

PROCEDURES FOR CENTRAL COUNTING STATION (CSS) OPERATION

UNDER TEC 127.007- LLANO COUNTY, TEXAS

The Central County Station is located at the Llano County Elections Office at 1447 E. State Hwy 71, Llano, TX 78643. Phone (325) 247- 5425

1. Central Counting Station Personnel:

CCS Manager – Rachel Wimberley
Manager Assistant – Andrea Wilson, EA
Tabulation Supervisor - Andrea Wilson, EA
Presiding Judge – Bette Sue Hoy
Alternate Presiding Judge – Becky Stewart

2. Procedures for Convening the Central Counting Station

In Advance of Election Day

- Call the Sheriff's Department and arrange for a deputy on Election Night starting at 6:30pm. - November General elections only. Retain security personnel as needed for other elections.
- Early voting Ballot Board (EVBB), AKA the Signature Verification Committee; convenes for the first time to compare signatures on existing ballots by mail.
Prepare any reject letters for mailing after the election.
- Set up the election in Tally (including any write-ins).
- Conduct the Secretary of State's test for Election Night online reporting and secure the necessary login and password.
- Prepare a contact list of e-mails for Election Night results. Let the recipients know how to access the results on the web site.
- Establish intake stations and teams.
 - o Prepare a list of phone numbers for each polling location.
 - o Prepare a Reconciliation Count check-list to be used at intake.

After Early Voting

- Pick up the Keys for the Llano Ag Building
- Pick up Key for the Ballot boxes from the Judge/Sheriff.
- Run a final report on the ePollbook when EV is shut down –email reports
- Upload Voter History to TEAM on Friday
- Count the number of names on the Early Voting combination forms; verify these numbers match the number of access codes voted for each day of EV using the white Hart Reconciliation envelope. The totals will be used Election Day for comparison to the tabulation numbers.
- Call the members of the EVBB/CCS team to remind them of Election Day work.
- Prepare the voter registration lists and ePollbooks, (or if needed, paper voter registration lists).
- Prepare EVBB/CCS Room for the EVBB and CCS with Compensation forms, Time Sheets, tables, Chairs, pens, Paper, calculator, wire cutters, paperwork collection boxes, letter openers, etc.
- Prepare a file folder for each polling place containing

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- Chain of Custody Log
- A transfer envelope for each MBB
- Get a clip board with a sign-in sheet for Roster for Voters hand-delivering Carrier Envelopes on ED only.

Election Day Morning

- Receive phone calls from all polling locations, indicating the equipment is powered up and they are ready to open polls at 7:00. Verify all members of the team are there.
- Put compensation sheets (SOS version) out on the main table for EVBB and CCS judges and intake clerks. Complete the top of the forms.
- Early Voting Ballot Board (EVBB) will arrive after the polls have opened, around 9:00 am. They take the oath and sign the compensation sheet. They are currently paid \$12 hour.

They will:

1. Verify the seals on the Early Voting Scanners and remove V-Drives. Place the V-drives in labeled transfer envelopes and secure them in a locked file in the tabulation room until they are read into Tally.
2. Determine the Early Voting provisional votes, if the work on them is complete.
3. Prepare rejection letters for Provisional Ballots.
4. The CCS manager shall direct the manual examination of all ABBMs to ascertain whether the ballots can be processed in the usual manner or if the ballots need to be duplicated (§127.126) to clearly reflect the voter's intent. Open ballot envelopes and place paper ballots into categories as need: rejected with reason, Statement of Residence included or not, unreadable/ damaged and signature matching. Sort any damaged ballots for duplication, and place on the list of duplicated ballots. Scan and resolve (over votes, mismarks, write-ins) the mail ballots. Scan mail ballot votes, the FPCA votes, and the limited ballot votes, into Central Count Scanner with the assistance of the office staff. Go to the post office to collect last mail ballots. If the EVBB has not dispersed, record any ballots that voters submit in our office by person on Election Day.
5. Election Day L&A Testing

If a voter delivers a ballot in person after the EVBB has left, this ballot must be added to the Election Day count. A member(s) of the EVBB must return as needed that evening to process the ballot.

(Keep informed of any NEW SOS regulations for Ballot by Mail or FPCA voting)

Election Day- Midday

- Prepare Intake (front) Office for intake with boxes for
 - Yellow envelopes #2
 - White reconciliation envelopes
 - Provisional bags

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- Calculator, pens, paper, and compensation sheet forms
- Remove items from the shelf in the reception area.
- Run a Tally Zero Report

Election Night 6:30 p.m.

