

State of Wisconsin \ Government Accountability Board

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JUDGE THOMAS H. BARLAND
Chairperson

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 12, 2014

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

FROM: Michael Haas
Elections Division Administrator

SUBJECT: Voter Photo ID Requirement Reinstated for November General Election

This afternoon the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals reinstated the requirement that most Wisconsin voters present photo identification in order to cast a ballot for the November 4, 2014 General Election. The Court of Appeals lifted an injunction against the requirement that had previously been issued by Judge Lynn Adelman of the Eastern District of Wisconsin federal court. A copy of the Court of Appeals order is attached.

The Government Accountability Board will communicate additional guidance to local election officials next week, which will include instructions regarding the processing of absentee ballots which have already been issued. In the meantime, please note the following:

1. The Court of Appeals order reinstates the photo identification requirement starting with the November election. Voters must not be asked to present photo ID for any local special election prior to the General Election.
2. Absentee ballots that are mailed will need to include uniform instructions depending upon the type of voter which incorporate directions about the photo ID requirement. For that reason, municipalities are directed not to mail out any additional absentee ballots until the G.A.B. issues those uniform instructions which will occur as soon as possible.
3. Military and permanent overseas voters are exempt from the photo ID requirement. Any ballots obtained through MyVote Wisconsin do not require a copy of photo ID when they are returned to the municipal clerk.

We understand that this change will require additional work and training on the part of clerks and election inspectors. G.A.B. staff will do all that we can to assist you in implementing the law and communicating with voters. If you have any questions, please contact the G.A.B. Help Desk at gabhelpdesk@wi.gov or (608) 261-2028. Thank you.