

Article 21A.

Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act.

Part 1. Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act.

**§ 163-258.1. Short title.**

This Article may be cited as the Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.2. Definitions.**

As used in this Article:

- (1) "Covered voter" means any of the following:
  - a. A uniformed-service voter or an overseas voter who is registered to vote in this State.
  - b. A uniformed-service voter defined in subdivision (7) of this section whose voting residence is in this State and who otherwise satisfies this State's voter eligibility requirements.
  - c. An overseas voter who, before leaving the United States, was last eligible to vote in this State and, except for a State residency requirement, otherwise satisfies this State's voter eligibility requirements.
  - d. An overseas voter who, before leaving the United States, would have been last eligible to vote in this State had the voter then been of voting age and, except for a State residency requirement, otherwise satisfies this State's voter eligibility requirements.
  - e. An overseas voter who was born outside the United States, is not described in sub-subdivision c. or d. of this subdivision, and, except for a State residency requirement, otherwise satisfies this State's voter eligibility requirements, if:
    1. The last place where a parent or legal guardian of the voter was, or under this Article would have been, eligible to vote before leaving the United States is within this State; and
    2. The voter has not previously registered to vote in any other state.
- (2) "Dependent" means an individual recognized as a dependent by a uniformed service.
- (3) "Military-overseas ballot" means any of the following:
  - a. A federal write-in absentee ballot described in the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, section 103, 42 U.S.C. § 1973ff-2.
  - b. A ballot specifically prepared or distributed for use by a covered voter in accordance with this Article.
  - c. A ballot cast by a covered voter in accordance with this Article.
- (4) "Overseas voter" means a United States citizen who is outside the United States.
- (5) "State" means a state of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, or any territory or insular possession subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.
- (6) "Uniformed service" means any of the following:

- a. Active and reserve components of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard of the United States.
  - b. The Merchant Marine, the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, and the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States.
  - c. The National Guard and state militia units.
- (7) "Uniformed-service voter" means an individual who is qualified to vote and is one of the following:
- a. A member of the active or reserve components of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard of the United States who is on active duty.
  - b. A member of the Merchant Marine, the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, or the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States.
  - c. A member of the National Guard or State militia unit who is on activated status.
  - d. A spouse or dependent of a member referred to in this subdivision.
- (8) "United States," used in the territorial sense, means the several states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and any territory or insular possession subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.3. Elections covered.**

The voting procedures in this Article apply to all of the following:

- (1) A primary, general, or special election for federal or State office.
- (2) A State ballot measure.
- (3) A primary, general, special, or runoff election for local government office or a local ballot measure if absentee balloting is allowed under Article 20 of this Chapter. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.4. Role of State Board of Elections.**

(a) The State Board of Elections is the State official responsible for implementing this Article and the State's responsibilities under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1973ff, et seq.

(b) The State Board of Elections shall make available to covered voters information regarding voter registration procedures for covered voters and procedures for casting military-overseas ballots. The State Board of Elections may delegate the responsibility under this subsection only to the State office designated in compliance with the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, section 102(b)(1), 42 U.S.C. § 1973ff-1(b)(1).

(c) The State Board of Elections shall establish an electronic transmission system through which covered voters may apply for and receive voter registration materials, military-overseas ballots, and other information under this Article.

(d) The State Board of Elections shall develop standardized absentee-voting materials, including privacy and transmission envelopes and their electronic equivalents, authentication materials, and voting instructions, to be used with the military-overseas ballot of a voter authorized

to vote in any jurisdiction in this State, and, to the extent reasonably possible, shall do so in coordination with other states.

(e) The State Board of Elections shall prescribe the form and content of a declaration for use by a covered voter to swear or affirm specific representations pertaining to the voter's identity, eligibility to vote, status as a covered voter, and timely and proper completion of an overseas-military ballot. The declaration shall be based on the declaration prescribed to accompany a federal write-in absentee ballot under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, section 103, 42 U.S.C. § 1973ff-2, as modified to be consistent with this Article. The State Board of Elections shall ensure that a form for the execution of the declaration, including an indication of the date of execution of the declaration, is a prominent part of all balloting materials for which the declaration is required. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.5. Overseas voter's registration address.**

In registering to vote, an overseas voter who is eligible to vote in this State shall use and shall be assigned to the precinct of the address of the last place of residence of the voter in this State, or, in the case of a voter described by G.S. 163-258.2(1)e., the address of the last place of residence in this State of the parent or legal guardian of the voter. If that address is no longer a recognized residential address, the voter shall be assigned an address for voting purposes. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.6. Methods of registering to vote.**

(a) In addition to any other approved method for registering to vote, a covered voter may use a federal postcard application, as prescribed under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, section 101(b)(2), 42 U.S.C. § 1973ff(b)(2), or the application's electronic equivalent, to apply to register to vote.

