



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2022

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Paul D. Pate".

Iowa Secretary of State

SERVICE • PARTICIPATION • INTEGRITY

INTRODUCTION



The State of Iowa is among the top three states in election administration. That is one of many achievements I'm proud of from Fiscal Year 2022. My top priorities as Iowa Secretary of State are election security and voter participation. I want every eligible Iowan to cast a ballot in our elections while feeling secure that the integrity of their vote is protected. The top three ranking in the Elections Performance Index shows our efforts paid off.

Throughout the past few years, my office has focused heavily on bolstering cybersecurity protections for our elections. We also must push back on misinformation and disinformation. It's vital that we protect the sanctity of the vote and inform Iowans about the numerous steps we take to safeguard elections at every level.

My staff also processed a record amount of new business registrations during Fiscal Year 2022. That's the sixth time in seven years Iowans have set a record for new business entities. Our Business Services Division is providing service faster and more efficiently than ever, despite a record amount of new business filings. The innovations we've made through the Fast Track Filing system ensure Iowa's business community receives the service it deserves.

We also tackled an important new venture this year with the launch of the Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking coalition. Human trafficking is a serious problem across the globe and unfortunately, it's happening right here in Iowa too. By partnering with Iowa's business community, we are raising awareness and building a statewide army to combat this form of modern-day slavery.

Serving as Iowa's Secretary of State is a tremendous honor. We live in the greatest state in the greatest nation on this planet. I'm extremely proud of the accomplishments the office has attained over the past seven and a half years, and we look forward to continuing to serve you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul D. Pate". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "P".

Paul D. Pate
Iowa Secretary of State

FY 2022 ACHIEVEMENTS

VOTING & ELECTIONS DIVISION

Iowa ranked in top 3 in the nation for election administration - The State of Iowa ranked third best in the nation for administration of the 2020 election, according to the [Elections Performance Index](#), compiled by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Election Data and Science Lab. The study released in March 2022 ranks states based on voter turnout, voter registration rate, and overall administration of elections.

Record-breaking city-school election – November 2021 saw Iowa’s second combined city-school election. Voter turnout surpassed 425,000 voters, an increase of 66,000 from the 2019 city-school election.

Efforts to enhance polling place accessibility receive national recognition – Secretary Pate was named a finalist for the prestigious IDEAS Award from the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) based upon his initiative to improve voter access for Iowans with disabilities. Secretary Pate collaborated with Disability Rights Iowa to produce the Voting Accessibility Quick Check Guide and distribute one to every polling place in the state. The booklet is a tool for precinct election officials to ensure polling places meet American Disabilities Act requirements and to quickly recognize and fix any accessibility issues that may arise on Election Day. We also turned the booklet into a video for auditors to use in training poll workers.

Successful June 2022 primary – More than 356,000 Iowans participated in the June 7 primary election, which was the second highest turnout for an Iowa primary since 1994. Absentee voting numbers topped 73,000. That is the second highest total for a primary election in the history of Iowa.

Provided free resources to assist Iowa counties and cities with redistricting – The Secretary of State offered free software and training sessions to assist local governments with the redistricting process. We assisted all 99 counties and close to 200 cities with the redistricting process. More than 350 people were trained by the Secretary of State during the process.

Due to the COVID pandemic, the 2020 Census data from the federal government was delayed and that resulted in drastically shortening Iowa’s reprecincting and redistricting timeline. A process that normally takes 10 months needed to be completed in just over two months.

Iowa registers 520,000 new voters in seven years - Two of Secretary Pate’s top goals are increasing voter registration and participation. By the end of FY 2022, 521,976 Iowans had registered to vote in the state since Secretary Pate first took office on January 1, 2015.

More than 320,000 of those voters registered using Iowa’s online registration system. Secretary Pate worked with the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) to develop the online voter

registration system, which launched on January 1, 2016. Iowa consistently ranks among the top states in the country in both voter registration and participation.

Carrie Chapman Catt Award helps high schools increase voter registration – A record high of 31 schools qualified for the Carrie Chapman Catt Award during the 2021-22 school year. The award is given to schools that register at least 90 percent of their eligible students to vote. It was named after Iowan Carrie Chapman Catt, a national leader in the women’s suffrage movement who was instrumental in securing passage of the 19th Amendment, granting women access to the ballot box 102 years ago. Along with those 31 schools, 10 more registered at least 70 percent of eligible students and 17 schools registered at least 50 percent of eligible students.

