



★ VIRGINIA ★
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

OFFICIAL GUIDANCE

Date: Originally issued October 6, 2020; updated 2-28-24 **Updated for 2024 November General**

RE: Election Night and Post-Election Reporting and the Central Absentee Precinct

Under section § 24.2-709 of the Code of Virginia, mail-in ballots postmarked on or before Election Day and received by noon on Friday after election day will count toward the election results. The following guidance explains how registrars should report election results from the Central Absentee Precinct (CAP).

1. On Election Day and Night, localities should process and count as many of the absentee ballots as can reasonably be counted. These ballots will include any received by the CAP and those that are returned to drop-off locations on Election Day. There is no requirement that *all* of these ballots have to be processed. However, you will already have pre-processed many ballots under the requirements of § 24.2-709.1 and 1VAC 20-70-40. Some localities will be able to process and count all of the ballots received through Election Day by the time the night is over. Others will not. **Continue processing ballots until you have finished or until 7:00 p.m., whichever comes first.** Absentee ballots that still need to be processed after 7:00 pm will be included with Post-Election.
2. At 7:00 pm, after the polls have closed, hit the button on your machine(s) to initiate ballot count totals.
3. Once counting has finished for the night, pull the results tapes and create an initial SOR for the CAP. Follow the closing procedures for your optical scan equipment.
4. ***Make sure you have extra rolls of machine tape available for your machines as more will likely be needed to accommodate absentee by precinct reporting.***
5. Report the results in Enhanced Results. When entering CAP results into Enhanced Results, **enter the consolidated totals first** as has been done in the past. Enter by-precinct totals as time allows. **Do not wait for all of your tapes to print** before reporting your consolidated results, as by-precinct totals do not have to be completed election night, but consolidated totals do.
6. You may continue to process ballots the Wednesday through Friday after the election, however, you are not required to process incoming ballots until after the deadline to receive ballots at noon on the Friday after the election. This will be a locality-by-locality decision based on the number of ballots received and the processing time necessary to enter all results totals into Enhanced Results and complete the canvass by the ~~Tuesday~~ second Friday after the election (Monday after the election for Primaries).
 - a. If you have a machine set aside to scan ballots after Election Day, follow opening procedures, run zero tapes, qualify and feed the ballots. Once all precincts are completed, pull your results.

- b. If you are reusing your machine from CAP to scan ballots after Election Day, you will need to place the Election Day media in Envelope #7 (**7FED for Federal media**). Follow your vendor's instructions on resetting your machine to zero, and insert new CAP media to reopen the voting machine. Follow opening procedures, run zero tapes, qualify and feed the ballots. (If you have not already completed L&A Testing on the media to be used for counting ballots after Election Day, you will need to conduct L&A Testing before scanning ballots.)
7. Once you have completed processing all ballots validly received and cast, pull results tapes from the machines, combine them with the initial SOR from election night, and edit the SOR to add new columns as necessary to capture the additional results tapes. Edit the CAP results in Enhanced Results to reflect the new totals.
8. Please note that the post-election CAP will ensure that no locality is reporting 100% results through ENR until the locality has counted all ballots.
9. Please scan or otherwise record received ballots in VERIS as your office receives them. This will ensure that VERIS maintains current, accurate data on the number of ballots returned. ELECT will be displaying this information on our website as part of our election results. Keeping this information current should help reduce the number of calls to your office.
10. CAP ballots counted after Election Day must be processed and counted by members of your CAP team, including the original CAP Chief and Assistant Chief, and at least one other Officer of Election. While the Chief and Assistant Chief must be the original CAP Officers, additional OOs brought in to assist do not have to have been part of your original CAP team. You may bring in as many teams as necessary to efficiently handle processing and counting. You should consider the availability of these officers when making your schedule to count CAP ballots.
11. Notify political parties and candidates of when you plan to continue processing and counting ballots. Note that the rules for observers/authorized representatives are the same for these additional days as they are for Election Day.
12. Pursuant to SBE Policy 2023-001, the absentee ballot results, separated by mail-in or in-person and by precinct, must be posted to ELECT's website no later than noon (12:00 PM) the seventh calendar day following the election. **This means all absentee (early voting, mailed absentee, and post-election) by precinct results must be entered in Enhanced Results before noon (12:00 PM) on the Tuesday after the election.**
13. Enhanced Results Use Procedures and training documents can be found in ELECT's Learning Management System (LMS) > My Courses > Course: Election Night and Post-Election Process.