



Legislative Updates: Voting In-Person

37th Annual
Election Law Seminar
for Cities, Schools, and
Other Political Subdivisions

December 1-3, 2025



Summary

LET'S THINK

Big Ideas of
Voting
In-Person

DISCUSS

What's
Important
Now

CHANGES

New Laws
from the
89th Regular
Session

TAKEAWAYS

Discuss
Impacts
for You



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Updated Resources



Updated Handbooks and Guides

- Election Judges and Clerks Handbook
- Early Voting Ballot Board Handbook
- Signature Verification Committee Handbook
- Central Counting Station Handbook
- Appointment of Election Workers Handbook
- County Chairs Handbook
- Poll Watcher's Guide

Available on our Training and Educational Resources webpage



Advisories and Webinars

- [**No.2025-07**](#)–2025 Legislative Summary – 89th Regular Session
- [**No.2025-10**](#)–Bill Summary of Senate Bill 2753
- [**No.2025-11**](#)–Registering a Voter who is Part of a Confidentiality Program
- [**No.2025-12**](#)–NEW LAW: Changes to Curbside Voting Requirements and Assistant Procedures - House Bill 521

Available on our Conducting Elections webpage.

- Remember to look for emails about our webinars.



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Forms

Elections Form Index

Note: The links displayed within the forms section access PDF (Portable Document Format) files which can be accessed using the Adobe Acrobat Reader. Visit Adobe.com to download your copy of Acrobat Reader. All PDF documents featured on this page are configured to print out on legal size paper.

Note: Some browsers use their own PDF readers. If you experience issues with the PDF documents below, we recommend opening these files with Adobe Acrobat.

Select a Form Category

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 1 – Order and Notice of an ElectionSection 2 – CandidatesSection 3 – BallotsSection 4 – Officers of ElectionSection 5 – Early Voting Clerk ResponsibilitiesSection 6 – Early Voting by MailSection 7 - Voting in PersonSection 8 – Security and Chain of Custody	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 9 – Provisional VotingSection 10 – Early Voting Ballot Board/Signature Verification CommitteeSection 11 – Counting VotesSection 12 – Reconciliation FormsSection 13 – Cancellation of an ElectionSection 14 – RecountSection 15 – Logic and Accuracy TestingSection 16 – Election Technology (Voting Systems, Electronic Pollbooks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 17 – Local Option ElectionsSection 18 – Primary ElectionsSection 19 – Voter Registration Chapter 19 FundingSection 20 - Primary FinanceSection 21 - Voter RegistrationSection 22 - Volunteer Deputy Registrar (including High Schools)Section 23 - Becoming an Elected OfficialSection 24 - Public InformationSection 25 - Miscellaneous Forms
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Voting In-Person

What We Know



Major Topics

Proper Appointment and Training of Election Workers (TEC § 32.001 et seq.)

Voter ID Requirements (TEC § 63.001 et seq.)

Polling Place Accessibility (TEC § 43.034)

Poll Watcher Rules (TEC § 33.001 et seq.)

Chain of Custody and Ballot Security (TEC § 66.001 et seq.)

Voting System and Equipment Testing (TEC § 129.001 et seq.)

Provisional Ballot Procedures (TEC § 63.011)

Electioneering and the 100-foot marker (TEC § 63.003)

Prompt and Accurate Results Reporting (TEC § 67.001 et seq.)



Partner Share

- Discuss the **three topics** of voting in-person that you believe your office does well.

Proper Appointment and Training of **Election Workers** (TEC § 32.001 et seq.)

Voter ID Requirements (TEC § 63.001 et seq.)

Polling Place Accessibility (TEC § 43.034)

Poll Watcher Rules (TEC § 33.001 et seq.)

Chain of Custody and Ballot Security (TEC § 66.001 et seq.)

Voting System and Equipment Testing (TEC § 129.001 et seq.)

Provisional Ballot Procedures (TEC § 63.011)

Electioneering and the 100-foot marker (TEC § 63.003)

Prompt and Accurate Results Reporting (TEC § 67.001 et seq.)

