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### National Voter Registration Act (NVRA)

# Policy No. CT-820.04

Effective Date: October 1, 2016

### No. of Pages: 2

#### Policy

Georgia WIC Program local agencies shall distribute a Voter Registration application and a Voter Registration Declaration Statement to all applicants/participants at each WIC certification, recertification, or change of address related to the provision of WIC benefits. This must be done whether in person, electronically, or by phone, facsimile, or mail. An applicant's/participant's decision to register to vote, or declination to do so, must be documented. The Voter Registration Declaration Statement shall remain confidential and not be subject to public inspection. If an applicant/participant fails to complete the Statement, then he/she will be deemed to have declined to apply to register to vote.

While an applicant/participant is not required to be a United States citizen to be eligible to receive WIC services, an applicant/participant must be a United States citizen to register to vote. However, NEVER assume a person is or is not a citizen.

Completed voter registration applications received within fifteen (15) days of a voter registration deadline must be transmitted to the Secretary of State by the close of each business day. Failure to comply with the NVRA requirements could result in monetary penalties against an out-of-compliance local agency and the State of Georgia. Failure to comply could also result in enforcement action by the United States Department of Justice.

At no time may a WIC staff person, assisting an applicant/participant with completing a voter registration application, engage in the following behaviors:

- A. Influence an individual's political preference or party registration;
- B. Display any political preference or party allegiance;
- C. Take any action or making any statement to an individual to discourage interest in registering to vote;
- D. Take any action or make any statement(s) that may lead the individual to believe that a decision to register or not to register has any bearing on the availability of or eligibility for WIC services

#### Purpose

To comply with the Congress enacted National Voter Registration Act of 1993 ("NVRA"), requiring states to establish procedures for public assistance applicants and participants to register to vote as designated under Section 7 of the NVRA.

To provide every citizen the opportunity to vote and ensure every citizen is informed of their right to vote.

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## Procedures

- I. Provide each applicant/participant, with a <u>Voter Registration Declaration Statement</u> and the voter registration application form at each certification, recertification, or change of address related to the provision of WIC benefits.
- II. Advise all applicants/participants, regardless of citizenship, that completion of the Voter Registration Declaration Statement is mandatory.
- III. Advise all applicants/participants that the voter registration application form may be completed and returned to a member of the local agency staff.
- IV. Offer the voter registration application form to all applicants/participants.
- V. Inform the applicant/participant the application can be mailed per the instructions on the application if an applicant/participant refuses to complete the voter registration application form in the clinic.
- VI. Offer an applicant/participant the same degree of assistance in completing a voter registration application as would be provided when completing WIC-related forms, if an applicant/participant elects to apply to register to vote on-site.
- VII. Accept completed voter registration applications and forward them to the Secretary of State at least once per week.
- VIII. Maintain Voter Registration Declaration Statements for a period of five years plus current.
- IX. Maintain statistical records on the number of voter registrations and declinations for submission to the Secretary of State upon request.
- X. Order voter registration supplies by contacting your local County Board of Registrar's Office. To find your County Board of Registrar's Office, visit <u>http://sos.ga.gov/cgi-bin/countyregistrarsindex.asp</u>, and select your county. Voter registration applications can be found on the Secretary of State website, at <u>http://sos.ga.gov/index.php/Elections/election\_connection</u>.

### Authority

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) (52 U.S.C. § 20501 - 52 U.S.C. § 20511) O.C.G.A. § 21-2-222(b)(1).

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Definitions/Supporting Information (None)