Numbered Memo 2022-04

TO: County Boards of Elections
FROM: Karen Brinson Bell, Executive Director
RE: Voter Registration Deadline
DATE: April 26, 2022

This numbered memo provides guidance regarding the deadline to submit a voter registration application. It formalizes guidance that was sent to county boards in 2020 and replaces Numbered Memo 2016-02.

To be valid for an election, a voter registration application must be submitted by the 25th day before the election. The time for receipt depends on the mode of submission. Forms will be processed for the election if received as follows:¹

¹ G.S. § 163-82.6:

... (d) Registration Deadlines for a Primary or Election. - In order to be valid for a primary or election, the form:

(1) If submitted by mail, must be postmarked at least 25 days before the primary or election, except that any mailed application on which the postmark is missing or unclear is validly submitted if received in the mail not later than 20 days before the primary or election,

(2) If submitted in person, by facsimile transmission, or by transmission of a scanned document, must be received by the county board of elections by a time established by that board, but no earlier than 5:00 P.M., on the twenty-fifth day before the primary or election,

(3) If submitted through a delegatee who violates the duty set forth in subsection (a) of this section, must be signed by the applicant and given to the delegatee not later than 25 days before the primary or election, except as provided in subsection (f) of this section.

(e) If the application is submitted by facsimile transmission or transmission of a scanned document, a permanent copy of the completed, signed form shall be delivered to the county board no later than 20 days before the election.

...
In Person
If submitted in person, the form must be received by the county board of elections by 5 p.m. on the 25th day before the election. This includes voter registration forms submitted in person by a voter drive.

Mail
If mailed and postmarked, must be postmarked by the 25th day before the election.

If mailed and the postmark is missing or unclear, must be received by the 20th day before the election.

Fax or Email
If submitted by fax or email, must be received by 11:59 p.m. on the 25th day before the election. If it is a new registration in the county, the wet ink signature must be received by the 20th day before the election. A wet ink signature is not required for a name change, party change, or address change in the county. See Numbered Memo 2020-05.

DMV or other NVRA Agency (Includes Online Voter Registration) ²
If submitted in person or by mail, NVRA registrations (e.g., 01, 02, 03, 05, and 21) must be signed by the 25th day before the election.

If submitted via online voter registration (OVA), must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. by the 25th day before the election. Remember to check the Incomplete Queue for OVA registrations. The OVA forms will have a timestamp next to the voter’s signature:

² G.S. § 163-82.20(h): “Twenty-Five-Day Deadline for an Election. - Applications to register accepted by a voter registration agency shall entitle a registrant to vote in any primary, general, or special election unless the registrant shall have made application later than the twenty-fifth calendar day immediately preceding such primary, general, or special election, provided that nothing shall prohibit voter registration agencies from continuing to accept applications during that period.”