101 Iowa high schools signed up across counties, and a total of 3,390 students registered to vote through the initiative. In three years, over 10,000+ students have registered to vote through the initiative.

Elections team member earns national certification – Deputy Elections Director Wes Hicok was designated as a Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA) in August 2021. The CERA distinction is the highest professional achievement in the nation for an election official. CERA designation is achieved only through a multi-year course of study taught by the Auburn University’s Master in Public Administration faculty and is conducted by the Election Center’s Professional Education Program. The intent of the program is to professionalize the management of voter registration and elections administration in promoting and preserving public trust in the democratic process.

BUSINESS SERVICES

Fast Track Filing greatly enhances efficiency, customer service - Secretary Pate launched the Fast Track Filing advanced online filing tool for business filings during the Spring of 2018. This innovative application greatly enhances the speed and efficiency of the filing process. In Fiscal Year 2022, approximately 90% of filings were completed using the Fast Track Filing system. Under normal conditions, new business filings done through Fast Track Filing are processed within a maximum of two days, some in as few as five minutes. The system is accessible online 24 hours a day at filings.sos.iowa.gov.

Record number of new business filings - The Business Services Division processed 33,331 new entity registrations in FY 2022, setting a new state record for the sixth time in seven years. The previous high of 33,260 was set in FY 2021.

New notary commission applications added to Fast Track Filing - Iowans now can submit new notary commission applications online through the Fast Track Filing system, Secretary Pate announced in June. This addition allows notaries to apply for a new commission from the

comfort of their home, without having to scan in documents any longer. While Notary Renewals have been available to file online for years, this is the first time an original commission can be filed electronically. Per Iowa Code, notaries must renew their commission every three years. There are currently more than 58,000 active notaries across the state.

Other new filing types added to the Fast Track system in Fiscal Year 2022 included Amended Certificates of Authority, Applications for Reservation of Name, Applications for Reinstatement, and Articles of Amendment.

Efficient processing - The Secretary of State's Office processed more than 281,421 business entity documents in calendar year 2021.

GENERAL

Safe at Home continues expansion - The Safe at Home (SAH) program continued to grow throughout Fiscal Year 2022. SAH is an address confidentiality program created to protect survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse trafficking, and stalking. Survivors of assault became eligible for the program on July 1, 2021. As of June 30, 2022, Safe at Home served approximately 1,168 participants across 78 counties. Iowa averages more than 3,000 convictions for domestic violence and sexual assault each year.

Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking launches – On January 13, 2022, Secretary Pate launched a new initiative, Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT). The mission is to raise awareness about human trafficking and unite Iowa's business community to combat it. Within the first month of launching over 400 businesses/organizations/associations had joined the fight and grew to 542 members across 89 counties by the end of FY 2022. Each entity that joins is committed to "Learn Something" and "Do Something" to help eliminate this horrific crime.

#BeAVoter initiative with Iowa's college football teams - Secretary Pate worked with the college football teams and coaches from the University of Iowa, Iowa State, Northern Iowa, and Drake to promote voter registration and participation ahead of the 2021 city-school election. The four head coaches appeared in social media and digital ads, encouraging Iowans to #BeAVoter. Additionally, radio spots ran during each school's football game broadcast. Each ad directed the viewer or listener to visit [VoterReady.Iowa.gov](https://www.voterready.iowa.gov), a one-stop-shop for state election information. Iowans can use the site to register to vote, download an absentee ballot request form, track its status, and find information about voting deadlines and requirements.

Elections 101/Iowa Youth Straw Poll - Secretary Pate, along with Iowa teachers, developed an online curriculum for Iowa high school students, designed to civically engage students while educating them about Iowa's unique role in the political process. The curriculum also included an Iowa Youth Straw Poll in the spring of 2022. Students cast their vote for their preferred candidate for the following offices: Governor, U.S. Senate, and U.S. House of Representatives. A total of 10,169 students participated representing 127 schools/organizations in 69 counties.

