

Voter Registration System

(Office of the Secretary of State Focus)

Topic Selection Background Information

April 2025

Program Overview	To vote in federal or state elections, Minnesotans must meet eligibility requirements and register. Voter registration responsibilities are shared in the state; county election officials must process registration applications and maintain voter records, while the Office of the Secretary of State (OSS) must maintain a statewide voter registration database. OSS regularly receives data from other state agencies to help ensure the accuracy of voter records.
Evaluation Questions	To what extent has OSS complied with requirements related to election security measures to ensure only the votes of eligible voters are counted? To what extent has OSS complied with Help America Vote Act requirements? How has the number of registered and active voters changed in recent years? To what extent have changes to voter documentation requirements affected election security and participation?
State Resources <i>Unclear</i>	OSS's total expenditures have fluctuated year-to-year. In Fiscal Year 2023, OSS's total expenditures were about \$15 million, and in Fiscal Year 2024 they were about \$27 million. It is unclear what portion of OSS's overall expenditures were from voter registration activities or how much counties spend on those activities.
State Control <i>Medium-High</i>	Minnesota law establishes voter registration requirements that OSS must follow. OSS must also follow certain federal laws, such as the 2002 Help America Vote Act.
Impact <i>High</i>	About 3.7 million people are registered to vote in Minnesota, and election integrity is important for all Minnesotans.
Timeliness <i>Medium-High</i>	There has been significant public and legislative interest in voter registration processes in recent years. It may be useful to learn whether changes to voter registration requirements in 2023 affected election security and participation in the 2024 general election.
Feasibility <i>Medium</i>	OLA could analyze OSS's voter registration data and interview staff about their processes. However, OLA would likely need to limit the scope of the review to State Voter Registration System data and documentation from a sample of counties.
Balance <i>Medium</i>	OLA's 2018 report, <i>Voter Registration</i> , addressed topics similar to those noted above.
Discussion	Election integrity and voter access are vital to a strong democracy. However, OLA's evaluation of Minnesota's election security would likely need to be limited to an analysis of OSS data and documentation from a sample of counties. In addition, it would be challenging to draw definitive conclusions about whether recent changes to voter registration requirements had an impact on election security and participation.