

Maintaining Voter Lists

COVID-19 and Election Administration:

Approaches for Election Officials

June 9, 2020

Housekeeping

- Be gracious about **work-from-home setups**
- **Restart Zoom** if needed
- **Slides and captioned recordings** will be available on the registration page
- Use the **chat panel** to say hello, chat with other attendees, and ask questions

Today's objectives

- Understand how the COVID-19 pandemic may result in new voter registration patterns
- Implement best practices for increasing voter list accuracy
- Proactively streamline voter registration and mail ballot requests

Today's agenda

- Introduction (10 mins.)
- Needs and challenges (10 mins.)
- Best Practices for Voter List Maintenance (10 mins.)
- Reflections from Daniel Wade (5 mins.)
- Support from ERIC (10 mins.)
- Q&A (10 mins.)
- Wrapping up and survey (5 mins.)

Hello, there!



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Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL)

Harnessing the promise of technology
to modernize the American voting
experience

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Federal resources

- Set of 10 documents (with more coming) provide guidance for state, local, tribal, and territorial election officials
- Written by the Joint COVID-19 Working Group
 - Cyber Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
 - Elections Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council (GCC)
 - Elections Infrastructure Sector Coordinating Council (SCC)

<https://www.cisa.gov/protect2020>

Keep in mind

1. This is tough!
2. One size doesn't fit all
3. Things will change
4. Preparation and flexibility > certainty
5. A supportive team > a solo mission
6. Your work *matters*, and it's hugely appreciated

“You’re holding an election during a pandemic, with a relatively new voting system, with a mail-in ballot system that is being widely embraced. Preparing for this is sort of like an earthquake, a tornado and a hurricane hitting you at the same time every day.”

--Al Schmidt, Philadelphia City Commissioner



David Swanson/The Philadelphia Inquirer

How voter lists face special pressure

VOTER LISTS DURING COVID: NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

Why is voter data so important?

- Inaccurate voter records may **prevent people from receiving ballots** or **having their votes counted**
- Up-to-date voter lists **promote integrity** and **strengthen trust** among voters and candidates
- Accurate voter data helps **save public funds** and **prevent waste** of election department resources and staff time

What's the extent of errors?

24 million – or 1 in 8 – voter registrations are no longer valid or are significantly inaccurate, including:

1.8 million deceased individuals

2.75 million people with registrations in more than one state

Sources of errors in voter data:

- Voters **move and don't update** their registrations
- People **omit information** when registering or updating
- **Signatures change** or their **data format becomes obsolete**
- **Data entry** or other internal errors
- Local **variation** in voter list management practices



With more mail voting comes an increased need for accurate voter data



But, accuracy has been frustrated by DMV closures, displacement of people from normal addresses, and other pandemic disruptions

POLITICS

About 1 in 10 ballots went undelivered to Baltimore City voters during 7th Congressional District special election

