

Back-End, Opt-Out Automatic Voter Registration
Work Group Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 24, 2026, 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM
Patrick Henry Building, 1111 E. Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219

Members Present: In-Person

- Ashley Coles, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Elections
- The Honorable Traci J. Deshazor, Secretary of Administration
- Lisa Gerchick, Chair, Fauquier County Electoral Board
- Grindly Johnson, Principal Consultant, Perception LLC
- Scott Konopasek, Vice Chair, Hanover County Electoral Board
- Jane Newell, Strategic Transformation Director, League of Women Voters
- Tram Nguyen, Co-Executive Director, Virginia New Majority
- Ajay Saini, Special Counsel, Office of the Attorney General
- Mikey Smith, Office of the Attorney General Intern
- Wanda Taylor, President, Virginia Electoral Board Association
- Matthew Weinstein, Deputy Secretary of Administration

Members Present: Virtual

- Victor Angry, Chair, Virginia Association of Counties
- Chris Bailey, David Bailey and Associates
- Alison Fox, President, Voter Registrars Association of Virginia
- Matthew Martin, Director, Records Access Management, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles
- The Honorable Delegate Cia Price, Chair, Virginia House of Delegates Committee on Privileges and Elections
- Allison Robbins, General Registrar, King William County
- The Honorable Senator Aaron Rouse, Chair, Virginia State Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections
- Mary Strenko, Chair, Frederick County Electoral Board
- Mike Watson, Chief Information Officer, Virginia Information Technologies Agency

Staff Present: In Person

- Charity Brown, Governor's Fellow, Office of the Secretary of Administration
- Alexander Cintron, Confidential Policy Advisor, Office of the Secretary of Administration
- Davis Gammon, Deputy Legislative Director for the Governor

Absent Members

- The Honorable Senator Tammy Mulchi, Virginia State Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

12:06 PM | Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:06 PM by Secretary Deshazor.

Welcome and Work Group Overview: Secretary Deshazor welcomed members to the meeting, provided housekeeping and logistical updates, and presented a brief history of the evolution of automatic voter registration in the Commonwealth before providing an overview of the Work Group.

- The federal motor voter model was established in 1993 and has been the primary voter registration method. In this system, voters must opt in to register vote when handling business at DMV.
- On April 9, 2020, Virginia House Bill 235 made voter registration an automatic front-end, opt-out system.

12:13 PM | Work Group Expectations and Timeline: Deputy Secretary Weinstein established four expectations for the work group and shared the meeting schedule with members:

1. Determine the effectiveness, efficiency, and feasibility of implementing a back end, opt-out registration system
2. Identify cost and benefits of a back-end, opt-out registration
3. Determine obstacles and the capacity of back-end, opt-out registration
4. Estimate cost of program

Timeline:

July 22, 2026	AVR Across the Country: The Work Group will reconvene to discuss models for automatic voter registration across the country. The National Conference on State Legislature (NCSL) will present. Guests from states around the country will also provide an overview of their efforts.
August 26, 2026	Recommendations and Proposals: The Work Group will consider proposals for the implementation of back-end, opt-out automatic voter registration.
September 23, 2026	Draft Report: The Work Group will convene to review a draft list of recommendations/report.
October 28, 2026	Final Report: The Work Group will review a final draft of recommendations/report—making final edits.
November 1, 2026	Deadline: The Secretary of Administration will submit the final report of the Work Group to the Virginia General Assembly’s State Senate and House of Delegates’ Privileges and Elections Committees for consideration.

12:23 PM | How Automatic Voter Registration Works in Virginia Today: Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Elections, Ashley Coles, shared a presentation explaining the intricacies of Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) and answered questions from the Work Group.

Overview of AVR:

- AVR is an automatic opportunity to register to vote.
- Under the current system (front-end, opt out), people are offered the opportunity to register to vote and can opt out before their information is sent to ELECT.
- Under the proposal being reviewed by the Work Group (back-end, opt out), people are automatically registered to vote and receive a notice after the transaction, asking if they would like to opt out. In this case the information has been sent to ELECT but will not be sent to the general registrar's office.

The general registrar's office and the DMV are vital for registering citizens to vote.

