



**26th Annual
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Orlando, Florida**

2010 Professional Practices Program

On-line Democracy: It's Complete!

Polk County, FL

Submitted by:

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An important goal in the election business is to provide convenient, easy ways for voters to participate in the democratic process. In Polk County, Florida, offering on-line voter registration through our website is one of the ways we make our office more accessible to our constituents.

Our state requires an original signature on an official paper registration form. These forms have been available on our website for many years in portable document format (PDF). The user completed the form on the screen, then printed, signed, and mailed it to our office. Upon receipt, the document was checked for completeness, the data was entered into our voter registration database, and the document was scanned and stored. The data entry process was completed a second time for automatic verification, then the verified data and image was transmitted to our state voter registration system. Two to three weeks later, the voter received their first indication that their application had been received in the form of their voter information card.

In comparison to typical handwritten forms, this process provided a more convenient method of registering for many prospective voters. But many times, forms were incomplete, and had to be returned to the voter with a letter of explanation. Some commonly missed items:

- To be registered in Florida, an applicant must affirm that they are an American citizen, not a convicted felon, and have not been declared mentally incompetent. This information is gathered from check boxes on the form, and is often overlooked by applicants.
- Florida law requires a driver license number or the last four digits of a Social Security number. Some applicants either do not know, or do not feel comfortable releasing this information, and would leave the information blank.
- Florida law prohibits the use of post office box numbers as an address of residence. Although the form requests a “residence” address, many applicants still completed the form using a post office box.

Our new on-line voter registration service eliminates the possibility of oversights and reduces mistakes. It’s interactive, and for some, less intimidating, as the applicant is only asked for a few pieces of information at a time. They also receive instant feedback if they have a problem. For example:

- If they do not respond in the affirmative regarding their citizenship, lack of felony conviction or mental competence, they cannot proceed. Error messages explain the requirements.
- If they are unable to provide their drivers license number or last four digits of their Social Security number, they cannot proceed, and again receive instructions on how to resolve the problem.
- Because a current *residence* address is required, post office box addresses are not accepted. Applicants must enter a *residence* address to continue.
- Age is validated, which not only notifies underage applicants they must wait until age 16 to pre-register, but helps identify “typos” made when filling in the date of birth.

At the end of the process, the applicant has the opportunity to review the data they have entered, and can return to any section to make changes. When the applicant clicks “SUBMIT,” the data is displayed on a PDF version of the official voter registration form, and clear instructions are provided to print and sign the application, and mail it to our office. An e-mail is also sent to their inbox reminding them to do so.

Next, the benefit for the efficiency of our operation begins. The completed electronic version of the on-line application is sent to a holding queue in our voter registration database. When the signed application is received, the application number printed on the document is used to retrieve the electronic record. The data entry operator only has to check for a signature, since the on-line application enforces completion of all other required information. To process, the operator simply clicks the "UPDATE" button to transmit the record to the statewide voter registration system, then scans the paper form and "clips" the signature for electronic storage. No data entry is required. At this time, an e-mail is sent advising the voter their application has been processed and their new voter information card will be arriving soon.

The processed record then flows into our electronic queue from the state registration system, where it awaits "validation," a process which electronically compares the residence address against our countywide street index. If errors are found, an operator will take the appropriate steps to resolve them.

This new service was launched with no introduction or advertising, and the response was immediate and extremely positive. Thirty percent of applications received by mail in April are from this new process. Sixty-two percent were from people over forty years old. The number of on-line applications grows daily, and we anticipate a significant increase as we move closer to our fall elections. The benefits to both applicants and the efficiency of our operation are clear:

- More and more of our citizens are used to conducting business over the internet. We've created a simple, seamless process that increases voter convenience while complying with statutory voter registration requirements.
- Fewer steps are needed to process applications. The prospective voters are essentially completing the data entry.
- Fewer applications require follow up mailings, since on-line applications are complete when received, and minimal discrepancies are generally found during the validation process.
- We're saving on postage. Instead of mailing blank forms to citizens, we verify that they have internet access. Then staff refers them to our web page if they need to register or change their name or party affiliation – transactions for which Florida law requires an official application form.
- The on-line application is also easy to find when a voter makes their own way to our web page - there are several links from our home page that refer customers to the application.
- Newly registered voters and voters making changes to their record receive instant (and automated!) feedback. They immediately receive an e-mail message thanking them for registering and reminding them to print and mail-in the form, reminder messages if they haven't submitted the printed form within a specified time, and finally, confirmation that their application has been processed and their voter information card is on the way. These are communications that were not previously available unless the voter asked.
- We also provide a link to join us on Facebook. Our Facebook page is one way our outreach department provides timely and informative election updates to our voters.

