

# Government Accountability Board

## State of Wisconsin

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## Veterans Can Now Use VA Cards for Voter ID in Wisconsin

MADISON, WI – For the first time, Wisconsin’s veterans can use a photo ID card issued by the Veterans Health Administration to get a ballot when they vote on April 5.

The change is part of an elections bill passed by the Legislature and signed into law by the Governor. The new law also makes it easier for voters who live in residential care facilities to register.

“Since the voter ID legislation was passed in 2011, many veterans have complained that the photo ID cards they use at VA clinics and hospitals wouldn’t work at the polling place,” said Kevin Kennedy, Wisconsin’s chief election official. “Many veterans already have another acceptable form of photo ID, but this change in the law will make it easier for homeless veterans and other veterans whose driver licenses or state ID cards have expired.”

Under the law, veterans’ photo identification cards that are issued by the Veterans Health Administration of the federal Department of Veterans Affairs may be used as an acceptable form of proof of identification for obtaining a ballot. The VA card must be unexpired or have no expiration date. Under existing law, photo identification cards issued by the military could already be used for voting purposes, including cards issued to retired service members or their dependents. Military photo ID cards must be either unexpired, have no expiration date, or have expired since the last general election in November 2014.

For a complete list of acceptable photo IDs, visit <http://bringit.wisconsin.gov>. The voter ID education website also has information about how to get a free state ID card for voting from the DMV. The campaign’s TV and radio ads, short videos and printable brochures are available on the website. Voters can also call a toll-free number, 866-VOTE-WIS (866-868-3947), for information.

Elections Division Administrator Michael Haas said another important change signed into law today helps ease voter registration for people in residential care facilities.

“Changes to election law in 2013 tightened the requirements for proof-of-residence documents for voter registration,” Haas said. “The new changes recognize that people who live in residential care facilities may not have traditional documentation with their current address, such as tax and utility bills.”

Haas said that an occupant of a residential care facility may now use a contract or intake document prepared by the facility that specifies that the occupant currently resides in the facility

as proof of residence for the purpose of registering to vote from the facility's address. The document may, but is not required to, identify the room or unit in which the occupant resides.

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The Government Accountability Board (G.A.B.) is responsible for administration and enforcement of campaign finance, elections, ethics and lobbying laws in Wisconsin. The G.A.B. is made up of six non-partisan, former judges and is supported by an agency of non-partisan staff members.