

CENTRAL COUNTING STATION

Central Counting (CCS) Manager - The Manager is in charge of the overall supervision of the central counting station and shall have a written plan for operation of the central counting station. The Manager, as well as the presiding judge, may appoint clerks to perform duties at the central counting station. The Manager oversees programming and is the general custodian of election records.

Tabulation Supervisor – The Tabulation Supervisor is responsible for counting the ballots and preparing the necessary reports such as the canvass, and the over and undervote reports. The tabulation supervisor may appoint one or more assistant tabulation supervisors. The Tabulation Supervisor will directly supervise full and part time staff acting as assistant tabulation supervisor and counting station clerks. If the tabulation supervisor is not the programmer, the tabulation supervisor must approve the program used to count the ballots prior to election day. The tabulation supervisor is responsible for the security of the program. The tabulation supervisor is to ensure that no other person other than assistant tabulation supervisors operate the tabulation equipment.

Assistant Tabulation Supervisor. The assistant shall assist the tabulation supervisor in the operation of the automatic tabulating equipment and tabulation procedures as directed by the tabulation supervisor.

Presiding Judge – The presiding judge has the same authority as an election day judge with respect to maintaining order and administering oaths. This authority also includes resolving any questions about voter intent on a ballot. If the central counting station manager determines that ballots will be duplicated or manually counted, then the clerks will duplicate or hand count the ballots, but the presiding judge will resolve any questions concerning voter intent. The presiding judge may also confer and advise the manager and tabulation supervisor on the operation of the central counting station. The presiding judge is the custodian of the testing materials prepared for the test until the materials are delivered to the general custodian of election records following the third test. If personnel are granted temporary absence from the central counting station while the polls are still open and the counting of ballots has begun, the presiding judge shall supervise those absences.

Alternate Judge – The alternate judge serves in the capacity of the presiding judge, if the presiding judge is absent. Otherwise, the alternate judge performs the duties assigned by the presiding judge.

Clerks – The clerks perform the duties assigned by the Tabulation Supervisor and/or the presiding judge.

Central Counting (CCS) Manager – Toni Pippins-Poole, Dallas County Elections Administrator

Tabulation Supervisor – Daniel Bradley, Central Count Station Manager

Assistant Tabulation - Danielle Grant, Central Count Station Lead Clerk and Nicolas Mevellec, ES&S Site Support/Project Manager

Presiding Judge – Carol Donovan or designee

Alternate Judge – Missy Shorey or designee

Counting Station Clerks – Debbie Jones and part time/temporary employees

The Oath for Early Voting Ballot Board and Central Counting Station Personnel (AW 8-3a Sec. 87.006, 127.0015) should 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.

Poll watchers are entitled to be present during the time the CCS has convened for the “purpose of processing or preparing to process election results and until the election officers complete their duties at the station.” (Sec. 33.055) The poll watcher must deliver their certificate of appointment to the Presiding Judge of the CCS and the Presiding Judge must countersign their certificate. A watcher is entitled to sit or stand conveniently near the election officers conducting the observed activity. (Sec. 33.056) A watcher may not interfere with the Election process.

If a Regional Site (Central Accumulation Station) has a problem with a MPCT, they will send down all paper work, voted ballots, M100 Card, PEBs, Flashcard, etc. for Central Count to process on election night accordingly. (Sec. 127.156)



This information should be logged on the Central Counting Station audit form.

