

STATE OF NEW YORK

5993

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 4, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. JACKSON -- read once and referred to the Committee on Election Law

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to voting rights expansion, voter registration on election day, expansion of the use of and requirements for absentee voting, creation of a real-time state-wide voter registration database, special ballots for election employees, voter affidavits; and to repeal certain provisions of such law relating thereto

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The election law is amended by adding two new sections
2 5-217 and 5-217-a to read as follows:

3 § 5-217. Registering at the polling place; election day registration.

4 1. The provisions of this section and section 5-217-a of this title
5 shall be used as an additional procedure for voter registration. For
6 the purposes of this section and section 5-217-a of this title, the term
7 "election day" shall refer to state primary and to state general
8 elections, to all town, city, school district, and village district
9 elections, and to all elections where persons may vote by absentee
10 ballot. A person registering to vote on election day shall do so in
11 accordance with the provisions of this section and all other applicable
12 law including, but not limited to completion of a voter registration
13 form as provided for in section 5-210 of this title. The provisions of
14 this section and those of 5-217-a of this title shall apply notwith-
15 standing any provisions of law to the contrary.

16 2. Any person whose name is not on the checklist but who is otherwise
17 a qualified voter shall be entitled to vote by requesting to be regis-
18 tered to vote at the polling place on election date. The voter may then
19 vote in such election. The applicant shall be required to produce appro-
20 priate proof of qualifications as provided in this chapter.

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

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1 3. Any person who is waiting to register to vote at the polling place
2 on election day at the time scheduled for the closing of the polls shall
3 be allowed to vote if determined to be qualified to register.

4 § 5-217-a. Effect of registration on election day. Any person who
5 registers to vote on election day according to the provisions of section
6 5-217 of this title shall be registered to vote at all subsequent town,
7 state, and federal elections.

8 § 2. Section 8-400 of the election law is REPEALED and a new section
9 8-400 is added to read as follows:

10 § 8-400. Absentee voting. 1. A qualified voter may vote as an absentee
11 voter under this chapter if, on the occurrence of any village election
12 conducted by the board of elections, primary election, special election,
13 general election or New York city community school board district or
14 city of Buffalo school district election, if he or she elects to do
15 such. Any reference to "board of elections" in the remaining provisions
16 of this section means only the board of elections of the county or city
17 in which the absentee voter is a qualified voter.

18 2. The board of elections for all counties or cities shall mail an
19 absentee ballot to every registered and qualified voter residing in such
20 county or city. Such absentee ballot shall be mailed to every registered
21 and qualified voter at the address given on his or her registration
22 records no later than thirty days before the scheduled election is to be
23 held.

24 3. In the case of a primary election, the board shall deliver only the
25 ballot of the party in which the records of the board of elections show
26 the absentee voter to be enrolled. In the event a primary election is
27 uncontested in the absentee voters election district for all offices or
28 positions except the party position of member of the ward, town, city or
29 county committee, no ballot shall be delivered to such absentee voter
30 for such election; and the absentee voter shall be advised why he or she
31 is not being sent a ballot.

32 4. If a person voting by absentee ballot is unable to sign his or her
33 signature because of illness, physical disability or inability to read,
34 he or she shall be excused from signing upon making a statement, in
35 substantially the following form, which shall be witnessed by one
36 person:

37 "I hereby state that I am unable to sign my absentee ballot without
38 assistance because I am unable to write by reason of my illness or phys-
39 ical disability or because I am unable to read. I have made, or have
40 received assistance in making, my mark in lieu of my signature."

41 (Date).....

42(Mark)

43(Name of Voter)

44 "I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the above named voter affixed
45 his or her mark to this application in my presence and I know him or her
46 to be the person who affixed his or her mark to said application and
47 understand that this statement will be accepted for all purposes as the
48 equivalent of an affidavit and if it contains a material false state-
49 ment, shall subject me to the same penalties as if I had been duly
50 sworn."

51

52 (Signature of Witness)

1 _____
2 (Address of Witness)

3 Such statement shall be included in the absentee ballot furnished by
4 the board of elections. The provisions of this subdivision shall also
5 apply to any application for an absentee ballot pursuant to section
6 8-402 of this title.