- Individuals can register in-person at the DMV, online through the DMV website, and through ELECT's Citizen Portal.
- ELECT's Citizens Portal requires DMV ID for registration. This shows how ELECT, the DMV, and the registrar's office are connected to voter registration and each other.
- 90% of all voter registration applications are completed electronic.

Information and data collection:

- Transactions at the DMV require personal information such as an individual's SSN, DOB, and address.
- All responses to voter registration questions are saved within a larger electronic system.
- We should consider what data should be automatically sent to ELECT in a back-end, opt out process.
 - No filters for personal information currently exist that stop specific kinds of personal information from being sent to ELECT.
 - Apart from individuals who are non-US citizens, the personal information of these individuals is always sent to ELECT.
 - Being a non-citizen inhibits individuals from being registered with the registrar's office but does not stop individual information from being sent to ELECT.
- Data collection process:
- Once received by ELECT, the applicant's information will be compared to the current list of registered voters. ELECT then sends the application to the general registrar's office for review and processing.
 - Personal information that must be confirmed or changed may require additional time for review before it is sent to ELECT. This means an individual's registration

can be halted overnight or for an entire day. While data is usually sent to ELECT immediately, in these cases the process is delayed.

- Once at the registrar's office, the registrar determines the applicant's eligibility to vote.
- The general registrar's office sends the applicant a notice of approval or denial.
- Protected voter status for legislators or military personnel:
 - Protected voter status means their personal information can be hidden.
- It's important to keep all the information and question responses because eligibility can change over time.
- Voter information is compiled into the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) which is shared between the DMV, ELECT, and the general registrar.
- Summary of DMV data sent to ELECT:
 - Applicants have the opportunity to decline automatic voter registration before their information is sent to ELECT.
 - There are no filters for information that is sent to ELECT.
 - All registration questions and data are saved and sent to ELECT as presented.
 - Unless the individual has protected voter status.

Questions/Answers to Deputy Commissioner Coles' Presentation.

Work group members asked several questions following Deputy Commissioner Coles' presentation:

Q: Where is the denial list?

- A: Cases in which individuals are ineligible to vote are handled on individual basis.

Q: What is the "trigger" for when potential voter information is sent to ELECT?

- A: The Triggers are the responses to the questions: "Are you a U.S. citizen?" and "Do you wish to register to vote?"

Q: How quickly does info go from ELECT (citizen portal) to local government?

- A: Usually, data is sent in real time, electronically through ERIC. If there are hang ups that require additional time for review, such as address changes or license surrenders, data will have to be reviewed by an ELECT member, possibly overnight. Once everything's clear it'll be sent to the local government registrar.

Q: How will we handle inconsistencies when people are registered online but cannot vote in person?

- A: These situations are handled on a case-by-case basis. Voters must ensure that they register before the blackout period during an upcoming election. Voters in these situations should wait until same-day voter registration. Voters may decline to have their information sent to ELECT for various reasons.

The **Director of Record Access Management at the DMV, Matthew Martin** explained the process of automatic voter registration from the DMV perspective and answered questions.

- The Electronic Motor Voter (EMV) program was established in 2016, and automatic voter registration was established in 2020.
 - EMV is presented at any credit card transaction with the DMV.
 - EMV is not offered for driver or identification privilege cards.
 - EMV is available in English, Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese since 2024/2025.
 - EMV sends potential voter responses to ELECT daily.
- In-person EMV at the DMV currently:
 - The customer completes the forms associated with their transaction.
 - The receptionist will manually update information for the EMV.
 - The receptionist will trigger the EMV process.
 - The customer will accept or deny the opportunity to register to vote and complete the EMV.
 - EMV is done without input of the receptionist.
 - Process/questions:
 - Applicants must confirm DMV record data (ex. phone number, address).
 - The DMV will send an inquiry to ELECT to check their registration status.
 - The registrar's office will notify the voter that they're registered and where their precinct is located.
 - The registrar's office will offer the voter an option to change any voting information.
 - 2 questions are posed to the potential voter:
 - Do u want to register?
 - Once presented with the opportunity to automatically register individuals can pick:
 - No – returns to previous page.
 - Continue – information will be sent to ELECT.
 - Back – returns to previous page.
 - Are you a citizen?
 - The options are yes, no, and no response.
 - Choosing no or no response will send the customer to a confirmation screen.
- Online:
 - Near the checkout process of an address change or credential transaction an EMV transaction is offered.
 - If accepted, the customer completes EMV.
 - After the EMV, customers return to their original transaction.
 - During this process, the customer does not need to validate their voting information.
 - The questions are formulated differently than the in-person process.

