

OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

DIANA DIZOGLIO

Official Audit Report – November 10, 2025

Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

For the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024



OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

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November 10, 2025

The Honorable William F. Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
1 Ashburton Place, 17th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Secretary Galvin:

I am pleased to provide you the results of the enclosed performance audit of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As is typically the case, this report details the audit objectives, scope, methodology, findings, and recommendations for the audit period, July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024. As you know, my audit team discussed the contents of this report with agency managers. This report reflects those comments.

I appreciate you and all your efforts at the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The cooperation and assistance provided to my staff during the audit went a long way toward a smooth process. Thank you for encouraging and making available your team. I am available to discuss this audit if you or your team has any questions.

Best regards,



Diana DiZoglio
Auditor of the Commonwealth

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

OVERVIEW OF AUDITED ENTITY 2

AUDIT OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY..... 7

OTHER MATTERS.....11

APPENDIX13

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	Address Confidentiality Program
CMR	Code of Massachusetts Regulations
DVSP	Domestic Violence Service Provider
SOC	Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with Section 12 of Chapter 11 of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Office of the State Auditor has conducted a performance audit of certain activities of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (SOC) for the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024.

The purpose of our audit was to determine the following:

- Did SOC administer its Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) in accordance with Section 130.04 of Title 950 of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR)?
- Did SOC process exemption requests received from state/local entities seeking access to ACP participants' actual addresses in accordance with 950 CMR 130.08?

Our audit revealed no significant issues related to our objectives that must be reported under generally accepted government auditing standards. However, during the course of our audit, we identified an issue not specifically addressed by our objectives regarding SOC's administration of its Domestic Violence Service Provider Grant Program. See Other Matters for more information.

OVERVIEW OF AUDITED ENTITY

The Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (SOC) operates under the authority of Chapter 9 of the Massachusetts General Laws and various statutes related to corporations, securities, and elections. According to its website, SOC serves as “the chief record-keeping, public information, securities regulator, and elections officer of the Commonwealth.” SOC is organized into 16 major units (see the [Appendix](#) for more information about each). One of these units is called the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP), about which we go into more detail below.

SOC’s central office is located at 1 Ashburton Place in Boston; it also has two satellite offices located in Fall River and Springfield. As of June 30, 2024, SOC had 462 active employees, including two employees responsible for managing the ACP. According to SOC officials, in fiscal years 2023 and 2024, SOC received state appropriations of \$75,158,175 and \$71,171,940, respectively.¹ Of these amounts, the Legislature allocated \$136,971 to the ACP for fiscal year 2023 and \$268,971 for fiscal year 2024.

ACP

The ACP was established by Chapter 409 of the Acts of 2000 and officially launched on April 9, 2001. The ACP provides a substitute address and confidential mail-forwarding service to (1) individuals who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and/or stalking and (2) healthcare providers who have a connection to a legally protected healthcare service.² The ACP helps participants keep their actual physical address confidential, thereby supporting efforts to avoid actual or potential threats. A participant’s enrollment in the ACP is valid for four years from the date of enrollment and may be extended through a reenrollment process.

During the audit period, a total of 356 individuals, which included 8 healthcare providers who have a connection to legally protected healthcare services, were enrolled in the ACP. This group included 151 children, 178 adult females, 22 adult males, 3 nonbinary adults, 1 transmasculine adult, and 1 adult who chose not to disclose their gender.

1. The decrease in state appropriations between these two years was due to specific line items that were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. According to SOC’s 2023–2024 Annual Report for the Address Confidentiality Program, legally protected healthcare services include gender-affirming healthcare services and reproductive healthcare services.

The table below shows the number of ACP participants by county during the audit period.

County	Number of ACP Participants
Middlesex	90
Norfolk	56
Suffolk	56
Essex	44
Worcester	27
Bristol	27
Hampden	16
Plymouth	15
Hampshire	14
Barnstable	7
Berkshire	4
Total	<u>356</u>

ACP Application Process

The ACP application process differs slightly, depending on an applicant's reason for applying to the ACP (i.e., whether they are a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and/or stalking, or they are a healthcare provider who has a connection to a legally protected healthcare service).

