

132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

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H.P. 249	House of Representatives, February 3, 2025

An Act to Repeal the Laws That Allow Same-day Voter Registration

Received by the Clerk of the House on January 30, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

R(+ B. Hunt

ROBERT B. HUNT Clerk

Presented by Representative BAGSHAW of Windham. Cosponsored by Senator BRADSTREET of Kennebec and Representatives: HAGGAN of Hampden, JAVNER of Chester, LIBBY of Auburn, LYMAN of Livermore Falls, RUDNICKI of Fairfield, SCHMERSAL-BURGESS of Mexico, Senators: LIBBY of Cumberland, MOORE of Washington. 1 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 21-A MRSA §121-A, as amended by PL 2023, c. 291, §2 and affected by §4, is further amended to read:

4 §121-A. Deadline for registration

5 The deadline for receipt of voter registration applications submitted by mail or by a 3rd person is the close of business on the 21st day before election day. The deadline for receipt 6 7 of voter registration applications submitted online is midnight on the 21st day before election day. The deadline for receipt of voter registration applications transmitted by the 8 Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles pursuant to section 232 or 9 10 by a source agency other than the Bureau of Motor Vehicles pursuant to section 233 is midnight on the 7th day before election day. The deadline for in-person registration is the 11 close of the polls on business on the last Thursday before election day. 12

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Sec. 2. 21-A MRSA §122, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2005, c. 453, §16, is repealed.

Sec. 3. 21-A MRSA §122, sub-§5, as amended by PL 2013, c. 131, §7, is further
 amended to read:

5. Alternative registration schedule for absentee voters. If the clerk receives a 16 17 properly completed absentee ballot application that is signed by a person who is not a 18 registered voter in the municipality, a presumption of the person's qualification as a voter 19 is established. The clerk shall send an absentee ballot to the voter at the address indicated, 20 along with a voter registration application under section 152. The completed registration 21 application must be returned to the clerk by the close of the polls on business on the last Thursday before election day in order for the ballot to be counted and may not be sealed 22 23 with the voted absentee ballot. If the application is received during the closed period and 24 the registrar is not satisfied as to the person's qualification as a voter, the registrar shall 25 follow the requirements of section 121, subsection 1-A to place the person's name on the 26 incoming voting list and challenge the absentee ballot. An application by telephone under section 753-A, subsection 4 or an application by electronic means under section 753-A, 27 subsection 6 does not establish a presumption of qualification under this section and the 28 29 requestor must submit a properly completed voter registration application before the clerk 30 may issue an absentee ballot.

Sec. 4. 21-A MRSA §122, sub-§6, ¶A, as amended by PL 2005, c. 453, §18, is
further amended by amending subparagraph (1) to read:

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(1) In a municipality with a population of 2,500 or fewer, on the last business day <u>Thursday</u> that the clerk's office is open before election day during the hours that

the clerk's office is open;

36 Sec. 5. 21-A MRSA §122, sub-§6, ¶A, as amended by PL 2005, c. 453, §18, is
 37 further amended by amending subparagraph (2) to read:

38 (2) In a municipality with a population of more than 2,500, on the last 5 business
39 days Thursday that the clerk's office is open before election day, and for the 4
40 business days prior to the last Thursday before election day, during the hours that
41 the clerk's office is open and for 2 hours in the evening between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m.
42 on at least one of these days; and

Sec. 6. 21-A MRSA §122, sub-§9, as amended by PL 2003, c. 395, §1, is further amended to read:

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3 9. Regulation of registration monitors. Anyone who wishes to monitor the names 4 and addresses of persons who are registering at the registrar's office or the clerk's office shall inform the registrar or clerk of that intent. Anyone who wishes to monitor the names 5 and addresses of persons who are registering at the polling place shall inform the registrar 6 7 or clerk of that intent by submitting a written, signed statement containing the proposed monitor's name, address and intent. The registrar or clerk may designate a place where a 8 9 person monitoring registrations may stand. The registrar or clerk shall then announce the 10 name and address of individuals registering to vote in a loud and clear voice. A person monitoring registrations shall direct any questions the person has to the registrar or clerk. 11 12 These questions must be limited to information pertinent to the qualifications of an 13 individual to register. A person monitoring registrations may not ask questions of individuals waiting to register concerning their eligibility to vote. A polling place 14 15 registration monitor may not handle or inspect registration cards, files or other materials used by the registrar or clerk except as provided in section 22. A monitor may not inhibit 16 the work of the registrar or clerk. If the work of a registrar or clerk appears to be inhibited, 17 the warden may request a reduction in the number of monitors present in the polling place. 18 A registrar or clerk may require a person monitoring registrations who violates the 19 20 provisions of this subsection to leave the building.

SUMMARY

This bill makes changes to the deadline for in-person voter registration. Current law permits in-person voter registration up to the close of business on election day. The bill changes the deadline to the close of business on the Thursday before election day.