

**§ 20510. Civil enforcement and private right of action**

**(a) Attorney General**

The Attorney General may bring a civil action in an appropriate district court for such declaratory or injunctive relief as is necessary to carry out this chapter.

**(b) Private right of action**

(1) A person who is aggrieved by a violation of this chapter may provide written notice of the violation to the chief election official of the State involved.

(2) If the violation is not corrected within 90 days after receipt of a notice under paragraph (1), or within 20 days after receipt of the notice if the violation occurred within 120 days before the date of an election for Federal office, the aggrieved person may bring a civil action in an appropriate district court for declaratory or injunctive relief with respect to the violation.

(3) If the violation occurred within 30 days before the date of an election for Federal office, the aggrieved person need not provide notice to the chief election official of the State under paragraph (1) before bringing a civil action under paragraph (2).

**(c) Attorney's fees**

In a civil action under this section, the court may allow the prevailing party (other than the United States) reasonable attorney fees, including litigation expenses, and costs.

**(d) Relation to other laws**

(1) The rights and remedies established by this section are in addition to all other rights and remedies provided by law, and neither the rights and remedies established by this section nor any other provision of this chapter shall supersede, restrict, or limit the application of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973 et seq.) [now 52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.].

(2) Nothing in this chapter authorizes or requires conduct that is prohibited by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973 et seq.) [now 52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.].

(Pub. L. 103-31, §11, May 20, 1993, 107 Stat. 88.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Voting Rights Act of 1965, referred to in subsec. (d), is Pub. L. 89-110, Aug. 6, 1965, 79 Stat. 437, which is classified generally to chapters 103 (§10301 et seq.), 105 (§10501 et seq.), and 107 (§10701 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Tables.

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1973gg-9 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

**§ 20511. Criminal penalties**

A person, including an election official, who in any election for Federal office—

(1) knowingly and willfully intimidates, threatens, or coerces, or attempts to intimidate, threaten, or coerce, any person for—

(A) registering to vote, or voting, or attempting to register or vote;

(B) urging or aiding any person to register to vote, to vote, or to attempt to register or vote; or

(C) exercising any right under this chapter; or

(2) knowingly and willfully deprives, defrauds, or attempts to deprive or defraud the residents of a State of a fair and impartially conducted election process, by—

(A) the procurement or submission of voter registration applications that are known by the person to be materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent under the laws of the State in which the election is held; or

(B) the procurement, casting, or tabulation of ballots that are known by the person to be materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent under the laws of the State in which the election is held,

shall be fined in accordance with title 18 (which fines shall be paid into the general fund of the Treasury, miscellaneous receipts (pursuant to section 3302 of title 31), notwithstanding any other law), or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

(Pub. L. 103-31, §12, May 20, 1993, 107 Stat. 88.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1973gg-10 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

**CHAPTER 207—FEDERAL ELECTION RECORDS**

Sec.	
20701.	Retention and preservation of records and papers by officers of elections; deposit with custodian; penalty for violation.
20702.	Theft, destruction, concealment, mutilation, or alteration of records or papers; penalties.
20703.	Demand for records or papers by Attorney General or representative; statement of basis and purpose.
20704.	Disclosure of records or papers.
20705.	Jurisdiction to compel production of records or papers.
20706.	“Officer of election” defined.

**§ 20701. Retention and preservation of records and papers by officers of elections; deposit with custodian; penalty for violation**

Every officer of election shall retain and preserve, for a period of twenty-two months from the date of any general, special, or primary election of which candidates for the office of President, Vice President, presidential elector, Member of the Senate, Member of the House of Representatives, or Resident Commissioner from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are voted for, all records and papers which come into his possession relating to any application, registration, payment of poll tax, or other act requisite to voting in such election, except that, when required by law, such records and papers may be delivered to another officer of election and except that, if a State or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico designates a custodian to retain and preserve these records and papers at a specified place, then such records and papers may be deposited with such custodian, and the duty to retain and preserve any record or paper so deposited shall devolve upon such custodian. Any officer of election or custodian who willfully fails to comply with this section shall be fined not more

than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

(Pub. L. 86-449, title III, §301, May 6, 1960, 74 Stat. 88.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1974 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

**§ 20702. Theft, destruction, concealment, mutilation, or alteration of records or papers; penalties**

Any person, whether or not an officer of election or custodian, who willfully steals, destroys, conceals, mutilates, or alters any record or paper required by section 20701 of this title to be retained and preserved shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

(Pub. L. 86-449, title III, §302, May 6, 1960, 74 Stat. 88.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1974a of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

**§ 20703. Demand for records or papers by Attorney General or representative; statement of basis and purpose**

Any record or paper required by section 20701 of this title to be retained and preserved shall, upon demand in writing by the Attorney General or his representative directed to the person having custody, possession, or control of such record or paper, be made available for inspection, reproduction, and copying at the principal office of such custodian by the Attorney General or his representative. This demand shall contain a statement of the basis and the purpose therefor.

(Pub. L. 86-449, title III, §303, May 6, 1960, 74 Stat. 88.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1974b of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

**§ 20704. Disclosure of records or papers**

Unless otherwise ordered by a court of the United States, neither the Attorney General nor any employee of the Department of Justice, nor any other representative of the Attorney General, shall disclose any record or paper produced pursuant to this chapter, or any reproduction or copy, except to Congress and any committee thereof, governmental agencies, and in the presentation of any case or proceeding before any court or grand jury.

(Pub. L. 86-449, title III, §304, May 6, 1960, 74 Stat. 88.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1974c of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

**§ 20705. Jurisdiction to compel production of records or papers**

The United States district court for the district in which a demand is made pursuant to section 20703 of this title, or in which a record or paper so demanded is located, shall have jurisdiction by appropriate process to compel the production of such record or paper.

(Pub. L. 86-449, title III, §305, May 6, 1960, 74 Stat. 88.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1974d of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

**§ 20706. "Officer of election" defined**

As used in this chapter, the term "officer of election" means any person who, under color of any Federal, State, Commonwealth, or local law, statute, ordinance, regulation, authority, custom, or usage, performs or is authorized to perform any function, duty, or task in connection with any application, registration, payment of poll tax, or other act requisite to voting in any general, special, or primary election at which votes are cast for candidates for the office of President, Vice President, presidential elector, Member of the Senate, Member of the House of Representatives, or Resident Commissioner from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

(Pub. L. 86-449, title III, §306, May 6, 1960, 74 Stat. 88.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 1974e of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

**CHAPTER 209—ELECTION ADMINISTRATION IMPROVEMENT**

**SUBCHAPTER I—PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR ELECTION ADMINISTRATION IMPROVEMENTS AND REPLACEMENT OF PUNCH CARD AND LEVER VOTING MACHINES**

- Sec.
- 20901. Payments to States for activities to improve administration of elections.
- 20902. Replacement of punch card or lever voting machines.
- 20903. Guaranteed minimum payment amount.
- 20904. Authorization of appropriations.
- 20905. Administration of programs.
- 20906. Effective date.

**SUBCHAPTER II—COMMISSION**

**PART A—ESTABLISHMENT AND GENERAL ORGANIZATION**

**SUBPART 1—ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION**

- 20921. Establishment.
- 20922. Duties.
- 20923. Membership and appointment.
- 20924. Staff.
- 20925. Powers.
- 20926. Dissemination of information.
- 20927. Annual report.
- 20928. Requiring majority approval for actions.
- 20929. Limitation on rulemaking authority.
- 20930. Authorization of appropriations.

**SUBPART 2—ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION STANDARDS BOARD AND BOARD OF ADVISORS**

- 20941. Establishment.