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TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY ELECTION OFFICIALS

Voter List Maintenance In Texas

How Texas counties keep voter rolls accurate under Texas and federal law.

WHO MAINTAINS THE VOTER ROLL, AND FROM WHAT SOURCES?

County voter registrars and elections administrators are the statutory custodians of their county's voter registration records. The Secretary of State maintains the statewide database — the Texas Election Administration Management system (TEAM) — and routes data from state and federal agencies to counties for comparison against records maintained at the county level. Counties act on that data, they do not and cannot modify voter eligibility standards.

SOURCE	USED FOR	WHAT IT CAN SUPPORT
Texas DSHS Vital Statistics death records; federal death data	Deceased voters	Cancellation, if the record meets the STRONG MATCH standard; otherwise written notice first
Texas DPS driver license / personal ID / election identification certificate records	Identity confirmation; duplicate registrations	Strong or weak match, depending on which fields align
Court records — final felony convictions; final judgments of total mental incapacity	Disqualification	Individualized cancellation under Election Code Ch. 16
Statewide comparisons run through TEAM	Duplicate registrations across counties	Strong or weak match, depending on which fields align
USPS National Change of Address data; returned county mail	Address verification	A confirmation notice and "suspense" designation — never an immediate cancellation
The voter — a new application, an address update, or a request to cancel	Voter-initiated changes	Processed year-round, including during the federal quiet period
State and federal agencies, including Texas DPS and USCIS	U.S. citizenship verification	Treated as a weak match and investigated pursuant to Sec. 16.033 and 16.0332 of the Texas Election Code

THE STANDARD THAT GOVERNS EVERYTHING: "STRONG MATCH" VS. "WEAK MATCH"

Texas does not permit registrars to cancel a registration because two records look similar. Secretary of State rulemaking (1 Tex. Admin. Code § 81.6) fixes, field by field, what counts as a strong match and what counts only as a weak match. A strong match supports cancellation; a weak match requires written notice to the voter and an opportunity to respond, generally 30 days, before any action.

COMPARISON	STRONG MATCH SUPPORTS CANCELLATION	WEAK MATCH NOTICE AND INVESTIGATION REQUIRED
Deceased records § 81.6(a)	Last name and full nine-digit Social Security number and date of birth all match the death record.	Any lesser combination — e.g., first and last name plus date of birth; last name plus full SSN; full SSN plus date of birth; or the last four SSN digits plus date of birth plus a single name component.
Duplicate registrations § 81.6(b)	Last and first name plus full SSN; or last and first name plus a Texas DPS-issued driver license, personal ID, or election identification certificate number; or last and first name plus the last four SSN digits and date of birth.	Last and first name plus the last four SSN digits; or a DPS-issued license, ID, or certificate number alone.

WHAT A THIRD-PARTY LIST CAN AND CANNOT DO

- Anyone may bring information forward. Texas law provides a process for a resident to challenge a registration in their own county, and counties review properly submitted challenges. Election officials welcome information that helps keep the roll accurate.
- A review is not a removal. When a county investigates a name and confirms the voter is eligible, the record stays — that is the process working. Name-and-birth-year matching routinely flags living voters who share identifying details with a deceased person, and flags people cancelled weeks earlier.
- A snapshot of the statewide file is out of date the day it is downloaded. Counties process registrations, address changes, cancellations, and death records every business day, so comparing a months-old extract against today's county records will always surface differences. Those differences are the record of maintenance being performed at the county level.
- Counties cannot outsource the legal standard. A registrar who cancelled a registration on unverified third-party data alone would be violating state rules and risks cancelling the legal registration of an eligible Texan. The notice-and-response requirements exist so that no voter loses a registration due to a bad data match.