

2010 ELECTION PROCEDURES

A guide for Town Clerks, Presiding Officers, Representative District Clerks,
Senatorial District Clerks, County Clerks, Boards of Civil Authority,
Election Officials, Candidates and Voters.



Prepared by the
Office of the Secretary of State

Deborah L. Markowitz
Secretary of State

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Office of the Secretary of State, Elections Division, 26 Terrace St., Montpelier, VT
05609-1101

Phone: (802) 828-2464 or Toll-Free (800) 439-8683

Fax: (802) 828-5171 On the web: <http://www.sec.state.vt.us>

Kathy DeWolfe, Director of Elections 828-2304 (kdewolfe@sec.state.vt.us)

Melanie Hodge, Elections Administrator 828-0175 (mhodge@sec.state.vt.us)

David Crossman, Elections Administrator 828-0771 (dcrossman@sec.state.vt.us)

Katie Lane-Karnas, Elections Administrator 828-2464 (klane-karnas@sec.state.vt.us)

The Vermont Constitution: A Word on Elections

Chapter I, Article 8th of the *Vermont Constitution* requires:

"That all elections ought to be free and without corruption, and that all voters, having a sufficient, evident, common interest with, and attachment to the community, have a right to elect officers, and be elected into office, agreeably to the regulations made in this constitution."

This is not just a homily. The purity and basic fairness of Vermont elections is both a philosophical and practical objective of our social and political lives as Vermonters. We begin this review of the Primary and General Elections by proudly repeating the purposes of the Vermont election laws, as explained in 17 V.S.A. §2101:

- to provide equal opportunity for all citizens of voting age to participate in political processes;
- to assure that political campaigns are fairly and honestly conducted and financed;
- to define unacceptable conduct among political candidates and public servants;
- to insure that public service will be in the public interest, rather than the special interest of groups or individuals;
- to encourage citizens to become more actively involved in the political processes which affect the quality of life; and
- to provide uniform practices and procedures in the conduct of elections throughout the state.

Introduction

Members of our Boards of Civil Authority know that there is more to running Vermont's elections than checklists and tabulators. In fact, the biggest challenge for those charged with running Vermont's elections is doing what needs to be done next -- before the deadline passes.

At the Secretary of State's office we work hard to help ensure that Vermont's local officials run elections in a proper and legal manner. The "2010 Election Procedures--A Guide for Election Officials" is designed to be used as an overview of the election process and as a step-by-step reference for election officials for conducting elections. This guide is supplemented during the election year by Elections Bulletins sent out by the Elections Division to the town clerks as a reminder of the various requirements of election administration as deadlines near.

There have been a number of changes to state election laws over the past two years. The procedures in this booklet differ from previous versions of Election Perspectives! PLEASE DISCARD ALL PREVIOUS VERSIONS OF THIS BOOKLET.

A complete 2010 Elections Calendar has been sent to each town clerk in Vermont and is available on the Elections page of the Secretary of State's web site at <http://www.sec.state.vt.us>.

This year, Vermont has three major parties that will be holding primaries on August 24, 2010: Democrat, Progressive and Republican. It is a year in which we will elect one of our U.S. Senators, our U.S. Representative, all six statewide offices, all 30 members of the State Senate, 150 members of the Vermont House of Representatives, state's attorneys, assistant judges, probate judges, sheriffs, high bailiffs and justices of the peace.

We have a lot of work to do! I am very pleased that we have a great Elections Division staff to serve you. As always, we encourage you to call us for additional information or assistance.



Deborah L. Markowitz
Secretary of State

Call Toll Free 1-800-439-8683, or call direct
Deb Markowitz, Secretary of State, 828-2148
Kathy DeWolfe, Director, 828-2304
Melanie Hodge, Elections Administrator, 828-0175
David Crossman, Elections Administrator, 828-0771
Katie Lane-Karnas, Elections Administrator, 828-2464

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