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**ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1716**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2022 Regular Session**

**By** House State Government & Tribal Relations (originally sponsored by Representatives Valdez, Dolan, and Pollet)

AN ACT Relating to locations at which ballots may be cast; and amending RCW 29A.40.160, 29A.08.140, and 29A.84.510.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 29A.40.160 and 2019 c 6 s 6 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Each county auditor shall open a voting center each primary, special election if the county is conducting an election, and general election. The voting center shall be open during business hours during the voting period, which begins eighteen days before, and ends at 8:00 p.m. on the day of, the primary, special election if the county is conducting an election, or general election.

(2) Each county auditor shall ((~~register voters in person~~)) open a voting center at each of the following locations in the county:

(a) At the county auditor's office((~~;~~

~~(b) At~~)) or at the division of elections((~~, if located~~)) that is in a separate ((~~city~~)) location from the county auditor's office; and

((~~(c)~~)) (b) For each presidential general election, ((~~at a voting center~~)) in each city in the county with a population of one hundred thousand or greater((~~,~~)) which does not have a voting center as required in (a) ((~~or (b)~~)) of this subsection. A voting center opened pursuant to this subsection (2) is not required to be open on the Sunday before the presidential election.

(3) Voting centers shall be located in public buildings or buildings that are leased by a public entity including, but not limited to, libraries.

(4) Each voting center, and at least one of the other locations designated by the county auditor to allow voters to register in person pursuant to RCW 29A.08.140(1)(b), must provide voter registration materials, ballots, provisional ballots, disability access voting units, sample ballots, instructions on how to properly vote the ballot, a ballot drop box, and voters' pamphlets, if a voters' pamphlet has been published.

(5) Each voting center must be accessible to persons with disabilities. Each state agency and entity of local government shall permit the use of any of its accessible facilities as voting centers when requested by a county auditor.

(6) Each voting center must provide at least one voting unit certified by the secretary of state that provides access to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, enabling them to vote with privacy and independence.

(7) No person may interfere with a voter attempting to vote in a voting center. Interfering with a voter attempting to vote is a violation of RCW 29A.84.510. The county auditor shall designate by administrative rule a specific point or points as the entrance to each voting center, taking into account the unique attributes of the voting center, to assure that voters have the ability to arrive and depart unimpeded.

(8) Before opening the voting center, the voting equipment shall be inspected to determine if it has been properly prepared for voting. If the voting equipment is capable of direct tabulation of each voter's choices, the county auditor shall verify that no votes have been registered for any issue or office, and that the device has been sealed with a unique numbered seal at the time of final preparation and logic and accuracy testing. A log must be made of all device numbers and seal numbers.

(9) The county auditor shall require any person desiring to vote at a voting center to either sign a ballot declaration or provide identification.

(a) The signature on the declaration must be compared to the signature on the voter registration record before the ballot may be counted. If the voter registered using a mark, or can no longer sign his or her name, the election officers shall require the voter to be identified by another registered voter.

(b) The identification must be valid photo identification, such as a driver's license, state identification card, student identification card, tribal identification card, or employer identification card. A tribal identification card is not required to include a residential address or an expiration date to be considered valid under this section. Any individual who desires to vote in person but cannot provide identification shall be issued a provisional ballot, which shall be accepted if the signature on the declaration matches the signature on the voter's registration record.

(10) Provisional ballots must be accompanied by a declaration and security envelope, as required by RCW 29A.40.091, and space for the voter's name, date of birth, current and former registered address, reason for the provisional ballot, and disposition of the provisional ballot. The voter shall vote and return the provisional ballot at the voting center. The voter must be provided information on how to ascertain whether the provisional ballot was counted and, if applicable, the reason why the vote was not counted.

(11) Any voter may take printed or written material into the voting device to assist in casting his or her vote. The voter shall not use this material to electioneer and shall remove it when he or she leaves the voting center.

(12) If any voter states that he or she is unable to cast his or her votes due to a disability, the voter may designate a person of his or her choice, or two election officers, to enter the voting booth and record the votes as he or she directs.

(13) No voter is entitled to vote more than once at a primary, special election, or general election. If a voter incorrectly marks a ballot, he or she may be issued a replacement ballot.