(b) A covered voter may use the declaration accompanying the federal write-in absentee ballot, as prescribed under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, section 103, 42 U.S.C. § 1973ff-2, to apply to register to vote simultaneously with the submission of the federal write-in absentee ballot.

(c) The State Board of Elections shall ensure that the electronic transmission system described in G.S. 163-258.4(c) is capable of accepting both a federal postcard application and any other approved electronic registration application sent to the appropriate election official. The voter may use the electronic transmission system or any other approved method to register to vote.

(d) A covered voter's registration to vote by any method authorized by this section may be received at any time prior to the primary or election, but no later than 5:00 P.M. on the day before the primary or election. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.7. Methods of applying for military-overseas ballot.**

(a) A covered voter who is registered to vote in this State may apply for a military-overseas ballot using either the regular application provided by Article 20 of this Chapter or the federal postcard application, as prescribed under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, section 101(b)(2), 42 U.S.C. § 1973ff(b)(2), or the application's electronic equivalent.

(b) A covered voter who is not registered to vote in this State may use the federal postcard application or the application's electronic equivalent simultaneously to apply to register to vote under G.S. 163-258.6 and to apply for a military-overseas ballot.

(c) The State Board of Elections shall ensure that the electronic transmission system described in G.S. 163-258.4(c) is capable of accepting the submission of both a federal postcard application and any other approved electronic military-overseas ballot application sent to the appropriate election official. The voter may use the electronic transmission system or any other approved method to apply for a military-overseas ballot.

(d) A covered voter may use the declaration accompanying the federal write-in absentee ballot, as prescribed under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, section 103, 42 U.S.C. § 1973ff-2, as an application for a military-overseas ballot simultaneously with the submission of the federal write-in absentee ballot, if the declaration is received by the appropriate election official no later than 5:00 P.M. on the day before the election.

(e) To receive the benefits of this Article, a covered voter shall inform the appropriate election official that the voter is a covered voter. Methods of informing the appropriate election official that a voter is a covered voter include any of the following:

- (1) The use of a federal postcard application or federal write-in absentee ballot.
- (2) The use of an overseas address on an approved voter registration application or ballot application.
- (3) The inclusion on an approved voter registration application or ballot application of other information sufficient to identify the voter as a covered voter.

(f) This Article does not preclude a covered voter from voting an absentee ballot under Article 20 of this Chapter. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.8. Timeliness and scope of application for military-overseas ballot.**

An application for a military-overseas ballot is timely if received by the appropriate election official by 5:00 P.M. of the day before the election or primary. An application from a covered voter for a military-overseas ballot shall be considered a valid absentee ballot request for any election covered under G.S. 163-258.3 held during the calendar year in which the application was received. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.9. Transmission of unvoted ballots.**

(a) Not later than 60 days before the statewide general election in even-numbered years and not later than 50 days before any other election, the county board of elections shall transmit a ballot and balloting materials to all covered voters who by that date submit a valid military-overseas ballot application, except for a second primary. Provided, in a presidential election year, the board of elections shall provide general election ballots no later than three days after nomination of the presidential and vice presidential candidates if that nomination occurs later than 63 days prior to the statewide general election and makes compliance with the 60-day deadline impossible. However, in the case of municipal elections, absentee ballots shall be made available no later than 30 days before an election. For a second primary which includes a candidate for federal office, the county board of elections shall transmit a ballot and balloting material to all covered voters who by that date submit a valid military-overseas ballot application no later than 45 days before the second primary. For a second primary which does not include a candidate for federal office, the transmission of the ballot and ballot materials shall be as soon as practicable and shall be transmitted electronically no later than three business days and by mail no later than 15 days from the date the appropriate board of elections orders that the second primary be held pursuant to G.S. 163-111. If additional offices are added to the ballot to fill a vacancy occurring

after the deadline provided by this subsection, those ballots shall be transmitted as soon as practicable.