Honor a Veteran/Partnership with Hy-Vee - Secretary Pate continued to promote the Honor a Veteran program by partnering with Hy-Vee for their annual Veterans Day free breakfast. Honor a Veteran is a way to pay tribute to those who served in the military and fought for our rights to choose our representative form of government. Secretary Pate partnered with Hy-Vee to distribute 30,000 Honor a Veteran postcards at all their Iowa stores during their 2021 breakfast for military veterans and active-duty personnel.

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

VOTING & ELECTIONS DIVISION

Successful 2021 city-school election

November 2021 saw Iowa's second combined city-school election. Voter turnout surpassed 425,000 voters, an increase of 66,000 from 2019.

Over the course of FY 2022, the Elections Division certified 254 state and federal candidates for the 2022 general election ballot. The office also processed 19 voter list subscriptions for daily absentee ballot counts, five annual statewide subscriptions of voter registration lists, which require daily updates, 10 statewide voter list and absentee subscriptions, as well as 126 one-time requests.

Enhancing election security

Secretary Pate and his staff take cybersecurity very seriously. Several steps were made to enhance election cybersecurity in FY 2022. The Secretary's Elections Division conducted numerous cybersecurity workshops for county election commissioners and staff. Partnering with the Iowa Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), free cybersecurity resources and training were offered throughout the year. The goal was ensuring all 99 counties' systems were protected.

Information sharing with county, state, and federal partners

The Secretary of State's Office continued full-scale government partnerships at local, state, and federal levels to secure Iowa's elections with unprecedented cooperation and information sharing. The Secretary of State's Office receives election threat intelligence from the Fusion Center, the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Election Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EI-ISAC). The intelligence comes in many forms.

Iowa's election community receives technical support and guidance from the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Iowa's Office of Chief Information Officer, and Iowa Counties Information Technology (ICIT). The

Secretary of State's Office worked with ICIT to better understand the IT demands and needs of counties. The office has undergone quantitative and qualitative assessments by CISA (and several others) to baseline our security posture. That information is then leveraged to identify training opportunities for county auditors and staff. People are the front of any cybersecurity defensive line.

National Voter Registration Act/Help America Vote Act

The Secretary of State is designated as the Chief State Election Official for purposes of administering federal election law, such as the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). In that role the Secretary continued implementation and review of the NVRA to ensure that all eligible Iowans are provided the opportunity to register to vote.

Online Voter Registration

A collaboration with the Iowa DOT to develop online voter registration opportunities for Iowa voters was completed and deployed on January 1, 2016. This application is available to Iowa residents who have an Iowa driver's license or non-operators ID and wish to register to vote or to change their registration information. The system resulted in significant savings in processing time for the State of Iowa. More than 320,000 Iowans registered to vote utilizing our online system since it launched.

Statewide Voter Registration System (I-Voters)

The Iowa Secretary of State continues its third-party vendor contract to maintain I-Voters, the statewide voter registration and election management system. The office made significant progress in FY 2022 to prepare for replacing I-Voters. This is a multi-year, multi-million-dollar project and remains on schedule.

The Elections Division worked with counties to conduct annual voter list maintenance, including the National Change of Address program. We also provided state and federal court systems a pool of registered voters to potentially serve as jurors in district, state, and federal court.

I-Voters is in a CJIS-compliant facility, giving it top-level protection. CJIS is an FBI standard used to secure sensitive law enforcement information. To remain CJIS-compliant, facilities and staff at those companies must undergo periodic audit and assessment.

I-Voters has, in addition to the Albert Intrusion Detection Sensor from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, its own separate intrusion detection system and intrusion protection system, which means the vendor is receiving notifications of malicious activity from both the federal government and private entities.

I-Voters sits behind an access control list (ACL). This means that I-Voters will accept connections only from computers it has been told to expect connections from. There are several layers of protection on the system and a multitude of channels someone must go through to gain access.

ERIC membership

Iowa is one of 31 states enrolled in the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC). Membership is required under Iowa Code. Participation in ERIC helps Iowa election officials improve the accuracy of the voter rolls, register more eligible citizens, reduce costs, and improve efficiencies in the voting process.

