



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2005 Wisconsin Act 278
[2005 Senate Bill 341]

**Confidentiality of Voter
Information of Victims of Domestic
Abuse, Sexual Assault, or Stalking**

2005 Wisconsin Act 278 expands the statements under which certain abuse and crime victims may elect to keep their voter registration information confidential.

Currently, voter registration information is generally open to public inspection under the Open Record Law. However, current law allows an individual to have his or her name and voter registration address withheld from disclosure if he or she is a victim of domestic abuse. To exercise this right, the individual must submit a request and must show that a protective order is in effect or that he or she resides in a shelter for domestic abuse victims. If the individual cannot provide such information, an affidavit signed by the sheriff or the chief of police must be submitted to the municipal clerk of the municipality where the individual resides. The affidavit must verify that a person has been charged or convicted of an offense relating to domestic abuse in which the individual was involved and that the individual has good reason to continue to feel threatened by that person. Once this confidentiality is obtained, it will be effective for 24 months.

The Act expands this provision so that victims of sexual assault or stalking may also request that their voter registration information be kept confidential. Furthermore, the Act permits a district attorney or any authorized representative of a sheriff, chief of police, or district attorney to sign an affidavit verifying the victim's status.

The Act also allows a victim of domestic abuse, stalking, or sexual assault to exercise the right to a confidential voter registration listing by submitting a statement signed by an authorized representative of an organization that qualifies as a domestic abuse victim service provider or a sexual assault victim service provider and is certified by the Department of Health and Family Services. The statement must be dated within 30 days of the date of the request and must indicate that the victim has received services from the organization within the 24-month period preceding the date of the statement.

Effective Date: The Act took effect on June 1, 2006.

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.