



Vermont Civic Connect Program



What is Civic Connect?

- We are launching a NEW program for Vermont businesses and nonprofit organizations that are committed to improving civic engagement and education across the state. Thank you, Connecticut for the inspiration!
- Vermonters need trustworthy, nonpartisan voting information and opportunities to engage in their communities.
- Businesses are powerfully positioned to spread this information and support because they are embedded, connected, and trusted in their communities.
- Ultimately, this partnership will support democracy and civic life!





We have two tiers – “Partner” and “Champion”

Civic Connect **Partners** commit to utilizing SOS resources to share trusted information with its employees, clients, and/or customers. After signing up, the business will receive access to our toolkit.

The **Civic Connect Toolkit** includes:

- Sample Social Media Posts and Captions
 - Ready-to-use newsletter and email content
 - Printable flyers and handouts
 - Quarterly updates with timely reminders, resources, and highlights from across the state
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“Champion” tier

Civic Connect **Champions** go a step further by a business taking steps to strengthen the culture of civic engagement in its workplace.

Champion Organizations Pledge to:

- Publicly announce the business’s commitment to civic engagement to its staff and the public it serves.
 - Provide flextime or paid time off on Election Days
 - Provide flextime for employees to volunteer in the community each year
 - Celebrate and recognize civic participation in the workplace
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Toolkit examples

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT: ABSENTEE BALLOTS

PRIMARY ELECTION:
August 11th

- If you need an absentee ballot you must request one.
- You will receive all three major party ballots
 - Choose 1 party to vote in their primary
 - Return all three ballots (including the two blank ones)
 - Make sure you sign the certificate envelope
- Give yourself plenty of time to mail it back to your clerk! Better yet, bring it to them directly when they're open, or drop it in your town's secure drop box!
- Track your absentee ballot at vote.vermont.gov



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: VERMONT VOTER PORTAL VOTE.VERMONT.GOV

In your Vermont Voter Portal you can:

- Check your registration status
- Update your address and contact information
- Request an absentee ballot
- Track your absentee ballot status
- Find contact info for your town clerk
- Find your polling location
- View a sample ballot
- Research candidates using your personalized Voter Guide



RULEMAKING EXPLAINED

A guide for citizens

Rules are the way public agencies operationalize their policy goals and duties. Rules are legally binding and must be based on the law. The rulemaking process is designed to incorporate public input. Rules can affect your rights, costs, and everyday services — and **your opinion can shape them.**



Vermont Secretary of
State Rules Portal
Website

1 New proposed rule filed

- An agency drafts rules, relying on stakeholders and sometimes public meetings.
- The agency files the proposed rule with the **Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules (ICAR)**.
 - This is an internal review step; the public does not participate.
 - ICAR votes on the rules and provides feedback.
- The agency files a proposed rule with the Vermont Secretary of State.
- This triggers public notice and opens the public comment period.

2 Public Notice & Comment

- **Notices are posted online and in newspapers of record.**
- **Members of the public can submit written comments by the deadline;** if no hearing is scheduled, the period is at least 14 days.
- **If hearings are scheduled, the public can attend and provide their opinion.** Most hearings are held in a hybrid manner.

Legal Notices

Proposed Vermont Hunting Rule Changes

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board proposes updates to big game reporting and tagging, crossbow broadhead standards, and leashed tracking dog rules.

Out-of-State Telehealth Licensing Rules

The Office of Professional Regulation proposes permanent rules for licensing and registering out-of-state healthcare professionals providing telehealth services to Vermont patients. The rules set eligibility, practice standards, and disclosure requirements.

3 Final proposal submitted

- After reviewing and either incorporating or rejecting feedback, the agency files the Final Proposed Rule with the Secretary of State and the **Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR)**.
- **This filing closes the public comment period.**

4 Legislative Review

The Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules reviews the Final Proposed Rule for compliance with law and legislative intent.

5 Rule adopted

- Following LCAR review and a vote, the agency files the Adopted Rule with the Secretary of State.
- The rule is officially adopted and prepared for implementation.
- The rule takes effect at least 15 days after the

Agency	Rule Number	Effective Date	Topic
Department of Fish and Wildlife	2023-01	2023-01-01	Proposed Vermont Hunting Rule Changes
Department of Professional Regulation	2023-02	2023-02-01	Out-of-State Telehealth Licensing Rules
Department of Health	2023-03	2023-03-01	Proposed Vermont Hunting Rule Changes
Department of Transportation	2023-04	2023-04-01	Proposed Vermont Hunting Rule Changes

*To get updates: Ask the agency to add you to its contact list; it must provide notice if hearings are added or changed, or if the comment period is extended.

*To read rules and supporting documents: Visit the



Our way of saying thank you to the Champions

Champions will receive:

- A Civic Connect Champion badge for the business's website, email signature, and promotional materials
 - A printable certificate from the Secretary of State's Office certifying the business's commitment to civic engagement
 - Opportunities to partner with our office for workplace civic engagement events, presentations, or celebrations
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What's Next?

- We signed up flagship companies as “founding members” through direct outreach. Now, we hope to leverage this momentum to attract more participants!
- We created a webpage that includes a sign-up form
- We just held an official launch starting with a press conference.
- All-star interns helping with the toolkit resources!



Thank you to all of our founding members!

Partners:



Champions:



Contact: SOS.CivicConnect@vermont.gov
<https://sos.vermont.gov/secretary-of-state-services/civics/civic-connect>



Press Conference – Official Launch!



Vermont Secretary of State Launches Civic Connect Program with VT Business Leaders

July 13, 2026



Montpelier, VT – Vermont Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas and leaders from several Vermont businesses and nonprofit organizations held a joint press conference today to launch a new program called “Vermont Civic Connect.”

[Vermont Civic Connect](#) is a program for Vermont businesses and nonprofit organizations that are committed to improving civic engagement and education across the state. The Secretary of State’s office will provide information and resources on voting and civic engagement to participating businesses/orgs. Those organizations can then share that trusted information with employees, clients, and customers.

The program will have two tiers – “Partners” and “Champions.” Civic Connect Partners will receive access to the Secretary of State’s toolkit of nonpartisan, official information and resources – including social media, newsletter and printable flyer materials – that promote voting and civic engagement. They commit to using these resources to share trustworthy information with employees, clients and/or customers.

Civic Connect Champions take this step and go one further, pledging to strengthen the culture of civic engagement at the workplace, including providing flextime or paid time off on election days and opportunities for employees to volunteer in their communities.

“This program recognizes two important realities: One, Vermonters are seeking trustworthy information about our elections and looking for ways to get more involved in their communities. Two, the workplace is where we spend most of our waking hours, and Vermont businesses/nonprofits are deeply embedded and trusted within the civic fabric of our state,” said Secretary Copeland Hanzas. “My office has the tools and information to spread the word about voting and promote

Questions?