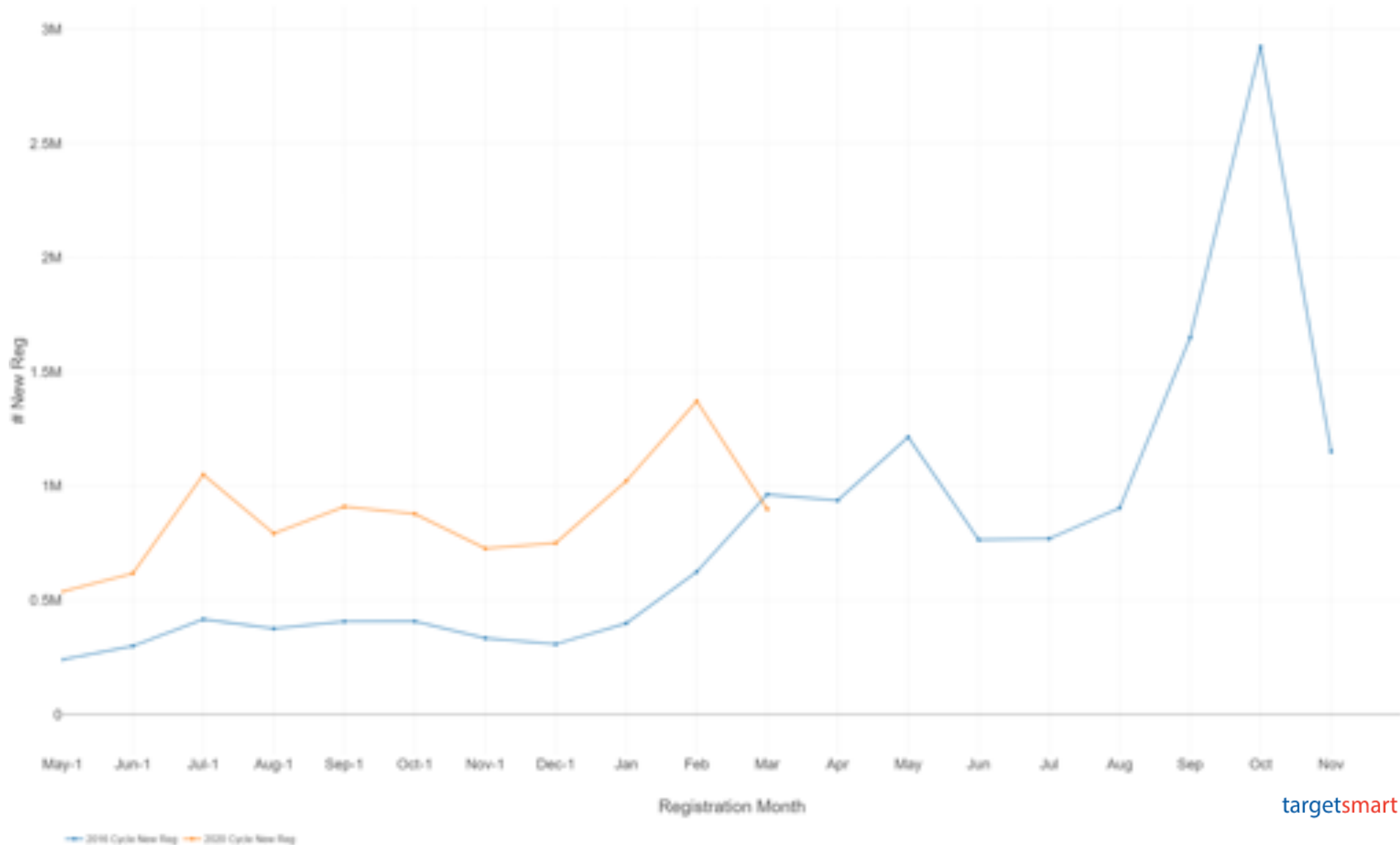


By EMILY OPILO

BALTIMORE SUN | MAY 13, 2020 | 4:36 PM



New Reg By Month Comparison



Remember your voters with the greatest need



**Language
barriers**



**Voters with
disabilities**



**Displaced
voters**



**Hard-to-reach
voters**

Strategies to maintain your voter list

BEST PRACTICES FOR VOTER LIST MAINTENANCE

Do your homework

If you're not sure how list maintenance is done in your state,
check in with your state election authority

Allow voters to verify and update registrations using OVR

John R. Ashcroft
Missouri Secretary of State

Business Services | Elections & Voting | Investor Protection & Securities | State Library | Records & Archives | Administrative Rules

ELECTIONS & VOTING

- Register to Vote
- How to Vote
- Where Do I Vote?
- View Candidates & Issues
- What Do I Bring To The Polls
- Absentee Voting
- Military and Overseas
- Accessible Voting
- Find My Local Election Authority
- Missouri Election Laws
- Election Results
- Election Integrity Unit
- Frequently Asked Questions

Check Your Voter Registration

For security, the Voter Lookup uses the exact data you provided when you registered to vote. If you are unsure how you registered - for example, whether you used a middle initial - you may need to try again.

When checking your voter registration, make sure to:

- Enter your first name. (Tip: It will be in the Voter Lookup exactly as you registered your name. If you type "Susan B." in the First Name box, but are registered as "Susan," the Voter Lookup may not locate your registration. You may have to re-try.)
- Enter your last name.
- Enter your house number.
- Enter the name of your street **WITHOUT** including the street type (Drive, Avenue, Street, etc.).
- Enter your birth date.
- Select your county from the drop-down menu.
- Click the "I'm not a robot" check box and click "Submit."
- If you have a non-standard address such as a rural route, you will need to contact your Local Election Authority instead of using this lookup.

* First Name (As Registered)

* Last Name

* House Number

* Street Name without Type (Do not enter Dr., Ave., etc.)

* Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)

* County

Let voters request mail ballots through OVR or an online request

And make sure the application provides an opportunity for voters to update their records

Send all voters a postcard to verify their registrations



Create a policy for undeliverable mail to trigger record updates

Undeliverable Ballot Matrix

Ballots are required to be mailed to voters by nonforwardable mail with a reply requested if not deliverable as addressed by the USPS. Those Undeliverable Ballots include the following categories and the action required by county election officials.