Regarding individuals who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and/or stalking, Section 130 of Title 950 of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) stipulates that these individuals who also meet certain ACP eligibility requirements,³ such as being a resident of Massachusetts, may apply to participate in the ACP. They do so by having a local, certified ACP application assistant⁴ complete a Participant Application form on their behalf (which is stipulated by 950 CMR 130.02 in order to help the individual during the difficult time caused by the domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and/or stalking). Once the Participant Application form is complete and signed by the applicant, the ACP application assistant then submits it to the ACP manager along with all required documentation. This documentation

3. For more about the ACP eligibility requirements, visit SOC's website [here](#).

4. According to SOC's website, certified ACP application assistants "are employees of a state or local agency, or of a nonprofit program that provides counseling, referral, shelter or other specialized service to victims of domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault or stalking. They are chosen by their organization and trained by the Secretary of the Commonwealth." These ACP application assistants are trained based on the ACP eligibility requirements (see footnote 3 for more information about these requirements).

includes copies of the applicant's identification, evidence of a safety threat (e.g., a restraining order or police report), proof of residency, and (if applicable) a birth certificate or custody documentation for each of the applicant's minor children.

Regarding healthcare providers who have a connection to a legally protected healthcare service, these individuals may apply to participate in the ACP. They do so by completing the Health Care Application form, which they can download from SOC's website. Unlike ACP applicants who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and/or stalking, healthcare providers are not required to work with an ACP application assistant when applying to the program. Once they complete the Health Care Application form, they must gather and submit all required documentation directly to the ACP manager. This documentation includes copies of the applicant's identification, evidence that they have a connection to legally protected healthcare services, proof of residency, and (if applicable) a birth certificate or custody documentation for each of the applicant's minor children.

The ACP manager determines the ACP applicant's eligibility by reviewing the application form to ensure that all required information is included by comparing the details provided on the form with the submitted documentation. Once the ACP manager approves an ACP application, ACP staff members contact the applicant to confirm their acceptance into the program and their status as an ACP participant. They also send the ACP participant a welcome packet and an ACP identification card, which includes the participant's enrollment start date and expiration date.

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles uses a single, designated substitute address for all ACP participants. ACP staff members notify the Registry of Motor Vehicles of the ACP participant's eligibility to use the substitute address. The Registry of Motor Vehicles keeps this substitute address on file for providing location information and proof of residency for the following:

- documents such as drivers' licenses, state identification cards, vehicle registrations, and vehicle titles and
- matters such as vehicle insurance and excise taxes.

State/Local Entity Exemption Requests

According to 950 CMR 130.08, all state and local entities are required to accept an ACP participant's substitute address as their residential and/or mailing address. If an entity determines that it cannot accept the substitute address and contacts ACP by telephone to request an ACP participant's actual address, then

ACP staff members must inform the caller that a written state/local entity exemption request is required. The request and details of this telephone conversation must be documented in the ACP call log by ACP staff members, which is maintained in the ACP participant's physical file.

If a state/local entity submits a written exemption request to the ACP, then the ACP manager reviews the state/local entity exemption request to determine whether the entity has a bona fide need to access the ACP participant's actual address. One example of a bona fide need would be a school district's need to verify a student's residency. State/local entities receiving an exemption must also demonstrate that they have measures in place to protect the ACP participants' safety and maintain the confidentiality of their addresses.

If the state/local entity exemption request is approved, then the ACP manager issues a notification letter to the requesting entity and discloses the ACP participant's actual address to the entity's designated contact by telephone. ACP participants must be notified both when a state/local entity exemption request is submitted and when it has been approved.

Domestic Violence Service Provider Grant Program

The Domestic Violence Service Provider (DVSP) Grant program was established by Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023 and is administered by SOC. The legislative acts require that a minimum of \$100,000 from SOC's state appropriation must be allocated to fund the DVSP Grant program. Eligible DVSP Grant applicants include nonprofit organizations that provide services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking, as well as healthcare providers who have a connection to a legally protected healthcare service. According to the DVSP Grant application, applicants must submit a comprehensive proposal that includes, at a minimum, a description of their past outreach efforts to geographic communities in which they provided services regarding domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking.

Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023 states,

The secretary shall, to the maximum extent possible, ensure a geographically equitable disbursement of funds; provided further, that the secretary shall provide technical assistance to eligible entities in the application process; provide further, that the secretary shall develop reporting requirements for grant recipients.

According to SOC officials, the ACP manager reviews each DVSP Grant application to ensure that it includes all required elements as outlined in Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023. Once the ACP manager completes this review, eligible applications are forwarded to SOC's general counsel for approval.

According to Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023, SOC was required to submit a report on the DVSP Grant program to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means no later than December 16, 2024. According to the fiscal year 2024 DVSP Grant program annual report, four nonprofit organizations received grant awards during fiscal year 2024. SOC officials informed us that the DVSP Grant was allocated based on the amounts the nonprofit organizations requested in their applications; any remaining balance was proportionately distributed among those organizations that received funding. The table below shows the fiscal year 2024 DVSP grantees, geographic areas of service, and awarded amounts.

DVSP Grant Award Information for Fiscal Year 2024

Grantee Name	Geographic Area of Service	Award Amount
Melrose Alliance Against Violence	Danvers, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Saugus, Stoneham, Wakefield, Winchester	\$ 18,215
Wakefield Alliance Against Violence	Wakefield	23,215
Employers Against Domestic Violence	Statewide	28,215
HarborCOV	Chelsea, East Boston, Revere, Winthrop	30,355
Total		<u>\$ 100,000</u>

During our audit, we identified areas for improvement regarding the administration and oversight of the DVSP Grant evaluation process. See [Other Matters](#) for more information.

AUDIT OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

In accordance with Section 12 of Chapter 11 of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Office of the State Auditor has conducted a performance audit of certain activities of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (SOC) for the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Below is a list of our audit objectives, indicating each question we intended our audit to answer; the conclusion we reached regarding each objective; and, if applicable, where each objective is discussed in the audit findings.

Objective	Conclusion
1. Did SOC administer its Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) in accordance with Section 130.04 of Title 950 of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR)?	Yes
2. Did SOC process exemption requests received from state/local entities seeking access to ACP participants' actual addresses in accordance with 950 CMR 130.08?	Yes

To accomplish our audit objectives, we gained an understanding of the SOC internal control environment relevant to our objectives by reviewing SOC's internal control plan and its applicable policies and procedures, as well as by interviewing SOC management. We also conducted site visits to the ACP office to observe the physical controls in place to protect ACP participants' information. Furthermore, we tested the operating effectiveness of internal controls related to the approval of ACP participants' application forms. In addition, to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to address our audit objectives, we performed the procedures described below.

ACP Applications

To determine whether SOC administered its ACP in accordance with 950 CMR 130.04, we took the following actions. We requested, and SOC provided us with, a list of ACP applications that were submitted during the audit period. To protect the confidentiality of ACP participants, this list only included unique

identifying codes to represent individual participants. This approach was intentionally taken to safeguard ACP participants' personally identifiable information (including their names and actual addresses) during the course of our audit work. Next, we selected a random, nonstatistical⁵ sample of 20 ACP applications from a total population of 206 ACP applications (which included both the Participant Applications for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and/or stalking, and the Health Care Applications for healthcare providers who have a connection to a legally protected healthcare service) approved during the audit period. For each application in our sample, we reviewed documentation (i.e., drivers' licenses, Massachusetts court documents, and healthcare records) to determine whether SOC confirmed the ACP participant's identity and residency in the Commonwealth. For ACP participants who were specifically victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and/or stalking, we examined court documents (e.g., abuse prevention orders, harassment prevention orders, and police reports) stored in SOC ACP participant files to determine whether SOC verified the ACP participant's status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and/or stalking. Furthermore, in cases involving minor children, we reviewed birth certificates to confirm that the information provided in the application matched the corresponding documentation. Finally, we inspected each application to determine whether (1) the ACP participant signed and dated the form, acknowledging the ACP's rules and regulations, and (2) the ACP manager recorded the application's approval status, the ACP participant's enrollment start date, and the ACP participant's enrollment expiration date.

