

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2026 SESSION

CHAPTER 228

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 24.2-418, 24.2-506, 24.2-676, 24.2-680, and 24.2-947.1 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 5 of Title 24.2 a section numbered 24.2-504.1, relating to elections; candidates and elected officials; address confidentiality.

[H 835]

Approved April 6, 2026

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 24.2-418, 24.2-506, 24.2-676, 24.2-680, and 24.2-947.1 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 5 of Title 24.2 a section numbered 24.2-504.1 as follows:

§ 24.2-418. Application for registration.

A. Each applicant to register shall provide, subject to felony penalties for making false statements pursuant to § 24.2-1016, the information necessary to complete the application to register. Unless physically disabled, he shall sign the application. The application to register shall be only on a form or forms prescribed by the State Board.

The form of the application to register shall require the applicant to provide the following information: full name; gender; date of birth; social security number, if any; whether the applicant is presently a United States citizen; address of residence in the precinct; place of last previous registration to vote; and whether the applicant has ever been adjudicated incapacitated and disqualified to vote or convicted of a felony, and if so, whether the applicant's right to vote has been restored. The form shall contain a statement that whoever votes more than once in any election in the same or different jurisdictions is guilty of a Class 6 felony. Unless directed by the applicant or as permitted in § 24.2-411.2 or 24.2-411.3, the registration application shall not be pre-populated with information the applicant is required to provide.

The form of the application to register shall request that the applicant provide his telephone number and email address, but no application shall be denied for failure to provide such information.

B. The form shall permit any individual, as follows, or member of his household, to furnish, in addition to his residence street address, a post office box address located within the Commonwealth to be included in lieu of his street address on the lists of registered voters and persons who voted, which are furnished pursuant to §§ 24.2-405 and 24.2-406, on voter registration records made available for public inspection pursuant to § 24.2-444, or on lists of absentee voter applicants furnished pursuant to § 24.2-706 or 24.2-710. The voter shall comply with the provisions of § 24.2-424 for any change in the post office box address provided under this subsection.

1. Any active or retired law-enforcement officer, as defined in § 9.1-101 and in 5 U.S.C. § 8331(20), but excluding officers whose duties relate to detention as defined in 5 U.S.C. § 8331(20);

2. Any *party person* granted a protective order issued by or under the authority of any court of competent jurisdiction, including but not limited to courts of the Commonwealth of Virginia;

3. Any *party person* who has furnished a signed written statement by the *party person* that he is in fear for his personal safety from another person who has threatened or stalked him;

4. Any *party person* participating in the address confidentiality program pursuant to § 2.2-515.2;

5. Any active or retired federal or Virginia justice, judge, or magistrate and any active or retired attorney employed by the United States Attorney General or Virginia Attorney General;

6. Any person who has been approved to be a foster parent pursuant to Chapter 9 (§ 63.2-900 et seq.) of Title 63.2;

7. Any person who is or has been one of the Commonwealth's electors for President and Vice President of the United States; ~~and~~

8. Any person who is or has been a member of the State Board of Elections, the Commissioner of Elections, an employee of the Department of Elections, a member of a local electoral board pursuant to § 24.2-106, a general registrar pursuant to § 24.2-110, a deputy registrar or employee in the office of the general registrar pursuant to § 24.2-112, or an officer of election pursuant to § 24.2-115; *and*

9. *Any person who is or has been an elected official.*

C. If the applicant formerly resided in another state, the general registrar shall send the information contained in the applicant's registration application to the appropriate voter registration official or other authority of another state where the applicant formerly resided, as prescribed in subdivision 15 of § 24.2-114.

§ 24.2-504.1. Confidentiality of personally identifiable information.

A. *The custodian of any filing made by a candidate pursuant to this chapter shall not release the address, phone number, or email address of such candidate in response to a request made under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.) without written consent of the candidate. If written consent is not*

granted or if the candidate does not respond to the custodian's request within five business days, the information shall be redacted. Nothing in this section shall have any bearing upon disclosures required to be made pursuant to any court order or subpoena. No exemption from mandatory disclosure shall be construed to make records or parts of records covered by such exemption privileged under the rules of discovery.

B. A candidate shall be permitted to provide the unique identifier assigned to him in the voter registration system pursuant to subdivision A 1 of § 24.2-404 in place of his residence address on any candidate filing required pursuant to this chapter.

