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ONLINE TRAINING FOR RENEWING VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRARS BEGINS TODAY!

Volunteer Deputy Registrars (VDR) are partners with County Voter Registrars, assisting citizens in registering to vote and educating them on the importance of voting. A high level of ethical conduct is required to be a VDR as they are responsible for protecting applicants' right to vote. At the end of the last VDR cycle, 275 volunteers were active in Galveston County.

During the 82nd Legislative Session (2011), training for VDRs became mandatory. Galveston County Voter Registrar Cheryl E. Johnson had long established a training program for the benefit of area residents. "The penalties for failing to turn in a voter registration application were harsh and it was logical that volunteers be aware of the potential for harm, not to mention the harm to a voter applicant," stated Johnson.

In October, Johnson sought permission from the Secretary of State Elections Division to provide renewing VDRs the opportunity to retake the training online. That approval was obtained at the end of 2014 and Johnson worked with the County IT Department to establish a reliable method of applying and verifying training. Online training began February 2.

The Texas Election Code requires VDRs to be at least 18 years of age, to not have been finally convicted of a felony or, if so, must have fully discharged the sentence, not have been finally convicted of an offense under Section 32.51 of the Penal Code (*identity theft*) and meet the requirements to be a qualified voter under Section 11.002 (*although not required to be a registered voter*). VDR terms begin after training and end December 31st of even numbered years.

VDR training is conducted monthly the third Friday of each month at 2:00 pm in the Commissioners Courtroom, Galveston County Courthouse, 722 Moody in Galveston. Although pre-registration is not required, volunteers are encouraged to contact the Voter Registration Department via email (galcotax@co.galveston.tx.us) or phone (toll free 1-888-976-2280 or 409-766-2280).