

VOTER LIST MAINTENANCE

June 4, 2025

Introduction

- Both state and federal law require each city and town to conduct voter list maintenance.
- The NVRA requires states to conduct a “general program” which makes a reasonable effort to remove ineligible voters from the lists of registered voters.

What is the street list?

- The street listing process is the foundation for the Commonwealth's compliance with the mandate set forth in the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA).
- The street listing process ensures that a yearly survey is performed to assess, among other things, the residence of individuals in each city or town.
- This annual survey provides local election officials with a process by which they may make changes to address information and inactive voters and thereafter delete such voters.
- The street listing is the primary tool used by municipalities to comply with requests for information from the Jury Commissioner.

Annual Street Listing

- On or before April 15th, the local election officials must prepare lists containing the names and addresses obtained in the street listing process.
- The street list must be arranged:
 - In cities by streets
 - In towns by streets or alphabetically by the names of the persons listed.

Annual Street Listing

- The street listing is required to be “published” and contain the following information for each person 17 years of age and older:
 - Name
 - DOB
 - Occupation
 - Nationality, if not a US citizen
 - Residence as of January 1st of the preceding year and of the current year

INACTIVATING VOTERS AND CONFIRMATION MAILINGS

Inactivating Voters

- After the street list responses are processed and you've completed that list itself, the voter list maintenance process begins by inactivating voters.
- Any voter who does not have a current census year (2025) should be made inactive.
- The easiest way to do this is using the “mass inactivation” process.
 - Using the “mass inactivation” process will also pick up anyone that you may have missed in previous years.
- Voters whose acknowledgement notices are returned as undeliverable must also be made inactive and sent a confirmation notice.

Confirmation Mailings

- Any voter who is made inactive must be sent a Confirmation Mailing notice.
- The Confirmation Mailing CANNOT be printed directly from VRIS.
- The mailing notifies the voter that their name has been removed from the active voting list and has been placed on the inactive voting list.
- The mailing must provide the voter with an opportunity to activate their voter status.

Confirmation Mailings

- Confirmation Mailing Notices Must:
 - Be sent postage prepaid;
 - Contain a preaddressed and postage prepaid return card;
 - Be sent by forwardable mail;
 - Instruct the voter to return the card before the last day to register; and
 - Contain additional information about remaining eligible to vote.

Sample Confirmation Notice

Dear Voter,

Our records indicate that you have not answered the annual street listing, (census) as required by law (Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 51, section 4). Therefore, your name will be designated as "inactive" on the voting list.

If you have not moved or if you have moved to a new street address in the city/town of _____ **return the attached postage pre-paid postcard and you will be** restored immediately to the active voters list.

If you have moved to another city/town, sign and return the attached postcard and your name will be immediately removed from the voters list here. You must register to vote in your new city/town. You may use a mail-in form to register.

If you do not return the attached postcard your name will be removed from the voters list if you do not vote in at least one of the next two state elections or take other action that would reinstate you as an active voter.

Board of Registrars or Election Commission
City or Town Hall
City/Town, MA 99999-9999



Voter
Street Address
City/Town, MA 99999-9999



Return Address
Main St.
City/Town, MA 99999-9999



Board of Registrars or Election
Commission
City or Town Hall
City/Town, MA 99999-9999



Please check the appropriate box and return immediately

☐ I am still living in the city or town of _____

My address now is _____

☐ I am no longer living in the city or town of _____

Sign your name on this line

Date

Confirmation Mailing Responses

- A response to a Confirmation Mailing Notice only changes a Voter's status from *Inactive* to *Active*.
- A response to a Confirmation Mailing does not update a voter's Census Year.
- If the voter responded to a Confirmation Mailing in June 2025 and does not return the 2026 street list form, the voter should be inactivated again in May 2026.

Mass Inactivation Tips

- Mass Inactivation must be run ANNUALLY.
- It should be run in MAY.
- You must send every inactivated voter a compliant Confirmation Mailing Notice by the first Monday in June.
- Inactive voters will only be eligible for deletion for inactivity if they've been sent the confirmation notice.

