



Dallas County Elections Department Central Counting Station

Operating Procedures

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Purpose

The following plan has been established and written for the orderly operation of the Central Counting Station. This plan is available to the public on request not later than 5 p.m. on the fifth day before the date of the election.

Location

The Dallas County Central Counting Station will be located at the Dallas County Elections Office at 1520 Round Table Dr, Dallas, Texas 75247 in Room 129.

Security Procedures

- A licensed Peace Officer will be posted during the times that the Central Counting Station is convening.
- Video of the Central Count Station is available online and is recorded
- Video of the Election Storage Area is recorded.
- Identification for all individuals is required.

Convening of the Central Counting Station

The Central Counting Station will convene for the purpose of receiving and tabulating Early Voting Mail Ballots, Early Voting In-Person Ballots and Election Day Ballots for the 2022 Joint Primary Election at the following times:

Friday, February 25, 2022 7:00pm – until completion

- Receiving of Early Voting Election Media and Securing in Election Storage Area
- Receiving of Early Voting Voted Ballots and Securing in Ballot Storage Area

Monday, February 28, 2022 9:00am- 5:00pm

- Tabulating of Early Voting Results
- Tabulation of Early Voting By Mail Ballots
- Tabulation of Provisional Ballots/Limited Ballots

Tuesday March 1, 2022 1:00 pm- until completion

- Tabulation of Early Voting by Mail Ballots (arrived on election day)
- Receiving and Tabulation of Election Day Results (from all vote center locations)

Monday, March 7, 2022 9:00 am- 5:00pm

- Tabulation of Provisional Ballots
- Tabulation of Early Voting Mail Ballots

Roles and Responsibilities

The following are roles and responsibilities inside the Central Counting Station, as contained in Sections 127.002-127.006 of the Texas Election Code:

Central Counting Station Manager – *Michael Scarpello*

Manager and Elections Administrator is in charge of the overall administration of the Central Counting Station and the supervision of the personnel working in the station.

Tabulation Supervisor – *Danielle Grant*

The Tabulation Supervisor is responsible for overseeing and operating the automatic tabulating equipment, which includes the:

- Tabulation Equipment – the part of the Election Management System that tabulates and/or consolidates vote totals for multiple precincts and races.
- DS850 (2) /DS450 (2) – High-speed central scanner and vote tabulator for all vote types.

Assistant Tabulation Supervisors – *Katherine Gilstrap, Angelica Munoz, Michelle Lee, Mildred West*

Will be performing as the assistant tabulation supervisors to assist in the operation of the automatic tabulating equipment as directed by the Tabulation Supervisor to include:

- operating of tabulating equipment
- processing of unofficial election results

Co-Presiding Judges - *Louis A Bedford IV, Mike Slaton*

The Co -Presiding judges have the same authority as an Election Day Co- Presiding Judge with respect to maintaining order, administering oaths, and receiving ballots to be counted.

Counting Station Clerks – *Sherrie Scott, Norma Smith and Part-Time Staff*

Clerks perform duties as assigned by the tabulation supervisor and/or the presiding judge. These duties include, but are not limited to, receiving of election media USBs from the regional site designee, duplicate ballots, and assisting with tabulation equipment.

Poll Watcher Rights & Responsibilities

Poll watchers may be present during the time the CCS is convened for the “purpose of processing or preparing to process election results and until the election officers complete their duties at the station.”

1. To be accepted into the CCS, a poll watcher will need:
 - A printed Certificate of Poll Watcher training from the SOS
 - Complete the Oath of Office (for Poll Watcher) with the Presiding Judge
 - A certificate of Appointment for Central Count Station
2. A poll watcher must comply with Sections 33.055, 33.056, 33.060 of the Texas Elections Code and the provisions of the Poll Watchers Guide issued by the Secretary of State. Copies of this guide will be available in the CCS and on the [SOS Website](#).
3. A poll watcher may request a digital copy of an audit log produced by the central accumulator before any votes are tabulated, after early voting results are tabulated, and immediately following the completion of the vote tabulation.

Administration of Oaths by Co-Presiding Judge

The administration of oaths will take place prior to conducting any duties at the CCS.

