

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 192 Session of 2025

INTRODUCED BY STREET, KEARNEY, HAYWOOD, SAVAL AND SCHWANK,  
JANUARY 29, 2025

REFERRED TO STATE GOVERNMENT, JANUARY 29, 2025

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), entitled  
 2 "An act concerning elections, including general, municipal,  
 3 special and primary elections, the nomination of candidates,  
 4 primary and election expenses and election contests; creating  
 5 and defining membership of county boards of elections;  
 6 imposing duties upon the Secretary of the Commonwealth,  
 7 courts, county boards of elections, county commissioners;  
 8 imposing penalties for violation of the act, and codifying,  
 9 revising and consolidating the laws relating thereto; and  
 10 repealing certain acts and parts of acts relating to  
 11 elections," in preliminary provisions, further providing for  
 12 definitions; in qualifications of electors, further providing  
 13 for rules for determining residence; in voting by qualified  
 14 absentee electors, further providing for qualified absentee  
 15 electors and providing for voting by absentee electors in  
 16 correctional institutions; and imposing duties on the  
 17 Department of State.

18 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
 19 hereby enacts as follows:

20 Section 1. Section 102(w) (14) and the last paragraph of  
 21 subsection (w) of the act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320),  
 22 known as the Pennsylvania Election Code, are amended, the  
 23 subsection is amended by adding a paragraph and the section is  
 24 amended by adding subsections to read:

25 Section 102. Definitions.--The following words, when used in

1 this act, shall have the following meanings, unless otherwise  
2 clearly apparent from the context:

3 \* \* \*

4 (h.1) The word "homeless" shall have the same meaning as  
5 under 42 U.S.C. § 11302 (relating to general definition of  
6 homeless individual).

7 \* \* \*

8 (w) The words "qualified absentee elector" shall mean:

9 \* \* \*

10 (14) Any qualified elector who will not attend a polling  
11 place because of the observance of a religious holiday[:]; or

12 (15) Any qualified elector who is confined in a correctional  
13 institution for other than a felony conviction, including those  
14 convicted of misdemeanors, those undergoing pretrial confinement  
15 and those in a custodial nonconviction status:

16 Provided, however, That the words "qualified absentee  
17 elector" shall in nowise be construed to include persons  
18 confined in [a penal institution or] a mental institution nor  
19 shall it in anywise be construed to include a person not  
20 otherwise qualified as a qualified elector in accordance with  
21 the definition set forth in section 102(t) of this act.

22 \* \* \*

23 (z.7) The words "correctional institution" shall mean any  
24 penal institution, penitentiary, State farm, reformatory,  
25 prison, jail, house of correction, juvenile detention facility  
26 or other institution located in this Commonwealth for the  
27 incarceration or custody of persons under sentence for offenses  
28 or awaiting trial or sentence for offenses.

29 Section 2. Section 704 of the act is amended by adding a  
30 subsection to read:

1 Section 704. Rules for Determining Residence.--In  
2 determining the residence of a person desiring to register or  
3 vote, the following rules shall be followed so far as they may  
4 be applicable:

5 \* \* \*

6 (i) The following for persons lacking a specific physical  
7 address:

8 (1) If a person resides in an area lacking a specific  
9 physical address or is homeless, instead of an address, the  
10 person may submit a description, such as a map or the latitude  
11 and longitude, indicating where the person resides, and the  
12 person shall be assigned to a precinct based on the geographic  
13 description of where the person resides.

14 (2) If a person confined in a correctional institution was  
15 homeless prior to confinement, the person may, instead of an  
16 address, submit a description, such as a map or the latitude and  
17 longitude, indicating where the person resided prior to  
18 confinement, and the person shall be assigned to a precinct  
19 based on the geographic description of where the person resided  
20 prior to confinement.

21 (3) The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall issue rules  
22 regarding acceptable forms of nonphysical addresses.

23 Section 3. Section 1301(n) and last paragraph of the section  
24 are amended and the section is amended by adding a subsection to  
25 read:

26 Section 1301. Qualified Absentee Electors.--The following  
27 persons shall be entitled to vote by an official absentee ballot  
28 in any primary or election held in this Commonwealth in the  
29 manner hereinafter provided:

30 \* \* \*

1 (n) Any qualified elector who will not attend a polling  
2 place because of the observance of a religious holiday[:]; or

3 (o) Any qualified elector who is confined in a correctional  
4 institution for other than a felony conviction, including those  
5 convicted of misdemeanors, those undergoing pretrial confinement  
6 and those in a custodial nonconviction status:

7 Provided, however, That the words "qualified absentee  
8 elector" shall in nowise be construed to include persons  
9 confined in [a penal institution or] a mental institution nor  
10 shall it in anywise be construed to include a person not  
11 otherwise qualified as a qualified elector in accordance with  
12 the definition set forth in section 102(t) of this act.

13 Section 4. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

14 Section 1306.2. Voting by Absentee Electors in Correctional  
15 Institutions.--(a) The department, in consultation with the  
16 Department of Corrections, shall establish a uniform policy for  
17 civic education in correctional institutions, including, but not  
18 limited to, notifications of all Federal, State, county, local  
19 and primary elections. The department shall provide correctional  
20 institutions with:

21 (1) information pertaining to voter registration, absentee  
22 ballots, mail-in ballots and eligibility requirements;

23 (2) the necessary forms and applications; and

24 (3) the necessary training for obtaining and casting a  
25 ballot.

26 (b) (1) A correctional institution shall designate at least  
27 one individual to help inmates vote. Designated individuals in a  
28 correctional institution shall provide the information under  
29 subsection (a) to each inmate and oversee the distribution,  
30 collection and submission of voter registration applications and

1 absentee ballots. The designated individual must be a staff  
2 member of the correctional institution and may not be an inmate.

3 (2) The secretary shall establish procedures to ensure a  
4 correctional institution establishes a policy designating at  
5 least one individual to help inmates vote, and this shall ensure  
6 that election resources and ballots are provided in multiple  
7 languages, as required by the language access needs of the  
8 correctional institution.

9 (c) The Department of Corrections shall promulgate  
10 regulations necessary to establish procedures for a correctional  
11 institution to inspect incoming voter registration applications  
12 and absentee ballots for contraband. The procedures may not  
13 involve opening or reading voter registration applications or  
14 absentee ballots to preserve secrecy in voting.

15 (d) The superintendent, warden or other authorized  
16 individual in charge of a correctional institution shall collect  
17 data that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

18 (1) demographic information of the correctional  
19 institution's inmate population;

20 (2) the number of qualified absentee electors in the  
21 correctional institution;

22 (3) the number of inmates registered to vote;

23 (4) the number of inmates that have applied for a ballot;

24 (5) the number of inmates that submitted a completed ballot;

25 and

26 (6) any other information requested by the department.

27 (e) The superintendent, warden or other authorized  
28 individual in charge of a correctional institution shall submit  
29 a report of the data collected under subsection (d) to the  
30 department within thirty (30) days after a general election. The

1 department shall prescribe the form of the report, and shall  
2 issue guidance to implement the provisions of this section.

3 (f) As used in this section:

4 "Department" shall mean the Department of State of the  
5 Commonwealth.

6 "Inmate" shall mean an offender who is committed to, under  
7 sentence to or confined in a correctional institution. The term  
8 shall not include an offender committed under a violation of 25  
9 Pa.C.S. § 1703 (relating to application) or of this act.

10 Section 5. This act shall take effect in one year.