



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 526

February Session, 2004

* SB00526GAE 031704 *

**AN ACT IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES FOR ABSENTEE VOTING
BASED ON THE PILOT PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE STATE
ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2005*) (a) The provisions of
2 sections 1 to 3, inclusive, of this act shall apply to elections and
3 primaries held in 2005 and 2006. The provisions of chapter 145 of the
4 general statutes shall also apply to such elections and primaries, except
5 as provided in sections 1 to 3, inclusive, of this act.

6 (b) Not later than forty-five days before each election and primary
7 in a municipality, absentee ballot coordinators shall be appointed to
8 serve in accordance with sections 1 to 3, inclusive, of this act. In each
9 municipality in which the registrars of voters serve full time, said
10 registrars shall jointly appoint and supervise such coordinators for
11 each election, and the registrar of the party holding a primary shall
12 appoint and supervise the coordinators for the primary. In each
13 municipality in which the registrars of voters serve part time, the
14 municipal clerk shall appoint and supervise such coordinators for each
15 election or primary. For purposes of this subsection, the registrars of
16 voters shall be considered full time when each registrar is physically
17 present in the office each day the city or town hall is open during the
18 forty-five-day period prior to an election or primary. Absentee ballot
19 coordinators shall be electors residing in the municipality holding the

20 election or primary.

21 (c) For each election, at least two absentee ballot coordinators shall
22 be appointed for each three hundred electors who voted by absentee
23 ballot in the most recent election for the same or similar offices. The
24 registrars of voters or the municipal clerk shall make such
25 appointments with due consideration of the names of electors
26 submitted by the chairpersons of the major parties, and shall notify
27 said chairpersons of their right to submit such names for
28 consideration. The party enrollment of absentee ballot coordinators
29 appointed under this subsection shall be divided evenly between the
30 major parties. As used in this subsection, "major party" has the same
31 meaning provided in section 9-372 of the general statutes, as amended.

32 (d) For each party holding a primary, at least one absentee ballot
33 coordinator shall be appointed for each three hundred electors who
34 voted by absentee ballot in the most recent primary for the same or
35 similar offices for each group of candidates whose names will appear
36 in a single row on the official ballot at the primary. The registrar of
37 voters or the municipal clerk shall make such appointments from
38 names of electors submitted by such groups of candidates whose
39 names will appear in a single row, and shall notify all such groups of
40 their right to submit such names for consideration. The absentee ballot
41 coordinators appointed under this subsection shall be divided as
42 evenly as practicable between or among said groups.

43 (e) In municipalities that are covered under Section 203 of the
44 Federal Voting Rights Act, 42 USC 1973aa-1a, the municipal clerk or
45 registrars of voters shall appoint at least two absentee ballot
46 coordinators, of different political parties for an election, or
47 representing different groups of candidates in a primary, who speak
48 the language of the applicable minority group as well as English.

49 (f) No candidate for public office, municipal employee, member of a
50 town committee or employee of, or volunteer for, a candidate
51 committee shall serve as an absentee ballot coordinator.

52 (g) Each elector appointed to serve as an absentee ballot coordinator
53 shall be sworn, by the municipal clerk or a registrar of voters, to the
54 faithful performance of the elector's duties as an absentee ballot
55 coordinator. The municipal clerk and registrars of voters shall jointly
56 train absentee ballot coordinators, and shall forthwith, after the
57 training, file a report in the office of the municipal clerk, stating that
58 they have provided such training to the coordinators named in the
59 report and the time and place where the training was provided.
60 Absentee ballot coordinators may be compensated by the
61 municipalities appointing them, provided a municipality may not
62 compensate some absentee ballot coordinators and not others.

63 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2005*) (a) An absentee ballot
64 application may be issued only by the municipal clerk, a registrar of
65 voters or an absentee ballot coordinator. Any such official may issue
66 such application only to the applicant or a designee of the applicant. A
67 designee of an applicant may provide such application only to the
68 applicant for whom the designee is serving. As used in this section,
69 "designee" has the same meaning provided in section 9-140b of the
70 general statutes, as amended, except that "designee" shall also include
71 two absentee ballot coordinators of different political parties or
72 representing different groups of candidates in a primary, in
73 accordance with sections 1 of this act and this section.

74 (b) (1) A municipal clerk or registrar of voters may issue absentee
75 ballot applications in person, by mail or by facsimile machine,
76 provided no such application shall be issued by such official in person
77 at a location other than the office of the official.

78 (2) An absentee ballot coordinator may issue absentee ballot
79 applications in person.

80 (3) Each municipal clerk, registrar of voters and absentee ballot
81 coordinator shall maintain a log of each application issued by such
82 person, including the date of issuance, the name and address of the
83 applicant and, if applicable, the name of any designee. The log shall be

84 confidential until the Friday before the election or primary, at which
85 time it shall be preserved as a public record open to public inspection.

86 (4) No municipal clerk, registrar of voters or absentee ballot
87 coordinator shall distribute with an absentee ballot application any
88 material that promotes the success or defeat of any candidate or
89 referendum question.

90 (c) A candidate or party committee may request a municipal clerk or
91 registrar of voters to issue absentee ballot applications to electors
92 whose names and addresses the candidate or party committee
93 provides on a written list to the municipal clerk or registrar of voters.
94 Not later than forty-eight hours after receiving such a request, the
95 municipal clerk or registrar of voters shall provide an absentee ballot
96 coordinator with a copy of the list and the coordinator shall make one
97 telephone call to each elector on the list to verify that the elector needs
98 an application. The coordinator shall annotate the list with the results
99 of such calls and return the annotated list to the municipal clerk, who
100 shall send an absentee ballot application to each person verified by the
101 coordinator or whom the coordinator was unable to contact.

102 (d) The provisions of this section shall not apply to supervised
103 absentee voting under section 9-159q or 9-159r of the general statutes.

104 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2005*) (a) Assistance in the
105 completion of an absentee ballot application may be provided to an
106 applicant by: (1) The municipal clerk or a registrar of voters while said
107 official is in said official's office, (2) a designee, as defined in section 2
108 of this act, of the applicant, or (3) two absentee ballot coordinators
109 enrolled in different political parties or representing different groups
110 of candidates in a primary.

111 (b) No person other than a municipal clerk, registrar of voters,
112 absentee ballot coordinator or designee, as defined in section 2 of this
113 act, of an applicant may assist an applicant in the completion of an
114 application.

115 (c) Two absentee ballot coordinators enrolled in different political
116 parties or representing different groups of candidates in a primary
117 shall jointly conduct a session for the completion of absentee ballot
118 applications at a federal or state subsidized multi-family dwelling or
119 housing project where twenty or more persons reside who voted by
120 absentee ballot in the most recent election or primary for the same or
121 similar offices.

122 (d) The list of issued absentee voting sets required under subsection
123 (e) of section 9-140 of the general statutes shall be confidential until the
124 Friday before the election or primary, at which time it shall be
125 preserved as a public record as required by section 9-150b of the
126 general statutes.

127 (e) Executed applications shall be confidential until the Friday
128 before the election, primary or referendum, at which time the
129 applications shall be preserved as a public record as required by
130 section 9-150b of the general statutes.

131 (f) The provisions of subsection (j) of section 9-140 of the general
132 statutes shall not apply to sections 1 to 3, inclusive, of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>January 1, 2005</i>
Sec. 2	<i>January 1, 2005</i>
Sec. 3	<i>January 1, 2005</i>

GAE *Joint Favorable Subst.*