

# Implementation of Automatic Voter Registration

## (Department of Public Safety Focus)

### Topic Selection Background Information

April 2025

<b>Program Overview</b>	In 2023, the Legislature enacted automatic voter registration. The law requires the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to transmit an individual's citizenship status to the Office of the Secretary of State (OSS) when they apply for or make changes to a driver's license. Licensing service center staff are responsible for reviewing citizenship documentation and providing it to DPS's Driver and Vehicle Services (DVS) staff. DVS staff must confirm citizenship prior to relaying the information to OSS for an additional review. OSS then reviews certain information to verify eligibility. If confirmed, OSS transfers the information to local election officials for registration.
<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	To what extent has DPS taken appropriate measures to ensure that only eligible voters have been registered to vote?
<b>Revised Questions</b>	To what extent has DPS taken appropriate measures to verify citizenship documentation of individuals who apply for or make changes to driver's licenses and conveyed that documentation to OSS so that eligible voters could be registered to vote?
<b>State Resources</b> <i>Low</i>	The Legislature appropriated \$45,000 to DPS in Fiscal Year 2024 for implementation of the automatic voter registration system. The portion of DPS's overall expenditures dedicated to automatic voter registration activities is likely small.
<b>State Control</b> <i>High</i>	Minnesota law establishes automatic voter registration requirements that DPS must follow. DPS must coordinate with OSS to ensure only eligible Minnesotans are registered to vote.
<b>Impact</b> <i>Medium</i>	As of March 2025, approximately 3.7 million Minnesotans were registered to vote. As of September 2024, DPS reported that over 65,000 Minnesotans had been automatically registered to vote.
<b>Timeliness</b> <i>Medium-High</i>	There have been concerns with the integrity of the automatic voter registration process since it was implemented in 2023. Since implementation, DPS reports that it has revised its processes and established additional verification checks to confirm eligibility. Despite recent changes, it may be a good time to evaluate DPS's processes as more individuals will be registered to vote through the automatic voter registration system in the coming years.
<b>Feasibility</b> <i>Medium</i>	OLA could evaluate DPS's processes for reviewing and relaying information to OSS using standard evaluation techniques, including document reviews. However, OLA would be able to review only a sample of voter eligibility documentation and DPS's oversight of a select number of licensing service centers.
<b>Balance</b> <i>Medium</i>	OLA last evaluated OSS's procedures for voter registration in 2018. At that time, however, automatic voter registration was not in place.
<b>Discussion</b>	Voter registration integrity is essential to fair elections. While OLA could independently review DPS's measures to validate citizenship, the office would likely not be able to review a large enough sample of documentation to make generalizable conclusions about voter registration eligibility.