



<b>SUBJECT</b> Voter's Registration	<b>YEAR</b> 2008	<b>PROCEDURE NUMBER</b> APD 05-002
<b>PROCEDURE MAINTENANCE ADMINISTRATOR:</b> Community Development		
<b>PURPOSE:</b> The purpose of this operating procedure is to establish procedure to assure the Agency is in compliance with the statutorily mandated Voter Registration Act, Chapter 97, F.S.		

**1. AUTHORITY**

Chapter 97, Part II, Florida Statutes, Voter Registration Act, designates the Agency for Persons with Disabilities as a voter registration agency and requires the agency to offer assistance with voter's registration for all applicants 17 and older, for individuals who are "renewing services" or at any time a change of address is made. Also, those individuals aged 15 and above who have a driver's permit should be given the opportunity to pre-register to vote using the process outlined in this operating procedure.

**2. SCOPE**

The Agency for Persons with Disabilities will comply with all requirements of the National Voter Registration Act and the Florida Voter Registration Act. This operating procedure applies to all APD area offices, waiver support coordinators and to Developmental Disabilities Centers.

**3. REFERENCES**

Sections 97.021(40) and 97.058, F.S.

**4. DEFINITIONS**

- a. Agency - the Agency for Person's with Disabilities (APD)
- b. Applicant – individual applying for services from APD
- c. Developmental Disabilities Center (DDC) – one of three facilities operated by the Agency. These facilities include Sunland at Marianna, Tacachale in Gainesville and Gulf Coast Center in Ft. Myers.
- d. Support Coordinator – APD staff who assists the individual with access to services and coordination of services for those individuals who are not enrolled in a waiver program. Also refers to support coordinators who are certified and enrolled Medicaid providers who serve individuals enrolled in a waiver program.

Jim DeBeaugrine, Acting Director ( <i>signature on file</i> )	
<b>Effective Date</b> July 1, 2008	<b>Revision Date</b> This operating procedure was established July 2008.

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## 5. **PROCESS**

### **A. New Applicants**

At the time of application for services from the Agency, any applicant who is seventeen years of age or older, who is a U.S. citizen, who has not been adjudicated as incompetent or who has not been convicted of a felony without civil rights restored shall be provided with an opportunity to register to vote. Also, those individuals aged 15 and above who have a driver's permit should be given the opportunity to pre-register to vote using the process outlined in this operating procedure.

Applicants who meet the criteria above shall be provided with a copy of the Voter Registration Preference Form (attachment A) and asked to complete it as a part of the application process.

The Agency staff member conducting the intake or application process will assist the individual, in person or on the telephone, in completing the form including a review of the criteria that must be met in order to register to vote. This criteria is included on the Voter's Registration Preference Form. Once signed, the form will be filed in the legal section of the individual's central record. The Agency staff member shall witness the signature if it was made with an "x" mark.

If the applicant is not registered to vote and chooses to register, the Agency staff will provide the applicant with a copy of the Voter's Registration Form available from the local Supervisor of Elections Office or Secretary of State. If the individual has computer access, the Agency staff may direct him or her to the website of the Division of Elections, Florida Department of State where registration to vote may be made online. The web address is <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/>. Agency staff will provide assistance in completing the Voter's Registration Form unless the applicant refuses assistance. Assistance may be provided in the APD offices or in the individual's home.

Each area office shall maintain a sufficient supply of Voter's Registration Forms, in both English and Spanish, to meet the needs of all applicants. The forms must be kept in an open area that is accessible and visible to anyone coming into the office.

If the Voter's Registration Form is completed in the presence of APD staff during the intake/application process, the APD staff shall submit the

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completed Voter's Registration Form to the Supervisor of Elections Office within five days of the completion and signature of the form. The transmission envelope should clearly identify APD as the voter's registration Agency submitting the form. The submission of the form shall be documented in the case notes section of the central record.

The Agency cannot mandate the completion of this form. However, once submitted, the Agency must accept and forward the form to the appropriate Supervisor of Elections office even if the form is incomplete.

**B. Annual Review of Voter's Registration**

Individuals who have been determined eligible for APD services and who are receiving services, are on the waitlist for waiver services or who reside in a DDC will be given the opportunity to receive voter registration services upon request or at least annually during the support plan process.

The Voter's Registration Preference Form shall be completed, upon request or at least annually and filed in the individual's central record. If the individual makes the decision to register to vote, the procedure and timeframes outlined in paragraph A shall be followed.

**C. Notification of Change of Address**

Upon notification of change of address for an individual, the support coordinator or DDC staff shall provide the individual with an opportunity to register to vote, or update a voter registration either by phone or in person. The individual shall be provided with the Voter's Registration Preference Form to complete, indicating a preference for registration. If the individual elects to register to vote, he or she shall be provided with a Voter's Registration Form. Once submitted, Agency personnel shall mail the form to the Supervisor of Elections Office in the county where the individual wishes to vote.

The Voter's Registration Preference Form shall be filed in the individual's central record and the documented in the support coordinator's case notes.

**6. AREA OFFICE AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES CENTERS DESIGNATED CONTACTS**

Each area office must identify and designate a staff person whose duties include oversight of voter registration activities. The name of this staff

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person shall be designated as the APD contact for the local Supervisor of Elections office and the area contact for the APD central office.

This staff member will have the responsibility to assure that this operating procedure is followed and that any changes or updates to Voter's Registration statutes, rules and operating procedures are distributed to the appropriate parties as needed.

## **7. PROHIBITED ACTS RELATED TO VOTER'S REGISTRATION**

In accordance with Section 97.058(8), F.S., APD staff and providers who provide assistance with voter's registration services shall not seek to influence political preference or party registration and may not display any political preference or party allegiance. Staff and providers shall not make any statements that may lead an individual they are assisting to believe that a decision regarding voter registration would have any impact on the availability, approval or continuation of services. Any attempt to discourage an applicant or individual receiving services from registering to vote, disclosing any voter registration information or attempting to influence political preference will be grounds for disciplinary action.

Completed Voter's Registration Applications are confidential and must be kept out of view of unauthorized persons.