Central Counting Station audit form on Election Night:

**Central Counting Station Audit Form
Precinct with Problems on Election Night**

MPCT _____ PCT _____

Regional site _____

Ballots and Signature Roster did not match

No M100 Card turned into Regional Site

M100 Card had CRC Error

Ballots Not counted on M100 Card

Other _____

Central Count Solution:

1. **Regional Site (Central Accumulation Station) modeming in M100 Cards:** As we receive results into ERM (Election Reporting Manager) during election night, we are communicating with all 10 regional sites on verifying which precincts have and have not been received. At 30 minute intervals, we print these results for members of the public located at our office and we place these results onto our website for viewing. Results are uploaded to the Secretary of State's website. A status report is printed and it is verified that all precincts had been counted and we show 100%. A precinct report is placed on the website showing the number of ballots counted for each precinct. A cumulative report is printed/placed on website indicating all votes from all precincts are included in the cumulative report.
2. **Regional Site (Central Accumulation Station) modeming in ADA PEBs:** As we receive results into ERM (Election Reporting Manager) during election night, we are communicating with all 10 regional sites on verifying which precincts have and have not been received. After the M100 results are at 100%, we then bring in the ADA files for any voters on election day that voted by ivotronic. Then after this is complete, we place these results onto the website for viewing. Results are uploaded to the Secretary of State's website. A status report is printed and it is verified that all precincts had been counted. A precinct report is printed showing the number of ballots counted for each precinct. A cumulative report is printed indicating all votes from all precincts are included in the cumulative report.
3. **On election night, Central Counting Station receives all election records including but not limited to:** the Regional Site bins (Expense Sheets, M100 ballot and Seals w/results tapes, Plastic bags, Red Envelope/Memory Card, MPCT voted ballots and provisional ballot transfer cases from each of the 10 regional sites after they have completed modeming in all their site's designated polling locations. The CCS Manager will hand over the Provisional ballot transfer cases to the Voter Registrar to process. Contact information for the CCS Manager, the Tabulation Supervisor, and an alternate Clerk is provided to the Secretary of State in the event results require confirmation.
4. **AUDIT OF RESULTS:** Central Count will do an audit of all ballots. Since the results are being transmitted via modem to the central counting station, the presiding judge is responsible for comparing the results transmitted with the results tape printed at the precinct and delivered to the central counting station.
 - a) Each Official Ballot and Seal Certificates, M100 receipt tapes will be audited to the ERM (ESS- Election Reporting Manager) results;
 - b) Each ADA Ballot and Seal Certificates will be audited to the ERM results;
 - c) Write-In Candidates (if applicable) will be hand-counted
5. **Write-in votes:** A write-in vote is counted if the election judge can determine the intent of the voter. If the voter misspells the write-in candidate's name but the judge can determine the intent, the vote is counted. If the voter only writes in part of the name as it appears on the list but the judge can determine the intent of the voter, the vote is counted. Failure to write in the name exactly as it appears on the list does not invalidate the vote as long as the judge can determine the intent of the voter. If the voter writes in the name of a declared write-in candidate but fails to mark the box, oval or arrow, the vote should be counted. (Section 65.009 of the Code and Advisory No. 2008-11) If the voter uses a sticker with the write-in candidate's name preprinted on the sticker, the vote cannot be counted. Only declared write-in candidates whose names appear on the list of declared write-in candidates are entitled to have their votes counted. (Section 146.022 of the Code.) For a more information see CCS "Write-In Tally Instructions" process.
6. **Early voting in person:** For each day of Early Voting, the Ballot Board will review and confirm that EV Combination Forms, Daily Reports (DRE vote totals), and Voter Registration Logs match. After Early Voting is completed, the ivotronic Flash Cards are delivered to the Central Count Station by the EV Presiding Election Officers. The assigned Flash Cards are confirmed returned, the number of votes on the Flash

Cards is confirmed to match the number of Early Voters, and the results are uploaded to ERM to be included in the Election Night Reports.

