

DIRECTIVE 2020-001

October 26, 2020

Effective Immediately

Absentee Ballot Signature Matching

Absentee voting is governed by Title 7, Chapter 15 of the South Carolina Code. Nothing in Title 7, Chapter 15 allows county boards of voter registration and elections to employ any type of signature matching procedure upon receipt of an absentee ballot. A “signature matching procedure” is any review process conducted by election officials to compare a voter’s signature on an absentee ballot to some other signature of the voter. No signature matching procedure may be used to disqualify or reject an absentee ballot that is otherwise properly completed and timely submitted.

If any county board of voter registration and elections, or any staff employed or working on behalf of a county board of voter registration and elections, is employing or plans to employ a signature matching procedure, it must stop doing so immediately. Further, any absentee ballot that, as a result of a signature matching procedure, has been rejected, disqualified or otherwise set aside so that it will not be counted should immediately be included with those absentee ballots that will be counted, assuming that absentee ballot otherwise complies with Title 7, Chapter 15.

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