You will have
2 minutes
to discuss with
your partner



Let's Discuss

- Share your **two topics** with the other people at your table that you believe your county can improve on.

Proper Appointment and Training of **Election Workers** (TEC § 32.001 et seq.)

Voter ID Requirements (TEC § 63.001 et seq.)

Polling Place Accessibility (TEC § 43.034)

Poll Watcher Rules (TEC § 33.001 et seq.)

Chain of Custody and Ballot Security (TEC § 66.001 et seq.)

Voting System and Equipment Testing (TEC § 129.001 et seq.)

Provisional Ballot Procedures (TEC § 63.011)

Electioneering and the 100-foot marker (TEC § 63.003)

Prompt and Accurate Results Reporting (TEC § 67.001 et seq.)

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What's Changed



Mandatory Office Hours

HB 640—Defines a “regular business day” to mean a day when the main business office of the county, city, or other political subdivision is regularly open for business.

- Beginning 50 days before election day and continuing until the 40th day after election day, each county clerk, city secretary, or secretary of a governing body (or the person performing duties of a secretary) **must keep the office open** for election duties for **at least three hours each day**, during regular office hours, on regular business days.





Moving Election Dates

HB 3546— allows ISD trustees to modify the length of trustee terms as well as the authority to move the date of their general election to November.

- The board of trustees of an independent school district to, not later than December 31, 2030, adopt a resolution to **modify the length of trustee terms** with terms **staggered** for either **three or four years**.
 - The resolution must **specify** how the transition from the former term length to the new term length will occur, starting with the first regular election after the resolution is adopted.
- Also, separately, gives independent school districts the authority to **change the date** of their **general elections** for officers to the **November** uniform election date.
 - The bill did not prescribe a deadline for an ISD to make the change to the November uniform election date, however any change would require an official action by the governing body.





Moving Election Dates

SB 1494— allows local political subdivisions (other than MUDs) to change the date it holds its general election to the November uniform election date.

- One important limitation to this type of change is that entities can only move the elections to the November uniform date in **odd-numbered years**. Entities cannot change the date of their election to the November uniform election date in **even-numbered years**.
- This process is NOT available to entities with two-year terms that are staggered or to entities that have one year or three-year terms.
 - Because the bill only authorizes these entities to move their election dates to the November uniform date in odd-numbered years, it is only available to entities that hold their elections every two years or every four years, such as two-year terms that are unstaggered, or four-year terms that are staggered or unstaggered.





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Moving Election Dates

	Cities	Schools	MUDs	Other (non-county)
<u>HB 3546</u>	X	No deadline to make change*	X	X
<u>SB 447</u>	City of Mission – no deadline to make change	X	X	X
<u>SB 914</u>	City of Alpine – expires Jan. 1, 2027	X	X	X
<u>SB 1494</u>	Governing body must decide to move election no later than Dec. 31, 2025	Governing body must decide to move election no later than Dec. 31, 2025	X	Governing body must decide to move election no later than Dec. 31, 2025

* While there is no deadline for ISDs to change the date of their election, if the ISD wants to change the length of trustee terms that change must occur no later than Dec. 31, 2030



Ballot Language

SB 1025

- Requires a ballot proposition that **increases or imposes** taxes to include, in capital typewritten letters of the **same font** size as the rest of the proposition **AND** at the **top** of the proposition, the statement **“THIS IS A TAX INCREASE”**.
 - Make sure to check for the required capitalization during ballot proofing and your L&A testing.
 - This language must also be on your Order.