7. **Early Voting Ballots/Provisional Ballots:** The Ballot Board and Signature Verification Committees will process each mail ballot (Sec.87.041) and place them into transfer cases to be delivered to Central Counting Station (CCS) (Sec.87.101). CCS will do the following:

- Sign Ballot Boards (BB) forms as accepting the transfer cases after verifying the seal number on the transfer case matches the seal number written on the paperwork
- Apply and fill out a Label on each transfer case that states what the Box #/ date/ number of ballots the BB says are in the transfer case
- Break the seal the transfer case and place the seal back into the box
- Run the ballots on the 650 machine and verify the total number of ballots being processed is what the Ballot Board states. Write this number on the label as the Number of ballots counted by CCS.
- Place the ballots back into the transfer case and re-seal the box with a new seal and write this seal number on the Seal Roster
- Save the 650 results to a zip disk and fill out the label with the Node#/ Time / Date / # of ballots saved / what type Provisional or Mail/ Box #
- Each 650 disk will be uploaded into Unity ERM for election night results

The Central Counting Station will convene to accept early voting ballots voted by mail at the end of the period for early voting by personal appearance, March 2, 2018, and reconvene daily through March 15, 2018, as needed, until all accepted ballots are counted and Canvass Reports are provided the Convening Authority and/or the Secretary of State.

8. **Duplicating Ballots:** (Sec. 127.126 and Advisory No. 2008-12) The CCS manager shall have each irregularly marked ballot duplicated to indicate the intent of the voter if the voter's intent is clearly ascertainable. CCS will do the following:

- A ballot is printed for that exact precinct-ballot style
- A "Dup #" label is placed on the original ballot
- The new ballot serial number is transposed on the original ballot; the original ballot serial number and the "Dup #" are transposed on the new ballot
- It is then duplicated to indicate the intent of the voter
- The original ballot is placed into a plastic bag labeled with that transfer case number and is preserved with the other voted ballots in the same transfer case
- The new ballot is counted on the 650 machine and is then included with the other ballots in that transfer case for the rest of the preservation period

Central Counting Station Procedures on Testing

1. **CCS preliminary Testing** – As soon as programing is complete on both the M100 Optical Scan Ballot and the DRE Ivotronic Ballot, we do an intense testing by proofing the races; testing the ovals; making sure there are no errors when inserting ballot into a M100 machine; verifying the election titles, location names; verify and vote by the audio ballot; confirm correct screens are appearing on the Ivotronic; proof every ballot and the positions of the ovals; proof the statistics of each ballot; proof the polling locations and the assigned precincts to each location; proof the candidate names; and much more.
2. **Public Logic and Accuracy Test on M100 Machines (Sec. 129.023)** – Each of the M100 machines that are assigned to each polling location are tested at the warehouse.
 - a. A pre-determined results report for every precinct is created
 - b. Test Ballots from the same ballot paper as election day are printed for each precinct

- c. Each precinct ballot is marked in a pre-determined vote guideline
- d. These test ballots along with the M100 card are given to the warehouse for testing
- e. These ballots are run on the actual machine that will be sent out to that site on election day, each machine has a hardware diagnostic test run (Sec.129.022), test ballots are run and results checked, time and date are check (guidelines for this process are located on the warehouse L&A procedures outline)
- f. After the test has been completed successfully the M100 card is made secure in that machine and the test ballots are sent back to Central Counting Station

3. Mock Test on M100 and Ivotronic Machines – Central Count receives back the test ballots that were used in the warehouse L&A. These ballots are then run on M100 Machines. Central Count runs test votes on PEB's for each MPCT. Pre-determined results are created for both M100 and Ivo votes.

M100 Machines

- a. Mock M100 cards are programmed for each MPCT
- b. Test ballots are run on each of the MPCT M100 cards with the pre-determined results
- c. M100 results tapes are verified that they match the pre-determined results
- d. A zero report is run on the 650; then the test ballots are then run on the 650 machine and compared to the pre-determined results; if correct, then saved onto a disk

IVO Machines

- a. Mock PEBs are programmed for each MPCT
- b. Test is run on each of the IVO PEB's with pre-determined results

Results into ERM

- a. A zero report is printed from ERM
- b. The 650 disk is uploaded into ERM in the EV-Mail field
- c. The MPCT M100 cards are then uploaded into ERM in the Election Day field
- d. The MPCT PEBs are then uploaded into ERM in the ED-ADA field
- e. An ERM results report is printed
- f. The results from a pre-determined votes report and the ERM report are compared to determine if the test was successful and accurate.
- g. If successful, ERM is zeroed out and a zero report is printed.

