

STATE OF NEW YORK

388

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 8, 2025

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

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

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 Section 8-400 of the election law is REPEALED and a new section 8-400 is added to read as follows:

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

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

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

4. If a person voting by absentee ballot is unable to sign their signature because of illness, physical disability or inability to read, they shall be excused from signing upon making a statement, in substantially the following form, which shall be witnessed by one person:

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

(Date).....

.....(Mark)

(Name of Voter)

"I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the above named voter affixed their mark to this application in my presence and I know them to be the person who affixed their mark to said application and understand that this statement will be accepted for all purposes as the equivalent of an affidavit and if it contains a material false statement, shall subject me to the same penalties as if I had been duly sworn."

.....
(Signature of Witness)

.....
(Address of Witness)

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

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

16 § 3. Section 8-402 of the election law is REPEALED and a new section
17 8-402 is added to read as follows:

18 § 8-402. Applications for absentee ballots. 1. Any voter, upon appli-
19 cation, may request that their absentee ballot be mailed to them at an
20 address other than their permanent address, if they expect to be absent
21 from the county or city of residence and unable to obtain their absentee
22 ballot.

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

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

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

40 (ii) A statement that the applicant is a qualified and registered
41 voter.

42 (iii) A statement that the applicant expects in good faith to be
43 absent from the county or city of their residence provided, however, if
44 the applicant expects to be absent from such county or city for a dura-
45 tion covering more than one election and seeks an absentee ballot for
46 each election, they shall state the dates when they expect to begin and
47 end such absence.

48 2. The application for an absentee ballot shall contain the following
49 language printed in bold face directly above the signature line: "I
50 CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION IN THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT AND
51 UNDERSTAND THAT THIS APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR ALL PURPOSES AS
52 THE EQUIVALENT OF AN AFFIDAVIT AND, IF IT CONTAINS A MATERIAL FALSE
53 STATEMENT, SHALL SUBJECT ME TO THE SAME PENALTIES AS IF I HAD BEEN DULY
54 SWORN." Such application shall be accepted for all proposes as the
55 equivalent of an affidavit and if it contains a material false statement

1 shall subject the person signing it to the same penalties as if they had
2 been duly sworn.

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

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

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

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

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

54 § 8-404. Absentee voting; hospitalized veterans, special provisions.

55 1. After entering upon the registration records, the application for
56 registration of a resident or patient of a veterans health adminis-

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

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

40 (b) If the returned list from a veterans' administration hospital
41 contains a notation showing that a "hospitalized veteran" is no longer a
42 resident or patient at the veterans health administration hospital where
43 [~~he or she is~~] they are recorded as staying, or if such letter contain-
44 ing an absentee voter's ballot for a "hospitalized veteran" or a "hospi-
45 talized veteran's relative" is returned by the post office as undeliver-
46 able, the board of elections shall ascertain whether the "hospitalized
47 veteran" or "hospitalized veteran's relative" is residing at the address
48 given on [~~his or her~~] their registration records as [~~his or her~~] their
49 permanent address. If [~~he or she is~~] they are residing there, the board
50 shall [~~not~~] send [~~him or her any further absentee ballots unless he or~~
51 ~~she applies therefor in the regular way~~] them an absentee ballot at such
52 address. If [~~he or she is~~] they are not residing at the place of resi-
53 dence given on [~~his or her~~] their registration records but the board
54 ascertains that [~~he or she has~~] they have 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]~~ their registration records and shall continue sending
2 ~~[him or her]~~ them absentee ballots at the veterans health administration
3 hospital where ~~[he or she is]~~ they are staying. If ~~[he or she is]~~ they
4 are not residing at the place of residence given on ~~[his or her]~~ their
5 registration records and the board cannot ascertain that ~~[he or she has]~~
6 they have been transferred to another veterans health administration
7 hospital, the board shall cancel ~~[his or her]~~ their registration. When-
8 ever a registration is cancelled pursuant to this paragraph notice shall
9 be mailed to the veteran or ~~[his or her]~~ their relative at ~~[his or her]~~
10 the veteran's permanent residence address and last temporary address.

