

Voter Registration and Voting in Correctional Facilities in 2025

Election Law Article, §1-303.2(e)

**Jared DeMarinis
State Board of Elections**

January 15, 2026



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State Administrator

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January 15, 2026

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Jheanelle Wilkins
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
Taylor House Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401
The Honorable Melissa Wells
Chair, House Government, Labor, and
Elections Committee
142 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Via Electronic Mail

Re: Report required by Election Law Article § 1-303.2(e) (MSAR #13223)

Dear Senator Feldman, Delegate Wilkins, and Delegate Wells:

The purpose of this letter is to fulfill the reporting requirements of Chapter 734 (2021) (introduced as House Bill 222 and codified as Election Law Article, §1-303.2(e)), which requires that the State Board of Elections (SBE) “submit a report to the Senate Education, Energy, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, that includes the following information, disaggregated by correctional facility:

- (1) the number of eligible voters who registered to vote, attempted to vote, and voted successfully by absentee ballot during the immediately preceding calendar year;
- (2) the number of times the State Board or a local board of elections visited each correctional facility during the immediately preceding calendar year, the duration of each visit, and a description of the work done at each correctional facility;
- (3) a description of any obstacles to implementing this section or § 2-501 of the Correctional Services Article; and
- (4) any recommendations for improving the implementation of this section or § 2-501 of the Correctional Services Article.”

This report is for calendar year 2025 and is being submitted to the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment (EEE) Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee. We also submit a copy to the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee.

In partnership with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), the local boards of elections, local detention and correctional facilities, and the Maryland Correctional Administrators' Association, we maintain a robust voting program at correctional facilities. The program includes the distribution of the voting information packets to eligible individuals in correctional facilities, in-person collection of voting materials, and voter education.

In 2025, the only jurisdiction to hold a State-administered election was Prince George's County. The 2025 Special Election in Prince George's County was conducted to fill a recent vacancy in the County Executive and County Council District 5 seats. The Primary Election was held March 4, 2025 and the General Election on June 3rd.

SBE provided voting materials for the two special elections in Prince George's County. SBE also commenced preparation to facilitate voting by eligible incarcerated people for elections in 2026, which included revising registration materials and information and renewing contacts with partner-agencies and administrators.

Ballot Drop Boxes

Pursuant to Maryland Code, Election Law Article §1-301.1(d), SBE maintains a ballot drop box in Baltimore City's centralized booking facility. Appendix 1 of this report is a copy of Baltimore City's centralized booking facility annual report regarding the drop boxes and ballot collection information in their centers.

Since no election occurred in Baltimore City or statewide, there are no facilities of incarceration managed by DPSCS where drop box usage would have occurred for election purposes.

Voting Information Packets for Prince George's County Special Elections

Correctional facilities provided estimated quantities required for voting packets. As a result, SBE distributed 550 Voting Information Packets, with information and forms in English and Spanish, to the Prince George's County Correctional Center and Cheltenham Juvenile Detention Center for both of the 2025 Prince George's Special Primary and General Elections.

Voting information packets include:

- a cover letter with important voting facts, such as deadlines and answers to common questions,
- a voter registration application with instructions,
- a mail-in ballot application with instructions, and
- a pre-paid return envelope to return both applications

A pre-paid envelope is included to provide eligible individuals with the option to return their voting forms via the United States Postal Service.

Voting Information Packet Preparations

By February 1 of each year in which a Statewide election is to be held, correctional facility managers provide information about the number of people eligible to vote incarcerated at each location. This information is used to determine the number of packets to send to each facility for the next election. Since no Statewide election occurred in 2025, SBE was not required to receive this information.

SBE requested updated information about correctional facility populations from DPSCS and from the Maryland Correctional Administrators' Association for the 2026 Election and expects to receive responsive information in a timely manner.

To enhance awareness of and interest in voting information and opportunities for 2026, SBE reviewed and updated a series of bilingual posters. SBE consulted with the Center for Civic Design to obtain recommendations to enhance usability and impact of these materials. During past elections, SBE and DPSCS partnered to leverage tablets used by inmates to send reminders as voting deadlines approached. In 2025, SBE has worked to expand the access available on a tablet to ensure greater information on the upcoming elections to the incarcerated populations. Additionally, SBE reviewed and set a plan to update its [video](#) with upcoming election deadlines. We expect it to be played on communal televisions throughout facilities in 2026.

In-Person Collection of Voting Materials

SBE did not collect election-related mail from correctional facilities in 2025 because of the lack of State-administered elections in the counties that host DPSCS facilities with dropboxes.

In 2025, SBE and DPSCS reviewed previously-developed protocols for visits by elections officials to facilities of incarceration, identifying attire of pickup staff, and procedures for emptying drop boxes with input from many of the correctional facilities.

