

US state 1st with voter registration on Facebook

18 July 2012, by RACHEL LA CORTE

(AP) - The state of Washington has become the first in the U.S. to offer voter registration on Facebook, as states update their approaches for younger, more connected residents who've come to expect many services online.

The secretary of state's office said Tuesday it will have an application on its Facebook page that allows residents to register to vote and then "like" the application and recommend it to their friends. It's expected to launch as early as next week.

"In this age of social media and more [people](#) going online for services, this is a natural way to introduce people to online registration and leverage the power of friends on Facebook to get more people registered," said Shane Hamlin, co-director of elections.

Washington is one of more than a dozen [states](#) that offer online registration, but Hamlin said it is the first to offer voter registration via Facebook.

"We are excited that citizens in Washington state will be able to register to vote and review useful voting [information](#) on Facebook," said Facebook spokesman Andrew Noyes.

The state, Facebook Inc. and Microsoft Corp., which developed the application, have been collaborating on the project, Hamlin said.

Hamlin said that beyond giving Facebook permission to use names and dates of birth, voters don't need to worry about their personal information being collected by the company.

"You are giving your information to us, not Facebook," he said.

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