- CCS judges and intake clerks arrive. They take the oath and sign the compensation sheet(s).
- Judges and clerks are currently paid \$12.00/hour
- Section 127.005(d) states that the CCS presiding judge (and we include alternate) is entitled to a minimum compensation of five hours' pay regardless of the time worked. Section 127.006(d) states that the CCS clerks are entitled to a minimum compensation of three hours' pay regardless of the time worked.
- Instruct the intake team in procedures and assign duties. Open the equipment storage area. Everyone wears nametags. Give the security person instructions.
- TALLY - Print a zero report, and the CCS judges, CCS Manager, EA (if not CCS Manager) and Assistant sign it.
- Tabulate the Early Voting V-drives and ABBMs. Verify to see that the cast vote numbers on the reports match the number of access codes actually used and the paper ballot document (for mail ballots). Return the V-drives to their transfer envelopes and check the box on the envelopes "Check here when MBB tallied." Secure the tallied V-drives in a file in the tabulation room. The judges observe all processes and ask questions and help as needed.

Election Night 7:00 p.m.

Staff accepts calls from the election workers, reporting that the polls have closed. Keep an office checklist. **No election results are to be posted until all the polls have reported to close.**

Election Night 7:05 p.m. to close of CCS

- Post Early Voting and Absentee results to the Secretary of State's office and the Llano County website, Update County Clerk with results. Mark all results "Unofficial" and "Early Voting only". Show report to anyone waiting outside. If there is a difference of more than 3, contact the SOS for further instructions. MARK ALL RESULTS as "UNOFFICIAL" IF POSSIBLE USE WATERMARK FEATURE.
- INTAKE - Election workers bring the equipment and supplies from the polling locations to the election's office. They will stay until the check-in is done. Check-in will be in order of arrival, with the poll workers staying in their vehicle until their turn in the lobby. Follow the guidelines for INTAKE PROCEDURES.
- Count the Combination Form signatures and compare them to the number of access codes voted. Use the Reconciliation Counts sheet to help with the reconciliation. If the numbers are off by three or more, report to the EA before the election judge leaves the premises to allow for discussion.

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- Provisional ballots are taken out of the Orange Bags and brought to the tabulating room for documentation and secure storage. In the CCS room - keep a list of the provisional ballots and for which elections the count may be affected.
- Bring the V-Drive transfer envelopes to the tabulation room for tallying.
- Tabulate each V-Drive, comparing the access code report and the precinct report numbers. The numbers should match exactly. Do not forget the provisional tab and/or the write-in tab. Return the V-Drive to the transfer envelope and place it in the secure file. Proceed until all voting precincts have been tabulated. Keep a checklist to ensure all precincts are accounted for, including any Scanners you might have replaced at the polls during the day, or an extra ballot box you might have used.
- Release the CCS intake clerks after all of the precincts have reported.

Results Release

- The CCS team will determine how often to release results, but should be released as soon as practical. All members of the team sign each printed UNOFFICIAL cumulative report that will be retained as an election record.
- Review the reports, number of provisional ballots, and number of outstanding FPCA overseas ballots to determine if an outcome for an election could be changed **before** reporting the final results.
- Final results should be released (depending on election the order varies) to:
 - o Secretary of State's office via online reporting.
 - o Email contact list for representatives of the Other Political Subdivisions and the Commissioner's Court
 - o Email contact list for press
 - o Public via posting the Cumulative Report on the Llano County website
 - o Public via posting at Courthouse

Telephone and fax are alternative methods. The final results e-mail should include information on how many provisional ballots are outstanding and for which elections. The final results e-mail may also include the number of any outstanding FPCA ballots that could be counted later.

Conclusion

- Print other reports for the election records including an Audit Log and Precinct Report.
- Do not Finalize the election in Tally after all V-DRIVES have been read. Post the unofficial results on the county website if not already done.

Post-Election Night

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- Back up all v-Drives used in the election via the Verity computer within a week of the election if possible. Back up the Verity database.
- Assist the Early Voting Ballot Board (and CAS judges if they are present) with tallying Election Day provisional votes, timely overseas FPCA votes, and late mail ballots; when the EVBB meets on the designated date and time. Finalize the election in Tally. The EVBB team signs the final official cumulative report for an election record. The EVBB judge takes a copy of the report home.
- Have Letter of Rejected Ballot prepared for their use.
- Print Official reports to accompany canvassing materials.
- Post Official results on the website after the canvassing deadline(s).

Poll watchers

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.” (Section 33.055, Texas Election Code). The poll watcher must deliver their certificate of appointment to the Presiding Judge of the CCS and the Presiding Judge must countersign their certificate. The CCS plan should address the presence of poll watchers. If necessary, the CCS plan may address this process and may stipulate the areas where a poll watcher is permitted to stand or sit to observe the counting activities.