



COMPLETE GUIDE TO BECOMING A TEXAS VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR (VDR)

INTRODUCTION: THE POWER TO COMPLETE WHAT YOU START

Here's a scenario you've probably experienced: After your message about civic engagement, Maria approaches you—a single mother working two jobs who's never voted because she "doesn't know how" and "doesn't have time to figure it out." You hand her a voter registration form, she takes it gratefully... and weeks later, it's still sitting on her kitchen counter, forgotten in the chaos of daily life.

This story repeats itself in churches across Texas. People leave inspired to register but many never follow through. The very people your ministry exists to serve—working families, seniors, young adults, new citizens—often remain voiceless in decisions that directly impact their daily lives.

What if you could change that story completely?

Instead of handing Maria a form and hoping for the best, what if you could help her complete the application properly, officially process it on the spot, hand her an official receipt, and guarantee her voice will be counted in the next election?

That's exactly what becoming a Volunteer Deputy Registrar (VDR) allows you to do.

As a VDR, you don't just distribute hope—you deliver results. You become the bridge between intention and action, transforming moments of civic awakening into immediate, completed voter registrations. You eliminate the barriers that prevent your community members from having their voices heard in local school board elections, county commissioner races, and state elections that shape policies affecting working families.

This guide will walk you through exactly how to become a VDR and how this certification can transform your church from a place that talks about civic engagement into a place that delivers it. Because in our republic, good intentions aren't enough—we need registered voters who actually show up at the polls.



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COMPLETE GUIDE TO BECOMING A TEXAS VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR (VDR)

WHAT IS A VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR?

Source: [Texas Election Code Chapter 13](#) and [Texas Secretary of State VDR Guidelines](#)

Volunteer Deputy Registrars (VDRs) are citizens entrusted with the official responsibility of registering voters in the State of Texas. VDRs are appointed by county voter registrars and receive official certification to help increase voter registration throughout the state.

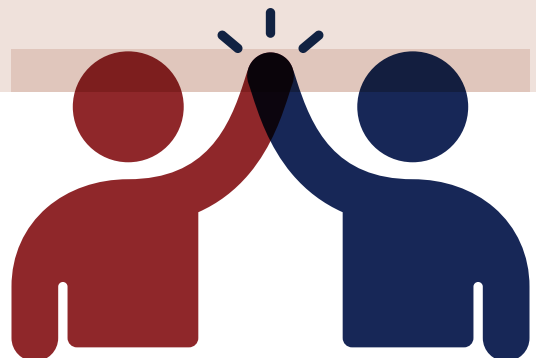
VDR vs. Non-VDR Volunteer Comparison

Source: [Texas Secretary of State VDR Training Materials](#)

Activity	Non-VDR Volunteer	VDR
Distribute blank forms	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Assist with completion	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Accept completed applications	✗ No	✓ Yes
Issue official receipts	✗ No	✓ Yes
Process applications	✗ No	✓ Yes
Training required	✗ No	✓ Yes
Legal delivery obligations	✗ No	✓ Yes

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR YOUR MINISTRY:

- Complete the entire registration process in one interaction - No more hoping people follow through
- Reduce barriers for community members - Help seniors, busy parents, individuals with disabilities, and others who might struggle with the process alone
- Prevent application rejections - Ensure proper completion and provide official credibility as a trusted source for voter registration services



COMPLETE GUIDE TO BECOMING A TEXAS VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR (VDR)

QUALIFICATIONS TO BECOME A VDR

Source: [Texas Secretary of State - Volunteer Deputy Registrars](#) and [Texas Election Code Section 13.031](#)

To be appointed a volunteer deputy registrar, you must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a United States citizen
- Be a resident of the State of Texas
- Not have been determined by a final judgment of a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be totally mentally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote
- Never have been convicted of failing to deliver a voter registration application to a voter registrar
- Not have been finally convicted of identity theft under Section 32.51 of the Penal Code
- Not have been finally convicted of a felony, OR if convicted, must have:
 - Fully discharged the sentence, including any term of incarceration, parole, or supervision, or completed a period of probation ordered by any court, OR
 - Been pardoned or otherwise released from the resulting disability to vote

HOW TO BECOME A VDR

Plan Ahead: Allow 4-6 weeks for the complete process. You'll need time to schedule training, take your test, and get your official materials.

Step 1: Contact Your County

- Call or visit your county voter registrar's office
- Ask about VDR training schedules
- Each county has different processes, so get their specific requirements

Find Your County: [Texas Secretary of State County Directory](#)

Step 2: Complete Training & Test

Source: [Texas Election Code Sections 13.047-13.048](#)

Counties offer one of the following:

- Online training through the Secretary of State, then an in-person test
- In-person training sessions (30 minutes to 1 hour)
- Virtual Zoom training sessions

Remember: You must complete training for each 2-year term (current term: 2025-2026)

COMPLETE GUIDE TO BECOMING A TEXAS VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR (VDR)

Step 3: Get Your Official Materials

Source: [Texas Election Code Section 13.031](#)

After passing your training, your county will give you:

- Official certificate of appointment
- Voter registration applications with tear-off receipts
- County-specific procedures and guidelines

Your certification: Valid immediately and expires on December 31 of even-numbered years.