DELETING VOTERS AND RESIDENTS

Deleting Residents (Non-Voters)

- All residents without a current census should be deleted.
- Residents do not lose any rights when they are deleted, unlike voters.
- Deleting residents prevents minors from becoming HOH when voter parents are deleted.
- You are not required to notify a resident when they are deleted.

Deleting Voters

- A voter cannot be deleted unless one of the following is true:
 - The Voter has died.
 - The Voter has registered in another community.
 - The Voter requested deletion IN WRITING.
 - The Voter has not responded to the confirmation mailing and has not had any voter activity for 2 federal elections since the confirmation mailing was sent.

Deleting Inactive Voters

- You may delete an inactive voter for inactivity if:
 - the voter was sent a confirmation mailing notice; and
 - the voter has not had any voter activity for 2 federal elections since the confirmation mailing was sent.
- Voter activity includes any of the following:
 - Voting in any local or state election or town meeting; or
 - Signing a nomination paper or petition; or
 - Applying for a vote by mail ballot; or
 - Updating personal information on registration (i.e. political party, address, name); or
 - Returning a confirmation mailing after being inactivated; or
 - Responding to annual street list.

Tips for Deleting Inactive Voters in VRIS

- Run the Delete Inactives Report biennially in December of the even-numbered years.
- Always print the report before deleting voters.
- Make sure you have scanned your voter list before deleting.
- Always confirm the confirmation mailing was sent and the date was properly recorded in the Voter's record.

TIPS FOR COMPLIANCE

Keep your records as current and accurate as possible

Manage Queues DAILY

- Pending Certification Queue (*Res/Vot: Certify*)
 - All RMV and online registrations are processed here
 - Investigate the error message and certify registrations
- Vote by Mail EV Application Queue (*EV: EV App*)
 - All vote by mail applications submitted through the SOC website are found here
 - Even if you've opted out of vote by mail for your local election, applications can still be submitted
 - You'll need to notify the voter if their application is not valid because you opted out

Accepting Duplicate Voters

- *Potential* duplicates appear when you register a voter and VRIS finds an existing voter with the same First and Last Name and DOB in MA
- CLERK IS REQUIRED TO RESEARCH THE VOTER BEFORE ACCEPTING OR REJECTING POTENTIAL DUPLICATES
- ITEMS TO COMPARE:
 - Middle Initial
 - Social Security Number (ID)
 - Driver's License Number (ID)
 - Former Name
 - Former Address
 - SIGNATURES!

Accepting Duplicate Voters: Errors

- If you don't accept the duplicate and the voter is registered twice:
 - Print the *Voter-Inquire* Screen of the oldest registration
 - In *Res/Vot-Online*, create a new registration in VRIS
 - Enter the original registration date
 - Enter all the current personal info (address, name, party etc.)
 - Click *Certify*
 - Select all duplicates
- All the Voter History will now be merged into one voter record

Accepting Duplicate Voters: Errors

- When you accept a duplicate and realize they are actually two different voters:
 - Contact the Help Desk and provide:
 - Voters' Names
 - Voter I.D. Numbers
 - Both Communities of Origin
- Our technical staff will separate the voters' histories and contact you when it's completed

Automatic Voter Registration

- At the RMV or health agency, applicants who are at least 16 and a US citizen will have their information sent to your Pending Queue
- With AVR, applicants don't have the option to select a political party
 - All AVR records have 'Unenrolled' when in the Pending Queue
 - If they are currently registered to vote, all information updates EXCEPT party. If they were registered in a party, they stay registered in that party.
 - If they are not currently registered to vote, they are automatically registered as 'unenrolled.'

Accuracy of VRIS Data

- Standardize street addresses.
 - Confirming with Assessor's before adding new street addresses.
- Checking for potential duplicates.
- Making sure cross-referencing death records.
- Process cancellations we send from other states.
- ERIC

Contacts

Elections Division

One Ashburton Place, Room 1705
Boston, MA 02108

Telephone: 1-800-462-VOTE (8683) or (617) 727-2828

Fax: (617) 742-3238

Email: elections@sec.state.ma.us

CVR Help Desk

One Ashburton Place, Room 1705
Boston, MA 02108

Telephone: (617) 727-2600

Fax: (617) 367-8682

Email: sec-help@sec.state.ma.us