Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Federal regulations regarding Indians voting in tribal elections have been amended to conform with the 26th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified June 30, 1971, which lowered the voting age from 21 to 18, Marvin L. Franklin, Assistant to the Secretary for Indian Affairs, announced today.

The amendments are to Part 52 of Title 25 (Code of Federal Regulations). Four sections were changed to reflect the lower voting age.

The regulations were also amended to eliminate the requirement that the Election Board require a return receipt when notifying each adult tribal member not living on the reservation that he must register to participate in elections called by the Secretary of the Interior. It is no longer necessary to establish proof of delivery of the notice since the U.S. Postal Service has its own system for recording the delivery of certified mail, and such information is available from its records.

The regulations were amended in addition to permit a voter to execute an absentee ballot without having to have two adults present to certify that proper procedures were followed. Certification in casting absentee ballots are seldom required by the State in State and Federal elections. The inconvenience caused by this provision has discouraged many off-reservation Indians from participating in tribal elections.

The notice was published in the Federal Register on April 23 and becomes effective immediately.