

HB521 ENGROSSED



1 HB521
2 TBYC819-2
3 By Representatives Holk-Jones, Reynolds, Brinyark, Colvin,
4 Moore (P), Myrex, Bracy, Lamb, Shirey, Robbins, Brown, Hulsey,
5 Lands
6 RFD: Ways and Means General Fund
7 First Read: 26-Feb-26



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A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Relating to boards of registrars; to amend Sections 17-3-2, 17-3-5, and 17-3-8 as last amended by Act 2025-22 of the 2025 Regular Session, and Section 17-4-33, Code of Alabama 1975; to require candidates for a board of registrars to submit to a criminal background check; to require that the state pays the salaries of the boards of registrars when the boards' working days are affected by county, state, or national emergencies; to require registrars to be considered as employees for purposes of receiving natural disaster, pandemic relief, or other emergency funds; and to permit members of the board of registrars to omit certain information about themselves from the voter registration list.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Sections 17-3-2, 17-3-5, and 17-3-8 as last amended by Act 2025-22 of the 2025 Regular Session, and Section 17-4-33, Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as follows:

"§17-3-2

(a) (1) Registration shall be conducted in each county by a board of three reputable and suitable individuals to be

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appointed, ~~unless otherwise provided by law~~, by the Governor, Auditor, and Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries, or by a majority of them acting as a state board of appointment, unless otherwise provided by law.

(2)a. The Governor, Auditor, or Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries, through his or her staff, shall request a criminal history background check of an applicant for the purpose of determining an applicant's qualification to serve as a registrar. The applicant shall submit two full sets of fingerprints through the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency for the purpose of obtaining a state and national criminal history background check. Each office shall obtain an Originating Record Identification Number from the Federal Bureau of Investigation in order to request criminal history background checks.

b. Fingerprints obtained pursuant to paragraph a. shall be submitted by the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the purpose of obtaining a state and national criminal history background check.

c. The applicant shall be responsible for all costs associated with the submission of his or her fingerprints and obtaining a state and national criminal history background check.

d. Information received by the Governor, Auditor, or Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries pursuant to a state and national criminal history background check shall be confidential and shall not be a public record, except that any



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information received by and relied upon by the Governor, Auditor, or Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries in denying an application may be disclosed as necessary to support the denial.

(3) In making appointments on or after October 1, 2025, the state board of appointment shall consider the racial, gender, urban, rural, and economic diversity of the ~~that~~ county where the registrar will be appointed.

~~(2)~~ (4) The registrars shall:

- a. Be qualified electors and be residents of the county;
- b. Have a high school diploma or equivalent;
- c. Possess excellent communication skills evident by reportable experience in areas such as electronic mail, online communications, and use of multi-line telephones;
- d. Demonstrate intermediate level experience and proficiency in data processing and use of computer programs used in the current day-to-day workplace, including, but not limited to, web-based operating systems;
- e. Demonstrate the ability to download and upload reports and files and conduct spreadsheet manipulation; and
- f. Demonstrate the ability to operate office equipment, including printers, copiers, scanners, and cameras.

~~(3)~~ (5) The Secretary of State shall prescribe guidelines to assist the state board of appointment in determining the qualifications of registrars. The registrars shall not hold an elective office during their term. One of the members shall be designated by the state board of



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85 appointment as chair of the board of registrars for each
86 county.

87 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a), the Legislature may
88 provide by local law for the appointment of additional members
89 to the board of registrars for a county that has two
90 courthouses.

91 (c) This section shall not apply in any county having a
92 population of ~~not less than~~ 600,000 or more inhabitants
93 according to the ~~1970 or any succeeding~~ most current federal
94 decennial census, ~~and any.~~ Any currently effective local law
95 or general law of local application providing for the
96 appointment of any member of the board of registrars in the
97 county shall remain in full force and effect and shall not be
98 repealed by operation of this chapter."

99 "§17-3-5

100 (a) (1) Each registrar shall receive a salary in the
101 amount of one hundred fifteen dollars (\$115) per day for each
102 day's attendance upon business of the board, to be paid by the
103 state and disbursed to the county commissions and disbursed by
104 the county commissions to each registrar on order of a quorum
105 of the board of registrars of the county. ~~The state~~
106 Comptroller shall issue to each county commission on a monthly
107 basis an amount sufficient to fund these payments plus the
108 employer share of the Social Security or Federal Insurance
109 Corporation Act tax. The county commission shall provide to
110 the Comptroller an invoice itemized to reflect payments made.

111 (2) If a legal holiday falls on a day the board is to
112 be in session and the courthouse of the county is closed for



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the holiday, the board of registrars shall be compensated for the holiday.

(3) A registrar shall receive payment of salary by the state when his or her regularly scheduled day of work coincides with closure of the office due to the existence of a declared state of emergency or similar order from a county, state, or federal governmental entity.

