

WISCONSIN ELECTIONS COMMISSION

212 EAST WASHINGTON AVENUE, 3RD FLOOR
POST OFFICE BOX 7984
MADISON, WI 53707-7984
(608) 261-2028
ELECTIONS@WI.GOV
ELECTIONS.WI.GOV



COMMISSIONERS

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JULIE M. GLANCEY
ANN S. JACOBS
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ADMINISTRATOR MICHAEL HAAS

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 5, 2016

TO: Wisconsin Municipal Clerks
City of Milwaukee Election Commission
Wisconsin County Clerks
Milwaukee County Election Commission

FROM: Michael Haas, Interim Administrator
Mai Choua Thao, WisVote Elections Specialist

SUBJECT: BADGER Voters Absentee Ballot Subscription Service

2015 Act 261 charged the Government Accountability Board (G.A.B.) and the Wisconsin Elections Commission with developing a subscription service that would allow the public to access absentee ballot data that is tracked in WisVote. Since the enactment of 2015 Act 261, the G.A.B. and the Elections Commission have been working on the implementation of the subscription service utilizing the current data request website, BADGER Voters, as the online tool to house the subscription service. The purpose of this communication is to announce the completion of the absentee subscription service in BADGER Voters and to provide an overview of how the subscription service works as the new feature becomes available for public use.

Data requesters wishing to receive absentee ballot data information on a rolling basis can now obtain such information through the BADGER Voters data request website. Users of BADGER Voters will have the option to sign up or register for an annual subscription of their submitted absentee ballot data request. The subscription will allow the user to receive and download updates of the submitted data request for the calendar year and will allow requesters to obtain updates as often as the subscriber prefers. More specifically, the BADGER Voters absentee subscription service will automatically look for any new data that meets the criteria of the submitted request based on the number of times the user wishes to receive updates. Users will receive email notifications each time an update occurs containing the total number of records found and an estimated quote of the file. As with all data files in BADGER Voters, users will have the option to purchase updated files either online or by cash or check.

Wis. Stat. 6.36(6) permits the Elections Commission to establish administrative rules for setting the price structure for accessing the subscription service. Until further administrative rulemaking of the cost structure of the subscription service is established, the current data pricing for the subscription service is set at \$25. In addition, there will be a charge of \$5 per 1,000 records provided or updated since the last request, but there will not be a separate \$25 charge for subsequent requests after the annual charge. A new subscription is required each calendar year.

Given the implementation of the absentee subscription service that is now available in BADGER Voters as well as growing public interest in obtaining absentee ballot data, it is important that clerks continue to do their best in entering absentee ballot data into WisVote including entry of absentee applications, issuance of ballots, and recording ballot statuses. The Elections Commission staff is happy to assist and help answer any questions you may have as you continue to track and record absentee ballot information into WisVote. If you have questions or and concerns about the implementation of the absentee subscription service in BADGER Voters or any other questions, please feel free to contact the Elections Commission HelpDesk at elections@wi.gov or at (608) 261-2028.