For this objective, we found no significant issues during our testing. Therefore, we concluded that, based on our testing, SOC administered its ACP in accordance with 950 CMR 130.04.

State/Local Entity Exemption Requests

To determine whether SOC processed exemption requests received from state/local entities seeking access to ACP participants' actual addresses in accordance with 950 CMR 130.08, we took the following actions. First, we requested, and SOC provided us with, a list of all the state/local entity exemption requests made during the audit period (of which there was a total population of three). Next, we inspected copies of all three requests to determine whether each request contained a bona fide need for the actual address of the ACP participant in question and identified the individuals who would have access to the information. Additionally, we inspected copies of the three written exemptions SOC issued to ensure that

5. Auditors use nonstatistical sampling to select items for audit testing when a population is very small, the population items are not similar enough, or there are specific items in the population that the auditors want to review.

each documented the following elements: (1) the outcome of the state/local entity exemption request, (2) the obligations and limitations on the use and access of the ACP participant's actual address, (3) the specific format in which the state/local entity could use the information, and (4) the date when the state/local entity is required to dispose of any record of the ACP participant's actual address.

For this objective, we found no significant issues during our testing. Therefore, we concluded that, based on our testing, SOC processed exemption requests received from state/local entities seeking access to ACP participants' actual addresses in accordance with 950 CMR 130.08.

We used nonstatistical sampling methods for testing and therefore did not project the results of our testing to any population.

Data Reliability Assessment

ACP Applications

To assess the reliability of the ACP application list provided by SOC, we interviewed SOC officials who were knowledgeable about the data. We tested the list to ensure that it did not contain certain dataset issues (e.g., hidden objects, such as rows or headers, or duplicate records). We examined the unique identifier field of each data record for gaps to determine whether any ACP participant records had been deleted. We reconciled the ACP application list with the ACP annual reports submitted by SOC to the Legislature to ensure that all enrolled ACP participants were included on the list. Furthermore, we selected a random sample of 20 applications from the ACP application list and compared certain information in this list (i.e., the ACP participants' genders, counties, corresponding ACP application assistants' names, ACP application assistants' employing entities, and the ACP participants' enrollment start dates) with the corresponding information on the original application forms to ensure the accuracy of the ACP application list. We also selected a random sample of 20 original application forms from SOC's filing cabinet and traced the ACP application assistants' names on these forms back to the ACP application list to ensure the list's completeness.

State/Local Entity Exemption Requests

To assess the reliability of the state/local entity exemption request list provided by SOC, we interviewed SOC officials who were knowledgeable about the exemption request process. To ensure the accuracy of the state/local entity exemption request list, we traced the unique identifier field of

each data record in this list to the ACP participant list to confirm that the participants were enrolled in the ACP. We selected a random sample of 20 enrolled ACP participants from the ACP participant list and inspected redacted ACP call logs within each participant's file to ensure the completeness of the state/local entity exemption request list.

Based on the results of the data reliability assessment procedures described above, we determined that the information we obtained during the course of our audit was sufficiently reliable for the purposes of our audit.

Conclusion

Our audit revealed no significant issues related to our objectives that must be reported under generally accepted government auditing standards. However, during the course of our audit, we identified an issue not specifically addressed by our objectives regarding SOC's administration of its Domestic Violence Service Provider Grant Program. See Other Matters for more information.

OTHER MATTERS

The Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts should develop written policies and procedures for administering its Domestic Violence Service Provider Grant Program to help increase transparency and accountability surrounding grant processes.

The Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (SOC) should develop written policies and procedures for administering the Domestic Violence Service Provider (DVSP) Grant program. As of fiscal year 2024, the DVSP Grant program has been operating without written guidance governing key aspects of grant management, including eligibility determination, proposal evaluation, fund allocation, applicant communication, and grant recipient monitoring.

Documented policies and procedures can help ensure that SOC is administering DVSP Grant program funds in a fair, consistent, and equitable manner. Documented guidance reduces the risk or appearance of unequal treatment of applicants, unclear decision-making, and an inability to meet key program objectives. This would enhance SOC's ability to demonstrate that public funds are being used in alignment with legislative intent and program commitments.