7 5. The board shall keep a record of all absentee ballots that are
8 mailed, showing the names and residences of the absentee voters, and
9 their party enrollment in the case of primary elections, and, as soon as
10 practicable shall, when requested, give to the chairman of each poli-
11 tical party or independent body in the county, and shall make available
12 for inspection to any other qualified voter upon request, a complete
13 list of all absentee voters to whom ballots have been delivered or
14 mailed, containing their names and places of residence as they appear on
15 the registration record, including the election district and ward, if
16 any, and in the city of New York and the county of Nassau, the assembly
17 district, and their party enrollment in the case of primary elections.

18 § 3. Section 8-402 of the election law is REPEALED and a new section
19 8-402 is added to read as follows:

20 § 8-402. Applications for absentee ballots. 1. Any voter, upon appli-
21 cation, may request that their absentee ballot be mailed to them at an
22 address other than their permanent address, if he or she expects to be
23 absent from the county or city of residence and unable to obtain their
24 absentee ballot.

25 (a) Application forms shall be furnished by and may be obtained from
26 any board of elections at any time until the day before such election.
27 Application forms shall also be supplied by the board of inspectors of
28 the election district in which applicant is a qualified voter on all of
29 the days provided for local registration. In addition, application forms
30 shall be supplied upon the request of the person authorized to vote
31 pursuant to this section, any such person's spouse, parent or child, a
32 person residing with the applicant as a member of his household, or the
33 applicant's duly authorized agent. Application forms sent outside of the
34 United States to a country other than Canada or Mexico, shall be sent
35 air mail.

36 (b) The application for an absentee ballot when filed must contain in
37 each instance the following information:

38 (i) Applicant's full name, date of birth, and residence address,
39 including the street and number, if any, rural delivery route, if any,
40 mailing address if different from the residence address and his or her
41 town or city and an address to which the ballot shall be mailed.

42 (ii) A statement that the applicant is a qualified and registered
43 voter.

44 (iii) A statement that the applicant expects in good faith to be
45 absent from the county or city of his or her residence provided, howev-
46 er, if the applicant expects to be absent from such county or city for a
47 duration covering more than one election and seeks an absentee ballot
48 for each election, he or she shall state the dates when he or she
49 expects to begin and end such absence.

50 2. The application for an absentee ballot shall contain the following
51 language printed in bold face directly above the signature line: "I
52 CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION IN THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT AND
53 UNDERSTAND THAT THIS APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR ALL PURPOSES AS
54 THE EQUIVALENT OF AN AFFIDAVIT AND, IF IT CONTAINS A MATERIAL FALSE
55 STATEMENT, SHALL SUBJECT ME TO THE SAME PENALTIES AS IF I HAD BEEN DULY

1 SWORN." Such application shall be accepted for all proposes as the
2 equivalent of an affidavit and if it contains a material false statement
3 shall subject the person signing it to the same penalties as if he or
4 she had been duly sworn.

5 3. For purposes of this section, the use of titles, initials or
6 customary abbreviations of given names by the signers of, or witnesses
7 to, an absentee ballot request letter, an absentee ballot application
8 form or an absentee ballot envelope, or the use of customary abbrevi-
9 ations of addresses of such signers or witnesses, shall not invalidate
10 such voter's signature or witness's signature on an application for an
11 absentee ballot or upon canvass or recanvass of the ballot pursuant to
12 this chapter.

13 4. Printed forms of applications for absentee ballots in accordance
14 with the requirements of this section shall be provided by the board of
15 elections. An appropriate number shall be retained by the board of
16 elections for the purpose of furnishing an application form to each
17 qualified voter who applies therefor before the board of elections,
18 either in person or by mail, and an appropriate number shall be deliv-
19 ered to each board of inspectors on registration days with the election
20 supplies, and the board of inspectors shall retain the completed and
21 unused applications and return them to the board of elections with their
22 election supplies and an appropriate number shall be available for
23 distribution to officers of political parties, county clerks, city, town
24 and village clerks, colleges, libraries, hospitals, nursing homes,
25 senior citizens centers and any other convenient distribution source
26 which is approved by the local or state board of elections and which
27 requests such forms.

28 5. The state board of elections shall prescribe a standard application
29 form for use under this section. The use of any application form which
30 substantially complies with the provisions of this section shall be
31 acceptable and any application filed on such a form shall be accepted
32 for filing.

