

2024 General Election Retrospective

February 26, 2025



★ VIRGINIA ★
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following each November General Election since 2018, the Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT) has published a post-election report to create a historical record of the election. In producing the reports, ELECT's goal is to provide transparency in its efforts to continually improve the administration of elections in the Commonwealth and to showcase the tremendous joint effort of the State Board of Elections (SBE), ELECT staff, general registrars and their staffs, local electoral boards, and officers of election that results in accurate, fair, open, and secure elections in the Commonwealth.

This report includes key stakeholder perspectives about the 2024 General Election (also referred to as "2024 Election" or "Election" throughout this report) through incorporating data from an ELECT post-election survey of Virginia's general registrar community.

This report highlights several areas, including law changes impacting the administration of elections, election participation statistics, elections administration tasks and compliance metrics, special topics related to the 2024 Election, and reflections by the general registrar community on both the Election and election administration generally.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Based upon ELECT's observations and feedback from the general registrar community, the following are major themes and takeaways emerging from the 2024 General Election:

- Same Day Registration (SDR) remains an administrative challenge for localities, which was amplified in 2024 by a high volume of SDR voters (114,894 SDR ballots).
- Many localities struggle to meet expanding obligations in the 10-day post-election period.
- General registrars continue to convey the need for additional personnel resources, particularly in the form of a full-time deputy registrar.
- ELECT partnered with stakeholders to prevent and mitigate external challenges in 2024, including issues with the United States Postal Service.
- Results were confirmed in two races selected by post-election audits, including the race for U.S. Senate.
- Virginia's meeting of the Electoral College was successfully held on December 17, 2024, with all necessary documents provided to the required federal and state recipients.
- General registrars noted improvements since 2023 with two critical state systems: the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS) and the Election Night Reporting (ENR) system.

INTRODUCTION

Election administration in the Commonwealth has fundamentally changed over the past five years with the implementation of legislation expanding early and absentee by mail voting, including 45-day early voting prior to elections, and making other sweeping changes to elections including SDR, ranked-choice voting, and new requirements to provide increased transparency of election results.

While the expanded early voting period has been in place since the 2020 General Election, 2024 was the first time 45-day early voting was available for all three scheduled elections in one year. With the addition of special elections, some localities in the Commonwealth administered 175 days of voting, meaning they were voting for nearly half of the year (48% of 2024). Across the Commonwealth, this effort required approximately 15,000 officers of election to facilitate early voting, as well as operating precincts on Election Day.

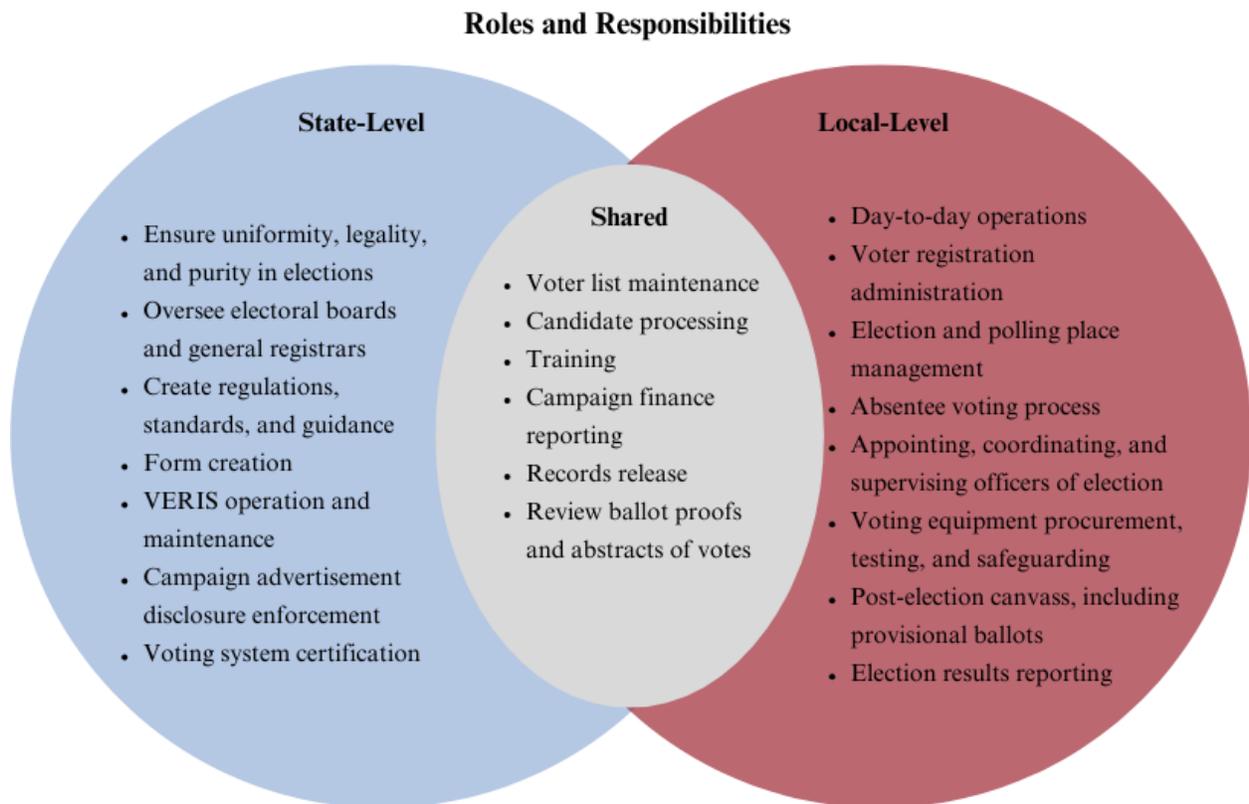
In addition to active voting periods, multiple recounts were held, including for the Fifth Congressional District Republican primary that involved 24 localities. Furthermore, Virginia conducted two post-election, pre-certification risk-limiting audits of the general election contests for the First Congressional District and the United States Senate.

