



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 463-A

By Council Members Vacca, Dickens, Barron, Johnson, Koo, Mealy, Mendez, Koslowitz, Rodriguez, Van Bramer, Cohen, Levin, Vallone, Kallos, Greenfield and Borelli

A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to providing e-mail and text message notifications to New York city voters.

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 46 of the New York city charter is amended by adding a new section 1057-d to read as follows:

§1057-d Notifications to voters. a. The board of elections in the city of New York shall send e-mail and text message notifications related to voting for local, state, and federal elections to registered New York city voters who provide the board with an e-mail address or mobile phone number for this purpose. The board shall provide opportunities for city residents to provide an e-mail address or mobile phone number to the board for this purpose and shall maintain a database of all such e-mail addresses and mobile phone numbers. Such e-mail and text message notifications shall be sent for primary elections, general elections and special elections for which each such voter is eligible to vote, for the following purposes and at the following times:

(1) notification of the dates and hours of such election, as well as the applicable poll site location, and any changes thereto, for such voter, sent ten business days prior to such date, and on election day;

(2) notification of the dates, hours, locations, and eligibility requirements for casting an in-person absentee ballot sent on the first day of in-person absentee voting for such election;

(3) notification of the deadline for submission of a mailed absentee voting application for such election, sent ten business days prior to such deadline; and

(4) for e-mailed notifications only, distribution to such voter of an applicable sample ballot, or a link to such sample ballot, for such election, sent within two business days of such sample ballot being posted online.

b. E-mail and text message notifications sent pursuant to this section shall include links to the board's website to access relevant forms, materials and other additional information, as determined by the board, and shall be available in the languages in which the board publishes the election notices sent to such voter by mail.

c. The board shall provide opportunities for city residents to provide an e-mail address or mobile phone number through the following means:

(1) on voter registration forms;

(2) on the board's website;

(3) by collecting e-mail addresses at events promoting voter registration, voter participation, and any other events or meetings the board deems appropriate;

(4) in all mailings to registered voters by directing recipients of such mailings to the board's website; and

(5) by any other means that the board determines would facilitate the collection of e-mail addresses of registered or prospective New York city voters.

d. The board shall provide all e-mail and text message recipients under this section the option to unsubscribe from receiving such e-mail or text message notifications or to update an e-mail address or mobile phone number previously provided to the board. The board shall not remove any e-mail address or mobile phone number from its database unless an e-mail or text message recipient unsubscribes or provides an updated e-mail address or mobile phone number, or if e-mails or text messages sent to such e-mail address or mobile phone number are not successfully transmitted for a period of one year.

e. The board shall not share, sell or otherwise disclose e-mail addresses or mobile phone numbers collected pursuant to this section, except as otherwise required by law, without acquiring advance written permission from individuals providing such information, or unless ordered by a court of law.

§2. This local law takes effect January 1, 2017.

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