



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

SENATE RULES COMMITTEE

SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI, CHAIR

Senate Bill 64

Election Reform

Sectional Analysis

Section 1: allows voters to register to vote within 30 days of an election.

Section 2: clarifies the residency requirements to define a residence as a place where a voter has a reasonable and articulable plan to return to whenever they are absent and provides that the presumption that a voter's registered address is correct may be rebutted by evidence that the voter has established residency at a different location.

Section 3: allows voters at 16 years of age and under 18 years of age to preregister to vote.

Section 4: clarifies that a person can use an electronic signature to register to vote online.

Section 5: add two subsections related to voter registration.

Subsection (g) allows voters to designate a language to receive election materials in from the languages that the Division of Elections (Division) is required to provide language assistance in.

Subsection (h) requires voters registering within 30 days of the election to confirm that they have resided in their house district since at least 30 days before the election.

Section 6: clarifies that electronic signatures are valid of the voter or a person acting with power of attorney on behalf of the voter.

Section 7: states that a person who registers to vote within 30 days of an election, and who meets the qualifications to register, may vote an absentee, special needs, or questioned ballot for that election.

Section 8: is conforming language relating to registering within 30 days of an election.

Section 9: is conforming language relating to registering within 30 days of an election.

Section 10: is conforming language relating to registering within 30 days of an election.

Section 11: is conforming language relating to registering within 30 days of an election.

Section 12: requires the Division to send a single forwardable notice as part of voter list maintenance and adds additional categories of voters to receive notices..

Section 13: is conforming language to reflect the changes made in Section 12.

Section 14: is conforming language to reflect the changes made in Section 12.

Section 15: requires the director to develop a process for voters to cancel their registrations and require that instructions for how to cancel one's registration be prominently posted at polling places.

Section 16: creates a rural community liaison in the Division.

Section 17: allows political parties, candidates, ballot measure, and ballot question campaigns to have observers at polling places and counting centers and clarifies that campaigns may have observers at all locations within a counting center where ballots are being reviewed or counted.

Section 18: repeals the requirement for the Alaska Public Offices Commission to have offices in every senate district.

Section 19: requires that notices be posted informing voters of language assistance available at precincts where it is required by federal law.

Section 20: codifies the procedure for when a person who requested an absentee ballot attempts to vote in person.

Section 21: clarifying that the division must include results for all rank levels on the precinct results.

Section 22: enacts new subsections related to unofficial results and ballot review data.

Subsection (b) requires the Division to release data for which ballots have been counted along with unofficial results.

Subsection (c) requires the Division to release data for count and reject codes for absentee ballots each day ballots are reviewed.

Subsection (d) provides a definition of "count code."

Section 23: allows candidates and ballot proposition campaigns to observe the State Review Board process.

Section 24: allows the Division to adopt additional risk limiting audit procedures as part of the State Review Board process.

Section 25: requires that all absentee ballots include a postage-paid return envelope. It also requires that there is a space for recording the date that the voter executed the certificate.

Section 26: provides that special needs ballots may not be rejected because of errors made by poll workers or representatives.

Section 27: repeals the witness signature requirement for absentee ballots.

Section 28: states that a ballot received after the day of the election that is not postmarked or postmarked after the election may be counted if it is marked with a United States Postal Service tracking barcode that indicates it was mailed on or before the day of the election.

Section 29: contains two provisions related to absentee by-mail ballots.

Subsection (m) allows voters to register to continue to receive absentee by mail ballots so long as the voter votes at least once every four years.

Subsection (n) allows voters to request by-mail ballots in any language for which the division is required to provide language assistance by federal law.

Section 30: requires the division to begin counting absentee ballots at least seven days before the election and to release the first tabulated results when polls close at 8pm on Election Day.

Section 31: contains conforming amendments to reflect the repeal of the witness signature requirement in and the new tracking barcode provision.

Section 32: requires the Division to adopt procedures for challenging ballot review decisions by regulation and that these regulations must provide a reasonable amount of time to submit a challenge.

Section 33: provides that ballots that are properly cured under new statute shall be counted during the state review board process if they were not previously counted.

Section 34: enacts two new sections of statutes:

New AS 15.20.221 requires the division to establish a ballot tracking system to allow a voter to track the status of their absentee by-mail ballot.

New AS 15.20.222 provides for ballot curing for absentee ballots.

- Subsection (a) requires the division to notify voters if their signature cannot be verified, there is no signature on the envelope, the voter does not have a signature on file, or if the voter did not provide a sufficient identifier of the process to cure their ballot.
- Subsection (b) requires that these notices must explain the need for a signature for verification purposes and include a form for the voter to provide their signature and copy of the identification.
- Subsection (c) provides that a ballot may be cured and counted if the voter returns the form, confirms that they did in fact vote, and provides a signature and copy of their identification.
- Subsection (d) provides that a ballot shall not be counted, and the director will refer the matter to the attorney general for investigation, if the voter indicates they did not in fact vote the ballot.
- Subsection (e) states that the division shall update their records with the signature the voter provides on the ballot curing forms.

Section 35: requires that the director provide secure ballot drop boxes at every DOE office and every community with 20,000 residents.

Section 36: clarifies that the return postage for absentee by-mail ballots required by Section 25 does not violate the prohibition on giving a thing of value in exchange for a person voting.

Section 37: requires the director to develop a cybersecurity program to defend the voter registration records kept by the division.

Section 38: prohibits the use of undisclosed synthetic media (commonly known as “deepfakes”) to influence elections and provides that someone defamed by an election related deepfake may seek injunctive relief.

Section 39: provides codifies the settlement in ACLU of Alaska v. State of Alaska related to campaign signs along state highways.

Section 40: removes the requirement that reports filed with the Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC) be available at offices in every senate district and requires that they be available on APOC's website.

Section 41: clarifies that reports filed with APOC shall be available at the commission's offices and on their website.

Section 42: allows voters to register to vote within 30 days of a municipal election.

Section 43: removes a requirement that certain municipal candidates file their public official financial disclosure twice.

Section 44: requires Redistricting Board members to file annual public official financial disclosures with APOC.

Section 45: clarifies that the Redistricting Board is subject to the Open Meetings Act.

Section 46: repeals redundant language relating to poll watchers.

Section 47: requires the division to provide a report to the legislature by November 1, 2026 with recommendations for expanding early voting in rural communities and low-income neighborhoods.

Section 48: states that Section 36 only applies to offense committed after the effective date of this act.

Section 49: provides a July 1, 2026 effective date for this bill.