The expansion of early and by mail voting and other new requirements has caused the traditional role of an election administrator to expand. Operating elections in the Commonwealth is no longer a twice-a-year endeavor, but rather a 365-day operation that requires a team of individuals working at both the state and local levels to plan, prepare, support, and deliver accurate, fair, open, and secure elections for the citizens of the Commonwealth. This report aims to capture the changing landscape and document the efforts of election officials during the 2024 General

Election, while also reflecting on and learning from these experiences to inform policy decisions about Virginia’s elections in the future.

STRUCTURE OF ELECTIONS IN THE COMMONWEALTH

Virginia’s electoral system is built upon a framework of state and local cooperation. Localities are primarily responsible for the direct administration of elections; this local control is a hallmark of Virginia’s electoral system and a key aspect of the checks and balances that make elections in the Commonwealth safe and secure. The state also plays a key role, including having general oversight of local election officials, to ensure legality and uniformity in elections throughout the Commonwealth.



State-Level Administration

The SBE is the regulatory body that oversees elections in the Commonwealth. Created in 1946, it consists of five members appointed by the governor and confirmed by the General Assembly. The SBE members represent both major political parties, with three members being of the sitting governor’s party and two members of the party that received the second most votes for Governor.¹ SBE members have staggered, four-year terms. Before the creation of ELECT, the SBE bore the state level administrative responsibilities provided by the Code (in addition to its responsibilities to promulgate regulations and procedures) to maintain the legality and purity of

¹ Va. Code § 24.2-102 (A).

all elections in the Commonwealth, including issuing instructions and guidance to electoral boards and general registrars to ensure *uniformity* in their practices and proceedings and overseeing campaign finance disclosure compliance, maintaining the centralized voter registration system and creating standards and procedures for list maintenance processes.

In 2014, ELECT was created as an executive branch agency under the Secretary of Administration to carry out the administrative functions of the SBE. ELECT is led by the commissioner of elections, who is appointed by the governor and confirmed by the General Assembly.² ELECT is both directly assigned duties under the Code and delegated duties by the SBE. In addition to taking over many of the SBE's administrative duties described above, the administrative demands on ELECT have increased with the implementation of transformative legislation in recent years and the general expansion of the use of technology and data in election administration. In furtherance of this work, the Office of the Attorney General provides legal advice to the SBE and ELECT.

Local Administration

The administration of elections in each of the 133 independent cities and counties in the Commonwealth is carried out by a general registrar and a three-member electoral board.³ Under Virginia law, electoral boards are primarily responsible for the conduct of elections (including oversight of officers of election) and appointing the general registrar, whereas the primary function of general registrars is to ensure the proper registration of qualified individuals and maintenance of the voter rolls.