The Oath for Early Voting Ballot Board and Central Counting Station Personnel (AW 8-3a Sec. [87.006](#), [127.0015](#)) will be administered verbally to all members of the early voting ballot board and all personnel at the central counting station prior to the performance of any duties by the board or the central counting station.

"I swear (or affirm) that I will objectively work to be sure every eligible voter's vote is accepted and counted, and that only the ballots of those voters who violated the Texas Election Code will be rejected. I will make every effort to correctly reflect the voter's intent when it can be clearly determined. I will not work alone when ballots are present and will work only in the presence of a member of a political party different from my own. I will faithfully perform my duty as an officer of the election and guard the purity of the election."

Ballot Tabulation

Tabulation of Early Voting

Early Voting Media

For ballot tabulators that were closed properly at the polls:

- Central Counting Clerks will break the seal on the black pouch and place it inside the pouch
- Central Count Clerks remove the Election Media USB from the front pocket from the pouch
- Central Count Clerks place the USB in the “To Be Tabulated” bin
- Central Count Clerks will give the “To Be Tabulated” bin to the Assistant Tabulation Supervisor
- The Assistant Tabulation Supervisor will distribute the “To Be Tabulated” bin to one of the Tabulation Supervisor.
- The Tabulation Supervisor will upload the Election USB media into the central accumulator and record the total number of votes.
- The Tabulation Supervisor will place the tabulated USB in the red “Tabulated” bin
- The Tabulation Supervisor will give the red “Tabulated” bin to the Central Count clerks to be placed in a binder labeled with each Early Voting Location to be stored and locked in the safe in the ballot storage room.

Early Voting Ballot Boxes

This procedure applies to 19 Early Voting locations

- Central Count Clerk will unlock the ballot box with the election keys
- Central Count Clerk will remove the Voted Ballots from the ballot box
- Assistant tabulation supervisor will scan the ballots on the DS850 High Speed Ballot Scanner labeled A or B.
- Assistant Tabulation Supervisor will save the ballot images to the labeled Election Media USB for that Early Voting Location.
- The Assistant Tabulation Supervisor will give the Election Media USB to the Tabulation Supervisor.
- The Tabulation Supervisor will upload the Election Media stick into the central accumulator for tabulation and record the total number of votes.

Tabulation of Early Voting Mail Ballots

The Ballot Board will process each mail ballot (Sec.87.041) and place them into transfer cases to be delivered to Central Counting Station (Sec.87.101) after the end of Early Voting. CCS will do the following:

- Accept each transfer case; verify the *seal* on the transfer case matches the seal number written on the ballot transmittal form and record on the Central Count Ballot Roster.
- Sign and make a copy of the ballot transmittal to give back to Ballot Board.
- Complete a label for each transfer case to show number of ballots in the transfer case from the ballot transmittal form.
- Break the seal on the transfer case and place the seal into the transfer case.
- Tabulate the ballots on the DS850 or DS450 machine, verify the total number of ballots processed matches the total number on the label on the side of the transfer case, and write the number of ballots processed on the Transfer Case Label as the *Number of ballots counted by CCS*.
- Place the ballots back into the transfer case, re-seal the transfer case with a new seal, and write the new seal number on the Seal Roster.
- Save the results to a USB, fill out the USB label with the time, date, # of ballots saved, ballot type (Provisional or Mail) and transfer case number.
- Upload each USB into the central accumulator for tabulation.

Tabulation of Provisional Ballots

The Ballot Board will process each Provisional ballot and place them into transfer cases to be delivered to Central Counting Station. CCS will do the following:

- Accept each transfer case; verify the *seal* on the transfer case matches the seal number written on the ballot transmittal form and record on the Central Count Ballot Roster.
- Sign and make a copy of the ballot transmittal to give back to Ballot Board.
- Complete a label for each transfer case to show number of ballots in the transfer case from the ballot transmittal form.
- Break the seal on the transfer case and place the seal into the transfer case.
- Remove the Provisional Ballot from the Secrecy Envelope.
- Tabulate the ballots on the DS850 or DS450 machine, verify the total number of ballots processed matches the label on the side of the transfer case, and write the number of ballots processed on the Transfer Case Label as the *Number of ballots counted by CCS*.
- Place the ballots back into the transfer case, re-seal the transfer case with a new seal, and write the new seal number on the Seal Roster.
- Save the results to a USB, fill out the USB label with the time, date, # of ballots saved, ballot type (Provisional or Mail) and transfer case number.
- Upload each USB into the central accumulator for tabulation.