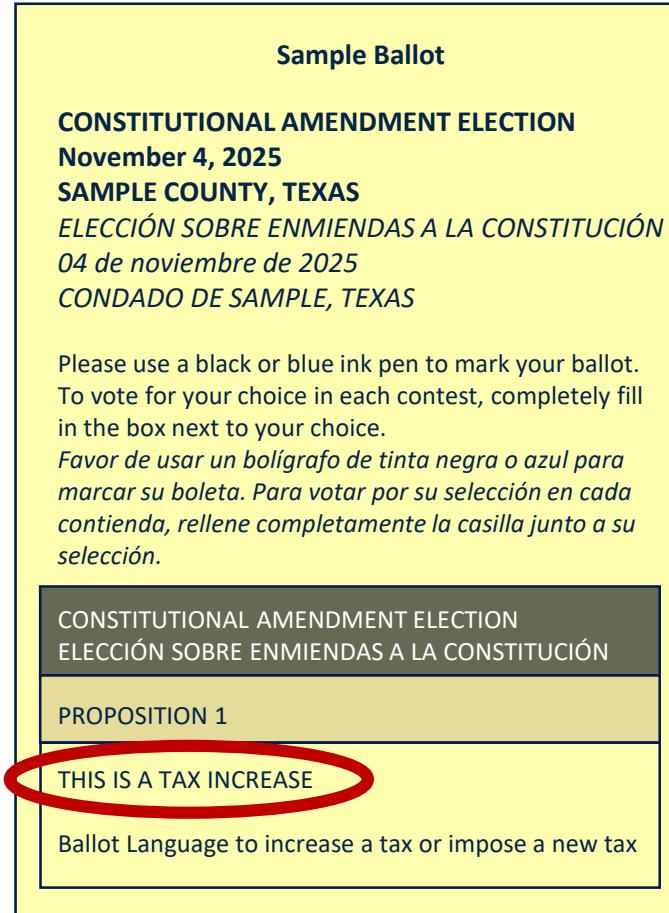
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Ballot Language

**Top of the Proposition,
Same Font Size, and
Capitalized Text**





Bond Elections

HB 3526—Creates new reporting requirements for local entities that order an election to authorize a local government to issue bonds.

- No later than the 20th day before election day for an election to authorize a local government to issue bonds, the local government must submit a report to the Bond Review Board that includes:
 - the date of the election;
 - the proposition number for each bond proposition;
 - the total estimated cost of the issuance of each proposed bond;
 - the estimated minimum dollar amount required to be annually expended for debt service;
 - a description of the purpose of each bond proposition; and
 - any other information the board determines necessary.





Bond Elections

HB 3526—Creates new reporting requirements for local entities that order an election to authorize a local government to issue bonds.

- No later than the 20th day after election day for an election to authorize a local government to issue bonds, the local government must submit a report to the Bond Review Board that includes:
 - The total number of votes cast for each bond proposition;
 - The total number of votes in support of the bond proposition;
 - The total number of votes against the bond proposition;
 - Any updated information different from the information provided to the board under Section 1231.025(a) of the Government Code, if applicable; and
 - Any other information the board determines necessary.





Candidate Applications

HB 3629—Candidates wishing to run for trustee of an independent school district must complete a new acknowledgement box on their candidate application

- Candidates seeking to serve on the board of trustees of an independent school district must include a statement on their candidate application acknowledging that they are ineligible to serve if they are required to register as a sex offender under Chapter 62, Code of Criminal Procedure.
 - This is a required box – failure to complete it will result in an application being rejected.
 - Requirement ONLY applies to ISD candidates. Does not apply to cities or other political subdivisions.



Candidate Applications

HB 148 & HB 3575—Candidate application requirements for county appraisal district candidates.

- HB 148 – an individual may not file an application for a place on the ballot for an elected position on the board of directors of an appraisal district unless the individual has signed the Acknowledgement of Director's Duties of Member of Appraisal District Board of Directors (**coming soon**).
 - The signed acknowledgement must be submitted to the chief appraiser of the appraisal district.
- HB 3575 – candidates must file their application for a place on the ballot with the **county clerk/elections administrator**.
 - Candidates can no longer file their application with the county judge.



Cancellation of an Election

HB 2253—Authorizes counties and local political subdivisions to cancel a bond election if the Governor issues a disaster declaration

- The governor must issue a disaster declaration regarding a natural disaster or other disaster which threatens the health, safety, or general welfare of the authority's residents **within 90 days of the date of the election**.
- The governing body must determine that cancellation is necessary due to damage to the authority's election system, or to avoid harm to the authority's election workers or voters.
- The governing body must provide notice of the meeting and allow members of the public and press to observe the meeting.





Curbside/Assistance

HB 521—Made several changes to curbside voting and assistance procedures.