When ERIC compared the voter file to the Social Security Death Index, they found 1,114 deceased Iowa voters who were not included in the Iowa Department of Public Health's data. Since the Iowa Legislature required our ERIC membership, these 1,114 deceased voters were allowed to be removed from the voter rolls. These 1,114 deceased matches were found across 94 of Iowa's 99 counties, and the index we used prior to ERIC had not found these matches.

In September 2021, as part of the ERIC membership, our office mailed a postcard to approximately 50,000 Iowans who are eligible to vote, but not registered. The postcard includes instructions on how to register and a QR code the recipient can use to register to vote online.

Safe at Home

Safe at Home (SAH) is an address confidentiality program for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, and stalking. Participants of the program receive three services: a legal substitute address, mail-forwarding, and confidential voter registration and absentee voting. Statistics show that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have been victims of severe physical violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime. This program is a critical safety tool for survivors to live without fear of their abuser finding them through public records.

Safe at Home includes all genders, ages, ethnicities, and participants are from rural and urban areas. Domestic and sexual violence, trafficking, assault, and stalking impact people of all types. Iowa averages more than 3,000 convictions for domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking in Iowa. These convictions touched all 99 counties. At the end of FY 2022 the program served 1,168 participants in 78 counties.

There was record-setting voter engagement from SAH participants in the June 2022 primary election. Safe at Home participants can register to vote and request an absentee ballot through the program. When these steps are taken their information is input and maintained in a separate database from I-Voters. This allows them to exercise their right to vote without their name and address becoming a public record.

The Iowa SAH program is a founding member of the Notational Association of Address Confidentiality Programs (NACAP). Our Program Administrator was elected the National Vice President and staff served on various committees during FY 2022.

During FY 2022, there was significant growth with the expansion of the Safe at Home program. Starting July 1, 2021, judges, prosecuting attorneys, members of law enforcement and civilians working for a law enforcement agency are eligible for the program. The Secretary of State's office worked diligently to include these newly eligible individuals in the program and started Protect our Protectors (POP) for those professionals who wished to use the address confidentiality program. After launching POP, Safe at Home gained nearly 600 new participants.

Secretary Pate announced a new initiative January 13, 2022: Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT). He asks Iowa businesses to make a commitment to "Learn Something" and "Do Something" to fight against human trafficking. 542 businesses signed up for IBAT before the end of FY 2022 and helped raise awareness of this horrific crime. We have seen human trafficking awareness signs at local festivals, social media campaigns, newsletter articles, lunch and learns, and more.

Annexations

The Secretary of State's office is the filing office for all city annexations that are not filed with the City Development Board. This includes annexations that are 100 percent voluntary and non-urbanized. This class of annexations is presumed to require simple ministerial approval. The Secretary of State's Office reviewed, approved, and filed 71 annexations in FY 2022.

BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION

Business Entity Filings

The Business Services Division is the business portal for the state. Its key responsibilities are the registration and authorization of domestic and foreign entities to transact business in Iowa, administering the Iowa Mechanic's Notice and Lien Registry, and registering Iowa trademarks. The online portal allows business to be conducted 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It provides access to over 3 million filed documents and a complete array of forms, applications, and searchable databases for use by businesses, lending institutions, and interested citizens.

Each business day the customer service phone line receives an average of over 250 telephone calls and many emails with business services-related questions. The Secretary of State's Office is continually seeking to improve its service delivery to citizens and the business community.

The Business Services Division houses millions of electronic documents. There are over 280,000 active business entities registered in the database. Corporate filings include articles of incorporation, certificates of organization, amendments, miscellaneous filings, and statements of registered agent changes. Most entities are also required to file a biennial report with the Secretary of State. In FY 2022, the office processed 171,653 business entity filings. Approximately 93,000 of those were biennial reports, overwhelmingly filed online.

Online Filings

The Secretary of State's Office continues to move toward paperless filings, allowing immediate communication between the office and customers.

FY 2022 Filing Transactions

UCC Filings	126,149
Business Entity Filings	171,653
Original Notices	1,122
Certificates of Existence	15,923
New Notary Commissions	7,676
Notary Commission Renewals	12,929
Apostilles	7,645

Uniform Commercial Code (UCC)

The Business Services Division is responsible for filing and maintaining lien records under Article 9 of the Iowa Uniform Commercial Code. The Secretary of State currently maintains more than 1 million lien records in the UCC database. The UCC filing system supports commerce by giving lenders a central place to file notices regarding personal property pledges as collateral for loans.

