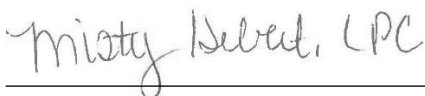



Voter Registration

Policy Type:	Administrative	Policy Number:	140
Original Issue:	10/14/2013	Effective Date:	7/19/2023
Document Owner's Approval:	 <hr/> Misty Hebert, LPC, Deputy Director		
Executive Director's Approval:	 <hr/> Kristin Bonner, BSN, RN, Executive Director		

Policy Statement:

South Central Louisiana Human Services Authority's (SCLHSA) shall comply with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1995 in performing voter registration activities.

Rationale:

To establish procedures that will increase the number of eligible citizens who register to vote for Federal, State and local officers, enhance the participation of eligible citizens as voters in elections, and protect the integrity of the electoral process by ensuring that accurate and current voter registration rolls are maintained.

Procedure:

A. Intent:

This policy identifies specific responsibilities and procedures for the distribution and use of the voter registration form and for the use and maintenance of the Declarations Statement form, as well as the reporting of data collected to the Louisiana Secretary of State.

B. Scope:

SCLHSA is a statutorily created separate and distinct juridical entity from the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH); and provides services that are included in the designated mandatory agencies that must comply with the NVRA.

All voter registration agencies must provide the following services during each application, recertification, renewal and change of address.

- Distribution of the voter registration declaration form and the mail voter registration application form.
- Assistance to applicants in completing voter registration application forms, unless the applicant refuses such assistance.
- Acceptance of completed voter registration application forms for transmittal to the appropriate State election official.

In applying the above listed requirements to the SCLHSA, the services listed must be provided during the following SCLHSA Behavioral Health transactions: ***application, admission, readmission, recertification (annual fee assessment), and change of address***. The SCLHSA Developmental Disabilities (DD) office will apply this policy to participants that

participates or takes part in OCDD services by ***applying for services, recertifying for services, renewing services and/or updating demographic information.***

C. LDH will be responsible for NVRA training, oversight, and compliance pursuant to the provision of LDH contract with the SCLHSA.

D. Roles of SCLHSA Facilities Providing Public Assistance

1. An adequate supply of the Voter Registration Application form, issued by the Louisiana Secretary of State, must be maintained in all SCLHSA facilities at all times. The manager, or his/her designee, must ensure that an adequate supply of forms is available in the office. In the event that all copies of the form are utilized before the end of any business day, additional copies must be immediately printed. Supplies of Voter Registration Application Forms (LR-1M) may be obtained from the local Registrar of Voters Office, through a link to the form on the LDH website or through the SCLHSA Intranet.
2. Persons should be offered the opportunity to register to vote when applying, admitted, re-admitted, re-certifying their financial eligibility or changing their address. The Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) will apply this policy to participants that participates or takes part in OCDD services by applying for services, recertifying for services, renewing services and/or updating demographic information. SCLHSA DD Office will apply the policy as stated above by the OCDD.
3. If an applicant is changing his/her name, ask the applicant: "Do you want your change of name to be used for voter registration purposes?" If the applicant declines, no further action is necessary. If the applicant accepts, have the applicant complete the voter registration application form.
4. If you are contacted by anyone inquiring about whether the facility offers voter registration, you must either:
 - a. Tell the person that SCLHSA facilities offer voter registration to all individuals when admitted for treatment, or
 - b. Refer the person to the manager or person in charge of your facility.
5. Failure to comply with these directives may result in disciplinary action and/or contract termination. If you do not fully understand any of the requirements or if you have any questions, you should immediately contact your supervisor for additional clarification.

E. Agency Requirements:

1. With each application, admission, re-admission, recertification (annual fee assessment) or change of address, each voter registration agency shall distribute voter registration forms as follows:
 - a. The Voter Registration Application Form
 - b. The Voter Registration Declaration Form
2. Provide each person who does not decline to register to vote the same degree of assistance with regard to completion of the registration application form as it provides with regard to completion of its own forms, unless the person refuses such assistance.
3. Accept the completed Voter Registration Application (VRA) Forms and transmit the forms to the appropriate Registrar of Voters Office within five calendar days of receipt. The Administrative Coordinator will be responsible for forwarding the VRA forms. Note: The facility's requirement to comply with NVRA shall be waived during which time the member exhibits signs of inebriation, psychosis, physical trauma or any other reason that precludes the person's ability to reason and make an informed decision to complete the Voter Registration Application and Declaration forms. Once the member is stable and has the capacity to reason, the agency then becomes obligated to offer the member the

opportunity to complete the Voter Registration Application and Declaration forms. Determinations must be made by a Licensed Mental Health Professional.

4. Review voter registration data elements for completeness. If an applicant's name, address, and original signature are missing, SCLHSA will send the Incomplete Louisiana Voter Registration Application Form and a blank Registration Application Form to the potential applicant.