§ 24.2-506. Petition of qualified voters required; number of signatures required; certain towns excepted.

A. The name of any candidate for any office, other than a party nominee, shall not be printed upon any official ballots provided for the election unless he shall file along with his declaration of candidacy a petition therefor, on a form prescribed by the State Board, signed by the number of qualified voters specified in this subsection on and after January 1 of the year in which the general election is held, or on and after the day on which the writ of election is issued in the case of a special election, and listing the residence address of each such voter. Each signature on the petition shall have been witnessed by a person who is not a minor or a felon whose voting rights have not been restored and whose affidavit to that effect appears on each page of the petition. Each such person circulating a petition who is not a legal resident of the Commonwealth shall sign a statement on the affidavit that he consents to the jurisdiction of the courts of Virginia in resolving any disputes concerning the circulation of petitions, or signatures contained therein, by that person. The signatures of qualified voters collected by a nonresident petition circulator who fails to sign such statement, or who later fails to appear or produce documents when properly served with a subpoena to do so, shall not be counted towards the minimum number of signatures required pursuant to this subsection.

Each voter signing the petition may provide on the petition the last four digits of his social security number, if any; however, noncompliance with this requirement shall not be cause to invalidate the voter's signature on the petition.

The minimum number of signatures of qualified voters required for candidate petitions shall be as follows:

1. For a candidate for the United States Senate, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General, 10,000 signatures, including the signatures of at least 400 qualified voters from each congressional district in the Commonwealth;
2. For a candidate for the United States House of Representatives, 1,000 signatures;
3. For a candidate for the Senate of Virginia, 250 signatures;
4. For a candidate for the House of Delegates or for a constitutional office, 125 signatures;
5. For a candidate for membership on the governing body or elected school board of any county or city, 125 signatures; or if from an election district not at large containing 1,000 or fewer registered voters, 50 signatures;
6. For a candidate for membership on the governing body or elected school board of any town that has more than 3,500 registered voters, 125 signatures; or if from a ward or other district not at large, 25 signatures;
7. For a candidate for membership on the governing body or elected school board of any town that has at least 1,500 but not more than 3,500 registered voters, 50 signatures; or if from a ward or other district not at large, 25 signatures;
8. For a candidate for membership on the governing body or elected school board of any town that has fewer than 1,500 registered voters, no petition shall be required;
9. For a candidate for director of a soil and water conservation district created pursuant to Article 3 (§ 10.1-506 et seq.) of Chapter 5 of Title 10.1, 25 signatures; and
10. For any other candidate, 50 signatures.

B. The State Board shall approve uniform standards by which petitions filed by a candidate for office, other than a party nominee, are reviewed to determine if the petitions contain sufficient signatures of qualified voters as required in subsection A. *Such standards shall not include a requirement for a candidate for office to provide his residence address or the unique identifier assigned to the voter in the voter registration system pursuant to subdivision A 1 of § 24.2-404 on the petition prior to it being filed.*

The State Board of Elections, on or before January 1, 2020, shall revise its processes and associated regulations for reviewing and processing candidate petitions. Such revisions shall provide a process for checking petition signatures that includes a method for determining if a petition signature belongs to an individual whose prior registration has been canceled and the reason for such cancellation. The process shall provide for the tracking of such information associated with each petition. The process shall provide for the escalation of cases of suspected fraud to the electoral board, the State Board, or the office of the attorney for the Commonwealth, as appropriate.

C. If a candidate, other than a party nominee, does not qualify to have his name appear on the ballot by reason of the candidate's filed petition not containing the minimum number of signatures of qualified voters for the office sought, the candidate may appeal that determination within five calendar days of the issuance of

the notice of disqualification pursuant to § 24.2-612 or notice from the State Board that the candidate did not meet the requirements to have his name appear on the ballot.

Appeals made by candidates for a county, city, or town office shall be filed with the electoral board. Appeals made by candidates for all other offices shall be filed with the State Board. The appeal shall be heard by the State Board or the electoral board, as appropriate, within five business days of its filing. The electoral board shall notify the State Board of any appeal that is filed with the electoral board.

