

## **Registrar of Voters Foundations Certification Program Course Outline**

**Please note: Registration for classes will be closed 5 Business days prior to the class date.**

### **Certification Courses and Approximate Classroom Hours**

**Section 1: Election Administration, Laws and Regulations  
3 Hours**

**Section 2: Voter Registration, Maintaining Voter List & Service to Voters  
4 Hours**

**Section 3: Registrar's Office Management  
2 Hours**

**Section 4: Preparing for Elections, Primaries, Referenda and Election Day Registration  
4 Hours**

**Section 5: Conducting Elections, Primaries, Referenda, and Election Day Registration,  
3 Hours**

**Section 6: Absentee Voting & Supervised Absentee Voting  
3 Hours**

**Section 7: Post Election Audits & Recanvasses  
4 Hours**

**Section 8: Petitions  
2 Hours**

**Instructional Hours: 25  
Final Exam**

## **Section 1 –Elections Administration, Election Laws, and Regulations (3 Hours)**

- A. Overview of Agencies (Federal, State, Municipal) Responsible for Elections Administration
  - 1. FEC, EAC, DOJ.
  - 2. SOTS, SEEC, OPAPD, FOIC.
  - 3. Municipal Election Officials—Registrar of Voters, Municipal Clerks.
  - 4. Examples of Common Municipal Forms of Government in CT
  
- B. Review of Relevant Federal Election Legislation
  - 1. Voting Rights Act of 1965(Amended to 1992)
  - 2. National Voter Registration Act of 1993
  - 3. American with Disabilities Act of 1990
  - 4. UOCAVA
  - 5. Help America Vote Act of 2002
  - 6. Move Act of 2009
  
- C. Overview of CT General Statutes--Title 9, Title 7, and Agency Regulations
  - 1. CGA Website Features
  - 2. Basic Search techniques
  
- D. Review of Major Relevant Court Cases
  - 1. Shelby County v. Holder
  - 2. Tashjian v. Republican Party of Connecticut
  - 3. Munster v. Gejdenson
  
- E. Political Parties—Overview of Role in CT Election Process
  - 1. Major, Minor, Local Parties
  - 2. State Central Committees, Town Committees
  - 3. Party By-Laws and local Party Rules
  - 4. Selecting/Endorsing Candidates
  - 5. Conventions, Caucuses, Meetings
  - 6. CT Primaries—Parties have discretion over eligibility to vote
  
- F. Overview of Home Rule in Connecticut—Charters, Special Acts, Ordinances

## **Section 2 – Voter Registration, Maintaining Accurate Voter Lists & Service to Voters (4 Hours)**

- A. Overview—Roles of Registrars, Municipal Clerks, Board for Admission of Electors, Voter Registration Agencies (§ 9-19h), Voting Rights Groups
  - 1. Admitting Officials Defined—§ 9-17
  - 2. Election of Registrars—number, terms.
  
- B. Who May be Admitted as Electors in CT--§ 9-12
  - 1. Statutory Requirements
  - 2. Bona Fide Residence
  - 3. Other Criteria for Acceptance
  - 4. Exceptions and Special Circumstances—17-year-olds, ex-felons (exception for Title 9 violation), Homeless, etc.
  
- C. Types of Registration Applications
  - 1. State of CT Forms—mailed in/in person/online/NVRA Agencies
  - 2. Federal Forms—FPCA, and ED-20 ( §Sec 9-26)
  
- D. Processing Applications—(§ 9-20)
  - 1. Basic Use of CVRS & OLVR (§9-19k)
  - 2. Identification Requirements for Registration
  - 3. Transfer from Former Voting Municipality
  - 4. Confirmation to New Voters and Cancellation Letters to Previous Voting Jurisdiction—Use of Prescribed Mailing Methods, Requirements for Timely Processing.
  - 5. Special Circumstances—Military Service, Overseas, Homeless, Protected Classes of Employment, Address Suppressed, Safe at Home Program, Persons with Physical Disabilities, Name Changes.
  - 6. Understanding Voter Status—Active, Inactive, Off, Purged, Permanent Absentee
  - 7. Public Records (FOI) vs. Privacy of Voter Information
  - 8. Inter-State & Inter-town Collaboration
  
- E. Problem Avoidance & Resolution
  - 1. Handling Incomplete Applications & Researching Voter Information
  - 2. Voter Registration Deadlines
  - 3. Duplicate Registrations
  - 4. Felony Conviction and Incarceration
  - 5. Consultation with SOTS & State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC)