The cost of creating this service was minimal, and will quickly be surpassed by the cost-savings resulting from more efficient processing.



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Lori Edwards is the Polk County Supervisor of Elections.

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>> SIGN UP NOW
 Registering to vote or updating voter information is quick and easy. Just click here to download an application!

>> JOIN OUR TEAM!
 More than 1,400 citizens in Polk County serve as...

>> FACTS AND FIGURES
 View past election results, campaign financial reports, registration statistics, and query our database.

A MESSAGE FROM LORI:


Thanks for the opportunity to serve as your Supervisor of Elections. It is a challenging position that is almost always fun! We don't think our job is done unless we're out and about in the community. Please [contact us](#) if you'd like our mobile registration van to visit an upcoming event, or if you would like us to attend a meeting to give a presentation or speech. If you're a teacher, you may want to check out our [lesson plans](#) and [links](#). We are also happy to offer your class or group a tour of election headquarters so you can see what goes on behind the scenes.

ELECTION NEWS
 8/24/2010 | [Primary Election August 24th, 2010](#): Voter Registration and Party Change Deadline: July 26th, 2010 ([read more](#))
 11/2/2010 | [General Election November 2nd, 2010](#): Voter Registration Deadline: October 4th, 2010 ([read more](#))

NOTEWORTHY:
[Earn Extra Money!](#): Election Workers earn extra ... ([read more](#))
[Request A Speaker!](#): The Elections Office is committed to community service and voter education. One way that we accomplish this is through speeches and presentations to community organizations. ([read more](#))

COMMON TASKS:

 [Register to Vote](#)

 [Precinct Lookup](#)

 [Vote by Mail](#)


 [Voter Info Change](#)

 [Printable Forms](#)

Select a Subject Matter [v](#)

PUBLIC NOTICES

Several access points are provided to the on-line registration application on our home page.



Polk County Supervisor of Elections
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YOU CAN USE THIS FORM TO:

- Register to vote in the State of Florida
- Change your name or address
- Replace your defaced, lost or stolen Voter Information Card
- Register with a political party or change party affiliation
- Update your signature

Once you have completed the online application, **PRINT IT, SIGN IT, and MAIL IT TO US**

You will need the free Acrobat Reader to complete the online application. [Click here](#) to download the latest version.

What would you like to do?

I need to?


☐ Register as a new voter in Florida
 ☒ Update my Florida voter registration information
 ☐ Request a replacement voter information card

I will be changing my? (check all that apply)

☐ Address
 ☐ Party Affiliation
 ☐ Name
 ☐ Signature

All home page links direct the user to this page.

If the voter selects 'Update my Florida voter registration', they are prompted to enter the type of change.



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TO REGISTER, YOU MUST:

- Be a Citizen of the United State of America.
- Not be a convicted felon unless you have had your civil rights restored.
- Not be adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting unless that right is restored.
- Provide a current and valid Florida driver's license number or Florida identification card number or the last four digits your social security number.
- Be at least 18 years old (you can pre-register if your are 17 or if you have a valid driver's license before your 17th birthday.)

Registration Eligibility

STOP: If you cannot answer Yes to this question, you cannot register to vote. Are you a citizen of the United States?

☐ Yes ☒ No

STOP: If you cannot answer Yes to this question, you cannot register to vote. I affirm that I am not a convicted felon, or if I am, my rights related to voting have been restored.

☐ Yes ☒ No

STOP: If you cannot answer Yes to this question, you cannot register to vote. I affirm that I have not been adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting, or if I have, my rights to vote have been restored.

☐ Yes ☒ No

What type of identification number will you be providing?

☐ FL Driver License #
☐ FL ID Card #
☒ Last 4 Social Security #
☐ I do not have any of the above


Social Security #
(last 4 digits only)

< Go Back

Continue >

The voter must be able to answer yes to the first three questions to continue and to become a Florida voter.

The input 'mask' changes depending on the type of ID number that will be provided.



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ALL INFORMATION IN THIS SECTION IS REQUIRED

WHY DO WE NEED YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?
If we need to provide you additional information we will contact you at your email address. Please provide a valid email address.

Required Information

There were some errors in processing your request. Please review and correct the errors listed.

