

**§ 20962. Process for adoption****(a) General requirement for notice and comment**

Consistent with the requirements of this section, the final adoption of the voluntary voting system guidelines (or modification of such a guideline) shall be carried out by the Commission in a manner that provides for each of the following:

- (1) Publication of notice of the proposed guidelines in the Federal Register.
- (2) An opportunity for public comment on the proposed guidelines.
- (3) An opportunity for a public hearing on the record.
- (4) Publication of the final guidelines in the Federal Register.

**(b) Consideration of recommendations of Development Committee; submission of proposed guidelines to Board of Advisors and Standards Board****(1) Consideration of recommendations of Development Committee**

In developing the voluntary voting system guidelines and modifications of such guidelines under this section, the Executive Director of the Commission shall take into consideration the recommendations provided by the Technical Guidelines Development Committee under section 20961 of this title.

**(2) Board of Advisors**

The Executive Director of the Commission shall submit the guidelines proposed to be adopted under this subpart (or any modifications to such guidelines) to the Board of Advisors.

**(3) Standards Board**

The Executive Director of the Commission shall submit the guidelines proposed to be adopted under this subpart (or any modifications to such guidelines) to the Executive Board of the Standards Board, which shall review the guidelines (or modifications) and forward its recommendations to the Standards Board.

**(c) Review**

Upon receipt of voluntary voting system guidelines described in subsection (b) (or a modification of such guidelines) from the Executive Director of the Commission, the Board of Advisors and the Standards Board shall each review and submit comments and recommendations regarding the guideline (or modification) to the Commission.

**(d) Final adoption****(1) In general**

A voluntary voting system guideline described in subsection (b) (or modification of such a guideline) shall not be considered to be finally adopted by the Commission unless the Commission votes to approve the final adoption of the guideline (or modification), taking into consideration the comments and recommendations submitted by the Board of Advisors and the Standards Board under subsection (c).

**(2) Minimum period for consideration of comments and recommendations**

The Commission may not vote on the final adoption of a guideline described in subsection (b) (or modification of such a guideline) until the expiration of the 90-day period which begins on the date the Executive Director of the Commission submits the proposed guideline (or modification) to the Board of Advisors and the Standards Board under subsection (b).

**(e) Special rule for initial set of guidelines**

Notwithstanding any other provision of this subpart, the most recent set of voting system standards adopted by the Federal Election Commission prior to October 29, 2002, shall be deemed to have been adopted by the Commission as of October 29, 2002, as the first set of voluntary voting system guidelines adopted under this subpart.

(Pub. L. 107-252, title II, § 222, Oct. 29, 2002, 116 Stat. 1683.)

## CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 15362 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

## PART B—TESTING, CERTIFICATION, DECERTIFICATION, AND RECERTIFICATION OF VOTING SYSTEM HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

**§ 20971. Certification and testing of voting systems****(a) Certification and testing****(1) In general**

The Commission shall provide for the testing, certification, decertification, and recertification of voting system hardware and software by accredited laboratories.

**(2) Optional use by States**

At the option of a State, the State may provide for the testing, certification, decertification, or recertification of its voting system hardware and software by the laboratories accredited by the Commission under this section.

**(b) Laboratory accreditation****(1) Recommendations by National Institute of Standards and Technology**

Not later than 6 months after the Commission first adopts voluntary voting system guidelines under subpart 3 of part A of this subchapter, the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology shall conduct an evaluation of independent, non-Federal laboratories and shall submit to the Commission a list of those laboratories the Director proposes to be accredited to carry out the testing, certification, decertification, and recertification provided for under this section.

**(2) Approval by Commission****(A) In general**

The Commission shall vote on the accreditation of any laboratory under this section, taking into consideration the list submitted under paragraph (1), and no laboratory may

be accredited for purposes of this section unless its accreditation is approved by a vote of the Commission.

**(B) Accreditation of laboratories not on Director list**

The Commission shall publish an explanation for the accreditation of any laboratory not included on the list submitted by the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology under paragraph (1).

**(c) Continuing review by National Institute of Standards and Technology**

**(1) In general**

In cooperation with the Commission and in consultation with the Standards Board and the Board of Advisors, the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology shall monitor and review, on an ongoing basis, the performance of the laboratories accredited by the Commission under this section, and shall make such recommendations to the Commission as it considers appropriate with respect to the continuing accreditation of such laboratories, including recommendations to revoke the accreditation of any such laboratory.

**(2) Approval by Commission required for revocation**

The accreditation of a laboratory for purposes of this section may not be revoked unless the revocation is approved by a vote of the Commission.

**(d) Transition**

Until such time as the Commission provides for the testing, certification, decertification, and recertification of voting system hardware and software by accredited laboratories under this section, the accreditation of laboratories and the procedure for the testing, certification, decertification, and recertification of voting system hardware and software used as of October 29, 2002, shall remain in effect.

(Pub. L. 107-252, title II, §231, Oct. 29, 2002, 116 Stat. 1684.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 15371 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

PART C—STUDIES AND OTHER ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL ELECTIONS

**§ 20981. Periodic studies of election administration issues**

**(a) In general**

On such periodic basis as the Commission may determine, the Commission shall conduct and make available to the public studies regarding the election administration issues described in subsection (b), with the goal of promoting methods of voting and administering elections which—

(1) will be the most convenient, accessible, and easy to use for voters, including members

of the uniformed services and overseas voters, individuals with disabilities, including the blind and visually impaired, and voters with limited proficiency in the English language;

(2) will yield the most accurate, secure, and expeditious system for voting and tabulating election results;

(3) will be nondiscriminatory and afford each registered and eligible voter an equal opportunity to vote and to have that vote counted; and

(4) will be efficient and cost-effective for use.

**(b) Election administration issues described**

For purposes of subsection (a), the election administration issues described in this subsection are as follows:

(1) Methods and mechanisms of election technology and voting systems used in voting and counting votes in elections for Federal office, including the over-vote and under-vote notification capabilities of such technology and systems.

(2) Ballot designs for elections for Federal office.

(3) Methods of voter registration, maintaining secure and accurate lists of registered voters (including the establishment of a centralized, interactive, statewide voter registration list linked to relevant agencies and all polling sites), and ensuring that registered voters appear on the voter registration list at the appropriate polling site.

(4) Methods of conducting provisional voting.

(5) Methods of ensuring the accessibility of voting, registration, polling places, and voting equipment to all voters, including individuals with disabilities (including the blind and visually impaired), Native American or Alaska Native citizens, and voters with limited proficiency in the English language.

(6) Nationwide statistics and methods of identifying, deterring, and investigating voting fraud in elections for Federal office.

(7) Identifying, deterring, and investigating methods of voter intimidation.

(8) Methods of recruiting, training, and improving the performance of poll workers.

(9) Methods of educating voters about the process of registering to vote and voting, the operation of voting mechanisms, the location of polling places, and all other aspects of participating in elections.

(10) The feasibility and advisability of conducting elections for Federal office on different days, at different places, and during different hours, including the advisability of establishing a uniform poll closing time and establishing—

(A) a legal public holiday under section 6103 of title 5 as the date on which general elections for Federal office are held;

(B) the Tuesday next after the 1st Monday in November, in every even numbered year, as a legal public holiday under such section;

(C) a date other than the Tuesday next after the 1st Monday in November, in every even numbered year as the date on which general elections for Federal office are held; and