11 2. The board of elections shall furnish to each party county ~~[chair-~~
12 ~~man]~~ chair in such county a list of the names and residence addresses of
13 the hospitalized veterans and hospitalized veterans' relatives to whom
14 absentee ballots have been sent.

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

18 § 5. Section 8-406 of the election law, as amended by section 2 of
19 part HH of chapter 55 of the laws of 2022, is amended to read as
20 follows:

21 § 8-406. Absentee ballots, delivery of. 1. ~~[If the]~~ The board shall
22 ~~[find that the applicant is a qualified voter of the election district~~
23 ~~containing his residence as stated in his statement and that his state-~~
24 ~~ment is sufficient, it shall, as soon as practicable after it shall have~~
25 ~~determined his right thereto,]~~ mail to ~~[him]~~ all voters an absentee
26 ballot and an envelope at ~~[an]~~ the permanent address designated ~~[by him,~~
27 ~~or deliver to him, or to any person designated for such purpose in writ-~~
28 ~~ing by him, at the office of the board, such an absentee voter's ballot~~
29 ~~or set of ballots and an envelope therefor]~~ on such voter's registration
30 records. If the ballot or ballots are to be sent outside of the United
31 States to a country other than Canada or Mexico, such ballot or ballots
32 shall be sent by air mail. However, if ~~[an applicant who is eligible~~
33 ~~for an absentee ballot]~~ a voter is a resident of a facility operated or
34 licensed by, or under the jurisdiction of, the department of mental
35 hygiene, or a resident of a facility defined as a nursing home or resi-
36 dential health care facility pursuant to subdivisions two and three of
37 section two thousand eight hundred one of the public health law, or a
38 resident of a hospital or other facility operated by the Veteran's
39 Administration of the United States, such absentee ballot need not be so
40 mailed or delivered to any such applicant but, may be delivered to the
41 voter in the manner prescribed by section 8-407 of this ~~[chapter]~~ title
42 if such facility is located in the county or city in which such voter is
43 eligible to vote.

44 2. When mailing an absentee ballot to a voter the board of elections
45 shall provide a domestic postage paid return envelope. When providing an
46 absentee ballot to a voter in-person, the board of elections shall offer
47 the voter a domestic postage paid return envelope and provide one if
48 requested.

49 § 6. Section 8-407 of the election law, as added by chapter 296 of the
50 laws of 1988, subdivisions 1, 3 and 15 as amended by chapter 195 of the
51 laws of 2001, and subdivision 6 as amended by chapter 326 of the laws of
52 1989, is amended to read as follows:

53 § 8-407. Voting by residents of nursing homes, residential health care
54 facilities, facilities operated or licensed, or under the jurisdiction
55 of, the department of mental hygiene or hospitals or facilities operated
56 by the Veteran's Administration of the United States. 1. The board of

1 elections of a county or city in which there is located at least one
2 facility operated or licensed, or under the jurisdiction of, the depart-
3 ment of mental hygiene, or a facility defined as a nursing home or resi-
4 dential health care facility pursuant to subdivisions two and three of
5 section two thousand eight hundred one of the public health law or an
6 adult care facility subject to the provisions of title two of article
7 seven of the social services law, or a hospital or other facility oper-
8 ated by the Veteran's Administration of the United States shall provide
9 ~~[that]~~ residents of each such facility ~~[for which such board has~~
10 ~~received twenty-five or more applications for]~~ absentee ballots ~~[from~~
11 ~~voters who are eligible to vote by absentee ballot in such city or coun-~~
12 ~~ty at such election, may vote by absentee ballot only]~~ in the manner
13 provided for in this section. ~~[Such board may, in its discretion,~~
14 ~~provide that the procedure described in this subdivision shall be appli-~~
15 ~~cable to all such facilities in such county or city without regard to~~
16 ~~the number of absentee ballot applications received from the residents~~
17 ~~of any such facility.]~~

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

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

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

34 5. The board of elections shall deliver to each board of inspectors
35 all ~~[the]~~ absentee ballots ~~[in the custody of such board of elections~~
36 ~~which are addressed to]~~ for residents of the facilities which such board
37 of inspectors is assigned to attend, together with one or more portable
38 voting booths of a type approved by the state board of elections and
39 such other supplies as such board of inspectors will require to
40 discharge its duties properly.

