



**House Ways and Means General Fund Reported
Substitute for HB521**

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

33 (2)a. The Governor, through his or her staff, shall
34 request a criminal history background check of an applicant
35 for the purpose of determining an applicant's qualification to
36 serve as a registrar. The applicant shall submit two full sets
37 of fingerprints through the Alabama State Law Enforcement
38 Agency for the purpose of obtaining a state and national
39 criminal history background check.

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

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

49 d. Information received by the Governor pursuant to a
50 state and national criminal history background check shall be
51 confidential and shall not be a public record, except that any
52 information received by and relied upon by the Governor in
53 denying an application may be disclosed as necessary to
54 support the denial.

55 (3) In making appointments on or after October 1, 2025,
56 the state board of appointment shall consider the racial,



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57 gender, urban, rural, and economic diversity of the ~~that~~
58 county where the registrar will be appointed.

59 ~~(2)~~ (4) The registrars shall:

60 a. Be qualified electors and be residents of the
61 county;

62 b. Have a high school diploma or equivalent;

63 c. Possess excellent communication skills evident by
64 reportable experience in areas such as electronic mail, online
65 communications, and use of multi-line telephones;

66 d. Demonstrate intermediate level experience and
67 proficiency in data processing and use of computer programs
68 used in the current day-to-day workplace, including, but not
69 limited to, web-based operating systems;

70 e. Demonstrate the ability to download and upload
71 reports and files and conduct spreadsheet manipulation; and

72 f. Demonstrate the ability to operate office equipment,
73 including printers, copiers, scanners, and cameras.

74 ~~(3)~~ (5) The Secretary of State shall prescribe
75 guidelines to assist the state board of appointment in
76 determining the qualifications of registrars. The registrars
77 shall not hold an elective office during their term. One of
78 the members shall be designated by the state board of
79 appointment as chair of the board of registrars for each
80 county.

81 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a), the Legislature may
82 provide by local law for the appointment of additional members
83 to the board of registrars for a county that has two
84 courthouses.



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

93 "§17-3-5

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

105 (2) If a legal holiday falls on a day the board is to
106 be in session and the courthouse of the county is closed for
107 the holiday, the board of registrars shall be compensated for
108 the holiday.

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



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113 state, or federal governmental entity.

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

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

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

135 (c) Members of the boards of registrars ~~of this state~~
 136 are declared to be state employees for the purposes of Chapter
 137 28 of Title 36.

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



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141 (e) All payments by a county to any member of a county
 142 board of registrars, except for mileage or reimbursement for
 143 expenses, shall be treated for Social Security purposes
 144 equally with payments by that county to county employees of
 145 the county.

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

155 (g) No county commission may reduce the current county
 156 supplement upon the effect of this section by implementation
 157 of Act 94-693.

158 (h) (1) A county commission may allow the chair or any
 159 member of the county board of registrars who has served at
 160 least 16 years in that position to participate in any health
 161 insurance program provided by the county upon the same terms,
 162 conditions, and employee contributions as required for county
 163 employees.

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

167 "§17-3-8

168 (a) (1) Each member of the board of registrars in the



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169 Counties of Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Dallas, Escambia, Geneva,
170 Lowndes, Perry, Sumter, and Wilcox may meet a maximum of 120
171 working days each fiscal year~~†~~.

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

180 (3) each~~Each~~ member of the board of registrars in the
181 Counties of Coffee, Shelby, Talladega, and Tallapoosa may meet
182 a maximum of 220 working days each fiscal year, except that in
183 Talladega County the board of registrars may meet up to an
184 additional 30 session days each fiscal year, at the discretion
185 of the chair of the county commission~~†~~.

186 (4) each~~Each~~ member of the board of registrars in the
187 Counties of Dale, Franklin, Houston, Marion, Marshall,
188 Bullock, Macon, and Tuscaloosa may meet a maximum of 216
189 working days each fiscal year~~†~~~~and~~.

190 (5) each~~Each~~ member of the board of registrars in
191 Russell County may meet a maximum of 177 working days each
192 fiscal year.

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

196 (c) (1) Each member of the Board of Registrars of



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

208 (2) Notwithstanding Section 17-3-5, the 60 additional
 209 working days for registrars in Lawrence County added by Act
 210 2023-456 shall be paid by the county commission and shall not
 211 be reimbursed by the state.

212 (d) Each member of the board of registrars in the
 213 Counties of Baldwin, Calhoun, Chilton, Etowah, Limestone, Lee,
 214 Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, St. Clair, and Morgan are
 215 authorized to meet not more than five days each week for the
 216 purpose of carrying out their official duties. Jefferson
 217 County, which is now operating under the provisions of local
 218 laws, shall be exempted from this section. ~~Provided, however,~~
 219 ~~that where~~Where the term "each year" is used in the local
 220 laws, the term means each fiscal year.

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

224 (f) (1) As many as 25 of the allotted working days may



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225 be used for special registration sessions (i.e., those
226 sessions held away from the courthouse in the several
227 precincts of the county or sessions held on Saturday or
228 between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.).

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

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

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

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

245 "§17-4-33

246 (a) The State of Alabama shall provide, through the
247 Secretary of State, a nondiscriminatory, single, uniform,
248 official, centralized, interactive computerized statewide
249 voter registration list defined, maintained, and administered
250 by the Secretary of State, with advice from the Voter
251 Registration Advisory Board and the President of the Alabama
252 Probate Judges Association, which contains the name and



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253 registration information of every legally registered voter in
254 the state. The computerized list shall comply with the
255 following requirements:

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

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

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

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

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

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

274 (7) All voter registration information obtained by any
275 registrar in the state shall be electronically entered into
276 the computerized list on an expedited basis at the time
277 information is provided to the registrar.

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



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

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

300 (11) The list shall be maintained so that it is
301 technologically secure.

302 (b) (1) The Secretary of State, or judge of probate, or
303 absentee election manager, or municipal clerk, or registrar
304 shall include the name and omit all other information of a
305 registered voter on any generally available list of registered
306 voters, except for those lists provided to federal and state
307 agencies, upon the written signed affidavit of the registered
308 voter to the board of registrars of the county in which the



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309 individual is registered or intends to register, affirming one
310 of the following:

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

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

320 c. That the registered voter is a federal or state
321 prosecutor, federal, state, probate, or municipal judge,
322 member of a board of registrars, legislator, or law
323 enforcement officer as defined in Chapter 21 of Title 36 or
324 the spouse of a federal or state prosecutor, federal, state,
325 probate, or municipal judge, member of a board of registrars,
326 legislator, or law enforcement officer as defined in Chapter
327 21 of Title 36.

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

331 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October
332 1, 2026.