Tabulation of Election Day Media

- Co-Judge(s) or designee delivers the Election Media USB (in sealed pouch), voted paper ballots (in sealed ballot box), and election supplies to their designated regional site drop-off location.
- Regional site intake personnel verify the vote center location information and take possession of Election Media USB, voted ballots, and election supplies.
- An election staff personnel will deliver sealed pouch to the CCS.
- CCS personnel will complete the Chain of Custody Form for the election media
- CCS personnel will break the seal on the black pouch and place it in the inside of the pouch
- Remove the USB in the front pocket from the pouch
- Place the USB in a bin labeled “To Be Tabulated”
- The assistant tabulation supervisor will give the bin to the Tabulation Clerks to upload the election Media
- The Tabulation Clerks will upload all the media and place the USB in a bin labeled “Tabulated”
- The assistant tabulation supervisor will give the bin labeled “Tabulated” to the Central Count clerks to be placed in binder to be stored and locked in the safe in the ballot storage room.

Paper Ballot Duplication / Electronic Ballot Duplication

Ballots that are torn, incorrectly marked, or otherwise are unable to be accurately processed through automated tabulation equipment will be processed by one of the following processes:

- The Duplication Team will write the original ballot serial number on a Duplication Log
- The Duplication Team will give the duplication log to a member of the Ballot Printing Team
- The Ballot Printing Team will print a blank ballot for the precinct and ballot style listed on the duplication log.
- The ballot is taken back to the Ballot Duplication Team.
- The Ballot Duplication Team will place a numbered duplication label on the original ballot.
- Ballot Duplication Team writes the serial number from the printed ballot on the original ballot.
- Write the original ballot serial number and the number from the duplication label on the new ballot.
- Duplicate the original ballot to indicate the intent of the voter, using team of two CCS personnel.
- Place the original ballot in the original transfer case and seal the case.
- Process the new ballot on the on the DS850/DS450.
- Place the new ballot a new transfer case and seal the case.

Ballot Adjudication

The Tabulation Supervisor with guidance from the Presiding Co-Judges will inspect each under-voted or over-voted ballot image to ascertain the intent of the voter (Sec 127.157). If it is determined that the intent differs from the tabulated results, a team of two will mark the selection on the screen as directed by the Tabulation Supervisor and Co-Judges.

Reconciliation

The reconciliation process requires comparing the *number of voters listed as voters* on the e-PollBook to the *number of ballots cast*.

- Early Voting In-Person – Compares the number of Early Voting *check-ins on the e-PollBook* to the *number of ballots cast minus Spoils and Provisionals*.
- Early Voting by Mail – Compares the *number of ballots on the Ballot Transmittal form* to the *number of ballots counted*.
- Election Day – Compares the *number of Election Day check-ins on the e-PollBook* to the *number of ballots cast minus Spoils and Provisionals*.
- Presiding Co-Judges must print and sign the reconciliation form at the end of election night.

Results Reporting

- *Unofficial Election Results* will be released via Dallas County Election Night Results webpage, beginning no earlier than 7:00PM. Election Day results will be released beginning at 9:00 pm and every 30 minutes until the tabulation process for all vote centers is complete.
- Dallas County Elections personnel will upload and report totals to the Secretary of State using the SOS online portal (TEAM).
- Tabulation supervisor will instruct staff after the counting of ballots/accumulation of vote totals, prepare the precinct election returns
- Presiding Judge will sign the precinct returns to certify accuracy. The printed “precinct by precinct” report, adjusted (if necessary) to include any hand-counted ballots, constitutes the certified precinct returns. (*Section 127.131(e)*. Texas Election Code).

Storage of Election Materials

Records created as part of the election are retained for twenty-two months.

Electronic records and paper documents will be secured in a locked container and sealed with one or more tamper-evident seals.