- An option to confirm their address and telephone only occurs when voter says they are a citizen and do want to register.
- Post transaction:
 - Immediately after EMV:
 - EMV responses for registered voters are sent to ELECT.
 - New voter EMV responses are sent to ELECT to relay legal presence document codes.
 - Responses that denied to register are sent to ELECT.
 - Sent daily:
 - New voter EMV responses for legal presence document codes.
 - Non-resident declarations.
 - Non-resident legal presence document codes.
 - Legal presence: to renew your voter registration individuals must provide evidence of legal presence.
 - ID privilege card can option:
 - If there are inconsistencies with your legal presence, the application is kept overnight for review.
 - SAVE Lookups:
 - Potential voters who are citizens but do not have legal presence are examined by DMV.
 - Customers are not required to update their legal presence documents with DMV if they are naturalized.
 - Monthly updates:
 - Address changes and credential surrenders.
 - Non-resident document codes.
 - Full customer file.
 - All declared nonresidents.
 - As needed:
 - Credential validation.
 - Ad hoc document lockup for ELECT and the General Registrars.

Items for Consideration in advance of the next meeting:

- What data should be sent to ELECT in a back-end, opt out registration format?
- Ways to ensure that the General Registrar's role in the process is central since they have the most authority in determining voter eligibility.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 1:32 PM on June 24, 2026, by Secretary Deshazor.

Back-End, Opt-Out Automatic Voter Registration Work Group Meeting

Wednesday, June 24, 2026



Agenda

- **Welcome**
- **Work Group Overview**
- **Introductions**
- **Work Group Expectations**
- **Timeline**
- **How Automatic Voter Registration Works in Virginia**
- **Work Group Discussion**
- **Next Steps**
- **Adjournment**



Welcome



Workgroup Overview (SB 658/HB 319)

*“The focus of the work group shall be the **move from** the Commonwealth's current **front-end, opt-out AVR to back-end, opt-out AVR**. The work group shall consider the effectiveness, efficiency, and security of backend, opt-out AVR as compared to front-end, opt-out AVR and identify the costs and benefits of implementing back-end, opt-out AVR in the Commonwealth. The work group shall identify current obstacles to implementation, including the capacity of current technology infrastructure, and estimate potential upfront and ongoing costs of back-end, opt-out AVR.”*



Introductions



Work Group Expectations

- 1. Review current Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) policies in Virginia and across the country.**
- 2. Analyze the feasibility of back-end, opt-out AVR as directed by SB 658/HB 319.**
- 3. Submit a report with possible recommendations to the Virginia State Senate and Virginia House of Delegates Committees on Privileges and Elections by November 1, 2026.**



Timeline

Work Group Meeting Dates:

- **Wednesday, June 24, 2026, 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM**
 - **Topic: AVR in Virginia**
- **Wednesday, July 22, 2026, 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM**
 - **Topic: AVR Across the Country**
- **Wednesday, August 26, 2026, 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM**
 - **Topic: Recommendations and Proposals**
- **Wednesday, September 23, 2026, 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM**
 - **Topic: Draft Report**
- **Wednesday, October 28, 2026, 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM**
 - **Topic: Final Report**



How Automatic Voter Registration Works in Virginia Today

*Virginia Department of Elections
Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles*





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Automatic Voter Registration