(b) A covered voter who requests that a ballot and balloting materials be sent to the voter by electronic transmission may choose facsimile transmission or electronic mail delivery, or, if offered by the voter's jurisdiction, Internet delivery. The election official in each jurisdiction charged with distributing a ballot and balloting materials shall transmit the ballot and balloting materials to the voter using the means of transmission chosen by the voter.

(c) If a ballot application from a covered voter arrives after the jurisdiction begins transmitting ballots and balloting materials to voters, the official charged with distributing a ballot and balloting materials shall transmit them to the voter not later than two business days after the application arrives. (2011-182, s. 1; 2013-381, s. 17(b); 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.10. Timely casting of ballot.**

To be valid, a military-overseas ballot shall either be received by the appropriate county board of elections no later than the close of the polls, or the covered voter shall submit the ballot for mailing, electronic transmission, or other authorized means of delivery not later than 12:01 A.M., at the place where the voter completes the ballot, on the date of the election. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.11. Federal write-in absentee ballot.**

A covered voter may use the federal write-in absentee ballot, in accordance with the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, section 103, 42 U.S.C. § 1973ff-2, to vote for all offices and ballot measures in a covered election. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.12. Receipt of voted ballot.**

(a) A valid military-overseas ballot cast in accordance with G.S. 163-258.10 shall be counted if it is delivered to the address that the appropriate State or local election office has specified by the end of business on the business day before the canvass conducted by the county board of elections held pursuant to G.S. 163-182.5 to determine the final official results.

(b) If the ballot is timely received, it may not be rejected on the basis that it has a late postmark, an unreadable postmark, or no postmark. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.13. Declaration.**

Each military-overseas ballot shall include or be accompanied by a declaration signed by the voter declaring that a material misstatement of fact in completing the document may be grounds for a conviction of perjury under the laws of the United States or this State. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

#### **§ 163-258.14. Confirmation of receipt of application and voted ballot.**

The State Board of Elections, in coordination with local election officials, shall implement an electronic free access system by which a covered voter may determine by telephone, electronic mail, or Internet whether:

- (1) The voter's federal postcard application or other registration or military-overseas ballot application has been received and accepted; and
- (2) The voter's military-overseas ballot has been received and the current status of the ballot. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.15. Use of voter's electronic mail address.**

(a) The county board of elections shall request an electronic mail address from each covered voter who registers to vote after January 1, 2012. An electronic mail address provided by a covered voter is not a public record under Chapter 132 of the General Statutes. The address may be used only for official communication with the voter about the voting process, including transmitting military-overseas ballots and election materials if the voter has requested electronic transmission, and verifying the voter's mailing address and physical location, as needed. The request for an electronic mail address shall describe the purposes for which the electronic mail address may be used and include a statement that any other use or disclosure of the electronic mail address is prohibited.

(b) A covered voter who provides an electronic mail address may request that the voter's application for a military-overseas ballot be considered a standing request for electronic delivery of a ballot for all elections held through December 31 of the year following the calendar year of the date of the application or another shorter period the voter specifies, including for any runoff elections that occur as a result of such elections. An election official shall provide a military-overseas ballot to a voter who makes a request for each election to which the request is applicable. A covered voter entitled to receive a military-overseas ballot for a primary election under this subsection is also entitled to receive a military-overseas ballot for the general election. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.16. Publication of election notice.**

(a) Not later than 100 days before a regularly scheduled election to which this Part applies, and as soon as practicable in the case of an election or vacancy election not regularly scheduled, each county board of elections shall prepare an election notice for that jurisdiction to be used in conjunction with the federal write-in absentee ballot described in G.S. 163-258.11. For a second primary required by G.S. 163-111, the county board of elections shall prepare, no later than the day following the date the appropriate board of elections orders that a second primary be held, an election notice for that jurisdiction to be used in conjunction with the federal write-in absentee ballot. The election notice shall contain a list of all of the ballot measures and federal, State, and local offices that, as of that date, the official expects to be on the ballot on the date of the election. The notice also shall contain specific instructions for how a voter is to indicate on the federal write-in absentee ballot the voter's choice for each office to be filled and for each ballot measure to be contested.

(b) A covered voter may request a copy of an election notice. The official charged with preparing the election notice shall send the notice to the voter by facsimile, electronic mail, or regular mail, as the voter requests.

(c) As soon as ballot styles are printed, the county board of elections shall update the notice with the certified candidates for each office and ballot measure questions and make the updated notice publicly available.

