

Guide to MVC Voter Registration Error



Issued August 19, 2026

Contents

Overview	2
Procedure for Reviewing Registrations.....	3
Frequently Asked Questions	4

Overview

Between June 2023 and June 2024, a software error affected the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission's ("MVC") system for processing in-person voter registration applications. The error caused the information for individuals who selected "No" in response to a question asking whether they are a U.S. citizen to be transferred to the Statewide Voter Registration System ("SVRS") for voter registration processing.

On July 28, 2026, Governor Mikie Sherrill announced that the Division of Elections ("Division") had begun a process of removing individuals from the voter rolls who had been registered solely due to the software issue.

Individuals who are not and have never been legally registered to vote, or have not otherwise attested to their voter eligibility, have been placed in "deleted" status in the SVRS.

Individuals who have a separate voter registration unrelated to the software issue, or who have another transaction in the SVRS that may include an attestation as to voter eligibility, have been placed in "rejected" status in the SVRS pending further review.

All the affected registrations have the notation "MVC Software Issue" added into the "Notes" column. Individuals placed in "deleted" status also have the notation "Do not reactivate" added into the "Notes" column.

Individuals who have a separate record of a registration that was not affected by the software issue, and those individuals who have a record of voting, are being referred to the County Commissioners of Registration for further inquiry.

The Division issues this guide to assist Commissioners as they review the referred registrations. The guide is intended to ensure that Commissioners (1) place additional individuals who are ineligible to vote in "deleted" status in the SVRS as expeditiously as possible; (2) protect the rights of eligible voters; and (3) apply consistent standards across the State.

The Division is sending correspondence to all individuals affected by the software error to advise them of their current registration status.

Procedure for Reviewing Registrations

Commissioners will receive a list of the affected individuals referred to them for further inquiry. That list will reflect the driver's license number for each individual, which Commissioners can use to locate the individual's profile in the SVRS.

When reviewing the registrations referred to them for further inquiry, Commissioners should do the following:

- **Check for a Voter Registration Unrelated to the Software Issue**: Check whether an individual has a valid voter registration unrelated to the software issue (that is, an online voter registration completed at any time, a paper registration completed at any time, or an agency MVC registration before June 2023 or after June 2024). Such an individual should be restored to “active” status from “rejected” status if the Commissioner is satisfied that the individual is, in fact, a U.S. citizen.
- **Take Action Based on Additional Information**: The following scenarios may arise in your review:
 - New Voter Registration with Attestation: An individual who completes a new voter registration, including attesting to being a U.S. citizen, should be restored to “active” status from “rejected” status if the Commissioner determines that the individual is eligible. If such an individual's record was in “deleted” status, a new record must be created in accordance with N.J.S.A. § 19:31-19. The Commissioner should process the registration in the SVRS and keep a copy of the registration form and any other correspondence in the SVRS.
 - Request for Removal from Active Voter Rolls: If an individual returns a signed form requesting removal from the active voter rolls for any reason, the registration should be changed to “deleted” status in the SVRS, with the “administrative action” designation selected as the “reason for deletion.” The Commissioner should keep a copy of the individual's request in the SVRS.
 - Confirmation of Non-Citizen Status: If an individual confirms in communications with the Commissioner that they are *not* a U.S. citizen, their registration status should be updated to “deleted” in the SVRS, with the “administrative action” designation selected as the “reason for

deletion.” The Commissioner should keep a copy of the individual’s confirmation in the SVRS.

- No Response: An individual who does not respond to a letter or a phone call should remain in “rejected” status. The Commissioner should document their attempts to contact the individual in the SVRS.
- Individuals Without Separate Registration or Attestation: For individuals who do not have a separate voter registration that was unaffected by the software issue and do not have another transaction in SVRS that may include an attestation as to voter eligibility, their registrations have been placed in “deleted” status. Under these circumstances, files in a deleted status may not be restored or reactivated for any reason, in accordance with N.J.S.A. § 19:31-19. If an individual completes a new voter registration with an attestation, as provided above, a new record must be created.
- As in the ordinary course, Commissioners have “jurisdiction to investigate . . . election law violations” and make appropriate referrals to enforce the law. Duties and Responsibilities, County Superintendent of Elections, NJ Elections Administration Manual. For questions that arise during the review process, Commissioners should consult their assigned DAG.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Did the software issue affect *all* MVC voter registration transactions?

A. No, the Division has been advised by MVC that the software issue only affected an identified set of *in-person* voter registration transactions at MVC locations during the specified time period. It did not affect online MVC transactions.

Q. If an individual’s voter profile reflects an *online* MVC transaction, is that enough to conclude that the person has a voter registration unrelated to the software issue?

A. No, an online MVC transaction does not mean that the individual has a voter registration unrelated to the software issue. Many online MVC transactions—such as online MVC address changes—do not require an attestation of eligibility to vote.

Q. Should Commissioners accept documentary proof of citizenship from individuals who voluntarily offer it?

A. Commissioners should treat documentary proof of citizenship the same as they would treat any other correspondence from the voter.

Q. Should Commissioners engage in ordinary voter roll updates during this process?

A. Yes, if Commissioners encounter information during this process that would normally lead to updates to the voter rolls (for example, updating a voter profile to reflect a change of address), they should conduct those activities as they would in the ordinary course.

Q. Whom should county election officials contact if they have legal questions?

A. County election officials should contact their assigned DAG as in the normal course.

Q. How should county election officials handle requests for records under the Open Public Records Act (“OPRA”) or other public records laws?

A. County election officials should consult county counsel when they receive a request for records related to the MVC software issue pursuant to OPRA or other public records laws.

When disclosing records in response to such requests, county election officials should be mindful of their obligations to protect personal privacy under both state and federal law. State and federal law generally prohibit the disclosure of driver’s license numbers and other personally identifiable information.