Additional Opportunities

In accordance with Chapter 734 (2021), DPSCS provides, as part of an exit packet, each individual with a voter registration application when that individual is released from a facility of incarceration. Additionally, all eligible individuals are given a voter registration application and the opportunity to register to vote during orientation at a correctional facility, which can occur when an individual is newly incarcerated or transferred to a different facility.

Chapter 734 (2021) Reporting Requirements

(1) The first requirement requests the number of eligible voters who registered to vote, attempted to vote, and voted successfully by mail-in ballot during 2025.

SBE typically determines the number of eligible voters who registered to vote or voted by cross-referencing a list from DPSCS of eligible individuals at any DPSCS facility at any point during the previous year with the statewide voter registration database. DPSCS identifies eligible voters based on their pre-trial or conviction status.

There were 5,569 people in total, including both active and inactive voters, who were under DPSCS supervision in 2025 and who were registered to vote. Of those, 4,814 registered to vote prior to 2025. In 2025, 586 additional individuals registered to vote.

As we have noted, only two State-administered elections took place in 2025: Prince George's County's Special Primary Election in March, and its Special General Election in June. Both elections were vote-by-mail elections, under Election Law Article, §§ 9-501(d)(2) and 9-502(a)(1). This means SBE sent a mail-in ballot to every registered eligible voter, whether or not it was requested. Because no incarcerated voters needed to request a ballot to participate in State-administered elections in 2025, we omit from this report statistics concerning the number of incarcerated people who attempted to vote.

Because certain individuals under DPSCS supervision used a DPSCS facility as a mailing address for voting materials while registered to vote in Prince George's County, four individuals successfully returned ballots that were counted in one of the special elections.

The chart in Appendix 2 breaks down, by facility, the number of eligible, incarcerated individuals who were registered to vote and voted successfully in 2025.

(2) The second requirement requests the number of times the State Board or a local board of elections visited each correctional facility during the immediately preceding calendar year, the duration of each visit, and a description of the work done at each correctional facility.

No visits took place in 2025.

SBE has requested and expects to receive an updated list of resource fairs to be held at DPSCS facilities in 2026. SBE will pursue opportunities for State Administrator Jared DeMarinis and other personnel to visit facilities and encourage registration and voting in 2026.

(3) The third requirement requests information about obstacles to implementation of voting and voter assistance in facilities of incarceration.

Several of the obstacles to implementing the requirements of HB222 persist. As noted in previous reports, obtaining population information from each county's correctional facility is a labor-intensive process, in part because there is no statewide database of detained and incarcerated individuals. There are 25 correctional facilities at the local level (not counting Baltimore City facilities which are under the purview of DPSCS), and each one uses its own system to track inmates and detainees. Requiring local facilities to provide information about inmates eligible to vote by a specific date well in advance of the conduct of Statewide elections would enhance SBE's ability to target communications and materials to potential voters and to more accurately report on the success of our efforts.

Significant turnover among the population of incarcerated people eligible to vote is a persistent barrier to engagement of incarcerated voters. Detainees who are eligible to vote belong to groups who, by definition, change status frequently: pre-trial detainees have a right to timely judgment, while people serving misdemeanor sentences are typically incarcerated for less than a year. As a result, few if any

incarcerated people who voted from a facility in 2024 will again do so in 2026, and voter services must start over with a different audience in each election year.

Incarcerated potential voters, moreover, have limited opportunities to educate themselves about contests and candidates, and about consequences of elections. The use of tablets and other telecommunications links is typically strictly limited to timed calls with family, friends, and legal representatives, and to offline information approved by facility management for publication. There is no open access to the internet, and with the decline and disappearance of print media, incarcerated people receive less civic information that would enable them to cast informed votes.

(4) The fourth requirement requests recommendations for improvement.

As we have noted, implementation of requirements under HB222 is an important yet time consuming task. The production and dissemination of written and video communications, procurement of a printing vendor, coordination of drop box pick ups, and conduct of visits to and communications with correctional institutions around the State require significant effort. These tasks draw on the same resources SBE relies on for all election preparation tasks, and they coincide with SBE's busiest times. An additional SBE staff member responsible for administering this program and conducting outreach to incarcerated individuals and facility managers could strengthen and expand this work, and increase incarcerated Marylanders' voter participation.

SBE and DPSCS will work together in 2026 to try to increase incarcerated people's access to nonpartisan information about the contests and candidates on ballots, consistent with facilities' security and other requirements.

