

# WEST VIRGINIA -ELECTION CONNECTION-

*Your source for Election News from Secretary of State Natalie E. Tennant*

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Issue 23 – March 13, 2012

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## **8 Weeks Until the May Primary!**

On Tuesday, March 13 there will be exactly 8 weeks until the May Primary!

## **Important Dates Coming Up**

- **March 13:** Notice of Number of Sets of Emergency Absentee Voting Commissioners Needed (§ 3-3-5c(b))
- **March 20 - May 8:** (From date of notification through day of primary election) County Clerks Fill Vacancies of Election Officials (Poll workers) (§ 3-1-30)
- **March 23:** Approved Voter Registration Program for Eligible High School Students. (At an appropriate time during each school year, but no later than 45 days before a statewide primary election held during a school year) Last day for clerk of the county commission to conduct an approved program of voter registration services for eligible high school students at each high school within the county. (§ 3-2-8)
- **March 23:** Delivery of Absentee Ballots to County Clerk (Not less than forty-six days prior to the primary election) Last day for board of ballot commissioners to have printed and delivered to the county clerk official absent voters' ballots and supplies. (§ 3-3-11, 3-4-10)
- **March 23 - May 2, 2012:** (May 3 for applications received May 2, 2012) Mail Absentee Ballots. Within one day after the clerk has both the completed application and the ballot. Ballots delivered at least 46 days before election and applications due no later than sixth day before election. Upon acceptance of a completed application, the county clerk determines whether the requirements have been met, and mails official absent voter's ballot(s), envelopes, instructions, and any other supplies required for voting the ballot. If the clerk determines the requirements have not been met, the clerk gives notice that the ballot will be provisional. (§ 3-3-5, 3-3-11)

- **March 27:** Notice Mailed to Election Officials (Within seven days following appointment) County commission notifies, by first-class mail, all election commissioners, poll clerks and alternates of their appointment, including a response form. (§ 3-1-30(h))
- **March 27:** Write-In Candidate Filing Deadline for Primary (Board of Education) (Received no later than the close of business forty two days before the election at which the office is to be filled.) Eligible person who seeks to be elected by write-in votes to an office which is to be filled in the primary (board of education only) shall file a write-in candidate's certificate of announcement. (§ 3-6-4a)

### **2012 Legislature Wrap Up**

Here is a summary of the election related bills that have passed the State Legislature and now await the Governor's signature to become law:

- Senate Bill 628: Allows fundraising for State Executive Party Headquarters
- House Bill 4238: Allows Address Confidentiality Program participants to be placed on a "permanent" absentee voters' list
- House Bill 4257: Allows late in-person voter registration for most individuals covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)
- House Bill 4279: Permits municipalities to stagger the term of elected officers
- House Bill 4403: Changes the certified write-in candidate deadline to 49 days before the election
- House Bill 4451: Establishes procedures to ensure executive party committees have primary responsibility for the naming of ballot commissioners.

### **EAC Roundtable Discussion**

Secretary of State Policy Director Jackie Harris has been invited to participate in a roundtable discussion sponsored by the EAC next week in Washington, DC. According to the EAC, "Our goal is to highlight and build on our role as a national clearinghouse and resource for election officials around the country as they prepare for the 2012 federal elections and beyond. This roundtable will provide a national platform for participants to share ideas and strategies for improving the administration of elections in the United States."

If you have feedback about the current EAC Election Clearinghouse materials, or if you would like to request new information be added to those materials, please contact Jackie at (304) 558-6000 or [jharris@wvsos.com](mailto:jharris@wvsos.com).

The event will also be webcast live on the EAC's website and will also feature a Twitter feed. The event is Tuesday, March 20 from 9:00AM to 12:30PM.

### **Hand Sanitizer in the Polling Place**

This interesting item appeared on the EAC website last week, posted by the General Registrar in Bristol, Virginia:

“If you plan to offer information regarding the use of hand sanitizers at voting precincts, I offer the follow suggestion. Never let a voter use hand sanitizer just before they are handed a ballot. In 2009, amid the flu epidemic and concern for minimizing the spread of germs, we sent hand sanitizer out to each voting precinct. A voter dispensed a big dollop on her hands just before she was given her ballot. Her ballot became damp from the sanitizer product left on her hands which in turn became jammed in the optical scan machine when she deposited it. Not only did it jam to the point that we could not readily remove the ballot, it tore into pieces that got into other parts of the machine. In spite of waiting for the residue to evaporate and attempting to remove the remains of the ballot, the machine was down for the rest of the day. Only 15 minutes before the close of the polls, the technicians were finally able to clear the slot. The machine had to be sent off for repair and cleaning. Problems have been seen whenever the card stock that ballots are printed on become damp for any reason. We even caution our officers on rainy elections to ensure voters dry their hands well before handling a ballot.”

### **Upcoming Primary Elections and Caucuses**

- March 13
  - o Alabama Primary (50 delegates)
  - o American Samoa Caucuses (9)
  - o Hawaii Caucuses (20)
  - o Mississippi Primary (40)
- March 17
  - o Missouri Caucuses (52)
- March 18
  - o Puerto Rico Caucuses (23)
- March 20
  - o Illinois Primary (69)
- March 24
  - o Louisiana Primary (46)
- April 3
  - o District of Columbia Primary (19)
  - o Maryland Primary (37)
  - o Wisconsin Primary (42)
- April 24
  - o Connecticut Primary (28)
  - o Delaware Primary (17)
  - o New York Primary (95)
  - o Pennsylvania Primary (72)
  - o Rhode Island Primary (19)
- May 8
  - o Indiana Primary (46)
  - o North Carolina Primary (55)
  - o West Virginia Primary (31)

- May 15
  - o Nebraska Primary (35)
  - o Oregon Primary (28)
- May 22
  - o Arkansas Primary (36)
  - o Kentucky Primary (45)
- May 29
  - o Texas Primary (155)
- June 5
  - o California Primary (172)
  - o Montana Primary (26)
  - o New Jersey Primary (50)
  - o New Mexico Primary (23)
  - o South Dakota Primary (28)
- June 26
  - o Utah Primary (40)

### **Have an idea?**

Is there something that you want to see addressed in the Election Connection? The goal of this newsletter is to keep everyone up to date about challenges facing election officials in West Virginia and to inform everyone about best practices that are being put into place. If you have an idea for a topic, have a question, or if you think there is a subject that election officials around the state would be interested in, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretary of State's Office. You can contact the Elections Division by email at [elections@wvsos.com](mailto:elections@wvsos.com) or (304) 558-6000 or Jake Glance directly at [jglance@wvsos.com](mailto:jglance@wvsos.com). Your input is appreciated.