The electoral board is comprised of two members representing the party of the governor and one member representing the party receiving the second highest vote total for governor in the previous gubernatorial election. Electoral board members are appointed by the circuit court for the locality, selected from a list of nominations provided by each party, and serve staggered, four-year terms. Some of the duties of electoral boards include appointing and overseeing the work of the general registrar, ensuring polling places meet all legal requirements, appointing and coordinating officers of election, conducting the canvass, and certifying locality results.

General registrars are appointed by the electoral board for a term of four years.⁴ Duties of general registrars include maintaining the office for voter registration, educating the public regarding registration, providing voter registration forms, processing voter registration applications, ensuring the list of registered voters is maintained, preparing pollbooks for precincts, ensuring redistricting is completed, reviewing candidate petitions, and administering the absentee ballot process. Beyond expressly enumerated duties in the Code, general registrars conduct the numerous day-to-day operations of the elections office, including many election administration duties delegated by the electoral board, which is the reason that many general registrars also have the title of director of elections. Electoral board members are paid a small

² Va. Code § 24.2-102 (B).

³ Va. Code § 24.2-106 (A).

⁴ Va. Code § 24.2-110 (A).

stipend for their attendance at electoral board meetings and election-related activities, while general registrars are full-time employees.

Officers of election are appointed by electoral boards to terms not to exceed three years.⁵ Political parties provide a list of proposed officers of election from which the appointments are made. Officers of election play an important role in staffing and operating polling places. Led by a chief officer of election, they are responsible for the conduct of elections at polling places, including checking in voters and providing ballots, ensuring all required voting processes and procedures are followed, assisting voters with questions, administering curbside voting, ensuring authorized representatives and observers comply with all requirements, maintaining a safe and orderly environment, and recording the machine-reported results on the Statement of Results.

TIMELINE OF THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTION

Due to the March Presidential Primary, 2024 presented a full calendar for voters and election officials in the Commonwealth. The following graphic provides an overview of key dates in the 2024 General Election cycle.

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⁵ Va. Code § 24.2-115 (A).

2024 Election Timeline



TRAINING AND PREPARATION

When not actively preparing to host the next election, the SBE, ELECT, general registrars, and electoral boards work to implement new legislation, refine and create new processes, educate voters, provide important technological updates, and train staff and officers of election on statutory requirements.

“Three elections in one year provided us with a comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved in the electoral process and the importance of thorough preparation and responsiveness.” - Anonymous General Registrar

Implementation of Enacted Legislation

Since 2020, state and local election officials in Virginia have successfully implemented over 100 enacted pieces of election-related legislation, including some with many individual requirements. During the 2024 General Assembly Session, numerous pieces of legislation were approved that directly impacted voters and election administration, including expanding the availability of curbside voting, increasing polling place notice requirements, expanding minority language requirements, codifying the availability of absentee voting for confined individuals, providing voters with a constitutional referendum regarding property tax exemptions for certain surviving spouses, changing campaign finance reporting requirements and candidate filing requirements, adding an administrative process to cancel a primary election, and extending the deadline for Electoral Boards to certify election results.

This report does not discuss all the election-related laws that passed during the 2024 General Assembly Session but provides an overview of approved legislation that was most impactful on the 2024 General Election. A comprehensive summary of all 2024 election law changes can be found on ELECT’s website.⁶

Absentee Voting

Individuals confined while awaiting trial or after a misdemeanor conviction have always been eligible to vote by absentee ballot if they had not been convicted of a felony. However, the statutory language that clarified this fact was removed when individuals were no longer required to have an excused reason to vote absentee. Acts of Assembly 553 recodified existing rights by adding this specific language back into the Code of Virginia for clarity.⁷ This bill also required the institution or facility in which such voter is confined to (i) provide the means and opportunity for such voter to complete and submit a timely application for an absentee ballot and to properly mark his absentee ballot and (ii) ensure such voter's marked absentee ballot is returned in accordance with law. ELECT updated guidance documents and certification training for general registrars following the enactment of this bill.

⁶ ELECT, Election Law, Election Law and Reference, <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/election-law/>

⁷ 2024 Va. Acts 553.

Certification of Elections

Acts of Assembly 738 extended from 7 days to 10 days the deadline after a general election for electoral boards to certify election results and submit the abstract of votes to the SBE.⁸ With the increase in the number of provisional ballots localities must process and adjudicate due to SDR, extending the deadline for electoral boards to certify election results was beneficial for the 2024 General Election. As a result of the extension, various administrative processes, trainings, forms, and guidance documents were updated, including the Risk-Limiting Audit Manual to ensure RLA administrative timelines coincided with the extended certification deadline.

