further
19 investigation and without further application by the applicant, shall
20 send to him at such hospital an absentee ballot and shall record in the
21 signature column on the back of his OR HER permanent personal registra-
22 tion poll record that such ballot has been sent.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 (a) Any voter who is duly registered and whose registration records
2 are marked "Hospitalized Veteran" or "Hospitalized Veteran's Relative"
3 need not thereafter make application for an absentee ballot. Sixty days
4 before each election, the board of elections shall compile and send a
5 list to each [veterans' administration hospital] V.A. EXTENDED CARE
6 CENTER of all inmates and patients of [veterans' administration hospi-
7 tals] V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTERS who appear by the records of such board
8 to be "hospitalized veterans" entitled to receive absentee ballots at
9 each such [hospital] V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTER pursuant to the
10 provisions of this section. Each [veterans' administration hospital]
11 V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTER shall no later than fifteen days following the
12 receipt of such list, return it with notations made thereon showing
13 whether the inmate or patient continues to be confined therein or has
14 been discharged therefrom. Upon the receipt of such returned list from
15 each [veterans' administration hospital] V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTER with
16 the proper notations showing that a "hospitalized veteran" continues to
17 be confined in such [hospital] V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTER, the board of
18 elections, by mail addressed to such "hospitalized veteran" at his OR
19 HER last known [hospital] V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTER address and by mail
20 addressed to such "hospitalized veteran's relative" at his OR HER last
21 known address shall send an absentee ballot for the ensuing election to
22 such "hospitalized veteran" and such "hospitalized veteran's relative"
23 an absentee ballot in the same manner as provided herein for a qualified
24 voter entitled to an absentee ballot because of permanent disability.
25 The board shall record on the back of his OR HER registration poll
26 record in the space reserved for his OR HER signature at such election,
27 the fact that such ballot has been sent.

28 (b) If the returned list from a [veterans' administration hospital]
29 V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTER contains a notation showing that a "hospital-
30 ized veteran" is no longer an inmate or patient at the [veterans' admin-
31 istration hospital] V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTER where he OR SHE is
32 recorded as staying, or if such letter containing an absentee voter's
33 ballot for a "hospitalized veteran" or a "hospitalized veterans' rela-
34 tive" is returned by the post office as undeliverable, the board of
35 elections shall ascertain whether the "hospitalized veteran" or "hospi-
36 talized veteran's relative" is residing at the address given on his OR
37 HER registration records as his OR HER permanent address. If he OR SHE
38 is residing there, the board shall not send him OR HER any further
39 absentee ballots unless he OR SHE applies therefor in the regular way.
40 If he OR SHE is not residing at the place of residence given on his OR
41 HER registration records but the board ascertains that he OR SHE has
42 been transferred to another [veterans' administration hospital] V.A.
43 EXTENDED CARE CENTER, the board shall cause a central board of registra-
44 tion to make the necessary changes of temporary address on his OR HER
45 registration records and shall continue sending him OR HER absentee
46 ballots at the [veterans' administration hospital] V.A. EXTENDED CARE
47 CENTER where he OR SHE is staying. If he OR SHE is not residing at the
48 place of residence given on his OR HER registration records and the
49 board cannot ascertain that he OR SHE has been transferred to another
50 [veterans' administration hospital] V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTER, the board
51 shall cancel his OR HER registration. Whenever a registration is
52 cancelled pursuant hereto notice shall be mailed to the veteran or his
53 OR HER relative at his OR HER permanent residence address and last
54 temporary address.

55 2. The board of elections shall furnish to each party county chairman
56 in such county a list of the names and residence addresses of the hospi-

1 talized veterans and hospitalized veterans' relatives to whom absentee
2 ballots have been sent.

3 3. Such ballots shall be mailed, voted, returned, counted, and
4 canvassed as provided in this chapter for other absentee voters'
5 ballots.

6 4. ONE DAY PRIOR TO A GENERAL OR SPECIAL VILLAGE, PRIMARY, SPECIAL,
7 GENERAL OR NEW YORK CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICT OR CITY OF
8 BUFFALO SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION; THE PATIENTS AND INMATES OF V.A.
9 MEDICAL CENTERS AND V.A. EXTENDED CARE CENTERS WILL BE CANVASSED BY THE
10 LOCAL BOARD OF ELECTIONS TO IDENTIFY QUALIFIED VOTERS NOT REGISTERED TO
11 RECEIVE ABSENTEE BALLOTS WHO ARE REQUESTING EMERGENCY AFFIDAVIT BALLOTS
12 FOR THE ELECTION DISTRICTS IN WHICH THEY RESIDE. ON ELECTION DAY THE
13 LOCAL BOARD OF ELECTIONS SHALL DISTRIBUTE THOSE EMERGENCY AFFIDAVIT
14 BALLOTS TO THE PATIENTS AND INMATES OF THE V.A. MEDICAL CENTERS AND V.A.
15 EXTENDED CARE CENTERS WHO ARE QUALIFIED VOTERS, WHO HAVE NOT REGISTERED
16 FOR ABSENTEE BALLOTS AND WHO HAVE REQUESTED EMERGENCY AFFIDAVIT BALLOTS.
17 THE LOCAL BOARD OF ELECTIONS ON ELECTION DAY SHALL COLLECT THE EMERGENCY
18 AFFIDAVIT BALLOTS FROM SUCH PATIENTS.

19 S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.