SOC officials stated that the DVSP Grant program is newly implemented, having begun in fiscal year 2024. As a result, written policies and procedures have not yet been developed for administering the grant.

SOC should develop and implement written policies and procedures to guide all aspects of the DVSP Grant program process. These should include eligibility determination, proposal evaluation, fund allocation, communication with applicants, defined methods for ensuring geographic equity in fund distribution, and grant recipient monitoring.

Auditee's Response

While not in the scope of the noticed audit objectives, the Auditor's Office later inquired about the administration of the Domestic Violence Service Provider (DVSP) Grant. The [draft audit report (DAR)] found that the SOC did not have written policies or procedures in place for administering the DVSP Grant program for fiscal year 2024. It is the SOC's position that the DAR unfairly mischaracterizes a lack of process or procedures with respect to the [Address Confidentiality Program's (ACP's)] administering of the DVSP Grant program in its inaugural year.

As requested by the Secretary, the DVSP Grant was created by the Legislature as part of chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023, which was enacted on August 9, 2023 and was limited to fiscal year 2024. Upon launch of the DVSP Grant program, ACP created an application and received bids from four qualifying organizations. These entities were awarded with grant money totaling \$100,000 to carry

out programs in line with the stated goal of reducing the effects of, as well as preventing, domestic violence. As stated in ACP's report to the Legislature, these grantees used the funds for outreach into new communities; to provide free legal consultation to survivors; increase staff hours; upgrade their technology; offer workshops, seminars, panel events and much more.

The finding in the DAR relies on the assumption that the ACP Manual available at the time of the Grant did not contain appropriate information about administering the Grant. We disagree. On February 10, 2025, the SOC provided a copy of the ACP Manual to the Auditor's Office, but explained that the ACP Manual is a dynamic document which is continuously being updated by ACP staff. While the version of the ACP Manual provided to the Auditor's Office had an "Updated 2025" notation, information contained in the Manual relative to the DVSP Grant was in effect in fiscal year 2024. This information included the statutory language of the grant, grantee eligibility and the obligations of the SOC with respect to awarding the grants.

Further, it should be noted that while Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023 appropriated funds to the ACP for the DVSP Grant, that was the first and only time an appropriation has occurred for a specified DVSP Grant. Nonetheless, on July 15, 2025 the SOC provided the Auditor's Office with a document detailing further the process and procedures the ACP followed for administering the DVSP Grant, to the extent it is authorized in future budgets.

Auditor's Reply

We acknowledge that SOC provided us with a version of its *ACP Program Operations and Information Manual*, which was dated outside the audit period and may have been in effect during the administration of the DVSP Grant program in fiscal year 2024. However, our concern is not with the timing of the ACP manual, but with its content. Specifically, the ACP manual should include formal guidance for staff members on key aspects of grant administration, including eligibility determination, proposal evaluation, fund allocation, applicant communication, and recipient monitoring. The ACP manual only included statutory language and a list of awardees, without internal procedures to ensure consistent and transparent implementation of these activities. Documented procedures are essential to ensure proper internal controls, transparency in decision-making, and effective management of public funds. Our recommendation for formal guidance and additional documentation could reduce the chance of impropriety in the future and provide a defense against such allegations.

After we raised this issue during the audit, SOC created a process checklist detailing the procedures the ACP followed to administer the DVSP Grant. We appreciate = SOC's commitment to addressing this issue and its prompt action to implement our recommendation.

We will be following up in approximately six months to determine the progress made regarding the implementation of our recommendations.

APPENDIX

Units within the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

According to the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts's (SOC's) fiscal year 2024 internal control plan, the units within SOC are as follows:

Executive Office

The Secretary, the Communications Division and Legislative Affairs Division are located in the Executive Office. In addition, staff coordinate the Secretary's schedule and renders constituent services.

Address Confidentiality Program ("ACP")

The ACP provides a means by which victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking use a confidential address when dealing with local and state agencies. The program ensures that their residential address does not become a public record thereby assisting in keeping them safe from threatened violence.

Administration

Comprised of the Budget Office, Human Resources, Legal Counsel and the Information Technology Division, these functions provide essential services to support the program and service delivery.

