PURPOSE: This policy describes the process local agencies must follow in order to comply with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA). NVRA requires WIC agencies to offer clients the opportunity to register to vote.

A.   POLICY:

1. The offer of voter registration shall be made to clients at certification and recertification appointments, and when a change of address occurs.

2. Each person shall be given form #NSP-938B, Voter Registration Application. The top portion of this form is commonly referred to as the "declination form." (See Exhibit 1.10A for a copy of this form.)

    a. If the person indicates on the form that he or she does not wish to register to vote, or if the person does not check either the "yes" or "no" box, he or she should sign and provide address. Should the person refuse to do this, the WIC staff must initial and date the "declination" portion of the form (top right hand corner). The form is then filed according to local agency procedures.

    b. If the person indicates that he or she is already registered to vote at the current address, the person shall be given the "declination" portion of the form to complete. Should the person refuse to do this, the WIC staff must initial and date the "declination" portion of the form (top right hand corner). The form is then filed according to local agency procedures.

    c. If the person indicates that he or she wishes to register to vote, the person shall be given the Voter Registration Application to complete. (See 1.10A Voter Registration Form)

        i. Michigan Public Act 523 of 2012 now requires individuals to present photo identification when registering to vote in person. Acceptable ID documents include:
            - Michigan driver's license or Michigan personal identification card (current or expired)
            - Current driver's license or personal identification card issued by another state
            - Current federal or state government-issued photo identification
            - Current U.S. passport
            - Current student identification with photo – from a high school or an accredited institution of higher education
            - Current military identification card with photo
            - Current tribal identification card with photo

ii. If a person does not possess photo ID, he/she is permitted to sign the *Affidavit of Voter not in Possession of Picture Identification* Form (ID Affidavit). ID Affidavit forms that are completed by clients should be stapled to the voter registration form and sent to the local clerk using standard procedures. (See Exhibit 1.10C Affidavit of Voter Not in Possession of Picture Identification and policy #6.)

d. When a client telephones the WIC office to change an address, the client shall be asked if he/she wishes to register to vote at the new address. If the client indicates he/she wants to register to vote, offer the client the following options for receiving the Voter Registration Application:

    i. Mail the Voter Registration Application
    ii. Access and print the form from the www.michigan.gov/vote website.

Inform the client that assistance in completing the Voter Registration Application is available at the WIC office or by calling 1-888-767-6424.

3. Persons requesting assistance to complete voter registration forms shall receive the same assistance that would be given to a person completing any other agency forms. This might include reading aloud or translation.

4. Persons may choose to complete the form outside of the WIC office and mail it themselves, or they may give the completed form to WIC agency staff to mail. Local agency staff shall accept all voter registration forms for mailing, if requested by the individual completing the form.

5. The WIC Division will annually publish election and close of registration dates for Michigan elections.

6. If the application is completed within seven days of the "close of registration," voter registration forms shall be forwarded to the appropriate clerk within one business day. Otherwise, Local Agency staff shall submit completed forms to the clerk of the County, City or Township of the applicant's residence within seven days of application.

7. Local agency staff providing voter registration services shall not:

a. Seek to influence an applicant's party preference.

b. Display any political preference or party allegiance.

c. Make any statement or take any action to discourage the applicant from registering to vote.

d. Make any statement or take any action that leads the applicant to believe that a decision whether or not to register to vote has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits through the WIC program.

8. Information on voter registration shall be kept strictly confidential. No information regarding a person's declination to register may be used for any purpose other than voter registration. Similarly, if an individual does register to vote, the local agency at which the applicant submits a Voter Registration Application may not be publicly disclosed.

9. Declination forms shall be retained by the local agency for 24 months from the date of declination before discarding (see MI-WIC Policy Record Retention and Destruction 1.06).

B.   GUIDANCE:

1. Intake and certification staff who record demographic information should conduct voter registration. The voter registration process might take place when the Michigan WIC Client Agreement is reviewed and signed.

2. Voter Registration Forms may be ordered using the WIC E-form ordering process. The form number is #NSP-938-B. Forms come in packets of 250.

3. Voter Registration Posters are available and may be ordered using the WIC E-forms ordering process. (See Exhibit 1.10B Voter Registration Poster.) The form number is DCH-1311.

References:
National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA)
Civil Rights Division NVRA FAQs, 2010
State of Michigan Public Act 523 of 2012

Cross-References:
1.06   Records Retention and Destruction

Exhibits:
1.10A   Voter Registration Form (#NSP-938-B)
1.10B   Voter Registration Poster (DCH -1311)
1.10C   Affidavit of Voter Not in Possession of Picture Identification