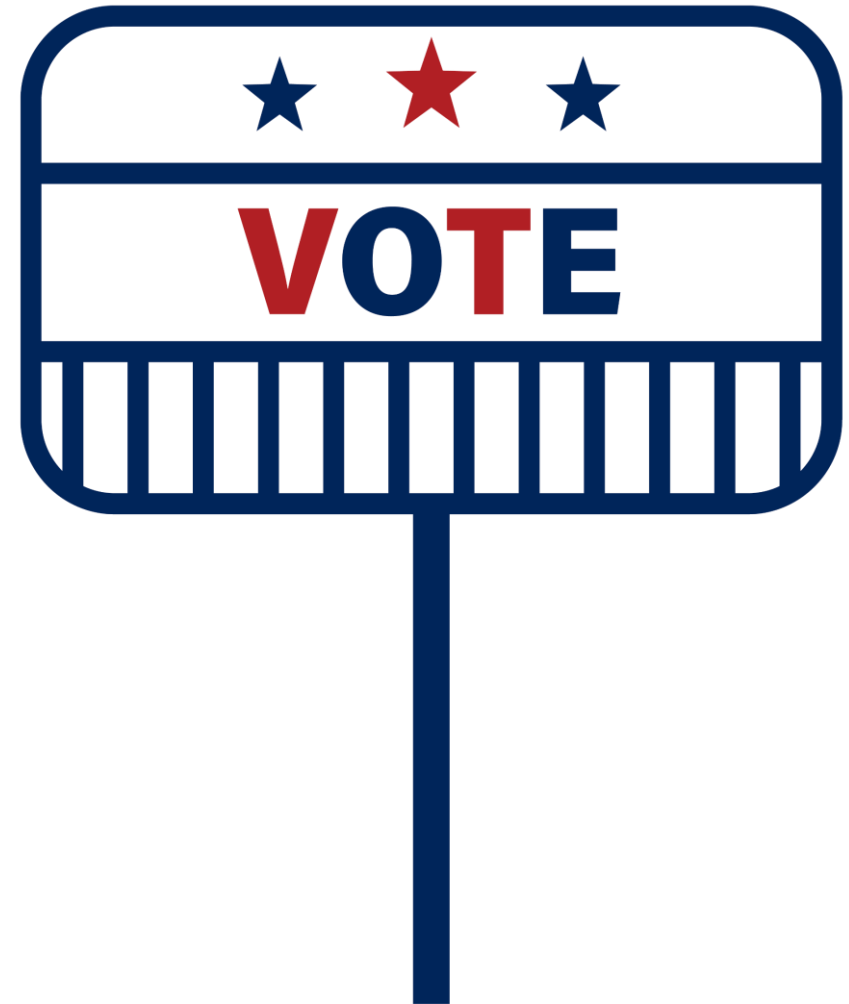
Agenda

What is AVR?

Methods for Electronic Registration

Current Electronic Data Exchanges

State & Local Processes



What is Automatic Voter Registration?

Process in which eligible individuals are automatically provided the opportunity to register to vote when interacting with certain government agencies.

Virginia's "front-end, opt-out" process

- Individuals are offered the opportunity to register to vote and can decline *before* their information is sent to ELECT

The "back-end, opt-out" process

- Eligible individuals are automatically registered to vote and receive a post-transaction notice in which they can decline *after* their information has been sent