Email

Verify Email

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)
You must be at least 16 years old to register. Enter a valid date of birth.

Legal Name
 First Middle Last Suffix

Residence Address
 House # Pre-Dir Street Name Street Type Post-Dir
 Unit Type Unit # City, State FL ZIP Code

< Go Back

Continue >

Polk County, FL

250 S. Broadway Avenue

Bartow, FL 33830

- E-mail address is verified so that we can contact the voter and report on the progress of their application.
- Validation of date of birth ensures the user is old enough to register.
- Address is not validated against the street index during this process, but the city drop-down provides only cities inside Polk County.
- The zip code is a required field.

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Please provide the additional information below.

PARTY AFFILIATION

Florida is a closed primary election state. Therefore, to vote in a primary election for partisan candidates, you must be a registered voter in the party for which a primary is being held. Regardless of party affiliation, all registered voters can vote on issues and non-partisan candidates.

Additional Information**Mailing Address**

(if different from residence address)

☐ My mailing address is different from the residence.

Street Address

Apt/Lot/Unit

1234 S Broadway AVE

City

State

Country

ZIP Code

LAKE ALFRED

FL

USA

33813

Prior Address

(address last registered to vote)

Street Address

Apt/Lot/Unit

City

State

Florida County

ZIP Code

Former Name

(if making a name change)

Phone

()

-

Party Affiliation☐ Democrat☐ Republican☐ None☒ Minor Party**Other Florida Party**

AMERICA FIRST PARTY OF FLORIDA

Race / Ethnicity☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native☐ Asian / Pacific Islander☐ Black, Not Hispanic☐ Hispanic☐ White, Not Hispanic**Gender**☐ Female ☐ Male**Do you need assistance in voting at the polls?**☐ Yes ☐ No**Are you interested in being a poll worker?**☐ Yes ☐ No**State or Country of Birth****Are you any of the following?**☐ Active Duty Military / Merchant Marine☐ Dependent of Active Duty Military / Merchant Marine☐ U.S. Citizen Residing Outside the U.S.☐ None of these apply

< Go Back

Continue >

Information on this screen is not required for voter registration and is not validated.

If Minor Party is selected, all of the approved minor parties in Florida appear in the drop-down list.



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VERIFY ALL INFORMATION YOU PROVIDED BELOW

Incorrect information can cause delays in your voter registration process.
Please make sure all information you provided below is accurate.
To modify any information, select the Make Changes link next to the information you need to change.
If everything looks good, confirm that at the bottom of the page and select Submit Application.

Verify Your Information

What would you like to do?

[Update my Florida voter registration information](#)

Registration Eligibility

[Make Changes](#)

Are you a citizen of the United States? YES
I affirm that I am not a convicted felon, or if I am, my rights related to voting have been restored. YES
I affirm that I have not been adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting, or if I have, my rights to vote have been restored. YES
What type of identification number will you be providing? Last 4 Social Security # 0119

Required Information

[Make Changes](#)

Email christinegoding@polkelections.com
Date of Birth 01/01/1990
Legal Name Jessica Lynn Voter
Residence Address 1234 S Broadway AVE
LAKE ALFRED FL 33813

Additional Information

[Make Changes](#)

Mailing Address 1234 S Broadway AVE
LAKE ALFRED FL
USA 33813
Prior Address
Former Name
Phone
Party Affiliation AMERICA FIRST PARTY OF FLORIDA
Race / Ethnicity
Gender
Do you need assistance in voting at the polls?
Are you interested in being a poll worker?
State or Country of Birth
Are you any of the following?

Is all the information you provided above correct? ☐ Yes ☐ No

[Submit Application](#)

Polk County, FL 250 S. Broadway Avenue Bartow, FL 33830

Voters are able to review their application and make changes.



Dear Jessica,

Thanks! We've received your online voter registration application.

If you haven't already done so, please be sure to print your completed form and mail it to our office. Florida Law requires that we have a signed copy of your application.

To reprint your application, click the Print Application button on the right and enter application number 587 along with your email address. Then, sign the application and mail it to our office.

If you have any questions, please give us a call at 534-5888, or email us at info@polkelections.com

Regards,
Lori Edwards



Print
Application

Join us on

facebook

When the user clicks 'Submit Application', an e-mail is sent to the address they provided. It lets them know that they must print, sign and mail the application to the elections office.

Dear Jessica,

Here is your completed voter registration application form. Your registration is not yet complete. Please print and sign this application form and mail it to the address below.

