

voting referees) to receive applications from any person claiming such deprivation as to the right to register or otherwise to qualify to vote at any election and to take evidence and report to the court findings as to whether such applicants or any of them (1) are qualified to vote at any election, and (2) have been (a) deprived of the opportunity to register to vote or otherwise to qualify to vote at any election, or (b) found by State election officials not qualified to register to vote or to vote at any election.

*"In a proceeding before such person or persons so appointed, the applicant shall be heard ex parte. His statement under oath shall be prima facie evidence as to his age, residence and his prior efforts to register or otherwise qualify to vote. Where proof of literacy or an understanding of other subjects is required by valid provisions of State law, the answer of the applicant, if written, shall be included in such report to the court; if oral, they shall be taken down stenographically and a transcription included in such report to the court.*

*"Upon receipt of such report, the court shall cause the Attorney General to transmit a copy thereof by mail to each party to such proceeding together with an order to show cause within 10 days why an order of the court should not be entered in accordance with such report. Upon the expiration of such period, such order shall be entered except as to any applicant named in the report as to whom the State registrar or other appropriate party to the proceeding prior to that time files with the court and serves upon the Attorney General and the applicant concerned a statement of exceptions to such report which, if the exceptions relate to matters of fact, is supported by a duly verified copy of a public record or by affidavit of persons having personal knowledge of such fact and, which, if relating to matters of law, is supported by an appropriate memorandum of law.*

*"Any report of any person or persons appointed pursuant to this subsection shall be reviewed by the court and the court shall accept the findings contained in such report unless clearly erroneous. The court shall issue a supplementary decree which shall specify which person or persons named in the report are qualified and entitled to vote at any election within such period as would be applicable if such person or persons had been registered or otherwise qualified under State law. The Attorney General shall cause to be transmitted certified copies of the original decree and any supplementary decree to the appropriate election officials of the State, and any such official who, with notice of such original or supplementary decree, refuses to permit any person, named as qualified to vote in such original or supplementary decree, to vote at any election covered thereby, or to have the vote of any such person counted, may be proceeded against for contempt.*

*"The court may authorize such person or persons appointed pursuant to this subsection to issue to each person named in the original decree or any supplementary decree as qualified*