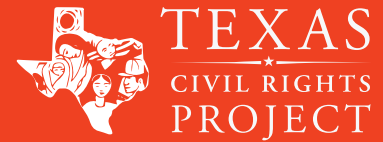


# MAJOR PROVISIONS

## SENATE BILL 1



- ✚ **Setting new minimum and maximum early voting hours, and banning overnight voting:**
  - In general, at least 9 hours of voting during the workweek between 6am-10pm.
  - In counties with a population of at least 55,000, early voting must take place for at least 12 hours on each weekday of the last week of early voting between 6am-10 pm.
  - Also in counties with a population of at least 55,000, early voting on the last Saturday of the early voting period must take place for at least 12 hours (between 6am-10 pm), and on the last Sunday of the early voting period for at least six hours (between 9am-10 pm).
- ✚ **More powers and less accountability for partisan poll watchers:**
  - Watchers must complete an online training program developed by SOS.
  - Watchers can't be removed for violating the Election Code or "any other provision of law relating to the conduct of elections" unless an election judge/clerk observed the violation.
  - A presiding judge can nonetheless call law enforcement to remove a watcher if they "commit a breach of the peace or a violation of law."
  - New/expanded criminal offenses for when an election officer "intentionally or knowingly refuses to accept a watcher for service when acceptance of the watcher is required" or if they take "any action to obstruct the view of a watcher or distance the watcher from the activity or procedure to be observed in a manner that would make observation not reasonably effective."
  - Watchers may be "near enough to see and hear" the activity they're trying to observe, except where otherwise prohibited. Except for being prohibited from being present at the voting station when a voter is preparing their ballot or is being assisted, the watcher "may not be denied free movement where election activity is occurring within the location at which the watcher is serving."
  - Parties appointing watchers may seek injunctive relief when they believe that one of their watchers was "unlawfully prevented or obstructed from the performance of" their duties.
- ✚ **Voters must provide ID numbers on their VBM applications and carrier envelopes:**
  - Voters would have to provide, on their VBM application and carrier envelope, their Texas DL/election identification certificate/personal ID card number; if they don't have one, the last four digits of their Social Security number; and if they have neither, a statement to that effect. If the number provided doesn't identify the voter, then the VBM application/carrier envelope is rejected.
  - If the VBM application is rejected because of a number issue, the county must provide notice of the rejection, and the voter can upload the correct number on the newly created VBM online tracker passed during the Regular Session.
  - If the VBM ballot is rejected because of a number issue, voters may be able to cure it through the curing process outlined below.

- ✚ **A new process to notify voters of certain issues with their mail ballots and cure them:**
  - When there is an issue with the VBM carrier envelope, the county must within two business days return the envelope to the voter by mail if it would be possible to correct the defect and return the envelope before the polls close on election day
  - If the county determines that would not be possible, then they may but are not required to notify the voter of the defect by telephone or email, and inform the voter they may either request their VBM application be canceled or come to the clerk's office in person within six days of the election to correct the defect.
  - If the reason for rejection is because of an ID number issue, then the voter may enter the correct number on the Online Mail Ballot Tracker. If the county has sent the ballot back to the voter, the voter must still return their ballot to the county by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.
- ✚ **Ban on drive through voting.**
- ✚ **Monthly comparisons of the voter registration rolls to DPS databases to check voters' citizenship status.**
- ✚ **Escalating sanctions against voter registrars if they are "not in substantial compliance" with requirements re the suspense list and the voter registration list.**
- ✚ **Certain portions of a voter registration form regarding eligibility and ID/Social Security numbers cannot be pre-filled.**
- ✚ **Allowing voters to update their registration electronically when they move from one county in Texas to another.**
- ✚ **Drivers of seven or more curbside voters must fill out a new form.**
- ✚ **Prohibiting any compensation for depositing a mail ballot or assisting mail ballot voters.**
- ✚ **Creating a new "vote harvesting" criminal offense, which prohibits the payment or receipt of payment for interacting with a voter "in the physical presence of an official ballot or a ballot voted by mail" in order to deliver votes for a candidate or measure.**
- ✚ **Counties are prohibited from distributing unsolicited vote by mail applications.**
- ✚ **Prohibiting election officials from serving if they have previously been convicted of an offense under the Election Code, and further exposing them to civil penalties and loss of employment benefits.**
- ✚ **Creating a new cause of action for "improper election activities," whereby candidates can sue their opponents for alleged violations of the Election Code.**
- ✚ **Creating a new expedited process for the Texas Supreme Court, the Texas Court of Appeals, and Texas trial courts to hear certain kinds of cases just before an election.**