F. Official Voter Lists, Record-Keeping & Retention

1. Understanding the CVRS Menus
2. Generating Voter Lists & Party Enrollment Lists—Deadlines, Public Availability
3. List Preparation in Emergency Situations
4. Confirming Eligibility of Permanent Absentee Voters--Annually
5. Storing Original Voter Registration Applications & Other Public Documents
6. Record Retention Schedules

G. Mandated and Optional Voter Registration Sessions

1. State-Mandated (§Sec 9-17) & Notice Requirements
2. High School (§9-17c)
3. Upon Request (§9-19c)
4. Partnerships with Voting Advocacy Groups
5. Spanish Language Requirements

H. Keeping Lists Current

1. Weekly DMV Notices--§ 9-19i
2. Friendly Letters to Voters—Property Transfers
3. Tax Collectors' Records
4. Annual Letters to Permanent Absentee Voters
5. Obituaries/Social Security Death Index/Town Clerk Death Registry

I. Annual Canvass—Purpose, Procedures, and Forms

1. Types of Canvas—Procedures, Forms, Deadlines
  - a. Mail
  - b. National Change of Address (NCOA) through approved vendors
  - c. Door-to-Door
  - d. Telephone
2. Generating CVRs
3. Processing Returns (and non-returns) in CVRS—See Handbook
4. Scenarios and Issues
  - a. Spanish Requirement/Alternate Languages
  - b. Overview of Canvass in National Voters Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA)
  - c. Post-Canvass Reporting Requirements

### Section 3 –Registrars’ Office Management (2 Hours)

- A. Election Resources
  - CVRS
  - SOTS Web Site [www.ct.gov/sots](http://www.ct.gov/sots)
  - State Elections Enforcement Web Site [www.ct.gov/seec](http://www.ct.gov/seec)
  - Registrar of Voters Association of Connecticut (ROVAC) Committees [www.rovac.org](http://www.rovac.org)
  - Navigating CGA Website— [www.cga.ct.gov](http://www.cga.ct.gov)
  - Report of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration— [www.supportthevoter.gov](http://www.supportthevoter.gov)
  
- B. Ethics—non-partisanship and teamwork
  
- C. Personnel Issues
  - 1. Role of Deputy and Assistant Registrars
    - a. Delegation of duties at polls & in registrar’s absence
    - b. Registrar on ballot
    - c. Incompatible offices on ballot
  
  - 2. Hiring Practices—Poll workers
    - a. Establishing Poll workers’ pay
    - b. Non- Discrimination and Outreach—ADA of 1990
    - c. Sexual Harassment
  
- D. Public Relations, Outreach, and Communications
  - a. Effective Written Communications
  - b. Networking with Community Organizations, Media, Schools
  - c. Community & Special Projects
  
- E. Budgeting and Representing Office at Municipal Budget Meetings
  - a. Preparation and Presentation of Budget
  - b. Planning for Future Needs
  
- D. Record Retention
  - a. Statutes
  - b. Consultation with CT State Library Public Records Administrator
  
- E. Other Duties
  - a. Redistricting Responsibilities
  - b. Polling Place Selection

## Section 4 – Preparing for Elections, Primaries, Referenda, and EDR (4 Hours)

- A. Be Prepared
  - 1. Review SOTS Elections Calendar
  - 2. Confirm maintenance of all voting equipment.
  - 3. Track Dates for Public Notices and Reports to SOTS
  - 4. Mandated Registration Sessions
  - 5. Certifications to SOTS—polling places, moderators, EDR locations, ballot orders
  - 6. Supervised Absentee Completion
  - 7. Ordering Ballots & Preparing Voting Equipment (Optical Scanner & IVS)
  - 8. Working with your Town Clerk—Overseas voters, Permanent Absentee Voting & Supervised Absentee, Custody and Receipt of Absentee Ballots,
  
- B. Recruiting & Training of Election Workers
  - 1. Required Class Sessions & Online Training
  - 2. Determining Shifts & Assignments
    - a. Avoiding conflicts of interest/statutory prohibitions in pollworker assignments
  - 3. Certification of Moderators
  - 4. Swearing In all Workers
  - 5. Completing Required Paperwork & Preparing payroll
  
- C. Selecting Voting Locations
  - 1. Secure polling places, EDR locations, & central absentee counting locations in accordance with state and federal laws
    - a. ADA compliance
    - b. Request for Waiver from ADA of 1990 Requirements
    - c. In District vs. Adjacent/Out of District
    - d. Parking, Security, Signage
    - e. Access to CVRS for EDR
  - 2. Emergency Contingency Plans
  - 3. Plan for Polling Place Lay-out
  