Category of Undeliverable Ballot	Action to Take if Received:	
	By 8 pm on Election Day	After 8 pm on Election Day
Temporarily Away Refused – Attempt to contact No Mail Receptacle – Attempt to contact	Do not take any action on this group.	Do not take any action on this group.
Moved out of State or County Attempted Not Known Forwarding Order Expired Vacant Not At This Address Moved Left No Address Moved Left No Forwarding Unable to Forward Gone No Order No Forwarding Address Not Deliverable as Addressed (not an data entry error) Unclaimed	Inactivate voter registration record, changing effective date of registration to election day or before to deduct from eligibility pool for the election, whether done prior to or after election day, but prior to certification if have any 50% measures on ballot.	Do not inactivate until after certification of election. (OAR 165-007-0130 (3))

Proactively update signatures on file with postcards

Returning Your Signature Card

- 1** Sign your card with black or blue pen
- 2** Detach the top portion of the card
- 3** Fold in half so that your signature is covered
- 4** Seal with tape and mail
No stamps needed



The diagram illustrates the process of returning a signature card. It features four numbered steps with corresponding images. Step 1 shows a yellow and white card with a signature. Step 2 shows the top portion of the card being detached. Step 3 shows the card folded in half. Step 4 shows the card sealed with tape.

Streamline your registration forms and processes



Center for Civic Design

Field Guides

Projects

Streamlining and nudging in voter registration

Some of us at the Center for Civic Design used to think about voter registration as just an enabling task, something voters had to do to get access to a ballot. It was a way of authenticating (or at least getting affirmation) that a person was eligible to vote. A necessary step.

In working with several states on modernizing voter registration, it's clear that at least in some places, voter registration can be streamlined to

Spread the word about verifying and updating registration

Flatten the curve of voter registration and list maintenance!
Get as much activity out of the way before Sept./Oct. as you can.

If ERIC member, download reports and act within NVRA timeline

Haven't done list maintenance in the last year? Soon is a good time.

If not ERIC member, use NCOA, SSA, etc. and act within NVRA timeline

What update sources are available? When's the last time they were used?

Review your security protocols for your voter registration data

Like in 2016, voter records will be attractive target for cyber attacks in 2020

Challenges and learnings

REFLECTIONS FROM DANIEL WADE

Weber County, Utah at a glance



- Utah's 4th most populous county
- 110,355 active registered voters
- Votes by mail, normally has vote centers, but vote centers eliminated for June 20 primary
- Utah a ERIC member since 2012 (a founding state)
- Daniel in role since 2015

List maintenance challenges in Weber County

- Accommodating a transitory population
- Achieving current and accurate addressing
- Facing the reality that maintenance is a full-time job

Learnings about list maintenance in Weber County

- Tasks must be performed *early* and *often*
- Vote-by-mail is the ultimate resource available
