Electoral College Clarifications

Acts of Assembly 801 recodified and consolidated existing provisions related to the Electoral College and added additional provisions, including requiring that electors be a citizen of the United States and a legal resident of the Commonwealth of Virginia.⁹ This bill also clarified that a “refusal to act” that leads to a vacancy of an elector is when an elector refuses to present a ballot, presents an unmarked ballot, or presents a ballot marked in violation of the elector's oath. It also created an allowance for the substitution of electors for third-party and independent candidates. Finally, consistent with 2022 amendments to the federal Electoral Count Act by Congress, the meeting of the electors for Virginia was moved to noon on the first Tuesday after the second Wednesday in December following their election; previously the Electoral College meeting occurred on the first Monday. This did not have a significant impact on existing processes but required ELECT to update candidate forms and documents, including the Oath for Electors.

Minority Language Requirements

Acts of Assembly 406 required the following information to be available and translated into any language that is spoken by a language minority group (consistent with § 24.2-128): (i) the role of and contact information for the SBE, ELECT, electoral boards, and general registrars and (ii) information about absentee voting, polling hours, Virginia's voter identification requirements and acceptable forms of identification, the casting of ballots, and a means for voters to find their polling place.¹⁰ The bill also required ELECT's website to allow a voter to review any information about themselves that is kept in the statewide voter registration database, which is currently done through Citizen Portal. ELECT has undertaken a wide range of efforts within the last three years to provide more translations to its website, including offering election results in three languages for the first time in 2023. This bill reinforced already existing best practices and ensured accessibility for future elections.

Polling Places

Acts of Assembly 191 and 515 expanded the definition of a “person with a disability” for purposes of curbside voting to include voters with any permanent or temporary disability.¹¹

⁸ 2024 Va. Acts 738.

⁹ 2024 Va. Acts 801.

¹⁰ Va. Code §24.2-128. *See* 2024 Va. Acts 406.

¹¹ 2024 Va. Acts 191. 2024 Va. Acts 515.

Previously, only voters with a physical permanent or temporary disability or who are aged 65 or older could use curbside voting.¹² These bills brought the definition of a “person with a disability” in § 24.2-101 in alignment with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Virginians with Disabilities Act (VDA), which require individuals with disabilities, whether physical or mental, to have equal access to government services and programs.¹³ These bills also required officers of election to be trained in assisting voters who use curbside voting. This legislation resulted in amendments to officer of election training, general registrar’s certification training, and Election Day guidance documents.

Protected Voter Status

As it pertains to voter registration, Acts of Assembly 309 and 787 increased the class of individuals eligible to register as a protected voter.¹⁴ Protected voters are permitted by law to provide on their voter registration application, in addition to their residence street address, a post office box address located within the Commonwealth to be included on (i) lists of registered voters and persons who voted, (ii) voter registration records made available for public inspection, and (iii) lists of absentee voter applicants. Combined, these bills added to the list of eligible protected voters any current or former elector for president and vice president of the United States, State Board of Elections member, ELECT commissioner and staff, member of a local electoral board, general registrar, deputy registrar or employee in an office of a general registrar, or officer of election. The SBE approved an updated voter registration form in response to this legislation, and ELECT collaborated with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to ensure the new protected voter statuses were available to individuals conducting eligible voter registration DMV transactions.

ELECT Trainings

As the election landscape in Virginia continues to change and the administrative demands expand, it is essential that all election officials are fully informed and prepared to serve voters, whether they are new or continuing their service. In furtherance of this effort for the 2024 General Election, ELECT developed and/or updated 20 different types of training. These trainings covered topics such as election security standards, SDR, Virginia legislative changes, officer of election requirements, election observer standards, and the ENR system. ELECT also provided updates to general registrars' certification curriculum and the annual training for Electoral Board members. Trainings are provided online through ELECT’s Learning Management System (LMS), virtually through webinars, or in person depending on the type of course.

Virginia Elections Workshop (VEW)

One of the largest training events organized by ELECT is the annual Virginia Elections Workshop (VEW). The VEW event is held as part of the SBE’s certification program for general

¹² Va. Code §24.2-649.1.

¹³ Va. Code §24.2-101. *See* Americans with Disabilities Act, 126 U.S.C. §12131. *See* Va. Code §51.5-40.1.