- D. Preparing Ballot and Voting Equipment
  - 1. Ballot Preparation—Absentee vs Regular Polling Place Ballot
    - a. Ballot Lay-out, Proofing & Order Certification
    - b. EDR Ballots
  - 2. Voting Machine Preparation
    - a. Setup & Notification of Testing to Party/Candidates
    - b. Test Deck & Pre-Election Testing
    - c. Sealing and Documentation to Secretary of the State (SOTS) & Municipal Clerk

- d. Cards to UConn
  - e. Chain of Custody
    - 1. Keys & Security
    - 2. Transporting Equipment
- E. General Elections
  - 1. Presidential
    - a. Nominations/Endorsement
    - b. Write-ins
    - c. Role of Electoral College
  - 2. Municipal
    - a. Multiple Opening Offices & Lottery ( § Sec 9-249a)
    - b. At Large vs District Candidates
    - c. Incompatible Offices ( § 9-210)
    - d. Write-ins
    - e. Minority Representation
  - 3. Vacancy Elections (CGS Sec 9-211 to 9-218) (§9-219 to 9-224b)
    - a. Municipal/Federal/State/Constitutional Offices
    - b. Multi-Town vs Single Town District
    - c. Endorsements
    - d. Write-ins
    - e. Appointments
- F. Primaries (refer to party rules §9-387)
  - 1. Type of Primary
    - a. Presidential Preference
    - b. Federal/State
    - c. Municipal Officials
    - d. Town Committee—Caucus and Conventions §9-250
  - 2. Eligibility to Vote
    - a. Party membership and acquisition of party privileges
    - b. Cut-off deadlines—different from elections
  - 3. Candidate Selection Process
    - a. Select Candidates or Delegates
    - b. Fill Vacancies
  - 4. Ballot Lay-out and Position
  - 5. Polling place selections, plans for staffing
  - 6. Requirements for candidate notifications, staffing representation
- G. Referenda
  - 1. Town Charter—schedules, voting equipment, eligibility, additional requirements
  - 2. Title 7 applicable

## H. Final Preparations

1. Assess Specific Needs for Polling Locations
  - Police, Lights, Ramps, etc.
  - Two primaries at same location?
2. Run official voter lists or prepare poll books
3. Pre-election testing of machines
4. Provide required equipment—flags, telephones, and supplies
5. Unofficial Checkers/Runners



## **Section 5 –Conducting Elections, Primaries, Referenda, and EDR (3 Hours)**

- A. Primary and Election Day Duties
1. General Overview (Registrars' Responsibilities—Primary/Election)
    - Registrars availability
    - Who Can be Present at polls—elector, officials, press, others
    - EDR Administration—triaging voters, contacting other towns.
    - AB Counting—central or at polls?
  2. Staff Management/Assignments
    - Staffing the polls
    - Emergency Replacements at Polls
    - Managing Unofficial Checkers/Runners
  3. Restricted Areas—polls and EDR Location
    - 75-foot buffer zone/signs
    - Activities Allowed/Prohibited at Polling Places
  4. Opening Polls
    - Opening voting machines and IVS machines
    - Voting continues if machine malfunctions
  5. Handling Problems at Polls
    - Provisional and Challenge Ballots
    - Referral to EDR Location
    - Restoration from Inactive List
    - Transfers
    - Machine malfunctions & ballot box emptying
    - Disruption
  6. Closing the Polls—at Polling Place and EDR Location
    - Last elector in line at 8 pm
    - Poll workers duties for closing
    - Tallying votes on write-in and hand-counted ballots
    - Announcing results, posting tabulator tapes
  7. Reporting Results
    - Moderators Return & Tally Sheets
    - Head Moderator Return
    - Who Voted—completion deadline and report

- B. Referenda (§9-1n)
  1. Definition
  2. Examples of Some Types – Know Your Town Code and Charter
    - Statewide, e.g., Constitutional Amendment
    - Referenda Question (§9-369a)
    - Adjourned Town Meeting (§7-7) and Charter Revisions
  3. Eligibility
    - Electors
    - Non-Resident, U.S. Citizen Tax Payers (Permission by Town or State Statute)
  4. Procedures and Guidelines—In Accordance with Local Charter, Special Acts, Connecticut General State Statutes, or Instructions of Town Attorney
  5. Possible Variations—
    - Election in Conjunction with Referenda
  