As we prepare for the 2026 election cycle, we will continue seeking additional ways to increase voter participation by eligible individuals.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information with you. If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact Erin Hustings at 410-269-2867 or erin.hustings@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Jared DeMarinis

Jared DeMarinis
State Administrator of Elections

cc: The Honorable Bill Ferguson, President, Senate of Maryland
The Honorable Joseline Peña-Melnyk, House Speaker, Maryland
Sarah T. Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)

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Elections Director

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Vice President (R)



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Senate Education, Health & Environmental
Affairs Committee
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Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins
House Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
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Re: Report required by Election Law Article §1-303.1(d) (MSAR #13107)

Dear Senators Guzzone and Feldman and Delegates Barnes and Wilkins:

The purpose of this letter is to fulfill the reporting requirements of SB525 of 2021, which requires that "On or before January 1 each year, the local board of elections for Baltimore City shall submit a report to the Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee, Senate Budget & Taxation Committee, the House Committee on Ways and Means, and the House Appropriations Committee, in accordance with §2-1257 of the State Government Article, on the following information submitted to the ballot drop box, disaggregated by each weekly collection from the ballot box and by the State Board or the local board that is the intended recipient of the election-related materials:

- (1) the number of absentee ballot applications received and accepted.
- (2) absentee ballots received and accepted; and
- (3) other election-related materials received."

SB525 required the installation of a ballot drop box at the Baltimore City centralized booking facility, known as the Baltimore City Central Booking and Intake Center (BCBIC). SBE worked with the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) with regards to production, placement, and installation. Because of the layout of the facility and due to security

restrictions, there was not one location at BCBIC where all inmates would be able to access a single ballot drop box. Therefore, at the recommendation of DPSCS, a total of six ballot drop boxes were placed at BCBIC, one in each housing unit. In addition to the six ballot drop boxes at BCBIC, ballot drop boxes were installed at each DPSCS detention and correctional facility in the State, which includes three other detention facilities in Baltimore City (the

Chesapeake Detention Facility, the Maryland Reception, Diagnostic and Classification Center, and the Metropolitan Transition Center), as well as the Baltimore City Correctional Center.

In coordination with SBE and DPSCS the Baltimore City Board of Elections periodically stopped by and there was nothing in the boxes due to the fact there was no election in Baltimore City in 2025.

Baltimore Correctional Center – 901 Greenmount:

Maryland Reception – 500 E Madison Street:

Youth Detention – 926 Greenmount Avenue:

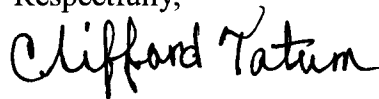
Central Booking – 300 E Madison Avenue:

Chesapeake Detention Center – 401 E. Madison Street:

Metropolitan Transition Center – 954 Forrest Street:

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information with you. If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact me at 410-396-5570 or by email at Clifford.tatum@baltimorecity.gov.

Respectfully,



Clifford Tatum

Election Director

Baltimore City Board of Elections

Appendix 2: Registered Voters and Attempted Votes By DPSCS Facility

Facility	Total Active and Inactive	Total Active	Active Voters Registered Prior to 2025	Active Voters Registered in 2025	Total Inactive	Inactive Voters Registered Prior to 2025	Inactive Voters Registered in 2025	Successful Votes
BCBIC	2986	2923	2593	330	63	58	5	1
BCCC	64	62	56	6	2	2	0	0
BCDC	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
CDF	151	148	133	15	3	3	0	1
CHDU	62	59	50	9	3	2	1	0
CMCF	72	67	54	13	5	5	0	0
DOCHQ	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
DRCF	138	132	125	7	6	5	1	0
ECI-A	86	76	69	7	10	9	1	1
ECI-E	72	68	61	7	4	4	0	0
ECI-W	70	66	59	7	4	4	0	0
HQTRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
JCI	198	181	165	16	17	17	0	0
LOCAL	5	5	5	0	0	0	0	0
MCIH	22	22	21	1	0	0	0	0

Facility	Total Active and Inactive	Total Active	Active Voters Registered Prior to 2025	Active Voters Registered in 2025	Total Inactive	Inactive Voters Registered Prior to 2025	Inactive Voters Registered in 2025	Successful Votes
MCIJ	45	44	42	2	1	1	0	0
MCIW	182	180	166	14	2	2	0	0
MCTC	188	169	154	15	19	19	0	0
MRDCC	235	231	205	26	4	3	1	0
MTC	814	799	707	92	15	15	0	0
NBCI	16	16	16	0	0	0	0	0
PATXNT	19	18	15	3	1	1	0	0
RCI	86	77	71	6	9	9	0	1
WCI	37	36	34	2	1	1	0	0
YDC	19	19	11	8	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	5569	5400	4814	586	169	160	9	4

Source: Offender Case Management System and the Maryland Statewide Voter Registration Database