33 6. If the board shall find that the applicant is a qualified voter of
34 the election district containing his or her residence as stated in his
35 or her statement and that his or her statement is sufficient, it shall,
36 as soon as practicable after it shall have determined his or her right
37 thereto, mail to him or her at an address designated by him or her, or
38 deliver to him or her, or to any person designated for such purpose in
39 writing by him or her, at the office of the board, such an absentee
40 voter's ballot or set of ballots and an envelope therefor. If the ballot
41 or ballots are to be sent outside of the United States to a country
42 other than Canada or Mexico, such ballot or ballots shall be sent by air
43 mail. However, if an applicant who is eligible for an absentee ballot is
44 a resident of a facility operated or licensed by, or under the jurisdic-
45 tion of, the department of mental hygiene, or a resident of a facility
46 defined as a nursing home or residential health care facility pursuant
47 to subdivisions two and three of section two thousand eight hundred one
48 of the public health law, or a resident of a hospital or other facility
49 operated by the Veteran's Administration of the United States, such
50 absentee ballot need not be so mailed or delivered to any such applicant
51 but, may be delivered to the voter in the manner prescribed by section
52 8-407 of this title if such facility is located in the county or city in
53 which such voter is eligible to vote.

54 § 4. Section 8-404 of the election law, subdivision 1 as amended by
55 chapter 375 of the laws of 2015, is amended to read as follows:

56 § 8-404. Absentee voting; hospitalized veterans, special provisions.

1 1. After entering upon the registration records, the application for
2 registration of a resident or patient of a veterans health adminis-
3 tration hospital as to whom the medical superintendent or medical head
4 of such hospital has attested that he or she expects that [~~he or she~~]
5 such veteran will not be discharged prior to the day following the next
6 general or special village, primary, special, general or New York city
7 community school board district or city of Buffalo school district
8 election, and the application for registration by the spouse, parent or
9 child of such resident or patient, accompanying or being with him or
10 her, if a qualified voter and a resident of the same election district,
11 the board of elections, without further investigation and without
12 further application by the applicant, shall send to him or her at such
13 hospital an absentee ballot and shall record in the signature column on
14 the back of his or her permanent personal registration poll record that
15 such ballot has been sent.

16 (a) Any voter who is duly registered and whose registration records
17 are marked "Hospitalized Veteran" or "Hospitalized Veteran's Relative"
18 need not thereafter make application for an absentee ballot. Sixty days
19 before each election, the board of elections shall compile and send a
20 list to each veterans health administration hospital of all residents
21 and patients of veterans health administration hospitals who appear by
22 the records of such board to be "hospitalized veterans" entitled to
23 receive absentee ballots at each such hospital pursuant to the
24 provisions of this section. Each veterans health administration hospital
25 shall no later than fifteen days following the receipt of such list,
26 return it with notations made thereon showing whether the resident or
27 patient continues to be confined therein or has been discharged there-
28 from. Upon the receipt of such returned list from each veterans health
29 administration hospital with the proper notations showing that a "hospi-
30 talized veteran" continues to be confined in such hospital, the board of
31 elections, by mail addressed to such "hospitalized veteran" at his or
32 her last known hospital address and by mail addressed to such "hospital-
33 ized veteran's relative" at his or her last known address shall send an
34 absentee ballot for the ensuing election to such "hospitalized veteran"
35 and such "hospitalized veteran's relative" [~~an absentee ballot in the~~
36 ~~same manner as provided in this section for a qualified voter entitled~~
37 ~~to an absentee ballot because of permanent disability~~]. The board shall
38 record on the back of his or her registration poll record in the space
39 reserved for his or her signature at such election, the fact that such
40 ballot has been sent.