- **Advisory No.2025-12**
- **Election Personnel**
 - If four or more election officers are present at the polling place → two election officers shall deliver a ballot to the voter at the curb.
 - If an election worker is assisting a curbside voter:
 - *Early Voting*—A **single** worker may assist.
 - *Election Day*—**Two** election workers must be present (one from each party, if possible).





Curbside/Assistance

HB 521—Made several changes to curbside voting and assistance procedures.

- **Forms**
 - Curbside **voters** will be required to execute a **form** attesting that they are physically unable to enter a polling place.
 - When voters are given **transportation** by another person, the election worker must ask the driver whether they have transported +7 curbside voters during the entire voting period. If yes, the **driver** must complete and sign a **form** and indicate whether they are assisting the voter with voting as well.
 - Forms must be **delivered** to the SOS as soon as practicable.





Curbside/Assistance

HB 521—Made several changes to curbside voting and assistance procedures.

- **Forms**
 - **Election workers** serving as an assistant (inside the polling place and/or curbside) must complete an assistance form.
 - Only required when the worker is providing assistance to a voter in voting a ballot.
 - Not required when the worker is providing general instructions in the polling place.
 - Forms must be **delivered** to the SOS as soon as practicable.





Curbside/Assistance



Curbside voters attest that they are physically unable to enter a polling place. (Form 7-66)



A driver has transported 7 or more curbside voters and will indicate whether they are assisting the voter. (Form 7-65)



Election workers serving as an assistant to a voter. (Form 7-67)
Note: Normal curbside voting procedure is not assistance to a voter.