(d) A county board of elections that maintains an Internet Web site shall make updated versions of its election notices regularly available on the Web site. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.17. Prohibition of nonessential requirements.**

(a) If a voter's mistake or omission in the completion of a document under this Article does not prevent determining whether a covered voter is eligible to vote, the mistake or omission does not invalidate the document. Failure to satisfy a nonessential requirement, such as using paper or envelopes of a specified size or weight, does not invalidate a document submitted under this Article. In any write-in ballot authorized by this Article or in any vote for a write-in candidate on a regular ballot, if the intention of the voter is discernable under this State's uniform definition of what constitutes a vote, as required by the Help America Vote Act, 42 U.S.C. § 15481(a)(6), an abbreviation, misspelling, or other minor variation in the form of the name of a candidate or a political party shall be accepted as a valid vote.

(b) An authentication, other than the declaration specified in G.S. 163-258.13 or the declaration on the federal postcard application and federal write-in absentee ballot, is not required for execution of a document under this Article. The declaration and any information in the declaration may be compared against information on file to ascertain the validity of the document. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.18. Issuance of injunction or other equitable relief.**

A court may issue an injunction or grant other equitable relief appropriate to ensure substantial compliance with, or enforce, this Article on application by:

- (1) A covered voter alleging a grievance under this Article; or
- (2) An election official in this State. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.19. Uniformity of application and construction.**

In applying and construing this uniform act, consideration shall be given to the need to promote uniformity of the law with respect to its subject matter among states that enact it. (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.20. Relation to Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act.**

This Article modifies, limits, and supersedes the federal Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, 15 U.S.C. § 7001, et seq., but does not modify, limit, or supersede section 101(c) of that act, 15 U.S.C. § 7001(c), or authorize electronic delivery of any of the notices described in section 103(b) of that act, 15 U.S.C. § 7003(b). (2011-182, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.21. Reserved for future codification purposes.**

§ 163-258.22. Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 163-258.23. Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 163-258.24. Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 163-258.25. Reserved for future codification purposes.

Part 2. Other Military and Overseas Voters Absentee Provisions.

**§ 163-258.26. Certified list of approved military-overseas ballot applications; record of ballots received; disposition of list; list constitutes registration.**

(a) Preparation of List. – The chair of the county board of elections shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, a list in quadruplicate of all military-overseas ballots returned to the county board of elections under this Article to be counted which have been approved by the county board of elections. At the end of the list the chair shall execute the following certificate under oath:

"State of North Carolina

County of \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Chair of the \_\_\_\_\_ County Board of Elections, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a list of all executed military-overseas ballots to be voted in the election to be conducted on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, which have been approved by the County Board of Elections. I further certify that I have issued ballots to no other persons than those listed herein and further that I have not delivered military-overseas ballots to persons other than those listed herein; that this list constitutes the only precinct registration of covered voters whose names have not heretofore been entered on the regular registration of the appropriate precinct.

This the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Chair of County  
Board of Elections)

Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Officer administering oath)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Title of officer)"

(b) Distribution of List. – No earlier than 3:00 P.M. on the day before the election and no later than 10:00 A.M. on election day, the chair shall cause one copy of the list of executed military-overseas ballots, which may be a continuing countywide list or a separate list for each precinct, to be immediately deposited as first-class mail to the State Board of Elections. The chair shall retain one copy in the board office for public inspection and shall cause two copies of the appropriate precinct list to be delivered to the chief judge of each precinct in the county. The chief judge shall post one copy in the voting place and retain one copy until all challenges of absentee

ballots have been heard by the county board of elections. Challenges shall be made as provided in G.S. 163-89.

After receipt of the list of absentee voters required by this section the chief judge shall call the name of each person recorded on the list and enter an "A" in the appropriate voting square on the voter's permanent registration record, if any, or a similar entry on the computer list used at the polls. If such person is already recorded as having voted in that election, the chief judge shall enter a challenge which shall be presented to the chair of the county board of elections for resolution by the board of elections prior to certification of results by the board.

(c) List Constitutes Registration. – The "List of Applicants for Military-Overseas Ballots to Whom Ballots Have Been Issued" prescribed by this section, when delivered to the chief judges of the various precincts, shall constitute the only precinct registration of the covered voters listed thereon whose names are not already entered in the registration records of the appropriate precinct. Chief judges shall not add the names of persons listed on the covered voters list to the regular registration books of their precincts.

