

Steps to Reconciling Your Election

October 8, 2024 Webinar

Secretary of State – Elections Division



Overview

- Background
- Preliminary Election Reconciliation form
- Central Count
- Ballot by Mail
- In Person
- Official Election Reconciliation form



Reconciliation

The Texas Election Code requires that the presiding judge of the central counting station attest to a written reconciliation of votes and voters (127.131(f)):

Two times each election

1. At the close of tabulation on election day
2. After counting late mail/provisional ballots (canvass)



Reconciliation

- Only required if using a central counting station
- Post completed forms on your county website
 - Post with results reports
 - We recommend keeping posted for at least 22 months



Reconciliation

Compares:

Number of voters who
cast valid ballots

Number of votes counted
by your voting system



Tips

- Have a plan
 - List the different types of ballots in your election
 - Identify which reports need to be run
- Don't wait until the end of the night



Preliminary Election Reconciliation – Unofficial Totals

Election Day

Preliminary Election Reconciliation - Unofficial Totals

Disclaimer: These numbers are subject to change as information is verified after election day

County _____ Election Name _____

Registered Voters _____ Election Date _____

1. Voters <small>(from election rosters)</small>		2. Rejected or pending ballots <small>(pending review, pending voter action, or rejected)</small>		3. Counted ballots <small>(from tabulation software)</small>	
A. In person voters		D. Provisional ballots rejected or pending		G. In person ballots counted	
B. By mail voters		E. Mail ballots rejected or pending		H. Mail ballots counted	
C. Total voters (A+B)		F. Total ballots rejected or pending (D+E)		I. Total ballots counted (G+H)	

4. Comparison of voters and counted ballots

J. Difference between voters and ballots (C-F) _____ K. Difference as percentage of voters (J-(C-F)*100) _____ %

L. Notes:

5. Attestation

M. "I certify that the information contained in this preliminary election reconciliation document accurately reflects the unofficial votes and voters as known to me on election night. The information may change based on provisional votes, mail ballots, and additional reconciliation efforts by election personnel."

Presiding judge signature _____ Print name _____ Date _____

6. Ballots that could be added to the final count

Disclaimer: These numbers typically change as information is verified after election day

N. Mail ballots not returned or pending voter action	O. Estimated Provisional ballots
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Overview

- Top group gathers election statistics

1. Voters (from election rosters)	
A. In person voters	
B. By mail voters	
C. Total voters (A+B)	

2. Rejected or pending ballots (pending review, pending voter action, or rejected)	
D. Provisional ballots rejected or pending	
E. Mail ballots rejected or pending	
F. Total ballots rejected or pending (D+E)	

3. Counted ballots (from tabulation software)	
G. In person ballots counted	
H. Mail ballots counted	
I. Total ballots counted (G+H)	



Overview (continued)

- Middle group compares those statistics

4. Comparison of voters and counted ballots	
J. Difference between voters and ballots (C-F-I) _____	K. Difference as percentage of voters (J÷(C-F)*100) _____ %
L. Notes:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px;"></div>



Overview (continued)

- Signed by the presiding judge of central count

5. Attestation

M. "I certify that the information contained in this preliminary election reconciliation document accurately reflects the unofficial votes and voters as known to me on election night. The information will likely change based on provisional votes, mail ballots, and additional reconciliation efforts by election personnel."

Presiding judge signature

Print name

Date



Overview (continued)

- Bottom group records the number of ballots that may be added between election day and canvass
- Mail ballots either not returned or pending voter action
- Provisional ballots not yet reviewed by EVBB or pending voter action

6. Ballots that could be added to the final count

Disclaimer: These numbers typically change as information is verified after election day

N. Mail ballots not returned or pending voter action		O. Estimated Provisional ballots	
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Preliminary Election Reconciliation



1 - Voters

In person*: EV + Limited + EDay

- Reports from
 - ePollbooks;
 - TEAM;
 - voter history software; or
 - hand-counted rosters

*Include provisional ballots if they are reported on your election night results



1. Voters (from election rosters)	
A. In person voters	
B. By mail voters	
C. Total voters (A+B)	



1 - Voters

By Mail: voted ballots

- Reports from
 - TEAM;
 - voter history software;
 - ballot transmittal form
- Include any other ballots you report with mail ballots



1. Voters (from election rosters)	
A. In person voters	
B. By mail voters	
C. Total voters (A+B)	



2 – Rejected or pending ballots

Ballots not accepted for counting



2. Rejected or pending ballots (pending review, pending voter action, or rejected)	
D. Provisional ballots rejected or pending	
E. Mail ballots rejected or pending	
F. Total ballots rejected or pending (D+E)	