Curbside

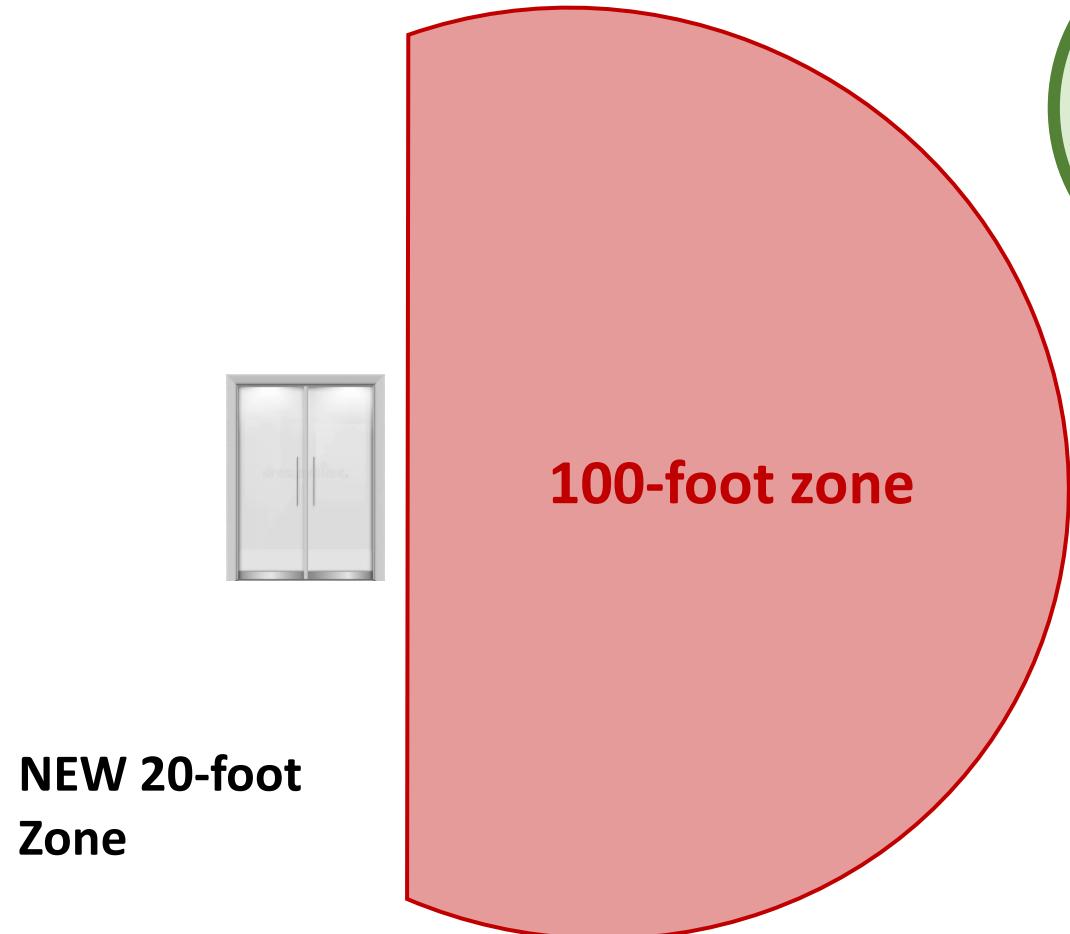
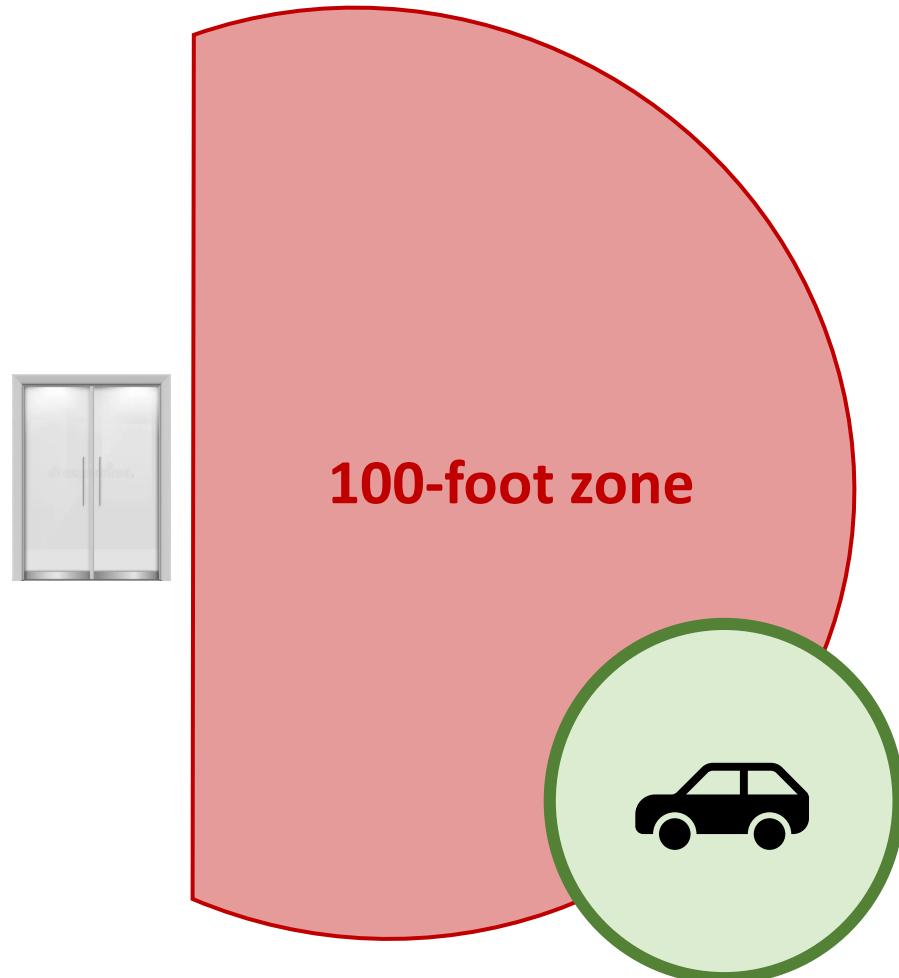
HB 521—Made several changes to curbside voting and assistance procedures.

- **Electioneering**
 - Prohibits loitering or electioneering within **20 feet** of the designated curbside voting parting spaces.
 - This would be **in addition** to the **100 foot** zone from an outside door in which a voter can enter the polling place.





Curbside





Wireless Communication Devices

HB 3909—A person may not use a wireless communication device within a room in which voting is taking place.

