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### 28.1 SBE Internet Website—Public Information Central

SBE’s primary means of communication is its main web site. See <http://www.sbe.virginia.gov>. The site provides forms and information to the public, candidates and election administrators. The Virginia Code requires certain information to be provided on the web site:

- SBE regulations (posted within 3 days after becoming effective) ([§ 24.2-103](#))
- Internet accessible absentee applications ([§ 24.2-701\(A\)](#))
- Changes to certified election results ([§ 24.2-802\(D\)](#))
- Campaign finance violations ([§§ 24.2-946.1\(D\)](#), [24.2-946.3\(H\)](#), [24.2-953.3\(G\)](#), [24.2-953.4\(C\)](#))
- A link to the Federal Election Commission’s federal political action committee reports ([§ 24.2-949.2\(C\)](#))

The Code also sets requirements for SBE to provide information to electoral boards, though it generally does not prescribe any particular form or method of communication.<sup>1</sup>

It does state, in part, what the SBE shall provide to both local electoral boards and registrars. See [§§ 24.2-103](#), [24.2-105](#), [24.2-105.1](#), [24.2-404](#). Specifically, [§ 24.2-103](#) states, “[SBE] shall make rules and regulations and issue instructions and provide information to the electoral boards and registrars to promote the proper administration of election laws. Electoral boards and registrars shall provide information requested by the Board.”

When the Code does *not* specify a format for providing information, SBE may choose to provide information electronically via e-mails and/or electronic files. It is important that the SBE staff have current and accurate e-mail addresses for both registrars and electoral board members. The

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<sup>1</sup> Section [24.2-404\(B\)](#) specifically authorizes SBE to determine the medium of information described in that section relating to VERIS.

e-mail addresses should be properly maintained in the VERIS directory. E-mail lists are updated periodically from the directory. Failure to update your office information in VERIS could result in your office missing important messages.

## **28.2 SBE SharePoint and Secure Site—Communication Hubs for Election Administrators**

In 2009, SBE launched an advanced Internet-based communication system, SBE SharePoint, to facilitate collaboration between SBE staff, registrars and electoral boards on the development of Board policies, forms and guidance documents such as the General Registrars and Electoral Board Members' Handbook. SharePoint enables SBE to effectively organize and maintain a large quantity of information, including forms, guidance documents and training materials. To create user profiles in SharePoint, electoral board members and general registrars should contact the SBE Information Center. Contact [VERIShelp@sbe.virginia.gov](mailto:VERIShelp@sbe.virginia.gov). In addition, SBE uses a commercial Internet-based program to survey registrars and electoral boards. See [surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com).

SBE maintains the secure general registrar web site (username and password required) that is used primarily for ordering election materials. General registrars' offices are assigned a username and password. If you need assistance with your username and password, please contact the SBE information center. Contact [VERIShelp@sbe.virginia.gov](mailto:VERIShelp@sbe.virginia.gov). SBE also uses VERIS to obtain and share information, forms and training materials.

## **28.3 E-mail Lists**

SBE provides two e-mail list serves to the election community. There is one for electoral board members and one for general registrars. See [eblist@virginiainteractive.org](mailto:eblist@virginiainteractive.org) and [gelist@virginiainteractive.org](mailto:gelist@virginiainteractive.org), respectively. The e-mail lists are useful for communicating mass messages to the electoral community and for soliciting assistance from fellow Virginia election administrators. For example, a general registrar can send an e-mail to the general registrar list e-mail address and that e-mail will be sent on his/her behalf to all of the other general registrars in the Commonwealth. SBE frequently uses the e-mail lists to communicate important information to the election community.

Care should be taken by list members to ensure that communications sent using the list are professional and relevant to the election community. The e-mails sent to the list are covered by FOIA. See GREB 28.4.

To join either list or to update your list membership status, contact the SBE Information Center. Contact [VERIShelp@sbe.virginia.gov](mailto:VERIShelp@sbe.virginia.gov).

## 28.4 FOIA Implications

Electronic records, including e-mails, are covered by FOIA. See GREB 26. The Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council has published a useful guide called *E-Mail: Use, Access & Retention*. See <http://foiacouncil.dls.virginia.gov/ref/e-mail.pdf>. Another issue that arises from use of e-mail is the blurring of the line between “correspondences” and “meetings.” The Council’s guides to *E-mail and Meetings Under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act* help sort out this issue. See <http://foiacouncil.dls.virginia.gov/ref/EMeetLocal09.pdf> and <http://foiacouncil.dls.virginia.gov/ref/EMeetState09.pdf>.