(4) Registrars may be treated the same as state employees for the payment of relief funds originating from the state or federal government due to a natural disaster, pandemic, or other emergency.

(5) Each registrar shall receive a mileage allowance equal to the amount allowed state employees or employees of the county, whichever is greater, for official travel in the course of attending the business of the board, including attending continuing education programs. Travel and other expenses shall be paid by the county commissions to the boards of registrars, and the state shall reimburse the county commissions based on a written request submitted by the county commissions to the Comptroller.

~~(b) The provisions of this section regarding travel mileage~~Subdivision (a) (5) shall not apply in any county having a population of 600,000 or more inhabitants according to the most current federal decennial census, and any currently effective local law or general law of local application regarding travel mileage for registrars in the county shall remain in full force and effect and shall not be repealed by operation of this chapter.



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141 (c) Members of the boards of registrars ~~of this state~~
142 are declared to be state employees for the purposes of Chapter
143 28 of Title 36.

144 (d) Members of the boards of registrars of this state
145 shall be treated as equals with state and county employees in
146 regard to Social Security protection and benefits.

147 (e) All payments by a county to any member of a county
148 board of registrars, except for mileage or reimbursement for
149 expenses, shall be treated for Social Security purposes
150 equally with payments by that county to county employees of
151 the county.

152 (f) The state office for Social Security and the state
153 Comptroller and each county commission shall take all
154 necessary action to ensure that members of the boards of
155 registrars of this state are treated as state and county
156 employees in regard to Social Security protection and benefits
157 as provided in Chapter 28 of Title 36, including, if
158 necessary, amending the federal-state agreement referred to in
159 Chapter 28 of Title 36, to implement the intent of the
160 Legislature as expressed herein.

161 (g) No county commission may reduce the current county
162 supplement upon the effect of this section by implementation
163 of Act 94-693.

164 (h) (1) A county commission may allow the chair or any
165 member of the county board of registrars who has served at
166 least 16 years in that position to participate in any health
167 insurance program provided by the county upon the same terms,
168 conditions, and employee contributions as required for county



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169 employees.

170 (2) This subsection shall not apply to any health
171 insurance plans administered by the State of Alabama as
172 described in Title 36, Chapter 29 and Title 11, Chapter 91A."

173 "§17-3-8

174 (a) (1) Each member of the board of registrars in the
175 Counties of Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Dallas, Escambia, Geneva,
176 Lowndes, Perry, Sumter, and Wilcox may meet a maximum of 120
177 working days each fiscal year~~+~~.

178 (2) ~~each~~ Each member of the board of registrars in the
179 Counties of Barbour, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Marengo,
180 Pickens, Pike, Randolph, and Winston may meet a maximum of 168
181 working days each fiscal year, except in Pike County each
182 board of registrars may meet up to an additional 30 session
183 days each fiscal year, at the discretion of the chair of the
184 county commission, and such days shall be paid from the
185 respective county funds~~+~~.

186 (3) ~~each~~ Each member of the board of registrars in the
187 Counties of Coffee, Shelby, Talladega, and Tallapoosa may meet
188 a maximum of 220 working days each fiscal year, except that in
189 Talladega County the board of registrars may meet up to an
190 additional 30 session days each fiscal year, at the discretion
191 of the chair of the county commission~~+~~.

192 (4) ~~each~~ Each member of the board of registrars in the
193 Counties of Dale, Franklin, Houston, Marion, Marshall,
194 Bullock, Macon, and Tuscaloosa may meet a maximum of 216
195 working days each fiscal year~~+~~~~and~~.

196 (5) ~~each~~ Each member of the board of registrars in



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197 Russell County may meet a maximum of 177 working days each
198 fiscal year.

199 (b) In the Counties of Choctaw, Colbert, Cullman,
200 Lauderdale, and Monroe, each member of the board of registrars
201 may meet a maximum of 199 working days each fiscal year.

202 (c) (1) Each member of the Board of Registrars of
203 Autauga, Elmore, and Bibb Counties may meet a maximum of 187
204 working days each fiscal year. Each member of the Board of
205 Registrars of Walker County may meet a maximum of 200 days
206 each fiscal year, and each member of the Board of Registrars
207 of Lamar, Cherokee, Clarke, Conecuh, Crenshaw, Hale, and
208 Washington Counties may meet a maximum of 140 days each fiscal
209 year. Each member of the board of registrars in the following
210 counties may meet the following maximum number of working days
211 each fiscal year: Henry - 140 working days; Covington - 188
212 working days; DeKalb, Jackson, and Blount - 207 working days;
213 Chambers - 180 working days; and Lawrence - 200 working days.

214 (2) Notwithstanding Section 17-3-5, the 60 additional
215 working days for registrars in Lawrence County added by Act
216 2023-456 shall be paid by the county commission and shall not
217 be reimbursed by the state.