The role of the Electronic Registration Information Center

HOW ERIC CAN SUPPORT YOUR ELECTION DEPARTMENT



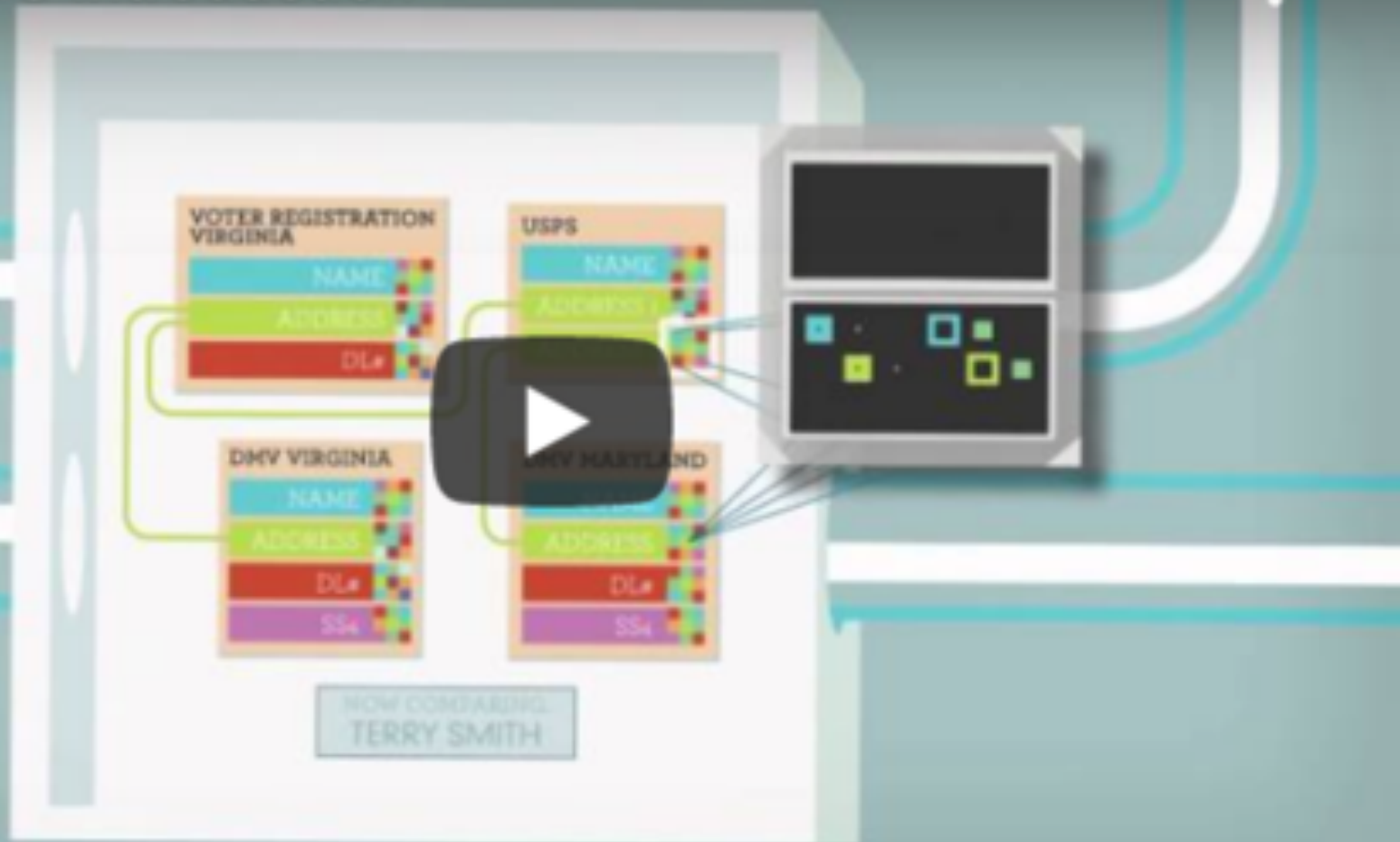


Member States

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
|  Alabama |  Alaska |  Arizona |  Colorado |
|  Connecticut |  Delaware |  Florida |  Georgia |
|  Illinois |  Iowa |  Kentucky |  Louisiana |
|  Maryland |  Michigan |  Minnesota |  Missouri |
|  Nevada |  New Mexico |  Ohio |  Oregon |
|  Pennsylvania |  Rhode Island |  South Carolina |  Texas |
|  Utah |  Vermont |  Virginia |  Washington |
|  Washington D.C. |  West Virginia |  Wisconsin | |



ERIC Introduction



So, how is ERIC thinking about supporting accurate voter records in this challenging year?

ERIC has ideas for expanded list maintenance, focusing on outreach

Helping states focus on the records that need the most attention

ERIC plans to expand the “eligible but unregistered” report

Giving people another chance will help ensure more complete and accurate voter lists

ERIC is actively seeking feedback and suggestions from states

They're assessing needs and brainstorming ways to help states

Let's talk

DISCUSSION



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Share your thoughts

- What resonated with you from today's webinar? (Any “ah-ha” moments?)
- What are your next steps?
- What questions do you have about what we covered today?
- What questions do you have about what we didn't cover today?

As questions come up for you...

- Reach out to CTCL
 - We'll help out, or
 - We'll find someone for you who can

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We've covered a lot of ground

WRAPPING UP



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Today's resources

CISA guide: "Importance of Accurate Voter Data"	cisa.gov/protect2020
Electronic Registration Information Center	www.ericstates.org
National Voter Registration Day Outreach Grant (not aimed at election departments)	nationalvoterregistrationday.org/apply-for-2020-outreach-grant
Center for Civic Design: "Streamlining and Nudging in Voter Registration"	civicdesign.org/streamlining-and-nudging-in-voter-registration
Center for Civic Design: "Voter Registration Forms in Pennsylvania (and Others)"	civicdesign.org/voter-registration-forms-in-pennsylvania
ModernReg.org: The Voter Registration Modernization Resource Center	modernreg.org

Timeline considerations, 146 days out:

Applications for ballots

- Outbound application envelope approval from USPS (140 days)

Outbound ballots -- logistics

- Artwork approval with USPS (140 days)

Voter list maintenance

- Process NCOA list (60 days)

What was your experience with today's webinar?

- A brief survey is linked in the chat box
- Please complete the survey now to provide feedback and improve the course for future participants

Up next

- ~~Supporting election officials (Thursday, May 21)~~
- ~~Planning 2020 workload and resource allocation (Tuesday, May 26)~~
- ~~Ensuring access, equity, and inclusion (Thursday, May 28)~~
- ~~Educating voters about their options (Thursday, June 4)~~
- ~~Maintaining voter lists (Tuesday, June 9)~~
- Managing mail ballot request forms (Thursday, June 11)
- Organizing ballot dropoff locations (Tuesday, June 16)
- Streamlining the inbound ballot process (Thursday, June 18)
- Verifying and curing signatures (Tuesday, June 23)
- Recruiting and training election workers (Thursday, June 25)
- Implementing public health guidelines for voting locations (Tuesday, June 30)

techandcivicliflife.org/covid-19-webinars/

Thanks!

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