

## **DIRECTIVE 2025-50**

September 4, 2025

To: All County Boards of Elections  
Board Members, Directors, and Deputy Directors

Re: Voter Registration Data Integrity

### **SUMMARY**

As you know, Ohio law requires the Secretary of State and the 88 county boards of elections to “maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration database.”<sup>1</sup> I take that duty seriously, and my administration has worked to enhance these efforts like never before by increasing the sources and frequency of our data verification protocols. Thanks to our bipartisan collaboration, Ohio has become the national leader in voter registration data integrity.

Under my administration, we worked with the General Assembly to enact the landmark DATA Act law, creating the first-ever Office of Data Analytics and Archives in the Secretary of State’s office. This team of data analysts now works full-time to review the accuracy of our statewide voter registration database in search of potential discrepancies in need of remediation or ineligible records that qualify for removal. To aid in that duty, my office initiated litigation along with other states against the United States government to challenge the previous executive administration’s repeated denial of access to federal databases. Thanks in part to our efforts, the new administration has now granted states access to expanded federal data and improved functionality, including the Department of Homeland Security’s Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system and the Social Security Administration’s death master file. In fact, my office has not only partnered with the Department of Homeland Security to test the effectiveness of these searchable resources but also worked with our federal partners to refine the parameters for states that have unique or limited identifiers, such as last-four Social Security numbers.

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<sup>1</sup> [R.C. 3503.151](#).

Additionally, we are now conducting more frequent citizenship verification rather than simply adhering to the longstanding statutory requirement of an annual assessment. We also created the first-of-its-kind Voter Data Integrity Dashboard for use by county boards of elections in quickly identifying and reconciling discrepancies to ensure records remain accurate and current. As a result of our combined efforts, Ohio now has the most accurate statewide voter registration database in state history, but much more work needs to be done. The voter file is a constantly changing database, in need of ongoing maintenance as people move to a new residence, change a name, become deceased, or otherwise become ineligible to vote.

As we now work to check our voter registration database against available federal data, we will identify many more records in need of remediation or removal. For this reason, my administration has increased the frequency of our list maintenance directives, and the guidance presented here builds on that continued work.

This directive pertains to deceased registrants we have identified through our federal data verification process. Ohio has historically utilized deceased data from the Ohio Department of Health and the State and Territorial Exchange of Vital Events (STEVE) database for compliance with Ohio law and the National Voter Registration Act requirements to make a reasonable effort to remove the names of ineligible voters from official lists due to death. The prior executive administration denied Ohio's access to the needed data and delayed our ability to review all deceased records. However, we now have that access, and this is the first of what will likely be several directives aimed at voter list maintenance based on these new sources of federal government data. Significantly, the Department of Homeland Security has expanded SAVE's capabilities to include verifying death records reported to the Social Security Administration. This directive therefore instructs the boards to remove deceased individuals confirmed by the Social Security Administration within 10 days.<sup>2</sup>

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

The boards are instructed to access **SharePoint > County (Ex. Adams) > Directive 2025-50 Voter Registration Data Integrity** files containing records identified as deceased by the Social Security Administration. The boards must access the files, review the data, and process it within 10 days of this directive.

Exception: If the board is currently conducting an election, do not process the files received after registration closes until the election is certified. If the board receives this

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<sup>2</sup> [R.C. 3501.11\(U\)](#) and [52 U.S.C. § 20507\(a\)\(4\)\(A\)](#).

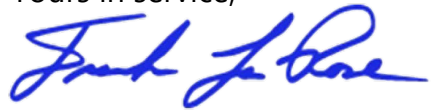
data after the close of registration, process the files as soon as the board is authorized to resume processing voter registrations, after the Official Canvass. Check voter history for registrations listed in the files received after registration closes to ensure no ballot was cast after the deceased voter's death. This exception only applies to registrations in precincts impacted by the current election.

When canceling a registration based on this directive, the voter registration record must be canceled and must list deceased as the cancellation reason. Upon cancellation, the board must send written notice on updated [Form 255-C](#) to the deceased voter's address and mark the third option of the form for cancellation. If the individual was canceled in error, then the board must restore the individual's voter registration as if it never occurred and notify the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State's office will continue to review the SAVE system for deceased records on an ongoing, regular basis and provide the boards with notification when additional records are identified. Such records must be processed in accordance with this directive.

If you have any questions about this directive or need assistance, please contact [Intake@OhioSoS.gov](mailto:Intake@OhioSoS.gov) or 614-728-8789.

Yours in service,



Frank LaRose

Ohio Secretary of State