218 (d) Each member of the board of registrars in the
219 Counties of Baldwin, Calhoun, Chilton, Etowah, Limestone, Lee,
220 Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, St. Clair, and Morgan are
221 authorized to meet not more than five days each week for the
222 purpose of carrying out their official duties. Jefferson
223 County, which is now operating under the provisions of local
224 laws, shall be exempted from this section. ~~Provided, however,~~



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~~that where~~Where the term "each year" is used in the local laws, the term means each fiscal year.

(e) The actual number of working days to be used as session days shall be determined by a quorum of the board of registrars according to the needs of the county.

(f) (1) As many as 25 of the allotted working days may be used for special registration sessions (i.e., those sessions held away from the courthouse in the several precincts of the county or sessions held on Saturday or between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.).

(2) Notice of any special session scheduled by the board shall be given at least 10 days prior to the special session by: (i) bills posted at three or more public places in each election precinct affected, if the session involves precinct visits; and (ii) advertisement once a week for two successive weeks in a newspaper published in the county or by radio or television announcements on a local station, or both by newspaper or announcement.

(g) On any day designated as a working day for a board of registrars, the board of registrars shall do both of the following:

(1) Be open the same hours as the courthouse of the county, or alternatively, establish regular hours and make those hours available to the public.

(2) Have a registrar or staff member present during those hours of operation."

"§17-4-33

(a) The State of Alabama shall provide, through the



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Secretary of State, a nondiscriminatory, single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list defined, maintained, and administered by the Secretary of State, with advice from the Voter Registration Advisory Board and the President of the Alabama Probate Judges Association, which contains the name and registration information of every legally registered voter in the state. The computerized list shall comply with the following requirements:

(1) It shall serve as the single system for storing and managing the official list of registered voters throughout the state.

(2) It shall contain the name, address, and voting location, as well as other information deemed necessary by the Voter Registration Advisory Board or the Secretary of State, of every legally registered voter in the state.

(3) A unique identifier shall be assigned to each legally registered voter in the state.

(4) It shall contain the voting history of each registered voter.

(5) It shall be coordinated with the ~~driver's~~driver license database of the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency and the appropriate state agency to assist in the removal of deceased voters.

(6) Any election official in the state, including any local election official, may obtain immediate electronic access to the information contained in the computerized list.

(7) All voter registration information obtained by any



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281 registrar in the state shall be electronically entered into
282 the computerized list on an expedited basis at the time
283 information is provided to the registrar.

284 (8) The Secretary of State shall provide such support
285 as may be required so that registrars are able to enter voter
286 registration information.

287 (9) It shall serve as the official voter registration
288 list for the conduct of all elections.

289 (10) Following each state and county election, the
290 Secretary of State shall provide one electronic copy of the
291 computerized voter list free of charge to each political party
292 that satisfied the ballot access requirements for that
293 election. The electronic copy of the computerized voter list
294 shall be provided within 30 days of the certification of the
295 election or upon the completion of the election vote history
296 update following the election, whichever comes first. In
297 addition, upon written request from the chair of a political
298 party, the Secretary of State shall furnish up to two
299 additional electronic copies of the computerized voter file
300 during each calendar year to each political party that
301 satisfied the ballot access requirements during the last
302 statewide election held prior to that calendar year. The
303 electronic copies provided pursuant to this section shall
304 contain the full, editable data as it exists in the
305 computerized voter list maintained by the Secretary of State.

306 (11) The list shall be maintained so that it is
307 technologically secure.

308 (b) (1) The Secretary of State, or judge of probate, or



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absentee election manager, or municipal clerk, or registrar shall include the name and omit all other information of a registered voter on any generally available list of registered voters, except for those lists provided to federal and state agencies, upon the written signed affidavit of the registered voter to the board of registrars of the county in which the individual is registered or intends to register, affirming one of the following:

a. That the registered voter, or a minor who is in the legal custody of the registered voter, is or has been the victim of domestic violence as provided in Article 7 ~~commencing with Section 13A-6-130~~, of Chapter 6 of Title 13A.

b. That a domestic violence order is or has been issued by a judge or magistrate pursuant to the Domestic Violence Protection Order Enforcement Act, to restrain access to the registered voter or a minor who is in the legal custody of the registered voter.

c. That the registered voter is a federal or state prosecutor, federal, state, probate, or municipal judge, member of a board of registrars, legislator, or law enforcement officer as defined in Chapter 21 of Title 36 or the spouse of a federal or state prosecutor, federal, state, probate, or municipal judge, member of a board of registrars, legislator, or law enforcement officer as defined in Chapter 21 of Title 36.

(2) The Secretary of State shall develop and provide to each county the affidavit to be completed under this subsection."



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337 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October
338 1, 2026.



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House of Representatives

Read for the first time and referred26-Feb-26
to the House of Representatives
committee on Ways and Means General
Fund

Read for the second time and placed05-Mar-26
on the calendar:
1 amendment

Read for the third time and passed17-Mar-26
as amended
Yeas 102
Nays 0
Abstains 1

John Treadwell
Clerk