

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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What Voters Should Expect at the Polls Tuesday

MADISON, WI – The Government Accountability Board reminds voters to be prepared for Tuesday’s Spring Election and Presidential Preference Primary.

“We say voters should be prepared because there is still some uncertainty about whether an acceptable photo ID will be required to vote on Tuesday,” said Kevin Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B. “As of today, a photo ID will not be required, but voters should pay attention to news reports on Election Day in the event of a change.”

The Attorney General has appealed two Dane County District Court orders enjoining the G.A.B. from enforcing photo ID provisions of 2011 Wisconsin Act 23. On March 28, those appeals were certified to the Wisconsin Supreme Court, which has not yet taken action on them.

“We are just a few days away from the April 3 election, and we have taken extensive steps to comply with the March 6 and March 12 court orders enjoining us from implementing and enforcing the photo ID provisions of the law,” Kennedy said. “While we understand the need to have this issue settled, as election administrators we believe it would be unfair to voters and local election officials to have the rules concerning photo ID changed again so close to the election.”

The G.A.B. has instructed local election officials to train poll workers on the photo ID requirements of the law so they will be prepared in case the court orders blocking photo ID are reversed. However, the local election officials have been instructed not to enforce the photo ID requirements for the April 3 election unless a new court orders otherwise.

Likewise, voters who have an acceptable photo ID (WI driver license, WI state ID card, student ID card with proof of enrollment, military ID card, US passport, tribal ID card) should bring it with them to the polling place, in the event the Supreme Court reinstates the photo ID requirement immediately before the April 3 election, Kennedy said.

“When you get to the polling place, be ready to state your name and address to the poll workers,” said Nathaniel E. Robinson, elections division administrator. “This is something Wisconsin voters have always needed to do to vote. It doesn’t matter if the poll workers know you.”

Voters should also be ready to sign the poll book – another new requirement in Act 23 that was not changed by the court orders. “Having you sign the poll book helps ensure your voter participation records are accurate, and will also provide evidence in case of suspected voter fraud,” Robinson said.

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.