- C. EDR Procedures (§9-19j)—See SOTS Guidance for Election Day Registration
  1. Requirements for EDR Location
  2. Admitting prospective electors
  3. Contacting previous towns, call-back procedures
  4. Handling problems/submitted election violation reports
  5. Secure transfer of ballots to AB counting locations
  6. Counting procedures
  
- D. Contested Election (Court) (§9-323 to 9-329) Tie Vote (§ 9-446), Adjourned Election (§9-332), Special Elections
  
- E. What Can Go Wrong and How to Prevent Violations
  1. SEEC Election Complaints
  2. Role of Town Attorney
  3. Importance of Documentation—at polls, AB counting, hand-counting, in office.

## Section 6—Absentee Voting & Supervised Absentee Voting (3 Hours)

### I. General Absentee Voting

#### A. See *Procedure Manual for Counting Absentee Ballots* for Registrar Responsibilities

1. Central Count vs Polling Place Counting
2. Hiring and Training of Absentee Ballot Counters/Moderator—Remember Statutory Prohibitions
3. Pre-checking of Names on Official Voter List
4. Receipt and Custody of Ballots When Transferred from Town Clerk
5. Delivery to Counting Location(s)
6. Permanent Absentee Ballot—Responsibilities of Registrar, Coordination with Town Clerk

#### B. Election Day Counting-Procedures & Documenting Results—Central v. District

1. Transfer of Absentee Ballots from Municipal Clerk to Registrar—Schedule
  - a. Affidavit of Delivery and Receipt
  - b. Count those ballot envelopes
2. Procedure for Counting—See *Procedure Manual for Counting Absentee Ballots*
  - a. Privacy
  - b. Voter intent
  - c. Public observation
  - d. Use of counting teams—machine v. hand-counting
  - e. Write-in votes, cross-endorsed double votes
3. EDR ballot counting to mirror absentee counting—central or at polls
  - a. Separation of EDR ballots
  - b. Ballots sealed in same case with EDR tally sheet/tabulator tape
4. Closing, Tally, Announcement of Results & Returns
  - a. Not before 8 pm
  - b. Tallying cross-endorsements—Unknown party

#### C. Special Circumstances

1. Moderator Decides Contested Ballots
2. Registrar on the Ballot
3. No Premature Disclosure of Absentee Ballot Count

## II. Supervised Absentee Voting (§9-159q and r)

- A. Definitions & Qualification
  - 1. Mandatory v. Requested
  - 2. Types of Facilities
- B. Responsibilities & Procedures
  - 1. Registrar vs Town Clerk
    - Coordination in Permanent Absentee Ballots for Voters in Facilities
  - 2. Facility Administrators
  - 3. In-Town vs. Out-of-Town Ballots
- C. Elector Rights (§9-264)
  - 1. Assisted and Affidavit
  - 2. By Registrar
  - 3. By Voter's Family or Others
  - 4. Not Assisted
  - 5. No Power of Attorney/Proxy
  - 6. Removal of Electoral Rights
- D. Conducting Supervised Absentee Balloting in Primaries vs Elections
  - 1. Notification to Party/Candidates
  - 2. Registrar on the Ballot
  - 3. Forms/Correspondence

## **Section 7 - Post-Election Audits and Re-canvasses (4 Hours)**

- A. Post-Election Audits (§9-320f and Audit Procedures)
  1. Guidelines from Secretary of the State
  2. Tips for Registrars from ROVAC
  3. Optional Methods for Hand-Counting in Teams
  4. Documentation
  5. Citizen Observers
  
- B. Re-canvass –See SOTS *Re-canvass Procedure Manual*.
  1. General Chain of Custody and Counting Principles
    - a. Supervision, Storage, and Transportation of Ballots
    - b. Counting Overview
    - c. Impoundment Procedures
      - Voting Machines
      - Absentee Ballots
      - Moderator Returns
  
  2. Types of Re-canvasses
    - a. Discrepancy (§ 9-311)/SOTS Opinion on Discrepancy on Primary
    - b. Close Vote (§ 9-311a)/Primary (§9-445)
    - c. Tie Vote (§ 9-311b)/Primary (§9-446)
    - d. Close Vote (§ 9-370a)
  
