

From the New Jersey Lawyer

AG REVISING ELECTIONS COMMUNICATIONS ON EX-CONS

The state Attorney General's Office has announced plans to revise its communications with county election offices in the wake of allegations by the New Jersey chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union regarding disparities in how counties register ex-convicts to vote. The ACLU wants the legislature to remove the Division of Elections from the AG's direction because nine counties - Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Hudson, Passaic, Hunterdon, Ocean and Salem - "illegally" demand ex-offenders provide "proof of release" to register, says the ACLU, while the remaining counties allow registration without such proof. An ACLU survey conducted after last November's elections also found wide differences in how counties make voter information available to ex-offenders. Markus Green, AG chief of staff, said the office is developing a system to ensure none of the counties require proof of release. "We are aware there is some miscommunication with respect to this, but the rule is the same for every county," he said. The AG's office in 1998 replaced the secretary of state as overseer of the elections division.

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