

CENTRAL COUNTING STATION PLAN FOR BRAZORIA COUNTY

Central Counting Station (CCS) Personnel

CCS Manager Sec. 127.002- County Clerk– Alternate Manager- Election Director/ Chief Deputy
Presiding Judge (1-Rep; 1-Dem Party-Primary Election) (Sec. 127.131; 172.126; 1 TAC 81.148)
Alternate Presiding Judge (Sec. 127.005)
Tabulation Supervisor Appointed (Sec. 127.003) Brandy Pena –Krystal Alegria
Tabulation Assistant Appointed (Sec.127.004) Johnathan Escamilla; Pam Guiliano

Administration of Oaths

All personnel working in any capacity at the CCS are required to take the Constitutional Oath of Office/Statement of Officer.
Oath of Early Voting Ballot Board and Central Counting Station Personnel (Form 10-1)
No wireless communication devices will be allowed in the CCS (Sec. 127.002, 127.007)

Logic and Accuracy Testing- Notice is posted at least 48 hours before testing begins-(Sec.127.96; 129.023)

Hash Testing, Logic, and Accuracy Testing for the Electronic Pollbooks System
L&A #1 is done before the 45-day mailing deadline, and always before mailing any ballots.
L&A #2 is done before any tabulation of ballots on election day.
L&A #3 is done after the tabulation of ballots on election night.

Procedures for Convening the Central Counting Station-Note: Livestream video recording will be ongoing (Sec. 127.1232)

CCS will convene as follows:

- Last day of early voting
 - Scan and resolve mail ballots
- Election Day
 - Scan and resolve mail ballots that have been received
 - Count mail ballots
 - Count electronic early voting ballots
 - Stay open to count electronic Election Day ballots
 - Duplicate any emergency ballots, if necessary
 - Prepare Provisional Ballots for delivery to the Voter Registrar
- Last day to receive overseas mail and to cure ID – time varies
 - Scan and resolve late mail
 - Determine the outcome of the provisional ballots received back from the Voter Registrar.
 - Complete final tabulation of all ballots

Duplication of Ballots

Duplication of ballots occurs when a mail ballot is damaged or when paper emergency ballots are used in the polling place.
The counting station judge does this in turn.

1. A new blank ballot is printed.
2. One member reads the votes from the damaged ballot while the other marks the blank one.
3. The team checks the completed ballot.
4. Ballots are stamped showing old and new ballot numbers.
5. Time is noted on each one.
6. Damaged ballot goes into "Damaged Ballot Envelope."
7. The new one is scanned and processed like all paper ballots.

Resolving Voter Intent

Paper ballots are scanned and then resolved using computer software.

When there is a questionable marking, the counting station judge and alternate do their best to determine voter intent and instruct the tabulation supervisor or assistant to mark it appropriately in the scanning software. If intent cannot be determined, no choice is counted for that race.

When there is a race with a write-in line, the counting station judge and alternate also resolve these votes. Certified write-in candidates receive the votes for their name and alternate spellings, if intent can be determined. Uncertified write-in names are designated as such and count as undervotes.

For Primary and General Elections, the County Chairs of the Democratic and Republican parties, or their designees, can also assist with resolving voter intent.

Tabulation Procedures: Note: A licensed peace officer will be present throughout the period of tabulation at the CCS (Sec. 127.1232)

Paper ballots are scanned, resolved, and written to the V-drive. The number of ballots scanned must equal the number on the Ballot Transmittal Form provided by the early voting ballot board.

In-person ballots are read and tabulated from the Scan V-drives.

In Count, the V-drives are inserted into the computer

The tabulation team compares the number of ballots counted to the number recorded on the Reconciliation Form, completed by the election judge at each polling place, and to the number recorded on the Ballot Transmittal Form from the early voting ballot board.

Intake of ballots, electronic media, and supplies

Receive the Election Day Hart Verity Scan for counting ballots

Two poll workers must return the supplies and sign the check-in sheet to verify the delivery.

CCS personnel also sign the check-in sheet and mark the time of return.

The drive-through team takes the scan, the scan paperwork, and any provisional bag to the intake station.

The intake station verifies the scan unit number and seal numbers.

The intake station removes the V-drive from the scan unit, places the V-drive and Reconciliation Log into a plastic sleeve for transport to the Central Counting Station, along with the provisional bag and any paperwork.

The Presiding Judge and Alternate Presiding Judge verify the seal number on the provisional bag and process provisional ballots for transport to the Voter Registrar.

The Tabulation Supervisor and Assistant receive the V-drive and the Reconciliation Log. They insert the V-drive into the Count computer and verify that the number of votes counted matches the number on the Reconciliation Log. They also log the V-drives as they are returned.

Once read, the V-drives are placed in a box labeled "processed."

Receive Election Day paperwork

The drive-through team sorts Envelopes 2 and 4, as well as the payroll envelopes, and verifies judges' signatures on all paperwork.

Receive Election Day Poll Pads if required, MiFis, cell phones, and keys; contents are checked upon arrival.

Printing of Precinct Returns and Election Totals

V-drives are read into the Count software, then tabulated by the Tabulation Supervisor and assistants.

For primary and general elections, results are tabulated approximately every 30 minutes, or as soon as available, and are updated on our webpage (www.brazoriacountytx.gov/departments/elections/election-results).

For local elections, results are tabulated once all locations have returned their supplies. Results are then posted on our webpage.

Cumulative and by precinct results are printed and signed by the Counting Station Judge.

Reports for primary, general, and constitutional amendment elections are reported to the Secretary of State by the designated ENR clerk, a County Clerk deputy, outside of the Count room. She receives the printed reports and inputs the results into the state Election Night Reporting system.

The early voting ballot board and CCS reconvene after the deadlines for late mail and provisional ballots. If there are ballots to be included in the final tabulation, procedures are as follows:

L&A #4

Late mail and provisional ballots accepted by the ballot board are tabulated, and final reports are printed and signed.

L&A #5

Poll watchers

A poll watcher must present a certificate of appointment and a certificate of completion to the Presiding Judge of the CCS. They will be issued a name badge and a vest, which must be returned upon completion of the assignment. They then may be present at any time the CCS is open and has convened for the purpose of processing or preparing to process election results, and until the election officials complete their duties at the station (Sec. 3.055), are permitted to observe all activities of the counting station from a designated area.

Delivery of materials to the General Custodian of Election Records

At the end of the tabulation procedures, materials are signed and sealed by CCS personnel and returned to the County Clerk's custody.

Audit Logs (1 TAC 81.62)

An Audit Log produced by a central accumulator is considered part of the election records and is available for public inspection. In addition, TAC Rule 81.62 authorizes a poll watcher to request copies of those audit logs produced by a central accumulator at three different points while the CCS is convened and conducting activities, the following times:

1. Before any votes are tabulated
2. After early voting results are tabulated, and
3. Immediately following the completion of the vote tabulation.

The CCS manager and CCS presiding Judge must ensure that the audit logs are delivered to the Secretary of State's office no later than the fifth day after vote counting is complete for the election (Sec. 127.009)