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

50 7. It shall be the duty of each such superintendent, administrator or
51 director to assist the board of inspectors attending such facility in
52 the discharge of its duties, including, but not limited to making avail-
53 able to such board of inspectors space within such facility suitable for
54 the discharge of its duties.

55 8. The board of inspectors shall deliver ~~[each absentee ballot~~
56 ~~addressed to a resident of each such facility to such resident]~~ absentee

1 ballots for residents to all facilities. If [~~such~~] any resident is phys-
2 ically disabled the inspectors shall, if necessary, deliver the ballot
3 to such voter at [~~his~~] their bedside.

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

7 10. If such a resident is unable to mark [~~his~~] their ballot, [~~he~~] they
8 may be assisted in marking such ballot by the two members of the board
9 of inspectors or such other person as [~~he~~] they may select. If a voter
10 is unable to mark the ballot and unable to communicate how [~~he wishes~~]
11 they wish such ballot marked, such ballot shall not be cast. No person
12 who assists a voter to mark [~~his~~] their ballot pursuant to the
13 provisions of this section, shall disclose to any other person how any
14 such ballot was marked.

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

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

20 [~~13.]~~ 12. Upon completion of its duties, the board of inspectors shall
21 forthwith return all such ballots to the board of elections.

22 [~~14.]~~ 13. Any person, political committee or independent body entitled
23 to appoint watchers for the election district in which any such facility
24 is located [~~at the election for which such absentee ballots are cast,~~]
25 shall be entitled to appoint a watcher to attend such board of inspec-
26 tors at such facility.

27 [~~15.]~~ 14. All ballots cast pursuant to the provisions of this section
28 which are received before the close of the polls on election day by the
29 board of elections charged with the duty of casting and canvassing such
30 ballots, may be delivered to the inspectors of election in the manner
31 prescribed by this chapter or retained at the board of elections and
32 cast and canvassed pursuant to the provisions of section 9-209 of this
33 chapter as such board shall, in its discretion, determine pursuant to
34 the provisions of subdivision one of this section.

35 § 7. Subdivision 1 of section 8-412 of the election law, as amended by
36 chapter 500 of the laws of 2024, is amended to read as follows:

37 1. The board of elections shall cause all absentee ballots received by
38 it before the close of the polls on election day and all ballots
39 contained in envelopes showing a cancellation mark of the United States
40 postal service or a foreign country's postal service, or showing a dated
41 endorsement of receipt by another agency of the United States govern-
42 ment, with a date which is ascertained to be not later than the day of
43 the election and received by such board of elections not later than
44 seven days following the day of election to be cast and counted [~~except~~
45 ~~that the absentee ballot of a voter who requested such ballot by letter,~~
46 ~~rather than application, shall not be counted unless a valid application~~
47 ~~form, signed by such voter, is received by the board of elections with~~
48 ~~such ballot~~]. For purposes of this section, any absentee ballot received
49 by the board of elections by mail that does not bear or display a dated
50 postmark shall be presumed to have been timely mailed or delivered if
51 such ballot bears a time stamp of the receiving board of elections indi-
52 cating receipt by such board on the day after the election. For the
53 purposes of this section, an absentee ballot shall be deemed to be
54 received by the board of elections before the close of the polls on
55 election day if it is deposited in an absentee ballot drop box before
56 the close of polls on election day. Ballots received in accordance with

1 this section shall be deemed timely and the failure of a board of
2 elections to time stamp such ballots received in this manner on or
3 before election day shall not prohibit the canvassing of such ballots.
4 At the close of the polls on election day, the board of elections shall
5 close every absentee ballot drop box and collect absentee ballots depos-
6 ited in such absentee ballot drop box.

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

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

23 2. The centralized statewide registration system and the computerized
24 statewide voter registration list shall be fully compliant with all
25 applicable requirements specified in section 303 of the federal "Help
26 America Vote Act of 2002", Pub.L. 107-252, codified at 42 U.S.C. sec.
27 15301 et seq and shall meet all applicable privacy requirements under
28 this chapter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

16 (b) Within four years of the effective date of this section the state
17 board of elections shall make the centralized statewide registration
18 system software available at no charge to each county board of
19 elections.