(14) A voter who has already returned a ballot but requests to vote at a voting center shall be issued a provisional ballot. The canvassing board shall not count the provisional ballot if it finds that the voter has also voted a regular ballot in that primary, special election, or general election.

(15) Any voter who is inside or in line at the voting center at 8:00 p.m. on the day of the primary, special election, or general election must be allowed to vote.

(16) For each primary, special election, and general election, the county auditor may provide election services at locations in addition to the voting center. The county auditor has discretion to establish which services will be provided at the additional locations, and which days and hours the locations will be open.

**Sec.**  RCW 29A.08.140 and 2020 c 208 s 22 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) In order to vote in any primary, special election, or general election, a person who is not registered to vote in Washington must:

(a) Submit a registration application that is received by an election official no later than eight days before the day of the primary, special election, or general election. For purposes of this subsection (1)(a), "received" means: (i) Being physically received by an election official by the close of business of the required deadline; or (ii) for applications received online or electronically, by midnight, of the required deadline; or

(b) Register in person at a county auditor's office, the division of elections if in a separate ((~~city~~)) location from the county auditor's office, a voting center, a student engagement hub, or other location designated by the county auditor no later than 8:00 p.m. on the day of the primary, special election if the county is conducting an election, or general election.

(2)(a) In order to change a residence address for voting in any primary, special election, or general election, a person who is already registered to vote in Washington may update his or her registration by:

(i) Submitting an address change using a registration application or making notification via any non-in-person method that is received by election officials no later than eight days before the day of the primary, special election, or general election; or

(ii) Appearing in person, at a county auditor's office, the division of elections if in a separate ((~~city~~)) location from the county auditor's office, a voting center, or other location designated by the county auditor, no later than 8:00 p.m. on the day of the primary, special election if the county is conducting an election, or general election to be in effect for that primary, special election if the county is conducting an election, or general election.

(b) A registered voter who fails to update his or her residential address by this deadline may vote according to his or her previous registration address.

(3) To register or update a voting address in person at a county auditor's office, a voting center, or other location designated by the county auditor, a person must appear in person at a county auditor's office, a voting center, or other location designated by the county auditor at a time when the facility is open and complete the voter registration application by providing the information required by RCW 29A.08.010.

**Sec.**  RCW 29A.84.510 and 2013 c 11 s 82 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) During the voting period that begins eighteen days before and ends the day of a special election, general election, or primary, no person may:

(a) Within a voting center or student engagement hub or in any public street or room in any public manner within 100 feet measured radially from the entrance to a voting center or student engagement hub or 25 feet measured radially from a ballot drop box as described in RCW 29A.40.170:

(i) Suggest or persuade or attempt to suggest or persuade any voter to vote for or against any candidate or ballot measure;

(ii) Circulate cards or handbills of any kind;

(iii) Solicit signatures to any kind of petition; or

(iv) Engage in any practice which interferes with the freedom of voters to exercise their franchise or disrupts the administration of the voting center;

(b) Engage in any activities restricted under (a) of this subsection through electronic amplification located more than 100 feet from an entrance to a voting center or student engagement hub or 25 feet from an entrance to a ballot drop box if the person is capable of being understood within 100 feet of the voting center or student engagement hub or 25 feet of the ballot drop box;

(c) Obstruct the doors or entries to a building in which a voting center or ballot drop location is located or prevent free access to and from any voting center or ballot drop location.

(2) The auditor shall post a sign at the point or points specified at each voting center as required by RCW 29A.40.160 during the voting period providing notice of the prohibition in subsection (1)(a) of this section.

(3) Any sheriff, deputy sheriff, or municipal law enforcement officer shall stop the prohibited activity, and may arrest any person engaging in the prohibited activity.

((~~(3)~~)) (4) Any violation of this section is a gross misdemeanor, punishable to the same extent as a gross misdemeanor that is punishable under RCW 9A.20.021, and the person convicted may be ordered to pay the costs of prosecution.

(5) Nothing in this section may be construed to limit or otherwise restrict the access of an authorized political party observer to a voting center, student engagement hub, or ballot drop box for the purpose of observing the election process.

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