Voter ID cards can be issued

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Published on: 06/30/06

Elections officials throughout Georgia can issue voter identification cards to people who need them beginning today, the State Election Board decided Thursday.

Voters in Georgia will be required to show one of six forms of government-issued photo identification at the polls on July 18 prior to casting a ballot in the primary election.

A driver's license or identification card issued by the state Department of Driver Services are acceptable forms of identification. The free voter identification cards will be issued at county voter registrar's offices only to people who do not have either one of those. To get one, voters must bring documents showing identity and proof of residency. Voters can also show a passport, a military ID, a government employee photo ID and a tribal ID card.

The Election Board also agreed to spend $211,000 on a voter education campaign. The money will go toward running 30-second radio spots before and after the July primary, creation of an informational brochure after the primary and the production of a two-page letter handed to voters at the polls in July after they vote — all aimed at telling voters to bring photo ID to cast a ballot.

David Worley, the Democratic appointee to the State Election Board, unsuccessfully tried to get the board to mail a letter to some 676,000 people the secretary of state's office identified as registered voters having neither a driver's license nor an identification card.

"It accomplishes nothing to hand it to them after voting on Election Day," Worley said.