(d) Counting Ballots, Hearing Challenges. – The county board of elections shall count military-overseas ballots as provided for civilian absentee ballots in G.S. 163-234, and shall hear challenges as provided in G.S. 163-89. (1941, c. 346, ss. 7-10, 12, 13; 1943, c. 503, ss. 4, 5; 1963, c. 457, s. 15; 1967, c. 775, s. 1; 1973, c. 536, s. 2; 1977, c. 265, s. 17; 1979, c. 797, s. 3; 1981, c. 155, s. 2; c. 308, s. 3; 1983, c. 331, s. 4; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 762, ss. 56, 57; 1999-456, s. 59; 2011-182, s. 2; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.27. Article inapplicable to persons after change of status; reregistration not required.**

An individual who no longer qualifies as a covered voter under the provisions of this Article shall not be entitled subsequently to vote by military-overseas ballot under this Article, but if the covered voter was registered under the provisions of this Article that voter's registration shall remain valid for the remainder of the calendar year that voter registered, and that voter shall be entitled to vote in any primary or election for the remainder of the calendar year without having to reregister. If requested by election officials, the voter shall present proof of military status at the time of registration. This section does not entitle a person to vote in North Carolina if that person has become disqualified because of change of permanent residence to another State or because of conviction of a felony. (1943, c. 503, s. 12; 1967, c. 775, s. 1; 1999-424, s. 7(k); 2001-466, s. 4(e); 2011-182, s. 2; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.28. Registration and voting on primary or election day.**

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Chapter, an individual shall be permitted to register in person at any time the office of the board of elections or the voting place is open, including the day of a primary or election if that individual was absent on the day the registration records close for an election, but returns to that individual's county of residence in North Carolina thereafter, and if the absence is due to uniformed service as defined by G.S. 163-258.2.

If an individual so absent on the day registration closes shall appear in person at the voting place on election day and is otherwise eligible to vote, that individual shall be entitled to register and vote at the voting place that day, regardless of whether the person's uniformed service status has changed since the close of registration. (1977, c. 93; 1999-424, s. 7(l); 2001-353, s. 3; 2009-281, s. 1; 2011-182, s. 2; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.29. Absentee voting at office of board of elections.**

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Chapter, any covered voter under this Article shall be permitted to vote an absentee ballot pursuant to G.S. 163-227.2, 163-227.5, and 163-227.6 if the covered voter has not already voted an absentee ballot which has been returned to the board of elections, and if the covered voter will not be in the county on the day of the primary or election.

In the event an absentee application or ballot has already been mailed to the covered voter applying to vote pursuant to G.S. 163-227.2, 163-227.5, and 163-227.6, the board of elections shall void the application and ballot unless the voted absentee ballot has been received by the board of elections. The covered voter shall be eligible to vote pursuant to G.S. 163-227.2, 163-227.5, and 163-227.6 no later than 5:00 P.M. on the day next preceding the primary, second primary or election. (1977, c. 93; 1979, c. 797, s. 4; 2011-182, s. 2; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-144, s. 3.4(l); 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)

**§ 163-258.30. Regulations of State Board of Elections.**

(a) The State Board of Elections shall adopt rules and regulations to carry out the intent and purpose of G.S. 163-258.28 and G.S. 163-258.29 and to ensure that a proper list of persons voting under said sections shall be maintained by the boards of elections, and to ensure proper registration records.

(b) The State Board of Elections shall be the single office responsible for providing information concerning voter registration and absentee voting procedures to be used by covered voters as to all elections and procedures relating to the use of federal write-in absentee ballots. Unless otherwise required by law, the State Board of Elections shall be responsible for maintaining contact and cooperation with the Federal Voting Assistance Program, the United States Department of Defense, and other federal entities that deal with military and overseas voting. The State Board of Elections shall, as needed, make recommendations concerning military and overseas citizen voting to the General Assembly, the Governor, and other State officials. (1977, c. 93; 1987, c. 827, s. 1; 2003-226, s. 18; 2011-182, s. 2; 2012-194, s. 37; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, ss. 3.1(a), (b), 4.5(g).)

**§ 163-258.31. Emergency powers.**

If an international, national, or local emergency or other situation arises that makes substantial compliance with this Article or the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act impossible or unreasonable, the State Board of Elections may prescribe, by emergency rule, such special procedures or requirements as may be necessary to facilitate absentee voting by those absent uniformed services voters or overseas voters directly affected who are eligible to vote in this State. The rule shall become effective when filed with the Codifier of Rules. (2009-537, s. 9; 2011-182, s. 2; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, s. 3.1(a), (b).)