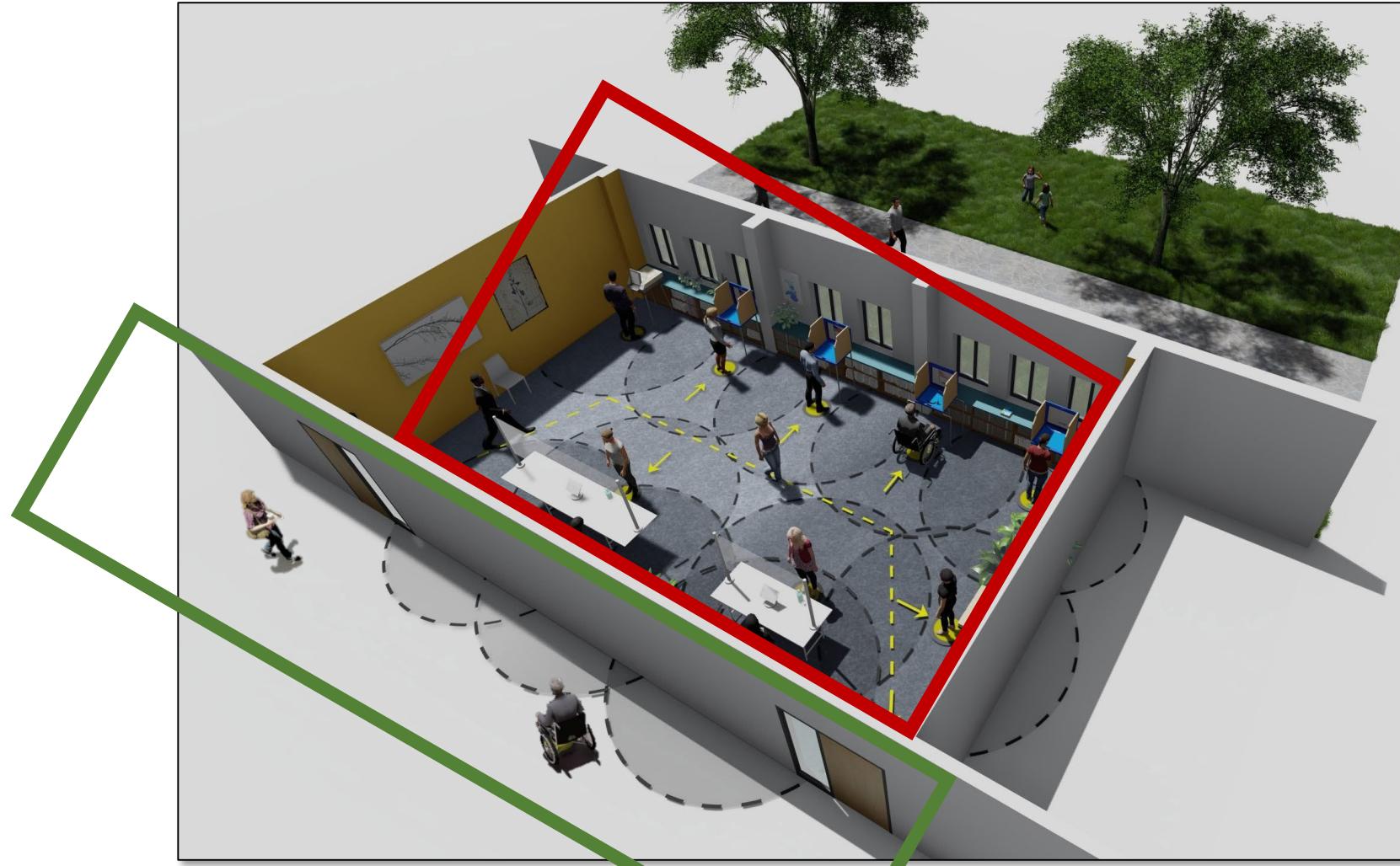
- This prohibition is in **addition** to the prohibition against using any mechanical or electronic means of recording sound or images within 100 feet of a voting station.
 - Therefore, a person could **use their phone** to check email while in the **green circle**, but the phone must be **put away** once the voter enters the **red box**.
 - Presiding judges will have to use their **discretion** as to whether they think a voter is unlawfully using their phone to record **sound or images** in the prohibited area.