VDR RESPONSIBILITIES AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

What VDRs Can Do:

- **Distribute and Accept Applications:** Provide voter registration forms and officially accept completed applications from any county resident who meets eligibility requirements
- **Assist with Completion:** Help individuals fill out applications if they cannot read or have a physical disability
- **Process Changes:** Accept applications from registered voters updating their information
- **Issue Receipts:** Provide official receipts for all submitted applications

DELIVERY DEADLINES – CRIMINAL PENALTIES APPLY

Source: [Texas Election Code Section 13.042](#)

Standard Deadline: 5:00 p.m. of the 5th day after receiving applications

Election Period: 5:00 p.m. of the next business day for applications received 34 days before an election

Failure to deliver on time is a criminal offense under Texas law

Application Review: While the applicant is still present, you must review the application for completeness

Required Application Sections to Review

Source: [Texas Secretary of State VDR Guide](#)

The following sections must be completed on the application:

- **Section 1:** New application, change, or replacement request; citizenship and age questions
- **Section 2:** Full name, including middle, maiden, or former name
- **Section 3:** Residence address (street address or location description)
- **Section 4:** Mailing address (if different from residence)

COMPLETE GUIDE TO BECOMING A TEXAS VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR (VDR)

- **Section 5:** City and County of former residence in Texas
- **Section 6:** Date of birth (month, day, and year)
- **Section 9:** Texas Driver's License, Texas ID, or last 4 digits of SSN
- **Section 10:** Signature of applicant and date

Additional information: [Texas Secretary of State VDR Guide](#)

COUNTY-SPECIFIC TRAINING INFORMATION

Note: Each county has its own VDR training process and schedule. Below are examples from major Texas counties. For complete county information, visit the [Texas Secretary of State County Directory](#).

Major Texas Counties VDR Training Examples:

BEXAR COUNTY

- **Phone:** 210-335-6625 | 30 minutes long | Training followed by immediate deputation

COLLIN COUNTY

- **Website:** [VDR Training Info](#)

DALLAS COUNTY

- **Website:** [VDR Information](#) | **Phone:** 469-627-8683

HARRIS COUNTY

- **Website:** [VDR Training](#) | 2025 Zoom Virtual Training available | Approximately one hour | Must RSVP and attend entire session | Certificate mailed within 10 business days

TARRANT COUNTY

- **Phone:** 817-831-8683 | **Contact:** Tarrant County Elections Department

TRAVIS COUNTY

- **Website:** [VDR Training](#) | One-hour training session | Zoom and video options available | Open to residents of Travis, Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Hays, Lee, or Williamson Counties

WILLIAMSON COUNTY

- **Website:** [VDR Information](#)



COMPLETE GUIDE TO BECOMING A TEXAS VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR (VDR)

GETTING STARTED: PLANNING YOUR CHURCH'S VDR PROGRAM

Recommended Timeline for Churches Planning VDR-Based Registration Drives:

- **6 weeks before drive:** Contact county voter registrar for training schedule and begin VDR certification process
- **4-5 weeks before:** Complete VDR training and receive certification
- **3-4 weeks before:** Obtain VDR materials, plan volunteer coordination, and organize supporting volunteers
- **2-3 weeks before:** Train supporting volunteers on procedures and prepare event logistics
- **1 week before:** Final preparations and volunteer briefings
- **Day of drive:** Execute voter registration drive with certified VDRs

Recommended Approach:

- **Certify 2-3 church volunteers as VDRs** to ensure adequate coverage and backup
- **Train additional supporting volunteers** (non-VDRs) to help with crowd management, information distribution, and basic assistance
- **Coordinate with your county voter registrar** to ensure you have adequate supplies and understand all current procedures

Next Steps:

1. **Contact your county voter registrar** using the information provided above
2. **Schedule VDR training** for 2-3 key church volunteers or leaders
3. **Review additional church voter registration resources** for comprehensive event planning
4. **Plan your drive timeline** allowing adequate preparation time (minimum 6 weeks)



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RESOURCES

Texas Secretary of State VDR Resources:

Official VDR Guides:

- [Volunteer Deputy Registrar Guide - English](#)
- [Volunteer Deputy Registrar Guide - Spanish](#)

Training Materials:

- [VDR Training Presentation - English](#)
- [VDR Training Presentation - Spanish](#)

Frequently Asked Questions:

- [VDR FAQs - English](#)
- [VDR FAQs - Spanish](#)

Key Texas Election Code Sections:

- Section 13.031: VDR qualifications and terms
- Section 13.042: Application delivery requirements
- Section 13.047: Training standards
- Section 13.048: Optional training methods

Complete Election Code Reference: [Texas Election Code Chapter 13 - Application for Registration](#)



BOTTOM LINE

Becoming a VDR provides official status to significantly enhance your voter registration efforts, but it comes with important legal responsibilities and training requirements. Having trained VDRs dramatically improves effectiveness and ensures proper processing of applications—transforming a simple form distribution into a complete voter registration service that gets people from civic inspiration to actual voter participation.

Allow adequate time for the VDR certification process before planning your voter registration drive, and consider this certification as an investment in your church's long-term capacity to serve your community's civic engagement needs.