Massachusetts Archives

The Massachusetts Archives is responsible for securing, preserving and managing for the public good and noncurrent records of state government deemed to have permanent value. Those records related to government goals, objectives and actions, or represent documentation of the state's citizens and history.

The Archives is mandated to acquire, describe, preserve and provide access to those records, and the division's Record Management Unit works with state and local agencies to ensure that records are properly maintained. In addition, this division trains records custodians in appropriate management techniques, including the appraisal and disposition of government records.

The Archives is also the repository of more than 370 years of Massachusetts history, housing such artifacts and documents as early probate and court records, genealogical and immigration information, and other historical data.

Citizen Information Service

Citizen Information Service (CIS) has made state government more accessible to residents of the Commonwealth. It has responded to nearly two million telephone inquiries, and has been able to provide immediate answers to approximately 99 percent of those calls.

Commonwealth Museum

The Commonwealth Museum brings Massachusetts history alive through exhibits, lectures and student programs and publications. In a major new initiative the museum is planning to display rare "foundation documents" from the collections of the Massachusetts Archives. Massachusetts students and general visitors will see original copies of the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights and other materials comparable in importance to those on display at the National Archives. An engaging interactive exhibit will explain their significance and the role of Massachusetts in the development of rights shared by all Americans.

Corporations Division

The Corporations Division administers the business entity laws in Massachusetts. Included are those statutes applicable to Massachusetts business corporations ([Chapter 156D of the Massachusetts General Laws]), foreign corporations ([Chapter 156D of the General Laws]), professional corporations ([Chapter 156A of the General Laws]), and non-profit corporations ([Chapter 180A of the General Laws]), limited liability companies ([Chapter 156C of the General Laws]), limited liability partnerships (Chapter 281 of the Acts of 1995), limited partnerships ([Chapter 109 of the General Laws]). Filings made under Article 9 of the Uniform Commercial Code and trademarks and service marks are also filed with the Division.

The Corporations Division is primarily the filing and public information office for more than 300,000 registered corporations and more than 85,000 limited liability companies in the Commonwealth. The public may gain access to this information at the office each weekday during business hours, by mail request or online at any time.

Elections Division

The Secretary of the Commonwealth is the state's chief election official. The Elections Division administers federal and state elections, from the distribution and receipt of nomination papers to the printing of ballots for all federal, state and county elections in Massachusetts.

In addition, the division conducts public education, outreach and voter registration campaigns, and is constitutionally required to print the "Information for Voters" booklet, which describes all statewide ballot questions and is mailed to every household in the Commonwealth.

The Elections Division is also responsible for implementing federal legislation regarding elections including:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act, which assures polling places are accessible for the disabled and elderly;*
- The Voting Rights Act, which requires voting materials be available in alternate languages for certain jurisdictions as determined by the director of the U.S. Census Bureau;*
- The National Voter Registration Act ("Motor Voter"), which established a state central voter registry and allows persons to register to vote at numerous public agencies throughout the state including the Registry of Motor Vehicles; and*

- *The Help America Vote Act which provides certain new procedures for registering and voting and requiring accessible equipment in each polling place to allow voters with disabilities the opportunity to mark their ballot independently and privately. In Massachusetts, this was done through the implementation of the AutoMARK Voter Assist Terminal.*

Massachusetts Historical Commission

The Massachusetts legislature established the Massachusetts Historical Commission [(MHC)] in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect the significant historic and archaeological assets of the commonwealth. The MHC is the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Office of the State Archaeologist and has a staff of architectural historians, preservation planners, historians, architects, geographers, and archaeologists distributed among three divisions: preservation planning, technical services, and grants. . . .

The State Archaeologist oversees archaeological excavations on public lands and issues permits for excavations to ensure that archaeological resources are properly excavated and conserved. The State Archaeologist sponsors Massachusetts Archaeology Month every October and oversees the curation and exhibit of archaeological collections through the Commonwealth's Archaeological Curation Center at the MHC.

Lobbyist Division

The Lobbyist Division is responsible for the oversight and enforcement of lobbyist registration and disclosure reporting. The Division functions to ensure that lobbyists register with this office when required, and that the registered lobbyists and clients fully disclose all information required by the Massachusetts Lobbying Law.