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

25 § 9. Section 11-302 of the election law, as amended by chapter 257 of
26 the laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

27 § 11-302. Special ballots for board of election employees. A person
28 who is an employee of the board of elections or who has been appointed
29 to serve as an inspector of elections, poll clerk or election coordina-
30 tor at a polling place other than the one at which ~~[he or she is]~~ they
31 are registered to vote, may deliver to the inspectors of election of the
32 election district in which ~~[he or she is]~~ they are registered, or to the
33 board of elections, at any time during the period in which an applica-
34 tion for an absentee ballot may be so delivered pursuant to the
35 provisions of this chapter, a written statement that ~~[he or she]~~ they
36 will be unable to appear at the polling place for such election district
37 on the day of an election because ~~[his or her]~~ their duties as an
38 employee of such board or as an inspector, poll clerk or election coord-
39 inator require ~~[him or her]~~ them to be elsewhere. The board of
40 elections shall provide such voter a special ballot any time prior to
41 the close of the polls on election day, provided however that the
42 distribution of such ballots to such voters shall be timed to afford
43 such voters sufficient time to cast such ballots prior to the close of
44 the polls on election day. Absent affirmative proof of fraud such
45 ballots shall be presumed valid and cast. Such cast ballots may be

46 delivered to an office of such board of elections or to any board of
47 inspectors not later than the close of the polls on election day. Such
48 ballots shall be retained at the board of elections and cast and
49 canvassed pursuant to the provisions of section 9-209 of this chapter.

50 § 10. Subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (e) of subdivision 3 of section
51 8-302 of the election law, as separately amended by chapters 479 and 481
52 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

53 (ii) They may swear to and subscribe an affidavit stating that they
54 have duly registered to vote, the address in such election district from
55 which they registered, that they remain a duly qualified voter in such
56 election district, that their registration poll record appears to be

1 lost or misplaced or that their name and/or their signature was omitted
2 from the computer generated registration list or such record indicates
3 the voter already voted when they did not do so or that they have moved
4 within New York state since they last registered, [~~the address from~~
5 ~~which they were previously registered~~] and the address at which they
6 currently reside, and at a primary election, the party in which they are
7 enrolled, or that such voter is eligible to vote pursuant to section
8 8-604 of this article. The inspectors of election shall offer such an
9 affidavit to each such voter whose residence address is in such election
10 district. Each such affidavit shall substantially comply with and be in
11 a form prescribed by the state board of elections, shall be printed on
12 an envelope of the size and quality used for an early mail ballot envel-
13 ope, and shall contain an acknowledgment that the affiant understands
14 that any false statement made therein is perjury punishable according to
15 law. Such form prescribed by the state board of elections shall request
16 information required to register such voter should the county board
17 determine that such voter is not yet registered and shall constitute an
18 application to register to vote. The voter's name and the entries
19 required shall then be entered without delay and without further inquiry
20 in the fourth section of the challenge report or in the place provided
21 in the computer generated registration list, with the notation that the
22 voter has executed the affidavit hereinabove prescribed, or, if such
23 person's name appears in such registration list, the board of elections
24 may provide a place to make such entry next to their name in such list.
25 The voter shall then, without further inquiry, be permitted to vote an
26 affidavit ballot provided for by this chapter. Such ballot shall there-
27 upon be placed in the envelope containing their affidavit, and the
28 envelope sealed and returned to the board of elections in the manner
29 provided by this chapter for protested official ballots, including a
30 statement of the number of such ballots. If a voter registration appli-
31 cation for a voter who casts an affidavit ballot pursuant to this
32 subparagraph was received by a board of elections by the tenth day prior
33 to the election, the board shall cast and count an affidavit ballot from
34 such voter, if otherwise valid, notwithstanding the fact that the
35 voter's name was omitted from a registration poll record or list of
36 registered voters.

37 § 11. This act shall take effect immediately.