Provisional ballots

- Only if also included in Box A
- Finally rejected by the Early Voting Ballot Board (EVBB)
- Awaiting EVBB review
- Awaiting voter action (no ID voters)



2 – Rejected or pending ballots

Ballots not accepted for counting

2. Rejected or pending ballots (pending review, pending voter action, or rejected)	
D. Provisional ballots rejected or pending	
E. Mail ballots rejected or pending	
F. Total ballots rejected or pending (D+E)	



Mail ballots

- Finally rejected by the EVBB
- Awaiting voter action (corrective action process)



3 – Counted ballots

Ballots counted by your voting system

In person: EV + Limited + EDay

- Reports from your voting system
 - Electionware
 - Count
- If provisional ballots are included in your results reports, include them in box G



3. Counted ballots (from tabulation software)	
G. In person ballots counted	
H. Mail ballots counted	
I. Total ballots counted (G+H)	



3 – Counted ballots

Ballots counted by your voting system

By Mail:

- Reports from your voting system
 - Electionware
 - Count



3. Counted ballots (from tabulation software)	
G. In person ballots counted	
H. Mail ballots counted	
I. Total ballots counted (G+H)	



3 – Counted ballots

Ballots counted by your voting system

- Box I should match the total number of ballots cast on your results report
- Consider creating any custom reports you may need in advance



3. Counted ballots (from tabulation software)	
G. In person ballots counted	
H. Mail ballots counted	
I. Total ballots counted (G+H)	



4 – Comparison of voters and counted ballots

4. Comparison of voters and counted ballots	
J. Difference between voters and ballots (C-F-I) _____	K. Difference as percentage of voters (J÷(C-F)*100) _____ %
L. Notes:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>



4 – Comparison (continued)

- Box C minus Box F = voters who cast valid ballots
- Subtract box I to compare the number of valid ballots to the number of ballots counted

J. Difference between voters and ballots
(C-F-I)



4 – Comparison (continued)

- If there is a discrepancy, stop and try to identify and resolve the issue before central count stops



4 – Comparison (continued)

- Calculate the percentage to put the discrepancy into context
 - Start with inner parentheses (Box C – box F)
 - Divide Box J by that number
 - Multiply by 100

K. Difference as percentage of voters
($J \div (C - F) * 100$)

_____ %



4 – Comparison (continued)

- Write any notes that you think will help explain the difference between voters and votes
 - Attach explanation if needed

4. Comparison of voters and counted ballots	
J. Difference between voters and ballots (C-F-I) _____	K. Difference as percentage of voters (J÷(C-F)*100) _____ %
L. Notes:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>



Central Count - Finding Discrepancies

- Positive vs. negative discrepancies
 - Positive - more voters checked in than ballots
 - Negative - more ballots counted than voters
- Verify that all media has been read
- Use ballot transmittal form to verify the number of mail ballots



Tracking down discrepancies

- Central Count process
 - Drop off
 - Processing/retrieving media stick
 - Reading the media sticks
 - Storing the media sticks



Example

1. Voters (from election rosters)	
A. In person voters	12,000
B. By mail voters	1,000
C. Total voters (A+B)	13,000

2. Rejected or pending ballots (pending review, pending voter action, or rejected)	
D. Provisional ballots rejected or pending	100
E. Mail ballots rejected or pending	50
F. Total ballots rejected or pending (D+E)	150

3. Counted ballots (from tabulation software)	
G. In person ballots counted	11,899
H. Mail ballots counted	948
I. Total ballots counted (G+H)	12,847

4. Comparison of voters and counted ballots			
J. Difference between voters and ballots (C-F-I)	<u>3</u>	K. Difference as percentage of voters (J÷(C-F)*100)	<u>0.02</u> %
L. Notes:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>In person: further research required</p> <p>Mail: two secrecy envelopes did not contain ballots</p> </div>		





Election Reconciliation



Ballot by Mail Process

- Application delivered
- Data entry
- Ballot packet prepared
- Ballot mailed
- Ballot received
- Delivery to EVBB/Qualification
- Delivery to Central Count/Counting



In-person Voting

- Early Voting
 - Small increments
- Election Day
 - Check at central count
 - Double-check after election day