4. Public Logic and Accuracy Test on Ivotronic Machines (Sec. 129.023) – Each of the Ivotronic machines that are assigned to a polling location is tested at the warehouse.

- a. Each machine has a hardware diagnostic test run (Sec. 129.022), time and date are checked. (guidelines for this process are located on the warehouse L&A procedures outline)
- b. Early Voting Ivotronics are opened at the location by the Judge/Techs and zero reports are printed and signed by the Judge (guidelines for this process are located in the Early Voting Procedures Book)
- c. For Election Day Ivotronics, a zero report is printed and placed into the MPCT PEB bag 2-A and secured with a seal until the Election Judge opens it on Election Day.
- d. After the test has been completed successfully, the Ivotronic machines are made secure in the carrying case and locked in the ESC; now they are ready for delivery.

5. Public Logic and Accuracy (M100, IVO, 650) & Testing of Tabulation Equipment – (Public L&A test Sec. 129.023 & 1st test of the Public Testing Tabulating Equipment Sec. 127.093(b)) is completed 1 week prior to Early Voting starting. Five Precincts are selected randomly from the election and are tested on Ivotronic, M100 and 650 Machines. A pre-determined results report is created. This test is completed in Central Counting Station.

- a. A zero tape from the Ivotronics is printed after opening up the terminals (Early Voting and Election Day equivalent setups are prepared).
- b. Pre-determined votes for each precinct are voted on each of the 5 terminals by looking at Optical Scan test ballots.
- c. After voting is complete, the terminals are closed with the Master PEB and results are printed on the IVO printers.
- d. A zero tape from each M100 Machine is printed after opening each MPCT.
- e. The same pre-determined votes are voted on the Optical Scan ballot and are run through the M100 machine.
- f. After voting is complete, the M100 Machines are closed and results are printed.

- g. A zero report is run on the 650; then the Optical Scan test ballots are then run on the 650 machine; results saved onto a disk.
 - h. In ERM (Election Reporting Manager) a zero report is printed.
 - i. The EV flashcards are then uploaded into ERM EV In-Person field.
 - j. The 650 disk is then uploaded into ERM EV Mail field.
 - k. The ED PEB's are then uploaded into ERM ED-ADA field.
 - l. The M100 cards are then uploaded into ERM Election Day field.
 - m. The 650 disk is also uploaded into ERM ED_EV Prov field.
 - n. An ERM results report is printed.
 - o. The results from a pre-determined votes report, the IVO printer reports, M100 printed reports, the 650 results report and the ERM report are all compared to determine if the test was successful and accurate.
 - p. If successful, ERM is zeroed out and a zero report is printed.
 - q. The presiding judge shall certify in writing that the test was successful and the date/hour the test was completed. (Sec.127.097(c))
 - r. The presiding judge is the custodian of the test materials; they are sealed in a container until delivered to the custodian of election records. (Sec. 127.100,129.024)

- 6. Regional Site Modem Test (Sec. 127.152)**– On the first Thursday of Early voting at 9am we test each of the 10 regional site phone/modem lines and send data back to ERM to test the accuracy of each site's transmission.
 - a. The M100 cards and the IVO PEBs from the Mock Test are given to each of the regional sites according to MPCT/site assignment.
 - b. All sites will dial into the Central Count server and upload each PEB and M100 card.
 - c. ERM will receive this data and confirm that we have received every precinct; then print out a results report.
 - d. The results from a pre-determined votes report and the ERM results report are compared to determine if the test was successful and accurate.
 - e. If successful, ERM is zeroed out and a zero report is printed.

