

Report Card on Directive 2024-11: Ohio Secretary of State's Directive to Clean Ohio's Voter Rolls

A Brief Report from the Ohio Election Security Project

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Introduction

On June 27, 2024, Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose issued [Directive 2024-11](#), introducing a new Registration Audit Dashboard for all Ohio county boards of elections. By August 1, 2024, county boards were required to use this dashboard to review and resolve identified issues. Boards were instructed to access the dashboard at least once per week and correct any flagged voter records. The directive mandated that boards maintain their voter registration databases to ensure flagged voter records do not exceed 0.1% of the total active and active-confirmation status records.

The Ohio Election Security Project compared the state of voter rolls on June 1, 2024 (pre-directive) with August 3, 2024 (post-deadline). Our findings for each required check are presented below.

Prohibited Name Characters

Overall Grade: B+

Honorable Mention: Butler, Clark, Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Geauga, Hamilton, Licking, Mahoning, Summit

Underperforming Counties: Montgomery, Madison, Morrow

Chapter 4 of the Secretary of State's Election Official Manual outlines data entry standards for voter names, prohibiting characters such as hyphens, apostrophes, and periods. The dashboard flags names containing these characters for correction.

Statewide, prohibited character violations decreased by 89%, from 3,505 to 374 records. However, Montgomery County's violations increased from 245 to 289, while Madison and Morrow counties also saw increases. Several counties earned honorable mention for resolving 50 or more issues.

Inconsistent Birthdates and Registration Dates

Date of Birth and Registration Date are crucial identifying information. The dashboard flags inconsistencies in these fields, which likely stem from data entry errors. Four issue types were identified: placeholder birth dates, registration before birth, registration under 17, and unreasonably high age.

Placeholder Birth Dates

Overall Grade: F

Honorable Mention: None

Underperforming Counties: Shelby, Mahoning, Hamilton

Prior to the centralized database, some registrations used placeholder dates (e.g., January 1, 1800) for illegible or incomplete records. The Election Official's Manual requires reviewing and correcting these entries.

Statewide, only 51% of the 383 placeholder birthdates were resolved. Hamilton county corrected 103 of their 154 placeholder birth dates. Shelby County increased violations from 8 to 9, while Mahoning County resolved only 1 of 19 flagged records. Hamilton County resolved only 66% of its issues.

Registration Before Birth

Overall Grade: A- (excluding 1/1/1900 placeholder dates)

Honorable Mention: Cuyahoga, Trumbull

Underperforming Counties: Montgomery, Morrow

Records where the Registration Date precedes the Birth Date decreased from 132 to 13 statewide. However, over 51,000 records with 1/1/1900 placeholder registration dates remain, with only 762 resolved between 6/1/24 and 8/3/24. Including these placeholder registration dates would result in an F grade. Trumbull county resolved all 38 issues. Cuyahoga County resolved all but one of the 44 records with a registration date that precedes a birth date.

Registration Under 17

Overall Grade: F

Honorable Mention: None

Underperforming Counties: Montgomery, Summit, Madison, Franklin

Records indicating voter registration before age 17 (the minimum eligible age) saw a 59% resolution rate, with 1,002 of 1,689 flagged records addressed. Including 1/1/1900 placeholder dates, 51,845 records remain to be reviewed. While Cuyahoga County resolved 130 of 131 cases of registration under 17 years of age, they are the primary offender of using a 1/1/1900 placeholder registration date.

Unreasonably High Age

Overall Grade: D

Honorable Mention: Richland

Underperforming Counties: Montgomery, Mahoning, Franklin

Records showing voters aged 110 or older were resolved at a 64% rate (66 of 103 records). Montgomery and Mahoning counties did not resolve any issues, while Franklin and Cuyahoga counties addressed relatively few. Richland County resolved all 15 cases of voters with unreasonable ages.

Conclusion

While some progress has been made in cleaning Ohio's voter rolls, significant work remains. The 0.1% error rate allowed by Secretary LaRose's directive leaves hundreds of errors unaddressed and causing the overall effort to earn a failing grade. Montgomery County failed to resolve enough issues to meet the 0.1% error rate. As a result, the overall effectiveness of the activity across the state was sorely lacking. Given that local election contests are often decided by just a few votes, more stringent efforts and oversight are necessary to ensure the integrity of Ohio's voter registration data.

