

League of Women Voters of Texas Education Fund

Voting Procedures to Increase Voting Participation

Election Day Registration (EDR)

Also known as: Same-Day Voter Registration (SDVR)

What it is: Allows voters to register and vote on the same day.

What Texas does now: Registration deadline 30 days prior to election day.

How EDR would work:

- Would depend on legislation. Iowa implemented EDR in 2008, requiring the citizen to appear in person; be determined eligible to vote; provide proof of identity and proof of residence in precinct; and complete and sign a voter registration form and an “Oath of Person Registering to Vote on Election Day.”
- Models exist in 9 states allowing EDR. Minnesota has had EDR for 33 years.

Arguments in favor of EDR:

- Increases voter turnout, based on experience in EDR states. Minnesota always has turnout higher than other states (~78% in 2008 Presidential Election).
- Reduces chance of fraud with in-person registration requiring a higher level of identification.
- Decreases need for provisional ballots, easing burden on precinct officials.
- Allows convenience of changing address on election day.
- Makes it easier for those who move a lot, such as the young, to stay registered.
- Reduces travel burden on those with disabilities or transportation needs.
- Entices those who get enthused late in a campaign to exercise their right to vote.

Arguments against EDR:

- Encourages fraud.
- Is costly.
- Leads to partisan advantage.
- Is not needed because there are already so many opportunities to register.
- Burdens poll workers who must deal with registration *and* voting, increasing voter time at busy polling place
- Increases risk that temporary residents, such as college students, will influence local elections.
- Lacks time to cancel out of state registration for those re-registering, who could cross borders and vote twice.

Discussion question:

- How well would EDR achieve goals of voter convenience and participation in the election process?

For more information: See LWV-TX *Facts and Issues on Election Day Registration*.