



# County Technical Assistance Service

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## National Voter Registration Act

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Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS electronic library known as e-Li. This online library is maintained daily by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other e-Li material.

Sincerely,

The University of Tennessee  
County Technical Assistance Service  
226 Capitol Blvd. Suite 400  
Nashville, TN. 37219  
615-532-3555 phone  
615-532-3699 fax  
[ctas@tennessee.edu](mailto:ctas@tennessee.edu)  
[www.ctas.tennessee.edu](http://www.ctas.tennessee.edu)

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## National Voter Registration Act

**Reference Number:** CTAS-872

In 1993 the U.S. Congress passed the National Voter Registration Act, codified as 52 U.S.C. § 20501 - 52 U.S.C. § 20511. The law has been commonly dubbed the "Motor Voter" program due to the law's requirement that driver's license facilities (as well as a number of other agencies) offer voter registration services to their clients. Congress required most states to pass legislation and implement the programs of the act by January 1, 1995. Tennessee fully implemented the program by that date. Some of the act's programs (such as by-mail voter registration) were already available in Tennessee. Under this legislation, Tennessee established a network of cooperative efforts between local county election commissions and numerous state and local agencies. The participating voter registration agencies in Tennessee are the following: the Department of Safety (motor vehicles division), Department of Health (WIC program), Department of Human Services, Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Department of Veterans Affairs, public libraries, public high schools, county clerks, and registers of deeds. T.C.A. § 2-2-202.

In addition to expanding the locations for voter registration, the law made substantial reforms in voter registration record keeping and maintenance. It eliminates purging a voter record for non-voting (formerly practiced in Tennessee) and requires election commissions to accommodate voters who have moved within a county but failed to update their voter registration.

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