

## **Lincoln County Election Commission Informs Voters of New Law**

The Tennessee General Assembly recently passed a law to make the elections process more secure. Beginning in 2012, voters must present identification bearing their names and photographs in order to vote, just as if they were boarding an airplane or cashing a check.

The process is simple: voters who do not have valid photo IDs may obtain free photo IDs for voting from any participating Department of Safety driver service center across the state, you will need proof of citizenship and two proofs of Tennessee residency. And voters over the age of 60 who have driver's licenses without photos and no other form of valid photo IDs for voting may have their photos added to their licenses free of charge.

County election commissions are making efforts now to get the message out about the changes well in advance of the 2012 elections.

“Our staff is prepared to help voters learn about the new requirements, and, if necessary, how to get a photo ID,” said Shelia Allen, Administrator. “We will do our best to ensure every voter is informed in plenty of time.”

Examples of acceptable photo IDs, even if expired, include: a Tennessee driver's license with a photo, a United States passport, a Department of Safety photo ID, a United States military photo ID, a state-issued handgun carry permit, or any other photo ID issued by the federal or state government, except college student IDs.

“Local election administrators are working hard to prepare voters and poll workers,” said Secretary of State Tre Hargett. “I am confident this law will be beneficial and can be implemented smoothly.”

Some citizens will be exempt from the new law, including: absentee voters, residents of nursing homes or assisted living centers who vote at the facility, people who are hospitalized, people who have religious objections to being photographed and those who are indigent and unable to pay for photo IDs. Voters who do not bring photo IDs to the polls may vote with provisional ballots that will be counted if they return to their local election commission office and present a valid photo ID within two business days of the election.

For more information about the voting requirements, contact the Lincoln County Election Commission at 931-433-6220 or call Mark Goins, Coordinator of Elections, or Andrew Dodd, Elections Specialist, in the state Division of Elections at 1-877-850-4959.