A circular diagram with a green outer ring and a white center. In the center is a red rectangular box containing the text "Room where voting is taking place".

Room where voting is taking place



Wireless Communication Devices



Green Zone Phone Use

Acceptable:

- Looking up ballot
- Texting
- Checking email

Not Acceptable:

- Video recording
- Audio recording
- Taking photos
- Phone calls

Red Zone Phone Use

- Must be put away and out of sight



Poll Watchers

HB 493 – Poll Watcher Eligibility

- Poll watcher appointment certifications now include an **affidavit** confirming that the poll watcher has **not been convicted** of a first- or second-degree felony or any election-related offense, and prohibits them from using **recording devices** while serving as a poll watcher.
 - Election workers will want to make sure poll watchers **present** a Certificate of Appointment with the new law information reflected on it.
- **Updated Resources:**
 - Poll Watcher's Guide
 - Poll Watcher's Training





Days and Hours of Early Voting

SB 2753

- Closes the gap between end of early voting and election day to create one continuous voting period.
 - The period for early voting by personal appearance begins on the 12th day before election day and continue through the day before election day, and includes Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.
- The requirements will not go into effect until the Secretary of State's Office publishes a report and procedures on the implementation of SB 2753.





Days and Hours of Early Voting

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday





Days and Hours of Early Voting





Open Meetings Notice

HB 1522 – Modifies notice requirements for meetings conducted under the open meetings law.

- Requires posting notice at least three business days before date of scheduled meeting.
 - Keep this in mind when posting notice for your canvass.
- New requirements for meetings where a governmental body will discuss or adopt a budget.





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Voter Registration and Address Confidentiality



Voter Registration Applications

SB 1862—Requires a voter registration application to include the address, including the city and county, where the applicant formerly resided.

- Before **SB 1862**, the city and county where the voter formerly resided was required, but **not** the address.
- If voter registration application reflects that the voter's previous residence address was **outside** of the State of Texas, the voter registrar must document the voter's full legal name, date of birth, current address of residence, and previous address of residence. Voter registrar must **compile** this information and, at least once a month, submit it to the SOS.
- SOS must notify the voter registrars with jurisdiction over the previous residence on a **monthly** basis that the voter may be removed from that jurisdiction's voter registration list.



Alternate Address Program

SB 523—Expands coverage under Alternate Address Program (AAP) through the Department of Public Safety (DPS) for parole officers and probation officers.

- AAP allows use of an **alternate address** on a voter's driver's license or ID card in lieu of their actual residential address.
- Voters are authorized to designate their **work address** on their voter-registration certificate if they choose.
- Applicant's voter registration information will be subject to **public disclosure**, but because the residence address on the voter registration application is the applicant's workplace, the actual residence address cannot be disclosed.



Confidentiality

SB 370 – Address confidentiality for public defenders

- Adds current or former employees of a **public defender's office** to the list of individuals eligible for confidentiality.
- Adds current or former employees of the **attorney general's office**, and the employee's family members (spouse and children), to the list of individuals eligible for confidentiality.
 - **Previously** only employees assigned to **certain divisions** within the attorney general's office were eligible.



Confidentiality

SB 1540 – Address confidentiality for election officials

- Adds current or former **election officials** (as defined by Section 1.005), as well as employees, volunteers, or designees of election officials and employees of the **Secretary of State** to the list of individuals eligible for confidentiality .



Confidentiality

SB 1569—Adds new professions to the list of individuals eligible for confidentiality.

- Specifically, it includes:
 - Members of the governing body of an **institution of higher learning or higher education**;
 - **Chancellor** or other **chief executive officer** of a university system; and
 - **President** or other **chief executive officer** of an institution of higher learning or higher education.
- The same individuals may **restrict information** in appraisal records related to the individual's home address and make that information available for only official use of governmental entities.



Confidentiality

HB 16 (2nd C.S.)—Adds several groups of people to the list of individuals eligible for the alternate address program and/or address confidentiality.