Summaries by County

Records with Prohibited Name Characters

County	6/1/2024	8/3/2024	County	6/1/2024	8/3/2024
Adams	2		Lawrence	8	1
Allen	35	2	Licking	98	
Ashland	13		Logan	77	1
Ashtabula	35		Lorain	33	4
Athens	7		Lucas	2	2
Auglaize	7		Madison	13	15
Belmont	37		Mahoning	193	
Brown	15		Marion	13	
Butler	293	1	Medina	8	
Carroll	6		Meigs	3	
Champaign	7	7	Mercer	8	
Clark	58	6	Miami	40	
Clermont	9		Monroe	1	
Clinton	6	1	Montgomery	245	289
Columbiana	17		Morrow	11	12
Coshocton	5		Muskingum	8	
Crawford	16		Noble	3	
Cuyahoga	3	3	Ottawa	9	
Darke	7		Paulding	2	
Defiance	8		Perry	1	
Delaware	50		Pickaway	7	
Erie	22	1	Pike	1	1
Fairfield	96		Portage	34	1
Fayette	8		Preble	4	
Franklin	846	11	Putnam	2	
Fulton	7	1	Ross	20	2
Geauga	128		Sandusky	14	
Greene	32	4	Scioto	6	
Guernsey	8		Seneca	13	
Hamilton	325	1	Shelby	6	5
Hancock	35		Stark	35	
Hardin	1		Summit	241	
Harrison	4		Trumbull	34	
Henry	30		Tuscarawas	4	
Highland	8		Union	19	
Hocking	3		Van Wert	1	
Holmes	1		Vinton	13	
Huron	2		Washington	6	
Jefferson	17		Williams	44	1
Knox	9		Wood	1	1

County	6/1/2024	8/3/2024
Wyandot	6	
Warren		1
Grand Total	3505	374

Placeholder Birth Dates

County	6/1/2024	8/3/2024
Adams	3	2
Allen	2	1
Ashland	5	2
Ashtabula	9	5
Athens	1	1
Brown	2	1
Champaign	1	1
Clark	1	
Columbiana	2	2
Fairfield	8	5
Franklin	13	11
Gallia	1	1
Geauga	3	
Greene	11	2
Hamilton	154	51
Jackson	1	
Jefferson	21	12
Lake	1	
Lawrence	3	1
Licking	1	
Lorain	19	13
Mahoning	19	18
Marion	2	
Medina	7	3
Monroe	3	1
Montgomery	8	7
Muskingum	1	1
Portage	5	5
Richland	14	2
Ross	1	
Sandusky	1	
Shelby	8	9
Stark	2	2
Summit	36	28
Trumbull	3	
Tuscarawas	1	
Vinton	1	
Warren	2	2
Wayne	1	
Wood	6	
Grand Total	383	189

Registration Before Birth

County	6/1/2024	8/3/2024
Crawford	3	
Cuyahoga	44	1
Fairfield	2	
Franklin	5	3
Hamilton	5	
Hancock	4	
Henry	2	
Huron	6	
Lucas	1	
Mahoning	9	4
Montgomery	3	3
Morrow	2	2
Pike	1	
Stark	6	
Trumbull	38	
Wood	1	
Grand Total	132	13

Registration Under 17

County	6/1/2024	8/3/2024	County	6/1/2024	8/3/2024
Adams	5		Logan	5	
Allen	11		Lorain	80	4
Ashland	30		Lucas	271	210
Ashtabula	47	1	Madison	2	2
Athens	6		Mahoning	71	54
Auglaize	8		Marion	12	
Belmont	13		Medina	10	
Brown	4	1	Meigs	5	
Carroll	2		Mercer	1	
Champaign	5	5	Miami	16	
Clark	32	1	Monroe	8	
Clermont	1		Montgomery	211	208
Clinton	3		Morgan	3	
Columbiana	9	2	Morrow	3	3
Coshocton	1		Muskingum	10	5
Crawford	3		Noble	2	
Cuyahoga	131	1	Ottawa	9	
Darke	3		Paulding	5	
Defiance	6		Perry	8	
Delaware	59		Pike	7	
Erie	11		Portage	14	1
Fairfield	24		Preble	2	
Fayette	2		Putnam	2	
Franklin	71	61	Ross	14	
Fulton	7		Sandusky	7	
Gallia	4	1	Scioto	19	
Geauga	12		Seneca	5	
Greene	3		Shelby	26	26
Guernsey	7		Stark	22	2
Hamilton	9		Summit	102	95
Hancock	8		Trumbull	70	2
Hardin	3		Tuscarawas	11	
Harrison	1	1	Union	8	
Henry	3		Van Wert	2	
Highland	7		Vinton	1	
Holmes	1		Warren	1	
Huron	20		Washington	3	
Jackson	9		Wayne	5	
Jefferson	12		Williams	9	1
Knox	5		Wood	2	
Lawrence	14		Wyandot	2	
Licking	11		Grand Total	1689	687

Unreasonably High Age

County	6/1/2024	8/3/2024
Adams	3	
Ashland	2	
Ashtabula	1	
Auglaize	1	1
Belmont	2	
Butler	1	
Clark	1	
Clermont	5	1
Coshocton	1	
Crawford	2	
Cuyahoga	13	9
Delaware	1	1
Fairfield	1	
Franklin	6	5
Geauga	1	1
Hamilton	3	1
Henry	1	
Lake	1	1
Lawrence	1	
Licking	2	

County	6/1/2024	8/3/2024
Lorain	4	1
Lucas	4	1
Mahoning	4	4
Marion	1	1
Medina	3	1
Montgomery	4	4
Morgan	1	
Paulding	1	
Pike	1	
Richland	15	
Scioto	1	
Stark	2	1
Summit	2	1
Trumbull	5	2
Van Wert	2	
Washington	1	
Williams	1	1
Wood	2	
Grand Total	103	37