



New Mexico Secretary of State

April 9, 2016

Guidance on the Implementation of 17 year olds voting in the 2016 Primary Election

After consultation with the Attorney General, the Secretary of State has confirmed that beginning May 18, 2016, 17 year olds eligible to vote pursuant to House Bill 138 will be able to vote in the June 7, 2016 primary election.

As you know HB138, allowing 17 year olds to vote in the primary election if they will be 18 by the general election, passed the legislature and was signed into law by the governor during the 2016 legislative session.

Per Article IV, Section 23 of the NM Constitution, a bill becomes law 90 days following adjournment of the legislature. Since the session adjourned on February 18, this law goes into effect on Wednesday, May 18, after the start of absentee voting for the primary election which begins on May 10.

Here are the specific conditions for eligibility in order for 17 years olds to vote in the primary:

1. 17 year olds must register to vote prior to books closing on May 10, 2016.
2. Eligible 17 year olds must turn 18 on or before the general election, November 8, 2016.
3. 17 year olds must register as a democrat or republican to vote in the primary election.

If the above conditions have been met then the registrant may vote beginning on **May 18, 2016**. In order to accommodate this, there are some configuration changes that must be made in VREMS at the state and county level.

PowerProfile Changes – County level

There are some configuration changes that must be made at the county level in order to setup the 2016 primary election and to prepare rosters to include 17 year olds eligible to vote beginning on May 18.

All counties must make the following changes in PowerProfile:

1. System Parameter Change:
 - Under Administration → System Parameter
 - Choose System Group: 'Voter Registration' and
 - System Parameter: 'Next Election'
 - Ensure that this value is left **blank** as it must be set at the STATE level.

System Parameter Modifications

System Group: Voter Registration

System Parameters
Label for Optional Field # 9
Make source of registration 'sticky'
Minimum Age Requirement
Most Propering Enabled
Next Election
Omit Households Where All Registrants are Indefinite Absentees
Perform Additional Validity Check on Age

Enter the Election Code (for example, GN98) to be used in calculating the minimum age and registration application eligibility.

2. When preparing rosters prior to Election Day:
 - Module→Elections→Prepare Rosters
 - Choose 'Primary 2016'
 - Mark check box to include 'Suspense registrants with a status reason of:' **UNDERAGE**
 - Mark check box to exclude 'Registrants born after:' **11/8/1998**

Include

☒ Inactive registrants, if made inactive on/after: 00/00/0000 ☐ Only

☒ Absentee Voters ☐ Only ☒ Early Voters ☐ Only From: 00/00/0000 To: 00/00/0000

☐ ONLY Absentee and Early Voters

☐ **Secure Registrants** ☐ Suppress Address Printing

☒ Suspense registrants with a status reason of: UNDER AGE

Exclude

☒ Registrants born after: 11/08/1998

3. A setting will be made at the STATE level under 'election maintenance' the evening of May 17 in order to allow 17 year olds to begin voting on May 18. This setting will impact the following:
 - For counties that use a pollbook provided by Robis or AES:
 - The Ballot on Demand export file created in PowerProfile to load voters onto the pollbook will contain eligible 17 year olds.
 - Counties will need to re-run a new export file in PowerProfile and provide it to the vendor prior to the start of voting on May 18 in order to include eligible 17 year olds.
 - For counties that use iPower or PowerProfile instead of a pollbook:

- Counties will be able to log credit to eligible 17 year olds beginning on May 18.
- Counties will be able to log applications and issue absentee ballots in PowerProfile or the pollbook beginning on May 18.

Additional Considerations regarding the implementation of HB138:

17 year olds will remain in ‘suspense’ in PowerProfile for the duration of the primary and will ONLY become ‘active’ on their 18th birthday.

- Voters in ‘suspense’ currently do not appear in VoterView – The SOS is working with ES&S to determine whether it may be possible to show ‘suspense’ registrants in VoterView.
- Voters in ‘suspense’ do NOT receive voter information cards upon being entered into PowerProfile – Counties should consider sending some other type of confirmation that the registration was received and processed in order to notify these voters of their eligibility to vote in the primary election.
- No changes need to be made in the setup and conduct of elections occurring between the 2016 primary and general elections. As long as counties have their recurring ‘age’ batch job setup in PowerProfile, registrants in ‘suspense’ due to being underage will continue to move to ‘active’ upon reaching their 18th birthday and will become eligible for the next election upon achieving the eligible voting age.
- Current state law does not allow for 17 year olds to vote in any other election conducted in the state.