

STATE OF NEW YORK

281

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 6, 2021

Introduced by Sens. MYRIE, SERRANO -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Elections

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to notifying voters of the
candidates and upcoming elections

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

1 Section 1. Article 8 of the election law is amended by adding a new
2 title 7 to read as follows:

TITLE VII

VOTER NOTIFICATIONS

Section 8-700. Voting guide.

8-702. Postcards.

8-704. Television and radio.

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8 § 8-700. Voting guide. 1. Any candidate seeking nomination or election
9 at the next general and primary election to any public office, or a
10 designated agent acting on behalf of such candidate, may, at least six
11 weeks prior to the general and primary election, file with the board of
12 elections with which nominating and designating petitions and certif-
13 icates for such office are filed pursuant to section 6-144 of this chap-
14 ter a sworn statement containing biographical information, such as the
15 candidate's occupation, educational and occupational background, prior
16 governmental experience, and any other personal background or experience
17 that the candidate deems relevant to the election campaign, and answers
18 to issue based questions drafted by the state board of elections that
19 are specified to each position.

20 2. The state board of elections shall, by regulation, establish the
21 format and length of the statement authorized under this section and
22 shall provide to candidates a standardized form for preparing such
23 statement.

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

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1 3. Within five days after the last day for filing statements under
2 this section, all local boards of elections shall forward all such
3 candidate biographies to the state board of elections in electronic form
4 in a manner to be prescribed by the state board of elections.

5 4. In the event that any candidate biographies received by the state
6 board of elections, from any local board of elections, is not in elec-
7 tronic form, the state board of elections shall, within ten days after
8 receipt of such candidate biography, convert such candidate biography to
9 electronic form.

10 5. The state board of elections shall mail and email, if a registered
11 voter's email is available to the state board of elections, to every
12 registered voter in each household in the state a voting guide consist-
13 ing of all biographical information and answers to issue based ques-
14 tions, as outlined in subdivision one of this section, received from
15 each candidate for whom the receiver of this mailing can vote for in the
16 upcoming election. In the event the state board of elections determines
17 that distribution of the voting guide would be more efficient and
18 economical if done by the local boards of elections, the state board is
19 hereby authorized to instruct all boards of elections to distribute the
20 voting guide to at least one registered voter in each household. Should
21 the state board so instruct the boards of elections, it shall provide a
22 sufficient number of voting guides to each board of elections and shall
23 promptly reimburse each board for the actual cost of postage incurred by
24 said board in distributing the voting guides provided that said board
25 utilize the lowest feasible postage rate charged by the United States
26 postal service. The distribution of the voting guides to registered
27 voters or households shall be made at least three weeks before the
28 election to which they pertain.

29 6. The state board of elections shall maintain a website where all
30 voter guide information is maintained, updated and accessible to the
31 general public.

32 § 8-702. Postcards. For each primary and general election, the state
33 board of elections shall mail and email, if a registered voter's email
34 is available to the state board of elections, to at least one registered
35 voter in each household a postcard which contains information for the
36 upcoming election that contains the date of the election. The board
37 shall send the postcards twice before the election with the first mail-
38 ing to be made no earlier than fifteen days and no later than ten days
39 prior to the election; and with the second mailing to be made no earlier
40 than seven days and no later than five days before the election.

41 § 8-704. Television and radio. For ten consecutive days before each
42 primary and general election, all major television and radio stations
43 using public airwaves or doing business within the state shall inform
44 their audience at least four times each day between the hours of seven
45 a.m. and eleven p.m. of the upcoming election. Each of the four required
46 notifications shall air at least three hours apart.

47 § 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after
48 it shall have become a law.