Public Records Division

The Public Records Division is the principal arbiter of the state's Freedom of Information Act. The legal section of the division annually processes nearly 1800 formal appeals from citizens, public officials and members of the media who have been denied information by public agencies. The division, in approximately 96 percent of the cases, has ruled on behalf of the public's right to gain access to that information. The legal staff also issues advisory opinions and answers thousands of questions each year involving interpretation of the public records statute.

The division also contains the Commissions Section, which tracks the appointments of more than 200,000 notaries public in Massachusetts, and administers the oaths of office to those notaries, justices of the peace and other gubernatorial appointments. It also maintains the governor's appointment system, prepares certifications of official signatures, and reviews and accepts information by clergy requesting authorization to solemnize marriages in the Commonwealth.

Registries of Deeds

The thirteen Registries of Deeds, under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Commonwealth pursuant to [Chapter 34B of the General Laws], are responsible for maintaining a permanent public record of all properly drawn legal documents submitted by the public relative to real estate including

deeds, mortgages, surveyor and architect plans, liens, Certificates of Title, and other records as mandated by statute.

Securities Division

The Securities Division regulates the offer and sale of securities and the people who sell or give advice about securities in the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts Uniform Securities Act requires that the securities be registered or exempt, and that most broker-dealers, agents, investment advisers and their representatives be registered with the Division. Citizens are encouraged to contact the Division for the registration status of the securities and the registration and disciplinary history of broker-dealers, agents, investment advisers and representatives.

Enforcement is a key component of the Division's operation. The Enforcement Section vigorously pursues those individuals, who sell investments fraudulently, as well as brokers, investment advisers, and others who make misrepresentations relating to securities transactions.

The Securities Division works with smaller businesses in Massachusetts to assist them in the securities registration process. It also participates in a New England project to make securities registration easier for small companies.

The Securities Division conducts investor education and outreach programs to help protect investors before any fraud or misconduct occurs. The Division provides speakers on investor protection and distributes numerous pamphlets and other materials dealing with investor protection and financial literacy.

State Records Center

The State Record Center provides a climate controlled off-site storage facility for 200,000 cubic feet of inactive records generated and collected by state agencies and is responsible for delivering, retrieving and refiling records for executive offices.

State House Tours and Government Education Division

Established by an act of the legislature in 1969, the State House Tours Division is responsible for guiding approximately 100,000 visitors annually through the halls of the state's capitol building. Offerings include an Architectural/Historical Tour and a Legislative Process Tour, as well as a number of brochures explaining the history of the State House and the passage of legislation.

The division, in addition to providing State House information in eight different languages, operates an Information desk, which assists with questions on state government, locating personnel and various tourist inquiries. It also has resource notebooks containing a wealth of information for school groups, journalists, historians and travel professionals. In addition, the Tours Division manages the operation of the State House Gift Cart, which has souvenirs, books and other materials relating to the State House.

State Publications and Regulations Division

This division, consisting of two components, Regulations and the State Bookstore, is responsible for publishing and distributing a wide variety of documents of pertinent interest to persons throughout Massachusetts.

The Regulations section produces the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR), which is 25,000 pages of the state's administrative law. It also publishes, for subscribers only, such documents as the "Massachusetts Register," a bi-weekly publication that includes amendments to the CMR; the "Central Register," a weekly which contains listings of bids for design and construction-related public projects; the "Goods and Services Bulletin," a weekly which lists bid opportunities for goods and professional services; and the "Cumulative Table," a monthly that lists all the current changes to CMR. Regulations also annually publish the "Acts and Resolves of Massachusetts," which is a compilation of all laws enacted by the state legislature for the year. . . .

The State Bookstore, a component of the State Publications and Regulations Division, is responsible for the sale of state regulations, as well as numerous other state publications, such as the "School Directory," "State Register of Historic Places" and "Massachusetts Election Statistics." It also has copies of recently passed state laws and a collection of souvenirs to accommodate the 100,000 tourists who visit the State House each year. Continually expanding its retail scope, the State Bookstore now averages more than \$400,000 in annual sales.