Election Reconciliation – Official Totals

Canvass

Election Reconciliation - Official Totals

County _____ Election Name _____
 Registered Voters _____ Election Date _____

1. Voters <small>(from election returns and lists)</small>		2. Rejected ballots		3. Counted ballots <small>(from tabulation software)</small>	
A. Early voting in person voters				I. Early voting ballots counted	
B. Election day in person voters				J. Election day ballots counted	
C. Mail ballot voters		F. Mail ballots rejected		K. Mail ballots counted	
D. Provisional ballots submitted		G. Provisional ballots rejected		L. Provisional ballots counted	
E. Total voters (A+B+C+D)		H. Total ballots rejected (F+G)		M. Total ballots counted (I+J+K+L)	

4. Comparison of voters and counted ballots	
N. Difference between voters and ballots (E-H) _____	O. Difference as percentage of voters (N÷E×100) _____ %
P. Explanation for difference, if any <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>	

5. Attestation	
Q. "I certify that the information contained in this document accurately reflects the official reconciliation of votes and voters from the above stated election"	
Presiding judge signature _____	Print name _____ Date _____

6. Mail ballots		7. Provisional ballots	
R. Mail ballots sent		U. Provisional ballots deemed incomplete	
S. Mail ballots not returned by voter			
T. Mail ballots surrendered			



Official Reconciliation

- Top group is divided by category

1. Voters (from election rosters and lists)	
A. Early voting in person voters	
B. Election day in person voters	
C. Mail ballot voters	
D. Provisional ballots submitted	
E. Total voters (A+B+C+D)	

2. Rejected ballots	
F. Mail ballots rejected	
G. Provisional ballots rejected	
H. Total ballots rejected (F+G)	

3. Counted ballots (from tabulation software)	
I. Early voting ballots counted	
J. Election day ballots counted	
K. Mail ballots counted	
L. Provisional ballots counted	
M. Total ballots counted (I+J+K+L)	



Overview (continued)

- Middle group compares those statistics

4. Comparison of voters and counted ballots	
N. Difference between voters and ballots (E-H-M) _____	O. Difference as percentage of voters (N÷(E-H)*100) _____ %
P. Explanation for difference, if any	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px;"></div>

Official Reconciliation (continued)

- Bottom group records statistics about mail and provisional ballots

6. Mail ballots	
R. Mail ballots sent	
S. Mail ballots not returned by voter	
T. Mail ballots surrendered	

7. Provisional ballots	
U. Provisional ballots deemed incomplete	



Election Reconciliation – Official Totals

Section details

1 - Voters

1. Voters (from election rosters and lists)	
A. Early voting in person voters	
B. Election day in person voters	
C. Mail ballot voters	
D. Provisional ballots submitted	
E. Total voters (A+B+C+D)	

Voters who participated in your election

- Separate in person voters into
 - Early Voting;
 - Election Day;
 - Provisional
- Do not include provisional ballots with Early Voting and Election Day

2 – Rejected ballots

Ballots not accepted for counting

- Provisional ballots finally rejected
- Mail ballots finally rejected

2. Rejected ballots	
F. Mail ballots rejected	
G. Provisional ballots rejected	
H. Total ballots rejected (F+G)	

3 – Counted ballots

3. Counted ballots (from tabulation software)	
I. Early voting ballots counted	
J. Election day ballots counted	
K. Mail ballots counted	
L. Provisional ballots counted	
M. Total ballots counted (I+J+K+L)	

Ballots counted by your voting system

- Boxes I, J, and L may differ from results reports depending on how you report provisional ballots
- Box M should match the total number of ballots cast on your results report

4 – Comparison of voters and counted ballots

4. Comparison of voters and counted ballots	
N. Difference between voters and ballots (E-H-M) _____	O. Difference as percentage of voters (N÷(E-H)*100) _____ %
P. Explanation for difference, if any	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px;"></div>

4 – Comparison (continued)

- Explain any difference between voters and votes
 - Clearly distinguish between what you know happened vs. what you think probably happened
 - Attach explanation if you need more space

4 – Comparison (continued)

- Tracking down discrepancies
 - Look at each row to find which category a discrepancy is in
 - Compare votes and voters for each polling location
 - Think about how the parts of your voting system work together

5 - Attestation

- Signed by the presiding judge of central count

5. Attestation		
Q. "I certify that the information contained in this document accurately reflects the official reconciliation of votes and voters from the above stated election"		
_____	_____	_____
Presiding judge signature	Print name	Date

6 – Mail ballots

6. Mail ballots	
R. Mail ballots sent	
S. Mail ballots not returned by voter	
T. Mail ballots surrendered	

- Box S includes any mail ballots returned as undeliverable

7 – Provisional ballots

- Number of provisional check-ins that were not completed
 - Accounts for any difference in the number of provisional ballots between election day and canvass reconciliation forms

Website Posting

- Post on your website along with results reports
- We recommend keeping posted for at least 22 months

Questions?

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