Mail to:
P.O. Box 1460
Bartow, FL 33831

Email: info@PolkElections.com



Florida Voter Registration Application

REQUIRED	1	Check boxes that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> New Registration <input type="checkbox"/> Address Change <input type="checkbox"/> Party Change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name Change <input type="checkbox"/> Card Replacement <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Update		OFFICIAL USE ONLY Web #: 587 4/26/2010 1:03:23 PM christinegoding@polkelections.com			
	2	Are you a citizen of the United State of America? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (If NO, you cannot register to vote)					
	3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I affirm that I am not a convicted felon, or if I am, my rights relating to voting have been restored					
	4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I affirm that I have not been adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting, or if I have, my right to vote has been restored					
IF YOU ANSWERED NO TO QUESTION 2, OR IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO AFFIRM THE STATEMENTS IN BOXES 3 AND 4, YOU ARE INELIGIBLE TO REGISTER TO VOTE. DO NOT COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION.							
REQUIRED	5	Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY) 01/01/1990					
	6	If you have a current and valid FL DL# or FL ID card#, you must provide the number in this box. If you do not have either, provide the last 4 digits of your SSN. If you have not been issued a FL DL#, FL ID card#, or SSN, write "NONE": 0119					
	7	Last Name Voter	Suffix	First Name Jessica	Middle Name / Initial Lynn		
	8	Address Where You Live (Legal Residence) 1234 S Broadway AVE	Apt/Lot/Unit	City LAKE ALFRED	County of Legal Residence Polk	State FL	ZIP Code 33813
REQUIRED	9	Mailing Address if Different from Above 1234 S Broadway AVE	Apt/Lot/Unit	City LAKE ALFRED	Country USA	State FL	ZIP Code 33813
	10	Address Last Registered to Vote	Apt/Lot/Unit	City	Country	State	ZIP Code
	11	Former Name if Making Name Change		Day Phone Number (optional)			
	12	Party Affiliation <input type="checkbox"/> Democratic Party <input type="checkbox"/> Republican Party <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> minor party AMERICA FIRST PARTY OF FLORIDA <input type="checkbox"/> None					
REQUIRED	13	Race / Ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Black, not Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> White, not Hispanic					
	14	Sex <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Do you need voting assistance at the polls? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Are you interested in being a poll worker? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	State or Country of Birth		
	15	Are You: <input type="checkbox"/> Active Duty Military/Merchant Marine <input type="checkbox"/> Dependent of Active Duty Military/Merchant Marine <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Citizen Currently Residing Outside the U.S.					
	16	OATH: I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will protect and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Florida, that I am qualified to register as an elector under the Constitution and the laws of the State of Florida, and that all information provided in this application is true.		SIGNATURE: Sign or mark on line in box below. (Invalid without signature or mark of applicant) X Date:			

The voter is instructed to print this page, sign it and send it to our office.

When the application is received at the office:

1. The application number is typed in to the program at left and 'found'.
2. User clicks 'Update FVRS'. The e-mail notification below is sent to the voter.
3. The user scans the image.
4. The data flows into the process queue where HSMV records and transfers from other counties are received.

The voter is notified by e-mail that their application has been received and a voter ID card will be mailed to them. We also invite them to join us on Facebook, where we'll keep them updated with timely election information.

[Start Scan and Index Image](#) | [Stop Scan and Index Image](#)

Registration #	587	Find Application
Registration Date	4/26/2010	Suspend Comment
State Voter ID		Update State ID to Web App
<input type="checkbox"/> New Registration <input type="checkbox"/> Address Change <input type="checkbox"/> Party Change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name Change <input type="checkbox"/> ID Replacement <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Update		
Legal Name	Jessica Lynn	Voter
Date of Birth	1/1/1990	ID
Email	christinegoding@polkelections.com	
Race		Gender
Party	AFP	Birth Place
Residence Address	1234 S Broadway AVE	Mailing Address
	LAKE ALFRED 33813 - Polk	LAKE ALFRED 33813 FL USA
Prior Address	Former Name	
Need Help	Be a Poll Worker?	Military
Date Entered	4/26/2010	



Polk County Supervisor of Elections
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Dear Jessica,

Your voter registration is complete! You'll receive a voter information card in the mail within 3 weeks. If you have any questions, give us a call at 534-5888, or email us at info@polkelections.com.

Please remember that our website has lots of helpful information for voters (www.polkelections.com), including precinct locations, sample ballots, early voting information and more!

Regards,
Lori Edwards

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