Electronic Voter Registration Options



**In-Person at a
DMV**



**Online through the DMV's
Website**



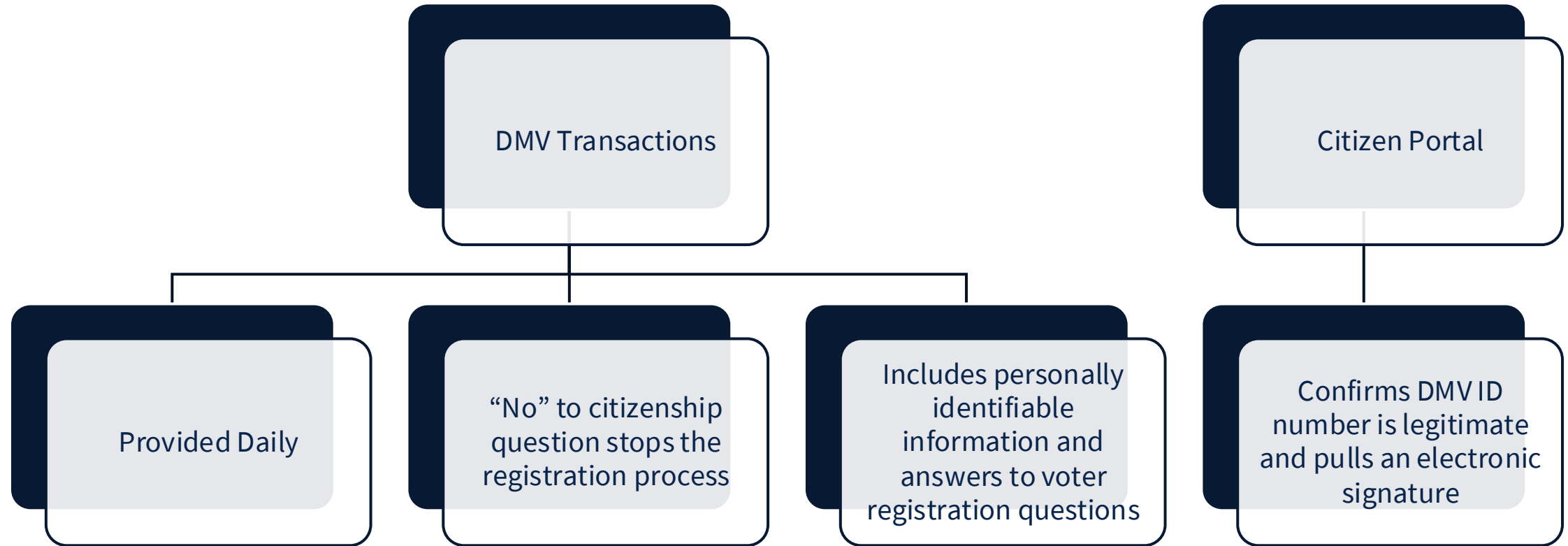
Online through ELECT's Citizen Portal

Note: The majority of voter registration applications are electronic.



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Voter Registration Data Provided From DMV



ELECT's Voter Registration Process



Receive applicant information in
real-time or through daily file
sharing



Compare applicant information
against current list of registered
voters



Provide applicant information to
general registrars for review and
processing



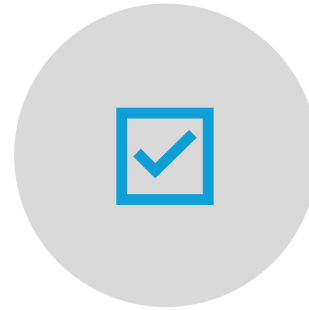
General Registrar's Process Steps



Review records for an existing match in the voter registration database



Check applicant information against the list of prohibited voters and determine overall eligibility



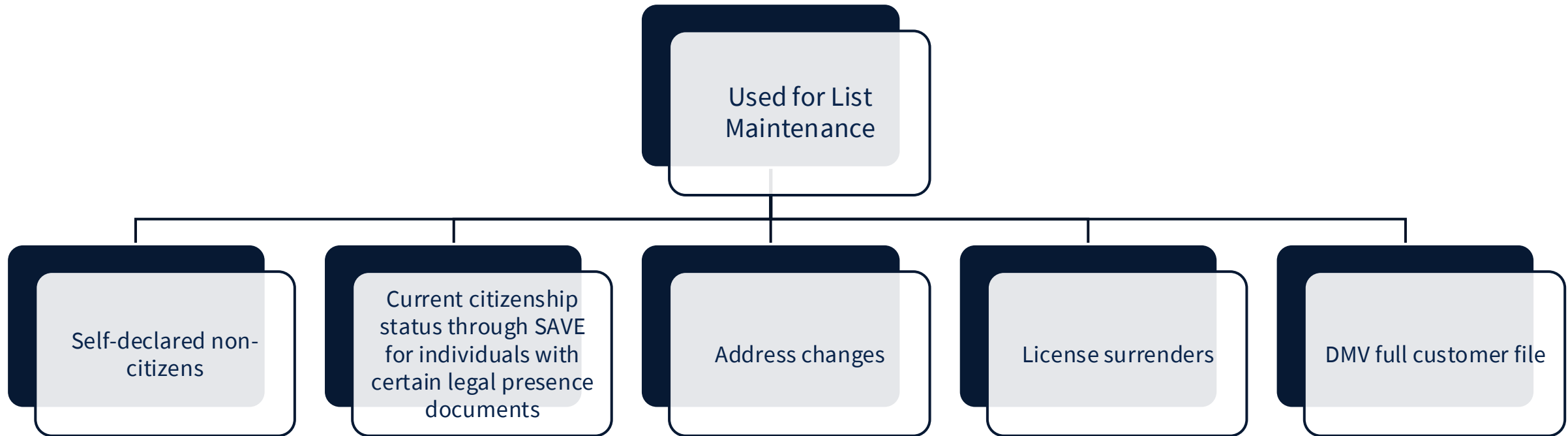
If accepted, register voter or update address and send a new voter notice



If denied, send a denial notice



Additional Data from the DMV



Current Process | Key Takeaways



Individuals have the option to decline **before** information is sent to ELECT



All voter registration questions are asked each transaction



No filtering based on responses except self-declared non-citizens



All final correspondence is provided by the general registrar





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Thank You.