- Specifically, it includes:
 - a current or former **county clerk, district clerk, or county and district clerk**, or a current or former employee of the office of a county clerk, district clerk, or county and district clerk or municipal court personnel;
 - a current or former employee whose duties relate to **court administration**, including a court clerk, court coordinator, court administrator, juvenile case manager, law clerk, or staff attorney;
 - a current or former employee of the **Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System** and entities administratively attached to the office; or
 - a current or former employee or commissioner of the **State Commission on Judicial Conduct**.



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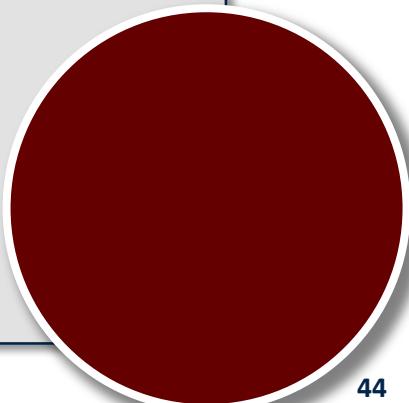
General Election-Related Changes



Election Supplies

HB 1661—Provides guidance and penalties surrounding distribution of election supplies.

- Requires the election officer responsible for procuring election supplies to provide a number of ballots equal to at least the percentage of voters who voted in the most recent corresponding election plus 25 percent of that number.
 - The number of ballot cannot exceed the total number of registered voters in the precinct (unless they are countywide).
- Criminal offense for intentionally failing to provide the required number of ballots or who does not promptly supplement the distributed ballots upon request from a polling place.





Security of Voting Equipment

SB 2216

- Equipment used in the operation of voting be stored in a **locked room**.
- The general custodian of election records must place **security seals** on each unit of voting system equipment to prevent **unauthorized access** to the equipment.
- The general custodian of election records must create a **procedure** for documenting which **specific seals** are placed on **each unit** of voting system equipment and any instance where the seals are **removed**.
 - The records must include the **identity** of the individual who **removed** the seals and the **purpose** for accessing the equipment.





County Elections Administrators

HB 677—County elections administrators may not hold another office or position appointed by an elected official.

- Prohibits a **county elections administrator** from holding another office or position appointed by an elected official.



Penalty for Election Fraud

HB 5115—Increases the penalty for election fraud

- **Increases the penalty for election fraud** by reclassifying the offense from a Class A misdemeanor to a second-degree felony.
- **Expands the definition of election fraud** to include certain actions such as counting votes the person knows are invalid, altering a report to include votes the person knows are invalid, refusing to count votes the person knows are valid, or altering a report to exclude votes the person knows are valid.
- If the offense is committed by a person while acting in their capacity as an **elected official**, it is a **felony** of the first degree.



Prosecution of Election Offenses

SB 12 (2nd C.S.) – Attorney General prosecutorial authority

- The Attorney General has jurisdiction to **prosecute** and **represent** the state in the prosecution of a criminal offense prescribed by the election laws of this state.



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Let's Discuss

Thoughts on Integrating These New Rules



Let's Discuss - Integrating New Rules

Prompt:

- How would you integrate these new rules?

You will have
2 minutes
to discuss

HB 3909: Prohibiting Wireless Devices in the Room

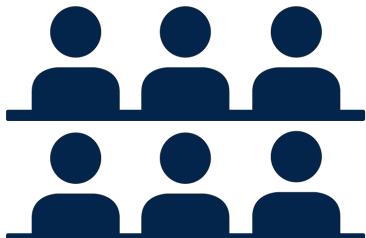
- How will your election workers communicate the new rules?

SB 2964: Correcting or Cancelling a Mail Ballot

- How will your office inform voters of their ability to correct a defect or cancel their mail ballot?

HB 521: Curbside Voters

- How will your election workers approach curbside voters and their drivers?
- How will your election workers enforce the 20ft zone around curbside vehicles?



Work together with people at your table and the table directly behind you.



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Available Support



WEBINARS



TRAINING



RESOURCES

elections@sos.texas.gov

800-252-VOTE • 512-463-5650

sos.texas.gov