  3. Re-canvass Officials
    - a. Official Positions
    - b. Substitutes
  
  4. Notice of Re-canvass
    - a. Discrepancy—Elections and Primaries for All Offices
      - a. Head Moderator (or Moderator §9-311) Calls
      - b. Summons of Officials
      - c. May be limited to Voting Machines, Absentee Ballots, Write-ins
    - b. Close Vote (§9-311d)
      - a. Elections or Primaries for State or District Office of District Delegates
      - b. SOTS Notifies Municipal Clerk
      - c. Municipal Clerk Notifies Head Moderator
      - d. Head Moderator Summons Re-canvass Officials
      - e. Head Moderator Notifies Town Chairman and Candidates

- c. Elections or primaries for Municipal Office of Election of Town Committee Delegates to a Convention. Multiple Opening Office.
      - a. Municipal Clerk Notifies Head Moderator
      - b. Head Moderator Summons Re-canvass Officials
      - c. Head Moderator Notifies Town Chairman and Candidates
5. Content of Notices
  - a. Registrar or Municipal Clerk to Bring Election Materials
  - b. Schedule for Re-canvass—no more than 5 business days after election
  - c. Notice to Town Committee Chairs --Observe but not Participate
  - d. Notice to Candidates—written to each. May appoint representatives to observe.
  - e. Notice to Public--signage
6. Re-canvass Day—Re-canvass of Voting Machines, Absentee Ballots, and Write-in Ballots
  - a. Registrar of Voters Responsibilities
  - b. Head Moderator in charge of Re-canvass
  - c. Public Observation—Moderator monitors for interference.
  - d. Pretest New Voting Machine and Memory Card, if no pretested back-up machine available
7. Counting Procedures --Machine Processed vs Hand Counts
  - a. Examine each ballot for voter intent
  - b. Two people confirm reading of ballot, two make hash-marks
  - c. Examine and Confirm Votes on Write-In Ballots (If Applicable)
  - d. Moderator Decides Questions of Voter Intent
  - e. Completion of Re-canvass Forms and Report
8. Filing of Return to SOTS & Town Clerk
9. Resources & Suggested Forms for Re-canvass
  - Primary
    - a. Municipal Clerk to Moderator (ED-631a)
    - b. Summons (ED-631b)
    - c. Re-canvass Notices – Discrepancy (ED-631) and Close Vote (ED-631c)
    - d. Return of Delivery Notice (ED-631d)
    - e. Re-canvass Return Form (ED-653a/Pr)
  - Election
    - a. Municipal Clerk to Moderator (ED-631e)
    - b. Summons (ED-631f)
    - c. Re-canvass Notices – Discrepancy (ED-631q) and Close Vote (ED-631h)
    - d. Return of Service (ED-631i)

e. Re-canvass Return Form (ED-653a)

- Referenda (§9-1 (n))
- Minority Representation (§9-167a)—Rationale

## **Section 8 --Petitions (2 Hours)**

- A. Typical Examples of Petitions—Roles and Responsibilities
  - 1. Nomination: Municipal, State, and District (Multi-Town)
  - 2. Primary Petitions
  - 3. Other—Charter Proposals, Regional School District Budgets, Town Meeting/Adjourned Town Meetings, Town Committee, Presidential
  
- B. Required Forms & Procedures
  - 1. Eligibility to Obtain Petitions
  - 2. Where to File Application
  - 3. Who Issues Forms—Role of TC and Registrars
    - a. Consent Form signed by candidate
    - b. Number of pages
    - c. Who can be circulator
    - d. Who can sign petitions
    - e. Return Deadlines
  - 4. Review of forms for completeness
  - 5. Verification/Rejections of Signatures—TC or Registrars
    - a. Inactive Voters on Petition
    - b. Non-electors
  - 6. Certifications of Signatures
  - 7. Filing Procedures
  - 8. Description of CVRS Petition Module
  
- C. Procedures for Becoming a Write-in Candidate & Pre-Election Notification to Registrars



## Final Exam

**The Certification Exam is a mandatory component of the ROV Certification Program.**

Upon the successful completion of all eight sections, there will be a final exam, which requires a passing grade of 70% or better. If you do not pass the final exam on your first try you will have an opportunity to take another final exam, with a maximum of 5 tries. The final exam will be “open book” and you may use your class notes, the Connecticut General Statutes, and any other source material that you feel can assist you in completing the exam.

Once the exam is graded and you have received a passing score of 70% or better you will receive a certificate of completion from UConn which will indicate that you have completed the coursework necessary toward your certification requirements. You should remember that completion of the 8 classroom sessions is but one component of the certification process, as you must also become certified as an Election Moderator in order to be certified.