41 (b) If the returned list from a veterans' administration hospital
42 contains a notation showing that a "hospitalized veteran" is no longer a
43 resident or patient at the veterans health administration hospital where
44 he or she is recorded as staying, or if such letter containing an absen-
45 tee voter's ballot for a "hospitalized veteran" or a "hospitalized
46 veteran's relative" is returned by the post office as undeliverable, the
47 board of elections shall ascertain whether the "hospitalized veteran" or
48 "hospitalized veteran's relative" is residing at the address given on
49 his or her registration records as his or her permanent address. If he
50 or she is residing there, the board shall [~~not~~] send him or her [~~any~~
51 ~~further absentee ballots unless he or she applies therefor in the regu-~~
52 ~~lar way~~] an absentee ballot at such address. If he or she is not resid-
53 ing at the place of residence given on his or her registration records
54 but the board ascertains that he or she has been transferred to another
55 veterans health administration hospital, the board shall cause a central
56 board of registration to make the necessary changes of temporary address

1 on his or her registration records and shall continue sending him or her
2 absentee ballots at the veterans health administration hospital where he
3 or she is staying. If he or she is not residing at the place of resi-
4 dence given on his or her registration records and the board cannot
5 ascertain that he or she has been transferred to another veterans health
6 administration hospital, the board shall cancel his or her registration.
7 Whenever a registration is cancelled pursuant to this paragraph notice
8 shall be mailed to the veteran or his or her relative at his or her
9 permanent residence address and last temporary address.

10 2. The board of elections shall furnish to each party county chairman
11 in such county a list of the names and residence addresses of the hospi-
12 talized veterans and hospitalized veterans' relatives to whom absentee
13 ballots have been sent.

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

17 § 5. Section 8-406 of the election law, as amended by chapter 296 of
18 the laws of 1988, is amended to read as follows:

19 § 8-406. Absentee ballots, delivery of. [~~If the~~] The board shall [~~find~~
20 ~~that the applicant is a qualified voter of the election district~~
21 ~~containing his residence as stated in his statement and that his state-~~
22 ~~ment is sufficient, it shall, as soon as practicable after it shall have~~
23 ~~determined his right thereto,~~] mail to [him] all voters an absentee
24 ballot and an envelope at [an] the permanent address designated [~~by him,~~
25 ~~or deliver to him, or to any person designated for such purpose in writ-~~
26 ~~ing by him, at the office of the board, such an absentee voter's ballot~~
27 ~~or set of ballots and an envelope therefor~~] on such voter's registration
28 records. If the ballot or ballots are to be sent outside of the United
29 States to a country other than Canada or Mexico, such ballot or ballots
30 shall be sent by air mail. However, if [~~an applicant who is eligible for~~
31 ~~an absentee ballot~~] a voter is a resident of a facility operated or
32 licensed by, or under the jurisdiction of, the department of mental
33 hygiene, or a resident of a facility defined as a nursing home or resi-
34 dential health care facility pursuant to subdivisions two and three of
35 section two thousand eight hundred one of the public health law, or a
36 resident of a hospital or other facility operated by the Veteran's
37 Administration of the United States, such absentee ballot need not be so
38 mailed or delivered to any such applicant but, may be delivered to the
39 voter in the manner prescribed by section 8-407 of this [~~chapter~~] title
40 if such facility is located in the county or city in which such voter is
41 eligible to vote.

42 § 6. Section 8-407 of the election law, as added by chapter 296 of the
43 laws of 1988, subdivisions 1, 3 and 15 as amended by chapter 195 of the
44 laws of 2001, and subdivision 6 as amended by chapter 326 of the laws of
45 1989, is amended to read as follows:

46 § 8-407. Voting by residents of nursing homes, residential health care
47 facilities, facilities operated or licensed, or under the jurisdiction
48 of, the department of mental hygiene or hospitals or facilities operated
49 by the Veteran's Administration of the United States. 1. The board of
50 elections of a county or city in which there is located at least one
51 facility operated or licensed, or under the jurisdiction of, the depart-
52 ment of mental hygiene, or a facility defined as a nursing home or resi-
53 dential health care facility pursuant to subdivisions two and three of
54 section two thousand eight hundred one of the public health law or an
55 adult care facility subject to the provisions of title two of article
56 seven of the social services law, or a hospital or other facility oper-

1 ated by the Veteran's Administration of the United States shall provide
2 [~~that~~] residents of each such facility [~~for which such board has~~
3 ~~received twenty-five or more applications for~~] absentee ballots [~~from~~
4 ~~voters who are eligible to vote by absentee ballot in such city or coun-~~
5 ~~ty at such election, may vote by absentee ballot only~~] in the manner
6 provided for in this section. [~~Such board may, in its discretion,~~
7 ~~provide that the procedure described in this subdivision shall be appli-~~
8 ~~eable to all such facilities in such county or city without regard to~~
9 ~~the number of absentee ballot applications received from the residents~~
10 ~~of any such facility.~~]

11 2. Such a board of elections shall appoint, in the same manner as
12 other inspectors, one or more bi-partisan boards of inspectors, each
13 composed of two such inspectors. Such inspectors may be regular employ-
14 ees of such board of elections.

