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# Voter Registration

Program Evaluation Description

July 2025

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## BACKGROUND

Before voting in a state or federal election, eligible Minnesotans must first register. Under state law, to register to vote, an individual must be: a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age or older on Election Day, a resident of Minnesota for at least 20 days, not under a court order that revokes their right to vote, and not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction.

In Minnesota, responsibility for overseeing voter registration is split between state and county officials. The Office of the Secretary of State (OSS) is responsible for operating a database of all registered voters in the state, called the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS). This database periodically interacts with other state and federal databases to help verify individuals' identity, location, and eligibility to vote. For example, SVRS receives data from the State Court Administrator's Office to identify registered voters who have legally changed their name.

County auditors are responsible for maintaining the list of eligible voters in the SVRS database. County staff process voter registration applications, add eligible voters to the database, and update voter registration records (for example, if an individual has moved).

Minnesota has made several changes to voter registration laws in recent years. For instance, individuals convicted of a felony who are not currently incarcerated (but are on probation or parole) were previously ineligible, but may now register to vote.

## EVALUATION ISSUES

1. To what extent have OSS and counties complied with state and federal voter registration requirements?

2. To what extent have OSS and counties established and implemented appropriate voter registration policies and procedures?
3. How have recent legislative changes in Minnesota affected voter registration?

## DISCUSSION

To conduct this evaluation, we will review OSS policies, as well as guidance that OSS provides to counties, to determine whether they align with applicable laws and best practices.

We will also analyze voter registration data in SVRS to determine legal compliance, examine the eligibility of selected registrants, and identify trends in voter registration rates over time.

Additionally, we plan to survey all county auditors in Minnesota and conduct more detailed interviews with auditors from a sample of counties. We will also review those counties' voter registration policies and procedures and analyze a nonrepresentative sample of voter registration applications.

Finally, we will evaluate the extent to which OSS and the Legislature have implemented the recommendations that OLA made in the 2018 *Voter Registration* evaluation.

This evaluation will focus on the efforts of OSS and counties to ensure that (1) only eligible individuals are registered to vote and (2) eligible voters are not prevented from registering to vote. The evaluation will not focus on voter outreach or election security. OLA plans to conduct a separate evaluation in the coming year on the Department of Public Safety's implementation of automatic voter registration.

This evaluation is scheduled to be completed in spring 2026. For additional information, contact Sarah Delacueva at [Sarah.Delacueva@state.mn.us](mailto:Sarah.Delacueva@state.mn.us) or 651-296-1226.