- 7. Testing Tabulating Equipment – 2nd test** (Testing Tabulating Equipment Sec. 127.093(c)) is completed immediately before the counting of ballots. The same five Precincts that were selected in the 1st test will be used to test the accuracy of ERM reporting. A pre-determined results report is created. This test is completed in Central Counting Station.
 - a. In ERM, a zero report is printed.
 - b. The Media used on the 1st test will be uploaded into the correct fields.
 - c. An ERM results report will then be printed.
 - d. The results from a pre-determined votes report and the ERM report are compared to determine if the test was successful and accurate.
 - e. If successful, ERM is zeroed out and a zero report is printed.
 - f. The official counting process can begin.
 - g. The presiding judge shall certify in writing that the 2nd test was successful and the date/hour the test was completed. (Sec.127.098(b))

- 8. Testing Tabulating Equipment – 3RD test** (Testing Tabulating Equipment Sec. 127.093(d)) is completed AFTER Election Day. The same five Precincts that were selected in the 1st and 2nd test will be used to test the accuracy of ERM reporting. A pre-determined results report is created. This test is completed in Central Counting Station.
 - a. Election Night results are zeroed out of ERM and a zero report is printed.
 - b. The Media used on the 1st and 2nd test will be uploaded into the correct fields.
 - c. An ERM results report will then be printed.
 - d. The results from a pre-determined votes report and the ERM report are compared to determine if the test was successful and accurate.
 - e. If successful, ERM is zeroed out and a zero report is printed.
 - f. The election night results are then imported back into ERM for canvassing.
 - g. The presiding judge shall certify in writing that the 3rd test was successful and the date/hour the test was completed. (Sec.127.098(b))

9. Partial count of electronic voting system ballots by general custodian. (Sec. 127.201a-f)

- a. To ensure the accuracy of the tabulation of electronic voting system results, the general custodian of election records shall conduct a manual count of all the races in at least one percent of the election precincts or in three precincts, whichever is greater, in which the electronic voting system was used. The custodian shall select the precincts at random and shall begin the count not later than 72 hours after the polls close. The count shall be completed not later than the 21st day after election day.

Audit Logs for an Election Management System's Central Accumulator

Under Sec. 81.62, a central accumulator is defined as the part of an Election Management System that tabulates and/or consolidates the vote totals for multiple precincts/devices. Currently, all central accumulators are required to have a continuous feed audit log printer. As a result of the petition-initiated rule change, this requirement for the continuous feed audit log printer was repealed effective November 7, 2017.

All central accumulators certified for use in Texas election maintain internal audit logs. This is a requirement under both the state and federal certification process and will remain in place. Any audit log produced by a central accumulator is an election record and must be retained for the proper preservation period.

In addition to eliminating the requirement for the continuous feed printer, the changes to Sec. 81.62 require a full audit log to be printed after the tabulation of results is completed on election night, and provide a procedure for poll watchers to gain access to these audit logs during the tabulation process.

Sec. 81.62(g) provides that a poll watcher may request a printed copy of an audit log produced by a central accumulator:

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

Once a request for a report has been made, the central counting station manager or tabulation supervisor is required to print a copy of the audit log at the required time and make a copy of it available to any and all poll watchers that have requested a copy of the audit log. You do not need to print an official audit log separately for multiple requestors. Once a copy is printed, it can be copied and provided to the different requestors.

Retention of election material by General Custodian of Elections

Records created as part of a federal election must be retained for twenty-two months and in nonfederal elections for six months. In addition to the instructions provided in Section 66.058 of the Code, electronic records shall be secured in a locked container sealed with one or more uniquely identified tamper-resistant or tamper-evident seals and logged. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Logic and Accuracy Test and results
2. Printed audits (Real-time audit log)
3. Forms
4. Zero tapes
5. Results tapes
6. Electronic Records
 - A. Ballot definitions
 - B. Cast vote records (ballot images), as applicable
 - C. Audit logs
 - D. Election results