Examples include liens on farm equipment and machinery, personal property, manufacturing equipment, inventory, crops, and livestock. Additionally, the office files federal tax liens and other federal liens.

In FY 2022, the Business Services Division filed 126,149 UCC documents, and supplied thousands of copies of filed documents to customers. Almost all certified searches and UCC filings are done online by customers.

Notary Public Commissions

The Business Services Division is responsible for commissioning Iowa notaries. A notary is a person who serves the public as an impartial and unbiased witness by identifying persons who come before the notary. They are especially critical to the legal, business, financial and real estate communities of Iowa. The most common function of a notary is to witness and attest that a person signing a document is who they claim to be.

The Secretary of State's Office maintains a database of approximately 58,509 active notaries, which most often require renewal at three-year intervals. In FY 2022, the Secretary of State renewed 12,929 notaries and commissioned 7,676 new notaries.

The Secretary of State's Business Services Division is responsible for issuing apostilles and notary certifications on documents destined for foreign countries that have been notarized by an Iowa notary. These certifications from the Secretary of State confirm that the notary is an Iowa Notary Public. The office issued 7,645 of these in FY 2022.

Miscellaneous Filings

In addition to corporate filings, mechanic's lien filings, UCC filings, trademark registrations, and notary commissions, the Office maintains the following, with relevant Iowa Code sections in parentheses:

- Agricultural Reports (10B)
- Athlete Agent Registrations (9A)
- Voluntary Annexations (368.7)
- Land Patents (9G)
- Transient Merchant Registrations (9C)
- Credit Service Organization Registrations (538A)
- Joint Exercise of Governmental Powers Agreements (28E)
- Condemnation Filings (6B & 9.2A)

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

Cybersecurity partnerships pay dividends

Cybersecurity partnerships continue to be a focus. Here's a synopsis of cyber partnerships:

Iowa Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO): Through OCIO, our office has access to endpoint protection, web application firewalls, network monitoring, multi-factor authentication, vulnerability scanning, risk assessment and "on demand" cybersecurity support.

EI-ISAC: Through the EI-ISAC, our office has access to endpoint protection software, network protection (web browsing), intrusion detection, malware analysis and access to their Security Operations Center (SOC) for reporting malicious events.

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA): Through this relationship, our office uses automated vulnerability scanning services, received guidance for physical security and we participated in their pilot program called "Crossfeed" that provides attack surface risk data. Our office will also be participating in a pilot for threat intel data.

Iowa National Guard (168th Cyber Operations Squadron): The Iowa National Guard cyber unit assists our agency through such services as vulnerability scanning, penetration testing, threat hunting, and incident response readiness.

Private vendors: Iowa SOS works with local and national vendors for a variety of services, including security incident and event management, system redundancy and failover, firewalls, networking, vulnerability scanning, penetration testing, and incident response.

The SOS office also maintains in-house cybersecurity staff to operate vulnerability management, patch management, log management, endpoint protection, network defense, incident response and more.

Fast Track Filing

The Fast Track Filing (FTF) system was designed by the Secretary of State's Information Technology Division and launched in the spring of 2018. In FY22, 90% of all business filings were filed through FTF compared to 33% online before FTF was launched.

The system is developed and operated by in-house staff, in cooperation with a local vendor.

In-house projects

The SOS I.T. staff built and supports processing systems for business filings, UCCs, notary filings, mechanic's liens and more. I.T. staff also supports the office computer infrastructure and users.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR FY 2023

- **Provide clean, fair, secure, and transparent elections statewide**
- **Protect the integrity and security of Iowa's elections and election infrastructure at every level**
- **Promote voter registration and participation to all eligible Iowans**
- **Boost voter confidence by dispelling mis/dis/malinformation**
- **Collaborate with other state agencies to create a universal business portal**
- **Continue to promote the Safe at Home program and make resources available to survivors of violence**
- **Grow the Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking coalition so that we have a statewide army ready to combat this form of modern-day slavery**