



STATE OF MICHIGAN
BUREAU OF ELECTIONS
LANSING

April 14, 2026

Victoria Bishop, Antrim County Clerk
Via email: bishopv@antrimcountymi.gov

Dear Clerk Bishop:

The Bureau of Elections has received information indicating you may be taking actions related to voter registration and voter record maintenance that fall outside the scope of your statutory authority and fail to comply with the law. Specifically, you have reportedly (1) issued confirmation and cancellation notices to residents, (2) entered improper status updates in the Qualified Voter File (QVF), and (3) transmitted lists to local clerks containing numerous irregularities.

Under the Michigan Election Law, responsibility for updating voter registration records and issuing related notices rests with the city or township clerk. These duties are set forth in MCL 168.496, 168.497, 168.500b, 168.500e, 168.503, and 168.507 (collectively, “MCL 168.496 et seq.”). The Election Officials’ Manual (“the Manual”), Chapter 1, further delineates these responsibilities.¹ Page 7 outlines the duties of the county clerk and does **not** include voter registration maintenance. Page 8 expressly states that “*City and township clerks maintain the voter registration records for their respective jurisdictions and are responsible for administering all federal, state, county, city, township, and village elections.*” (Emphasis added).

Information provided to the Bureau indicates that you have issued confirmation and cancellation notices to individuals and the reported basis for sending these notices was their failure to vote in the last two major elections. Michigan law is explicit that a clerk may not cancel, or cause the cancellation of, a voter’s registration solely because a voter has missed one or two elections. MCL 168.509bb.²

Chapter 2 of the Manual, page 28, also explains when notices may be issued. It states that a confirmation notice may be sent only when the clerk receives *reliable information* that a voter has moved within the jurisdiction. Likewise, a cancellation notice may be sent only when the clerk receives *reliable information* that the voter has moved to a different jurisdiction or to an unknown address.

Administrative Rule R 168.252(5) reinforces that this requirement applies even when a clerk receives this information from a third party. Subrule (3) identifies sources that are insufficiently

¹ The Manual is available to clerks through the eLearning Center, as well as posted online at: <https://www.michigan.gov/sos/-/media/Project/Websites/sos/01mcalpine/Structure-of-MI-Elections-System.pdf?rev=df142ee39af5456f9441743f361ab216&hash=92ACDD72F60279150CDDDB25984CAAC82>

² Administrative Rule R 168.252(2)(a) treats nonvoting for 20 years as reliable information that can trigger a cancellation notice.

reliable to justify sending such notices without independent clerk review. If a clerk elects to investigate a voter's registration status based on information from the sources listed in subrule (3), the clerk must independently verify that information with a reliable source before issuing either a confirmation or cancellation notice. Information that the Bureau has received suggests you have not independently verified the information you are acting upon, as would be consistent with this rule, prior to issuing confirmation and cancellation notices to voters.

The Bureau has also received reports that you have changed voter status codes in QVF to "Cancel" or "Reject" without any agreement or delegation of authority allowing you to do so from the affected local jurisdiction. Additionally, it appears that notices you issued were not properly recorded in QVF, including the required notation that a notice was sent and the reason for its issuance.

Under the Michigan Election Law, the Secretary of State is the Chief Election Officer of this State and "shall have supervisory control over local election officials in the performance of their duties under the provisions of this act."³ The Secretary of State is required by law to "issue instructions" and "[a]dvice and direct local election officials as to the proper methods of conducting elections."⁴ Clerks and other election officials are required to comply with the instructions given by the Secretary of State. See, e.g., *Secretary of State v Berrien Co Bd of Election Comm'rs*, 373 Mich 526, 530-531 (1964). And the failure to perform a legal duty or to obey a lawful instruction given by the Secretary may result in a criminal misdemeanor. MCL 168.931(1)(g).⁵ The Director of Elections is authorized to act at the Secretary's behest "with respect to the supervision and administration of the election laws."⁶

To ensure the integrity of Michigan Elections, the following information must be provided to the Bureau of Elections provided by **Thursday, April 23, 2026**.

1. Provide a detailed explanation of your actions in issuing confirmation and cancellation notices to voters in Antrim County, including the legal basis for initiating these notices and the criteria used to determine which voters received them.
2. For the lists transmitted to local clerks identifying voters purportedly sent confirmation or cancellation notices, identify the origin of these lists and the data sources used to generate them. Additionally, specify whether any steps were taken to independently verify the information as "reliable information" as required under Michigan Election Law and administrative rules.
3. Confirm whether you did or did not follow the procedures outlined in the Election Officials' Manual regarding any address change activity when written notice was not provided directly by the voter. If applicable, explain any deviation from the required process.
4. Provide a comprehensive list, on an Excel spreadsheet, of every voter to whom you sent a confirmation notice and/or cancellation notice within the past year. For each voter, the list must include:
 - The voter's name

³ [MCL - Section 168.21 - Michigan Legislature](#)

⁴ [MCL - Section 168.31 - Michigan Legislature](#)

⁵ [MCL - Section 168.931 - Michigan Legislature](#)

⁶ [MCL - Section 168.32 - Michigan Legislature](#)

- Type of notice issued
 - The specific reason for the notice being issued
 - Identification of any “reliable information” received, including the specific source (e.g., returned mail)
 - The date the notice was sent
 - Whether QVF was updated to reflect issuance of the notice
 - If QVF was not updated, an explanation for the omission
 - If the required procedures were not followed, an explanation for the noncompliance
 - Whether the notice was sent via forwardable mail, as required by statute
5. Provide a separate list, on an Excel spreadsheet, of all changes you made to voter status codes in QVF within the past year. For each change, the list must include:
- The voter’s name
 - The specific change made
 - The voter’s prior status or information before the change
 - A detailed explanation of the reason for the change
 - The date the change was made
 - For any voter who had a formal challenge, provide the signed affidavit from the registered elector challenging that voter’s qualifications to vote.
6. If any postcards issued did not include the statutorily required language informing voters that issuance of a cancellation notice rescinds any existing permanent ballot list request, explain why omission this occurred.
7. If any postcards issued did not indicate whether the voter was completing a Notice of Change of Address or a Notice of Cancellation, explain why this occurred, and the basis for omitting this required information.
8. State whether you have entered into any agreements with jurisdictions within your county to perform duties assigned by law to local clerks. If such agreements exist, provide:
- A list of all jurisdictions involved
 - A description of the specific duties delegated
 - The date each agreement was executed
 - A copy of each agreement, if available

For instructions on how to submit files to the Bureau of Elections through secure file transfer or any questions about this correspondence, please email MDOS-BOERegulatory@michigan.gov.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Brater, Director
Bureau of Elections