

COUNTY AUDITOR
AND COMMISSIONER OF ELECTIONS

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NEWS RELEASE

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Important Voter File Maintenance Mailing

If you get a voter card at your home for someone who doesn't live there, **don't throw it away!** Last week, the Secretary of State's office mailed cards to Black Hawk County voters who have had no activity in the last four years, and the Black Hawk County Election Office needs the public's help to keep the voter rolls up to date.

This annual "Four Year No Activity" mailing is required by law. It is very important that you check the box that applies, make notes if needed, sign the card – no changes can be made unless you sign it - and return it to the Election Office.

If your Four Year No Activity card is returned to our office as undeliverable:

Your voter registration record will be placed on **inactive** status. This is a preliminary step to cancellation.

Voters remain on the rolls with inactive status through two general elections. If you try to vote, you will be asked to update your registration. You will then be returned to active status.

If you get a card for someone who doesn't live at your address:

Indicate on the reply card that the person does not live at your address, sign the card, and return it to the Election Office. They will then place the person on inactive status. However, they can't completely cancel the registration without the voter's *own* signature unless:

- they get notice from another community that the voter has registered there;
- they get notice that the voter has died or been convicted of a felony; or
- the voter has been on inactive status through two general elections

If the card is not returned, the law requires that the county assume that the person still lives there. The person may not be taken off the rolls for another four years. (Political campaigns will also assume the person still lives there, so you'll probably get mailings and phone calls.)

If you get a Four Year No Activity card for yourself and your address is correct:

You don't have to do anything. The fact that you got the card indicates that you are still registered with Active status.

If you get a Four Year No Activity and the address is incorrect:

Check the box marked "I am the person named above but I no longer live at the address listed." Fill in your new street address and sign the card.

If your new address is inside Black Hawk County, your voter registration record will be updated and you will receive a new voter card. This will show up as activity on your voter registration record.

If your new address is outside Black Hawk County, your voter registration will be cancelled. **IMPORTANT:** This does **not** register you to vote in your new community! You will need to re-register at your new address. Follow this link to register online or download a voter registration form:

<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterinformation/voterregistration.html>

If you fill out a paper form, send it to your county auditor. This link gets you to the addresses of all 99 Iowa county auditors:

<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/auditors/auditorslist.html>

Common Issues

The law is designed to make it hard to cancel someone's voter registration without their knowledge. This is a good thing but it has some unintended consequences that make certain voters especially hard to inactivate and cancel:

- Young adults who have moved away from their parent's home. If the mail carrier keeps delivering mail to the parent's address, the Election Office has no way of knowing the young adult has moved away, and it has to assume they still live there. Parents can sign the card and indicate their adult child has moved away, and this will allow the county to place them on inactive status. However, the county will not be able to completely cancel the registration without the voter's own signature.
- Large group housing such as dorms, fraternity/sorority houses, and apartment buildings. It's very important for the new residents to sign and return the cards so the county can inactivate the former residents.
- Elderly voters who have moved to care centers. Unfortunately, if the person is no longer able to sign the card and indicate they no longer wish to vote, the county cannot cancel their registration. Iowa law specifically excludes the use of power of attorney for voting and election matters.

Please contact the Election Office, 319-833-3007, with any questions.