

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 680

BY REPRESENTATIVE NEWELL

ELECTIONS/POLLING PLACES: Provides relative to notice of changes to polling places

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:535 and 536 and to enact R.S. 18:401.2(B)(5) and 425.1(C),
3 relative to polling place locations, to provide for notice of changes to polling places;
4 and to provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 18:535 and 536 are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.
7 18:401.2(B)(5) and 425.1(C) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

8 §401.2. Relocation of polling places; state of emergency

9 * * *

10 B. When a polling place is relocated pursuant to Subsection A, the clerk of
11 court in conjunction with the secretary of state shall give adequate notice of the
12 change of the location to each voter registered to vote at that polling place and to
13 each candidate to be voted on at that polling place, if practicable, in the following
14 manner:

15 * * *

16 (5) Each affected voter shall be notified of the polling location changes via
17 electronic mail to the address provided in the voter's registration information and an
18 automated message by telephone or other electronic means such as text message to
19 the phone number provided in the voter's registration information.

20 * * *

1 §425.1. Consolidation of polling places; reduction of voting machines and election
2 officials; notifications to voters

3 * * *

4 C. Each affected voter shall be given immediate notice of such consolidation
5 and the polling location changes via electronic mail to the address provided in the
6 voter's registration information and via an automated message by telephone or other
7 electronic means such as text message to the phone number provided in the voter's
8 registration information.

9 * * *

10 §535. Notice of location of precincts and polling places

11 A.(1) Establishment and change. When a precinct or polling place is
12 established or changed, notice of its location shall be published by the parish
13 governing authority. The publication shall be in the official journal of the parish.

14 (2) When a precinct or polling place is established or changed, notice of the
15 establishment or change shall be shared with affected voters via electronic mail to
16 the address provided in the voter's registration information and via an automated
17 message by telephone or other electronic means such as text message to the phone
18 number provided in the voter's registration information.

19 B. Before ~~primary~~ elections, the parish board of election supervisors shall
20 publish the location of the polling places in the parish at least once ~~before each~~
21 ~~primary election~~. The publication shall be in the official journal of the parish during
22 the third week before the ~~primary~~ election and on websites maintained by parish
23 election officials, including the registrar of voters and clerk of court, where
24 applicable, and the secretary of state.

25 §536. Notice of change of location of polling place

26 A. When a parish governing authority or parish president, in accordance with
27 the provisions of R.S. 18:534, changes the location of a polling place during the
28 period commencing on the date the qualifying period opens and ending on the date
29 of the general election or during the period commencing on the forty-sixth day prior

1 to an election and ending on the day of the election for an election date exclusively
2 for bond, tax, or other propositions or questions, the governing authority shall give
3 adequate notice of the change of the location to each voter registered to vote at that
4 polling place and to each candidate to be voted on at that polling place, if applicable,
5 in the following manner:

6 (1) Each candidate shall be given immediate notice by telephone and by
7 certified mail of the new location of the polling place.

8 (2) All affected voters shall be given immediate notice as provided by R.S.
9 18:535(A)(2).

10 ~~(2)~~(3) A sign shall be posted at the former polling place directing voters to
11 the new location of the polling place.

12 ~~(3)~~(4) An employee of the parish governing authority shall be stationed at
13 the former polling place for the purpose of directing potential voters to the new
14 location of the polling place. The eligibility requirements provided in R.S.
15 18:1354(C) for appointment as a deputy parish custodian of voting machines are
16 applicable to the employee. Such employee shall be required to take the
17 constitutional oath or affirmation. The clerk of court shall administer the oath.

18 (5) If reasonable time exists, the notice of the change in location shall be
19 published by the parish governing authority in the official journal of the parish and
20 in any other newspaper of general circulation in the precinct or precincts affected.
21 Publication of the notice shall appear under the heading, NOTICE OF CHANGE OF
22 POLLING PLACE.

23 B. The governing authority may take such other reasonable steps as it deems
24 necessary or desirable to inform the voters and the candidates of the change in
25 location, including but not limited to posting notices on utility poles and
26 advertisements in the electronic media.

27 C. The governing authority shall inform the secretary of state of all polling
28 place changes. The parish election officials, including the registrar of voters and

1 clerk of court, and the secretary of state shall list polling place changes on their
2 websites, where applicable.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 680 Original

2022 Regular Session

Newell

Abstract: Provides for notification of polling place changes.

Present law provides that if any polling place is determined by the clerk of court in conjunction with the secretary of state to be destroyed, inaccessible, or unsafe due to an emergency or common disaster occurring before or during a regularly scheduled or special election, such election officials may relocate any such polling place. Present law provides that when such polling place is relocated, the clerk of court in conjunction with the secretary of state shall give adequate notice of the change of the location to each voter registered to vote at that polling place.

Proposed law retains present law and requires notice be provided to affected voters via electronic mail and an automated message by telephone or other electronic means such as text message.

Present law provides that where more than one polling place is within the same location, the parish board of election supervisors may consolidate polling places in that location for that election.

Proposed law retains present law and requires notice of such consolidation be provided to affected voters via electronic mail and an automated message by telephone or other electronic means such as text message.

Present law provides that once a polling place is established, it may only be changed by a vote of the parish governing authority.

Proposed law retains present law and requires notice of such change be provided to affected voters via electronic mail and an automated message by telephone or other electronic means such as text message. Also provides that changes of polling place locations shall be published on websites maintained by parish election officials and the secretary of state.

(Amends R.S. 18:535 and 536; Adds R.S. 18:401.2(B)(5) and 425.1(C))