The State Board shall develop procedures for the conduct of such an appeal. The consideration on appeal shall be limited to whether or not the signatures on the petitions that were filed were reasonably rejected according to the requirements of this title and the uniform standards approved by the State Board for the review of petitions. Immediately after the conclusion of the appeal hearing, the entity conducting the appeal shall notify the candidate and, if applicable, the State Board, of its decision in writing. The decision on appeal shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

§ 24.2-676. Secretary to make out and deliver certificate of election.

Immediately after the electoral board has determined the election results, the secretary shall make out certificates of election for each county, city, town, or district office other than an office shared by more than one county or city, or any combination thereof. The secretary shall make out the certificate for each of the persons who has the highest number of votes for the office, who has sufficient votes to be elected to a multi-member office, or, in case of a tie, who has been decided by lot to be elected. The secretary, or another board member or registrar designated by the secretary, shall deliver in person or the secretary shall transmit by certified mail the certificate to the person elected, as soon as such person has complied with the provisions of § 24.2-948.2. *The certificate shall be delivered to the person declared to be elected with a notice that the person meets the qualifications for being granted protected voter status under the provisions of subsection B of § 24.2-418. The notice shall include instructions for updating the person's voter registration to acquire such protected status.*

§ 24.2-680. Certificates of election.

Subject to the requirements of § 24.2-948.2, the State Board shall without delay complete and transmit to each of the persons declared to be elected a certificate of his election, certified by it under its seal of office. In the election of a member of the United States Congress, it shall also forward a certificate of election to the clerk of the United States Senate or House of Representatives, as appropriate. The names of members elected to the General Assembly shall be certified by the State Board to the clerk of the House of Delegates or Senate, as appropriate. The names of the persons elected Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Attorney General shall be certified by the State Board to the clerks of the House of Delegates and Senate. The name of any officer shared by more than one county or city, or any combination thereof, shall be certified by the State Board to the clerk of the circuit court having jurisdiction in each affected county or city. The names of the persons elected to soil and water conservation districts shall be certified by the State Board to the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation. *The certificate shall be delivered to the person declared to be elected with a notice that the person meets the qualifications for being granted protected voter status under the provisions of subsection B of § 24.2-418. The notice shall include instructions for updating the person's voter registration to acquire such protected status.*

§ 24.2-947.1. Statement of organization.

A. Any individual seeking or campaigning for an office of the Commonwealth or one of its governmental units in a party nomination process or general, primary, or special election shall file a statement of organization within 10 days of meeting any one of the following conditions:

1. Acceptance of a contribution;
2. Expenditure of any funds;
3. The payment of a filing fee for any party nomination method;
4. The filing of a candidate statement of qualification pursuant to § 24.2-501;
5. The appointment of a campaign treasurer, designation of a campaign committee, or designation of a campaign depository; or
6. In the case of a candidate for a town office in a town with a population of less than 25,000 that has not otherwise adopted the provisions of this chapter by ordinance, acceptance of a contribution or expenditure of funds that brings the total amount of contributions accepted or funds expended to more than \$25,000 within the candidate's election cycle, as set forth in § 24.2-947.

B. Candidates for statewide office shall file the statement with the State Board. Candidates for the General Assembly shall file the statement with the State Board and a copy of the statement with the general registrar of the locality of the candidate's residence. Candidates for local or constitutional office shall file the statement with the general registrar and, if the statement indicates that the candidate committee will be filing electronically, a copy with the State Board.

C. The statement of organization shall include the following information:

1. The full name and *either the residence address of the candidate or the unique identifier assigned to the candidate in the voter registration system pursuant to subdivision A 1 of § 24.2-404;*
2. The full name and mailing address for the campaign committee;

3. The full name, residence address, and daytime phone number of the treasurer;
4. The office being sought and district, if any, for the office;
5. The recognized political party affiliation of the candidate for statewide office or the General Assembly.

In the absence of any political party affiliation, independent shall be used;

6. The name of the financial institution for his campaign depository; and
7. Such other information as shall be required by the State Board except that the account number for a designated depository account shall not be required.

D. In the case of any candidate who seeks election for successive terms in the same office, the statement of organization filed by the candidate shall continue in effect for such successive elections, but the candidate shall file notice of any changes in the information provided on the form within 10 days of the change with the State Board, general registrar, or both, as appropriate.

2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on January 1, 2027.