15 3. Not earlier than thirteen days before or later than the day before
16 such an election such a board of inspectors shall, between the hours of
17 nine o'clock in the morning and five o'clock in the evening, attend at
18 each such facility for the residents [~~of which the board of elections~~
19 ~~has custody of twenty-five or more absentee ballots or, if the board of~~
20 ~~elections has so provided, each such facility for which the board has~~
21 ~~custody of one or more such absentee ballots, pursuant to the provisions~~
22 ~~of this chapter~~].

23 4. Each such board of inspectors may attend at more than one facility,
24 provided, however, that no such board of inspectors shall be assigned to
25 attend at more facilities than it reasonably can be expected to complete
26 within the time specified by this section.

27 5. The board of elections shall deliver to each board of inspectors
28 all [~~the~~] absentee ballots [~~in the custody of such board of elections~~
29 ~~which are addressed to~~] for residents of the facilities which such board
30 of inspectors is assigned to attend, together with one or more portable
31 voting booths of a type approved by the state board of elections and
32 such other supplies as such board of inspectors will require to
33 discharge its duties properly.

34 6. The board of elections, at least twenty days before each such
35 election, [~~or on the day after it shall have received the requisite~~
36 ~~number of applications for absentee ballots from the residents of any~~
37 ~~such facility, whichever is later,~~] shall communicate with the super-
38 intendent, administrator or director of each such facility to arrange
39 the day and time when the board of inspectors will attend at such facil-
40 ity. The board of elections shall keep a list of the day and time at
41 which the board of inspectors will attend at each such facility as a
42 public record at its office.

43 7. It shall be the duty of each such superintendent, administrator or
44 director to assist the board of inspectors attending such facility in
45 the discharge of its duties, including, but not limited to making avail-
46 able to such board of inspectors space within such facility suitable for
47 the discharge of its duties.

48 8. The board of inspectors shall deliver [~~each absentee ballot~~
49 ~~addressed to a resident of each such facility to such resident~~] absentee
50 ballots for residents to all facilities. If [~~such~~] any resident is phys-
51 ically disabled the inspectors shall, if necessary, deliver the ballot
52 to such voter at his or her bedside.

53 9. The board of inspectors shall arrange the portable voting booth or
54 booths provided and effect such safeguards as may be necessary to
55 provide secrecy for the votes cast by such residents.

10. If such a resident is unable to mark his or her ballot, he or she may be assisted in marking such ballot by the two members of the board of inspectors or such other person as he may select. If a voter is unable to mark the ballot and unable to communicate how he or she wishes such ballot marked, such ballot shall not be cast. No person who assists a voter to mark his ballot pursuant to the provisions of this section, shall disclose to any other person how any such ballot was marked.

~~11. [Except as otherwise provided in this section, all ballots cast pursuant to this section shall be cast in the manner provided by this chapter for the casting of absentee ballots.~~

~~12.]~~ After such ballots have been cast and sealed in the appropriate envelopes, they shall be returned to such inspectors.

~~13.]~~ 12. Upon completion of its duties, the board of inspectors shall forthwith return all such ballots to the board of elections.

~~14.]~~ 13. Any person, political committee or independent body entitled to appoint watchers for the election district in which any such facility is located ~~[at the election for which such absentee ballots are cast,~~ shall be entitled to appoint a watcher to attend such board of inspectors at such facility.

~~15.]~~ 14. All ballots cast pursuant to the provisions of this section which are received before the close of the polls on election day by the board of elections charged with the duty of casting and canvassing such ballots, may be delivered to the inspectors of election in the manner prescribed by this chapter or retained at the board of elections and cast and canvassed pursuant to the provisions of section 9-209 of this chapter as such board shall, in its discretion, determine pursuant to the provisions of subdivision one of this section.

