

Election Day – Closing the Polling Place Checklist

NOTE: Please do not take down or remove any signage until the last voter has voted. All legally required signs must remain posted in the designated places under the Texas Election Code. (See Texas Election Code 62.002)

- Read through the Closing the Polling Place Checklist prior to assigning duties to your workers.

Final Voters of the Day (See Texas Election Code 41.032)

- A voter who was in line or waiting to enter the polling place at 7:00 p.m. is entitled to vote even if the ballot is cast after the posted closing time.
- If voters are waiting to enter the polling place at closing time, the presiding judge shall direct them to enter the polling place, if possible, and close it to others. If entry to the polling place is not possible, the presiding judge may distribute numbered identification cards to the waiting voters and allow entry only to those possessing a numbered card. If neither method is possible, an election worker may stand at the end of the line to mark the last voter who is entitled to enter the polling place.
- The presiding judge shall take the precautions necessary to prevent voting after closing time by persons who are not entitled to do so.

Cell Phone in the Polling Place:

- Keep designated cell phone(s) turned on to communicate with the authority conducting the election.
- Notify the authority conducting the election once the last voter has voted and follow any instructions given by the authority conducting the election.

Reconciling Vote Totals:

After the last voter has voted, the presiding judge and alternate judge should verify the public count as displayed on the electronic ballot counter, results tape, and ePollbook. Complete the reconciliation paperwork listed below.

Counties with an ePollbook

- ☐ ePollbook check-in totals should be compared to Paper Combination Forms – Count the total of all voters who signed the Combination Form (if voters were qualified using an ePollbook but the Combination Form was completed on paper).
- ☐ Compare the total number of voters on the Combination Forms (if applicable) to the ePollbook totals.
- ☐ Count the number of provisional ballots – Provisional ballots may be included in the totals or they may be tracked separately. Follow instructions provided by the authority conducting the election.
- ☐ Complete the Register of Official Ballots.

Paper Voter Registration List

- ☐ Count the number of signatures on the Combination Forms and compare the total to the number of voters who were checked in using the Paper Official List of Registered Voters (count the number of times “voted” was stamped next to voters’ names)
- ☐ Count the number of provisional ballots – Provisional ballots may be included in the totals or they may be tracked separately. Follow instructions provided by the authority conducting the election.
- ☐ Complete the Ballot and Seal Certificate if used.
- ☐ Complete the Register of Official Ballots.

If there are any discrepancies, write a detailed explanation and notify the authority conducting the election.

Closing the Tabulating Area / Ballot Box:

Follow the directions from the authority conducting the election about how to close each piece of equipment. If you do not have instructions on how to close your equipment, notify the authority conducting the election.

Ballot Box – Hand-marked paper ballots

Once your vote totals have been reconciled, proceed with the following actions:

- ☐ The presiding judge and alternate judge sign the Register of Official Ballots.
- ☐ Place white copy of the Register of Official Ballots in the ballot box.
- ☐ Seal the ballot box.
- ☐ The presiding judge should keep the ballot box in view until it is delivered to Election Night Headquarters.

Closing the Voting Station(s):

Hand-Marked Paper Ballot Station(s):

- ☐ Remove all indelible marking instruments from each voting station.
- ☐ Remove all posted signs from the privacy panels.
- ☐ Disassemble and pack all voting booths and privacy panels.

Closing of Check-In Station(s): Follow closing instructions provided by the authority conducting the election. The order of the closing steps may be different for each vendor.

ePollbook: Follow instructions provided by the authority conducting the election. The order may be different for each ePollbook vendor.

Once your numbers have been reconciled, proceed with the following actions (see above “Reconciling Vote Totals” section):

- ☐ Log out of and shut down your ePollbook.
- ☐ Unplug all devices from the ePollbook and return to the case/bag in which it was delivered.

Paper List of Registered Voters

- ☐ Prepare a paper list of registered voters to return to Election Night Headquarters.

Organizing Supplies and Paperwork:

Filing election paperwork is crucial to ensure effective record keeping for the general custodian of election records and the presiding judge. Follow the filing instructions from the authority conducting the election.

- ☐ Organize and complete paperwork. **Don’t forget to sign and date.**
- ☐ Gather all polling place election records and place them in the appropriate envelopes.
 - ☐ Envelope #1 – Contains the election returns for the polling place.
 - ☐ Envelope #2 – Contains records for the general custodian of election records.
 - ☐ Envelope #3 – Retained by the presiding judge for 22 months
 - ☐ Envelope #4 – Contains records for the voter registrar.
 - ☐ Envelope #5 – Some counties use this envelope to convey records to the county chair in a primary election.
- ☐ Secure and log all ballot boxes for transport to Election Night headquarters.
 - Voted ballots
 - Unused ballot stock (insert in ballot box #4 or **designated container**)
- ☐ Pack all cords and put in the containers in which they were issued.
- ☐ Pack all of the supplies in the containers in which they were issued. Refer to the Opening the Polling Place Checklist for a list of supplies.
- ☐ Gather and return the supplies that were used for curbside voting.
- ☐ **Verify that all election workers have completed their statement of compensation and oaths or other applicable timesheet for payroll purposes.**

Signs

- ☐ Remove all posted signs inside the polling place.
- ☐ Remove the signs posted outside the polling place and the directional signs near the road. Refer to the Opening the Polling Place Checklist for a list of signs, if needed.

Best Practices for Closing the Polling Place on Election Night:

- ☐ Lock the door once the last voter has voted and left the polling place.
- ☐ The presiding judge should designate certain parts of the checklist to each election worker in order to ensure an efficient closing of the polling place.
- ☐ The presiding judge and alternate judge should be the only workers who execute the electronic closing polls procedures, the printing of results tapes, and completion of required reports as directed by the authority conducting the election.
- ☐ **Before releasing election clerks for the night, please make sure all required documents are completed and signed and the polling place is restored to its original condition.**
- ☐ Complete all chain of custody forms, apply and verify all seals on voting equipment. Two people should verify all seal numbers and complete the chain of custody form.
- ☐ Please remove all tape from the electrical cords before returning them to Election Night Headquarters.
- ☐ If any equipment or supplies were delivered to the polling place by the authority conducting the election, make sure the items are packed and returned in the same manner in which they were delivered.
- ☐ Review the supplies checklist – make sure all required equipment/supplies are accounted for and secured.
- ☐ **Do a walk-through before leaving the polling place. Make sure the polling place is left in the same condition in which it was found.**
- ☐ Ensure your required paperwork is organized and available when you deliver the required equipment and supplies to Election Night Headquarters.
- ☐ Follow any other instructions from the authority conducting the election.

Once your polling place has been returned to its original condition, please proceed to election night headquarters to return equipment and supplies as directed by the authority conducting the election.