

State of Wisconsin \ Government Accountability Board

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DATE: August 17, 2012

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

FROM: Nathaniel E. Robinson
Election Division Administrator
Government Accountability Board

SUBJECT: Public Records Requests for GAB-190 Statistics/Voter Data Requests from SVRS

Public Records Requests

The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board has received several public records requests for elections statistics listed on the GAB-190 Form, including cost data for the April 3rd, May 8th, and June 5th elections this year. By law, we are required to comply with these public records requests. Based on communications with municipal and county clerks, we understand that some clerks may have reported cost data before receiving all of their bills for an election.

We want to remind our clerk partners that the cost information may be updated at any time. Please contact Brian Bell at (608) 261-2011 or brian.bell@wi.gov if you need to update any cost reports for the April, May, or June election.

The cost report for the August 14 Partisan Primary is now available in the same format as the reporting unit section of the GAB-190, and you can go back and update the cost report the same way you can for the rest of the GAB-190 data. By August 24, 2012 we will also add the previous cost reports directly into WEDCS so clerks will be able to update that information for the April, May, and June elections. Updated instructions for WEDCS can be found on the GAB website at <http://gab.wi.gov/clerks/education-training/svrs-manual>.

The G.A.B. has also revised the statement about data availability and quality to incorporate election, voting, and registration statistics. This statement will be provided to everyone who requests data from the G.A.B. A copy is enclosed for your convenience.

Voter Data Request From SVRS

As we look forward to the November 6 General and Presidential Election, we expect an increase in data requests. This includes voter listings, voter participation, polling place locations, absentee information, and a variety of other types of data. The price for data from the Statewide Voter Registration System

(SVRS) is determined by Wisconsin Statute §6.36(6) and Wisconsin Administrative Code §GAB 3.50. Note that these requests are addressed differently than public records requests for documents, which are limited to the cost of producing copies of the documents.

Absentee information requests are an excellent example of the difference between these two types of requests. For example, if you provide a list of absentee voters from SVRS then you should charge \$25 plus \$5 per 1,000 voters (\$5 for up to the first 1,000 and rounded to the nearest 1,000 thereafter). If you do not use SVRS to track absentee ballots and only use a paper absentee ballot log, then, you would only charge for the cost of making a copy of your absentee ballot log.

Clerks may process voter data requests through SVRS. Instructions are outlined in the reports chapter of the SVRS manual, available on the G.A.B. website at: <http://gab.wi.gov/clerks/education-training/svrs-manual>. You may also refer data requests to the G.A.B. If you process a request, we encourage you to also provide a copy of the G.A.B. statement on data availability and quality. You can also use copies of the GAB-361 Voter Data Request Form for your record keeping. A fillable PDF version of the form is available on the G.A.B. website at: <http://gab.wi.gov/forms/gab-361>.

If you refer a request to the G.A.B., we ask that the requestor contact the G.A.B. directly at (608) 261-2028, or GABdata@wi.gov. Note that Wisconsin Administrative Code §GAB 3.50(10) states that “The money received from requests for voter registration data shall remain with the municipality, county, or government accountability board, whichever produces and provides the report.”

If you have any additional questions about GAB-190 statistics or voter data requests, please contact Brian Bell, Elections Data Manager, at (608) 261-2028, or Brian.Bell@wi.gov. You may also contact the G.A.B. Help Desk at (608) 261-2028, or gabhhelpdesk@wi.gov. Thank you.

Enclosure:

cc: Kevin J. Kennedy
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