§ 7. Section 8-410 of the election law, as amended by chapter 352 of the laws of 1986, is amended to read as follows:

§ 8-410. Absentee voting; method of. The absentee voter shall mark an absentee ballot as provided for paper ballots or ballots prepared for counting by ballot counting machines. He or she shall make no mark or writing whatsoever upon the ballot, except as above prescribed, and shall see that it bears no such mark or writing. He or she shall make no mark or writing whatsoever on the outside of the ballot. After marking the ballot or ballots he or she shall fold each such ballot and enclose them in the envelope and seal the envelope. He or she shall then take and subscribe the oath on the envelope, with blanks properly filled in. The envelope, containing the ballot or ballots, shall then be mailed or delivered to the board of elections of the county or city of his or her residence.

§ 8. Subdivision 1 of section 8-412 of the election law, as amended by chapter 140 of the laws of 2020, is amended to read as follows:

1. The board of elections shall cause all absentee ballots received by it before the close of the polls on election day and all ballots contained in envelopes showing a cancellation mark of the United States postal service or a foreign country's postal service, or showing a dated endorsement of receipt by another agency of the United States government, with a date which is ascertained to be not later than the day of the election and received by such board of elections not later than seven days following the day of election to be cast and counted ~~[except that the absentee ballot of a voter who requested such ballot by letter, rather than application, shall not be counted unless a valid application form, signed by such voter, is received by the board of elections with such ballot]~~. For purposes of this section, any absentee ballot received by the board of elections by mail that does not bear or display a dated

1 postmark shall be presumed to have been timely mailed or delivered if
2 such ballot bears a time stamp of the receiving board of elections indi-
3 cating receipt by such board on the day after the election.

4 § 9. The election law is amended by adding a new section 5-714 to read
5 as follows:

6 § 5-714. Computerized statewide voter registration list. 1. The New
7 York state board of elections shall, within one year of the effective
8 date of this section implement, in a uniform and nondiscriminatory
9 manner, a single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive, computer-
10 ized statewide voter registration database system. Such database system
11 shall be defined, maintained, and administered at the state level and
12 shall contain the voter registration lists maintained by each county
13 board of elections. Further, such database system shall contain the name
14 and registration information of every legally registered voter in the
15 state and shall assign a unique identifier to each legally registered
16 voter. The single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive, comput-
17 erized statewide voter registration database system required by this
18 section shall be referred to as the "centralized statewide registration
19 system".

20 2. The centralized statewide registration system and the computerized
21 statewide voter registration list shall be fully compliant with all
22 applicable requirements specified in section 303 of the federal "Help
23 America Vote Act of 2002", Pub.L. 107-252, codified at 42 U.S.C. sec.
24 15301 et seq and shall meet all applicable privacy requirements under
25 this chapter.

26 3. Within two years of the effective date of this section each county
27 board of elections shall maintain voter registration information by
28 utilizing the centralized statewide registration system developed or
29 acquired by the state board of elections under subdivision one of this
30 section. Prior to the implementation of the computerized statewide voter
31 registration list required by subdivision one of this section, if the
32 county chooses to maintain voter registration information on its own
33 computer system, the information required by law to be transmitted to
34 the New York state board of elections shall be transmitted in a media
35 format acceptable to the New York state board of elections and within
36 the time prescribed by the New York state board of elections.

37 4. (a) The centralized statewide registration system shall enable the
38 state board of elections to maintain voter registration information and
39 shall include such additional capabilities as may be necessary or desir-
40 able to enable the county boards of elections and the state board of
41 elections to carry out their responsibilities related to the conduct of
42 elections. Such additional capabilities may include but need not be
43 limited to the preparation of ballots, the identification of voting
44 districts for each address, access by county boards of elections to the
45 master list of registered electors.

46 (b) Within two years of the effective date of this section the comput-
47 erized statewide voter registration list maintained pursuant to this
48 section shall allow for:

49 (i) the management of absentee ballots, the preparation of official
50 abstracts of votes cast, the transmission of voting data from county
51 boards of election to the state board of elections, and reporting of
52 voting results on election night; and

53 (ii) access to the digitized signatures of electors in the centralized
54 statewide registration system for the purpose of comparing an elector's
55 signature in the system with the signature on the return envelope of an
56 absentee ballot, including by using a signature verification.