F. Record Retention:

1. Each facility must maintain a copy of each completed voter registration declaration form and each completed or partially completed voter registration application form in electronic and/or hard copy format.
2. Copies in electronic format must be maintained for ten (10) years or longer if required by SCLHSA policy.
3. Copies in hard copy must be maintained for six (6) years or longer if required by SCLHSA policy according to National Voter Registration Act, 42 U.S.C section 1973gg et seq. 407.c

G. Confidential Information:

1. The following information is confidential:
 - a. Information about declining to register to vote
 - b. Information about the specific location where a person applies to register to vote
 - c. Social Security Number
 - d. Driver's License Number
 - e. Day and month of the date of birth
 - f. Mother's maiden name

Note: It is important to note that a voter registration agency is not required to offer voter registration with every contact it has with the client, but rather only in the five instances listed above – application, admission , re-admission, recertification (annual fee assessment), or change of address.

2. Conversations with persons should be handled with sensitivity. When an agency offers a person the opportunity to register to vote, the agency must not:
 - a. Try to influence a person's political preference or party registration
 - b. Display any political preference or party allegiance
 - c. Make any statement to a person or take any action which would discourage that person from registering to vote
 - d. Make any statement to a person or take any action which would lead that person to believe that a decision to register to vote or not register to vote would have any bearing on the availability of services or benefits from the agency

H. In Person Procedure:

1. SCLHSA does not conduct in-person applications; therefore, pursuant to the NVRA, persons shall be offered the opportunity to register to vote when admitted, readmitted, re-certified for financial eligibility or change their address in person with a SCLHSA staff and/or contractor member. Any complaint regarding voter registration received by an employee or contractor of SCLHSA must be reported to the Executive Director.
2. If two (2) adults (or voter aged individuals) apply (i.e., husband/wife), each shall be offered a Voter Registration Application form.

3. Document the person's response to the offer on the Declaration Statement Form.
4. Provide the person with the LR-1M form.
5. Assist persons in completing the Voter Registration Application form unless the person refuses.
6. If an applicant want to complete the voter registration application form at home or requests one for a friend or family member, provide the necessary voter registration application form. You must not mark the voter registration application form in any manner. Make a note on the declaration form if the applicant indicated he/she wanted to register to vote, but took the voter registration application form home to complete.
7. Verify that the Voter Registration Application contains the applicant's name, address, and signature prior to accepting it as complete.
8. Mail completed Voter Registration Application forms to the parish Registrar of Voters preferably daily but within five calendar days of receipt.

I. Questions:

1. If a person has any questions regarding voter registration, you may refer the person to the local registrar of voters or to the web site www.geauxvote.com
2. The Secretary of State, Registration Division, may be reached by calling (225) 922-0900 or toll-free at 1-800-883-2805. or you may visit the Secretary of State's website at <http://www.sos.la.gov/tabid/457/default.aspx>

J. Employee Training:

1. SCLHSA Site Coordinator
The SCLHSA Site Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring compliance by each SCLHSA facility. The name of the SCLHSA Site Coordinator shall be submitted to LDH and onto the Secretary of State. When a change is made to the Agency Coordinator, the agency shall provide the name and contact information to LDH and the Secretary of State NVRA Coordinator within 10 days.

On a quarterly basis, beginning January 1, 2014, the NVRA Agency Coordinator shall submit a concise report that documents the following:

- a. The total number of applications for service or assistance, recertification, renewals, and changes of address relating to such service or assistance received by the agency by site;
 - b. The total number of declaration forms received by the agency by site;
 - c. The total number of completed voter registration applications received by the agency and forwarded to the appropriate registrar of voters by site.
2. NVRA Training will be provided to all employees (including student workers, volunteers and temporary workers) within 30 days of employment. Training will also be provided to the Developmental Disabilities Support Coordination Agencies. The SCLHSA staff members who perform these duties will receive annual training thereafter. Supervisors will be responsible for assuring that their subordinates maintain compliance with this training and implement this policy in accordance with the training received. The training shall include but shall not be limited to the following:
 - a. Review of responsibilities of employees to distribute voter registration applications and provide declaration forms;
 - b. Overview of the voter registration application form with special emphasis on potentially problematic areas;
 - c. Discuss documents/information which may be used to establish the voter

- registration applicant's age, identity, and residency;
- d. Review of the type and level of assistance that may be offered to and provided to the voter registration applicant;
 - e. Review of responsibilities for ensuring the accuracy and eligibility of the Voter Registration Application Form (LR-1M);
 - f. Emphasis on the authorized employee's responsibility to inform the voter registration applicant that he/she is not registered to vote until the parish registrar notifies him/her of registration; and
 - g. Review of transmittal requirements; and
 - h. Review of prohibitions

Compliance Requirement:

- National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1995
- Louisiana Department of Health (LDH)
- National Voter Registration Act, 42 U.S.C section 1973gg et seq. 407.c

Attachments:

- Louisiana Voter Registration Application
- Voter Declaration Form
- Incomplete Louisiana Voter Registration Application Form

Linkages:

<https://www.sos.la.gov/ElectionsAndVoting/RegisterToVote/Pages/default.aspx>