DMV Electronic Motor Voter

Matthew Martin

Director, Records Access Management

June 24, 2026

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2	EMV Transaction Timing When EMV Occurs
3	In-Person EMV Transaction Process in a CSC
4	Online EMV Transaction Comparison to In-Person
5	Data Sharing What DMV Provides to ELECT and When

Electronic Motor Voter (EMV) Overview

Implemented in 2016

Replaced 20 years of
paper applications

Automatic Voter
Registration enacted
in 2020

In-person EMV captured on
credit card terminals

Mimics a paper application

Print-on-demand
paper applications
available

Spanish, Korean, and
Vietnamese paper
options added in 2026

Spanish option added to in-
person in 2024 and online in
2025

Offered with certain
transactions

All credential
transactions, including
address changes

NOT offered with
Driver or Identification
Privilege Cards

DMV sends responses daily
to ELECT

EMV Transaction Timing

In-Person

- Customer presents credential or address change application
- DMV CSR reviews application and updates customer address information, if necessary
- CSR triggers EMV transaction on credit card terminal
- Customer completes EMV
- CSR completes DMV transaction

Online

- Customer initiates online address change or credential transaction
- Customer is pushed to separate EMV transaction before final processing and payment
- Customer completes EMV
- Customer returns to finalize DMV transaction

In-Person EMV Transaction

Customer chooses English or Spanish

Customer confirms DMV record data

Name

DOB

Last 4 SSN

Residence and Mailing Addresses

DMV queries ELECT for existing voter registration information

Customer reviews existing information, if found

Customer has option to enter phone number to share with ELECT

In-Person EMV Transaction

Customer presented with automatic voter registration notice

“If you are an eligible Virginia resident, this process will register you to vote or update your current voter registration.”

Options are “Back,” “Continue,” and “No”

“No” exits EMV after a confirmation screen

If “Continue,” customer presented with citizenship question

“Are you a citizen of the United States? Your answer will be provided only to the Department of Elections and does not affect your ability to obtain a driver’s license or identification card.”

Options are “Yes,” “No,” and “No Response”

“No” and “No Response” exit EMV after a confirmation screen

If “Yes,” customer completes the voter registration application

Online EMV Transaction

Slightly different from In-Person

Customer does not validate personal DMV information at the start

DMV checks but does not show current voter registration information

The web can offer format options the credit card terminals cannot, so there are fewer questions to navigate

Address review and telephone number collection only occur if customer opts to proceed with EMV

Both transactions are otherwise equivalent

Data Sharing

Real Time

Immediately after EMV

- EMV responses for registered voters
- New voter EMV responses for certain legal presence document codes
- Non-consent responses

Daily

Overnight

- New voter EMV responses for other legal presence document codes (with SAVE lookups)
- Non-resident declarations (“No” to citizenship) for the day (§24.2-410.1)
- Non-resident legal presence document codes (§46.2-328.1)

Daily

SAVE Lookups

- DMV runs SAVE lookups on behalf of ELECT for customers who declare they are citizens but have non-citizen legal presence documents on file with DMV
- Customers are not required to update their legal presence documents with DMV if they are naturalized

Data Sharing

Monthly

On the 10th of each month

- All address changes and credential surrenders for the month
- All declared non-citizens, including statements on applications
- All non-citizens based on legal presence document codes
- Full customer file

As Needed

Direct access to DMV records

- Credential validation and signature service for online registration
- Ad hoc document lookup for ELECT and General Registrars

Work Group Discussion



Next Steps

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 22, 2026, 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM Patrick Henry Building in Richmond, Virginia.

Next Meeting Topic: Overview of AVR systems across the country. The National Conference on State Legislatures (NCSL) will lead the discussion.



Adjournment