1 5. (a) Subject to available appropriations, the state board of
2 elections is responsible for the cost of acquiring computer hardware and
3 providing necessary training for the centralized statewide registration
4 system. The state board of elections shall promulgate rules specifying
5 whether such hardware is owned by the state or the counties or whether
6 and to what extent ownership may be shared between the state and the
7 counties. If the state provides system hardware to any county, it may
8 transfer ownership of the hardware to that county. The state board of
9 elections may promulgate rules providing that the county shall be solely
10 responsible for the support and maintenance of the hardware provided to
11 the counties.

12 (b) Within four years of the effective date of this section the state
13 board of elections shall make the centralized statewide registration
14 system software available at no charge to each county board of
15 elections.

16 (c) As soon as practicable, the department of state shall make the
17 master list of registered electors available at no charge on the inter-
18 net to county boards of election. This section shall not be construed to
19 require the state to provide or pay for internet connection services for
20 any county.

21 § 10. Section 11-302 of the election law, as amended by chapter 257 of
22 the laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

23 § 11-302. Special ballots for board of election employees. A person
24 who is an employee of the board of elections or who has been appointed
25 to serve as an inspector of elections, poll clerk or election coordina-
26 tor at a polling place other than the one at which he or she is regis-
27 tered to vote, may deliver to the inspectors of election of the election
28 district in which he or she is registered, or to the board of elections,
29 at any time during the period in which an application for an absentee
30 ballot may be so delivered pursuant to the provisions of this chapter, a
31 written statement that he or she will be unable to appear at the polling
32 place for such election district on the day of an election because he
33 or her duties as an employee of such board or as an inspector, poll
34 clerk or election coordinator require him or her to be elsewhere. The
35 board of elections shall provide such voter a special ballot any time
36 prior to the close of the polls on election day, provided however that
37 the distribution of such ballots to such voters shall be timed to afford
38 such voters sufficient time to cast such ballots prior to the close of
39 the polls on election day. Absent affirmative proof of fraud such
40 ballots shall be presumed valid and cast. Such cast ballots may be
41 delivered to an office of such board of elections or to any board of
42 inspectors not later than the close of the polls on election day. Such
43 ballots shall be retained at the board of elections and cast and
44 canvassed pursuant to the provisions of section 9-209 of this chapter.

45 § 11. Subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (e) of subdivision 3 of section
46 8-302 of the election law, as amended by section 8 of part XX of chapter
47 55 of the laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

48 (ii) He or she may swear to and subscribe an affidavit stating that he
49 or she has duly registered to vote, the address in such election
50 district from which he or she registered, that he or she remains a duly
51 qualified voter in such election district, that his or her registration
52 poll record appears to be lost or misplaced or that his or her name
53 and/or his or her signature was omitted from the computer generated
54 registration list or such record indicates the voter already voted when
55 he or she did not do so or that he or she has moved within New York
56 state since he or she last registered, [~~the address from which he or she~~

1 ~~was previously registered and~~] the address at which he or she currently
2 resides, and at a primary election, the party in which he or she is
3 enrolled. The inspectors of election shall offer such an affidavit to
4 each such voter whose residence address is in such election district.
5 Each such affidavit shall substantially comply with and be in a form
6 prescribed by the state board of elections, shall be printed on an
7 envelope of the size and quality used for an absentee ballot envelope,
8 and shall contain an acknowledgment that the affiant understands that
9 any false statement made therein is perjury punishable according to law.
10 Such form prescribed by the state board of elections shall request
11 information required to register such voter should the county board
12 determine that such voter is not registered and shall constitute an
13 application to register to vote. The voter's name and the entries
14 required shall then be entered without delay and without further inquiry
15 in the fourth section of the challenge report or in the place provided
16 in the computer generated registration list, with the notation that the
17 voter has executed the affidavit hereinabove prescribed, or, if such
18 person's name appears in such registration list, the board of elections
19 may provide a place to make such entry next to his or her name in such
20 list. The voter shall then, without further inquiry, be permitted to
21 vote an affidavit ballot provided for by this chapter. Such ballot shall
22 thereupon be placed in the envelope containing his or her affidavit, and
23 the envelope sealed and returned to the board of elections in the manner
24 provided by this chapter for protested official ballots, including a
25 statement of the number of such ballots.
26 § 12. This act shall take effect immediately.