

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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New Voter Registration Requirements Take Effect

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board is providing guidance to voters and local election officials about voter registration requirements that become effective yesterday.

All electors, except those in the military and those residing overseas permanently, must now provide a valid proof of residence document when registering to vote. Under previous law, a document establishing residency was not required if an elector registered to vote more than 20 days before an election.

“The Legislature sought to make the proof of residence requirement consistent for voters regardless of when they register to vote,” said Kevin Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B. “It is important that voters understand that they must have a valid document showing their current name and address when they register with a clerk or at a voter registration drive, or that they must submit a copy of the document when registering by mail.”

A variety of documents can be used to prove a person’s residence, including a valid driver license or state identification card, a utility bill or residential lease, a bank statement or paycheck, or a property tax bill or other document issued by a unit of government. A full list of acceptable documents is available here: <http://gab.wi.gov/publications/voter-guides/proof-of-residence>.

Governor Walker signed 2013 Wisconsin Act 182 (Senate Bill 267) and it became effective on Friday, April 4, 2014. The G.A.B. has issued guidance to clerks, special registration deputies, and voters regarding the new requirements, which may be found at <http://gab.wi.gov/node/3151>.

Elections Division Administrator Michael Haas noted that election officials will be implementing a number of new legislative changes leading up to this fall’s elections. “Change has become a constant in the world of elections,” Haas said. “We appreciate that municipal and county clerks will need to adapt their procedures and training to comply with these changes. Their efforts will help ensure the integrity of the registration and election process while assisting each qualified elector to become eligible to vote.”

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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.