¹⁴ 2024 Va. Acts 309. 2024 Va. Acts 787.

registrars and brings election officials from across the Commonwealth together to discuss a series of election related topics. The 2024 VEW event was held on July 18 and included the following agenda topics:

- Logic and Accuracy Testing
- Campaign Finance
- SDR
- Accessibility for voters with disabilities
- Write-In Certification
- ENR
- RLA

Feedback from multiple surveys has continued to inform and improve the curriculum of ELECT's training. ELECT consistently reevaluates how trainings are provided to local election officials to ensure they can learn and adapt to any changes required to administer smooth and successful elections. Several trainings have been planned in preparation for 2025 both in response to emerging topics in election administration and proposed legislative changes.

Local, State, and Federal Partnerships

The Virginia Election Day Operations Team (VEOP) is a group that supports collaboration with election administrators, law enforcement, emergency management, and representatives from the state, local, and federal levels. The VEOP Team meets at least twice a year, usually before early voting begins for the primary and November general elections. Meetings with these stakeholders have proved invaluable, as they involve important discussions about election preparations and resources to address issues that may impact election operations.

Other partners include the Virginia State Police, Virginia Capitol Police, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Virginia National Guard, U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, and U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Not only do many of these agencies work with ELECT in preparation for every election, but they also serve as valuable partners on Election Day, often working with ELECT staff from the opening to the closing of polls.

Many of Virginia's emergency management and law enforcement partners also participate in local and national tabletop exercises with ELECT. These exercises are designed to discuss strategies for mitigating cyber and physical impacts on election operations and election infrastructure. Through these preparations, localities, ELECT, and their partners are better prepared to respond to emergencies and incidents.

United States Postal Service

With the expansion of absentee voting, the use of mail-in absentee ballots has become more common in Virginia. As a result, this increased usage has required a greater reliance on the United States Postal Service (USPS). Beginning in 2023, as it became clear there were growing issues with mail delivery in Virginia, ELECT began work to address related concerns about the timely delivery of absentee ballots.

Since 2024 featured three major elections in Virginia, ELECT engaged in constant contact with local, regional, and national representatives from USPS to address issues with mail-in ballots, including identifying ballots that were falsely marked “undeliverable” and tracking ballots that were being delivered to the wrong localities. ELECT continues to participate in regular meetings with USPS to address new and ongoing service issues. For further discussion on issues related to USPS, please see the SPECIAL TOPICS FROM 2024 GENERAL ELECTION section.

Locality Pre-Election Compliance

A key component of the state’s responsibility to ensure uniformity, legality, and purity in elections is measuring locality compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, and procedures. This is partly carried out during the pre-election period by surveying localities and verifying their answers to ensure completion of necessary tasks and uniform operations where statutorily required. The following graphic shows key compliance tasks about which localities communicate heavily with ELECT.¹⁵

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¹⁵ See Va. Code § 24.2-101, -632, -633 (Logic and Accuracy Testing Certification of Voting Systems including BOD) (2024). See 1 Va. Admin Code § 20-60-70 (Logic and Accuracy Testing Certification of Electronic Pollbooks). See Va. Code § 24.2-612, (Absentee Ballot Compliance and Ballot Proofing and Printing). See Va. Code § 24.2-603, (Hours Polls to be Open). See Va. Code § 24.2-70.2 (Satellite Locations and Drop Box Security Measures). See 1 Va. Admin Code § 20-70-60.

Accurate Elections

- Logic and Accuracy (L&A) Testing Certifications of Electronic Pollbooks and Voting Systems
 - *All localities perform L&A testing of all voting systems and electronic pollbooks before Election Day and report the completion of the testing to ELECT.*
- Ballot on Demand (BOD) Printers and systems are operating properly
 - *All localities must perform L&A testing for BOD systems*

Fair Elections

- Absentee Ballot Deadline Compliance
 - *Each general registrar shall report to ELECT, in writing on a form approved by ELECT, whether he has complied with the applicable [absentee ballot] deadline, no later than five days after absentee ballots are made available*

ELECT Compliance Metrics

*100% Locality
Compliance*

Open Elections

- Ballot Proofing and Printing Approval
 - *Appropriate number of ballots ordered by localities*
 - *All ballots must be approved by ELECT prior to their use in any general election.*
- All localities opened on time on Election Day
 - *Polling location hours are 6:00 am - 7:00 pm*

Secure Elections

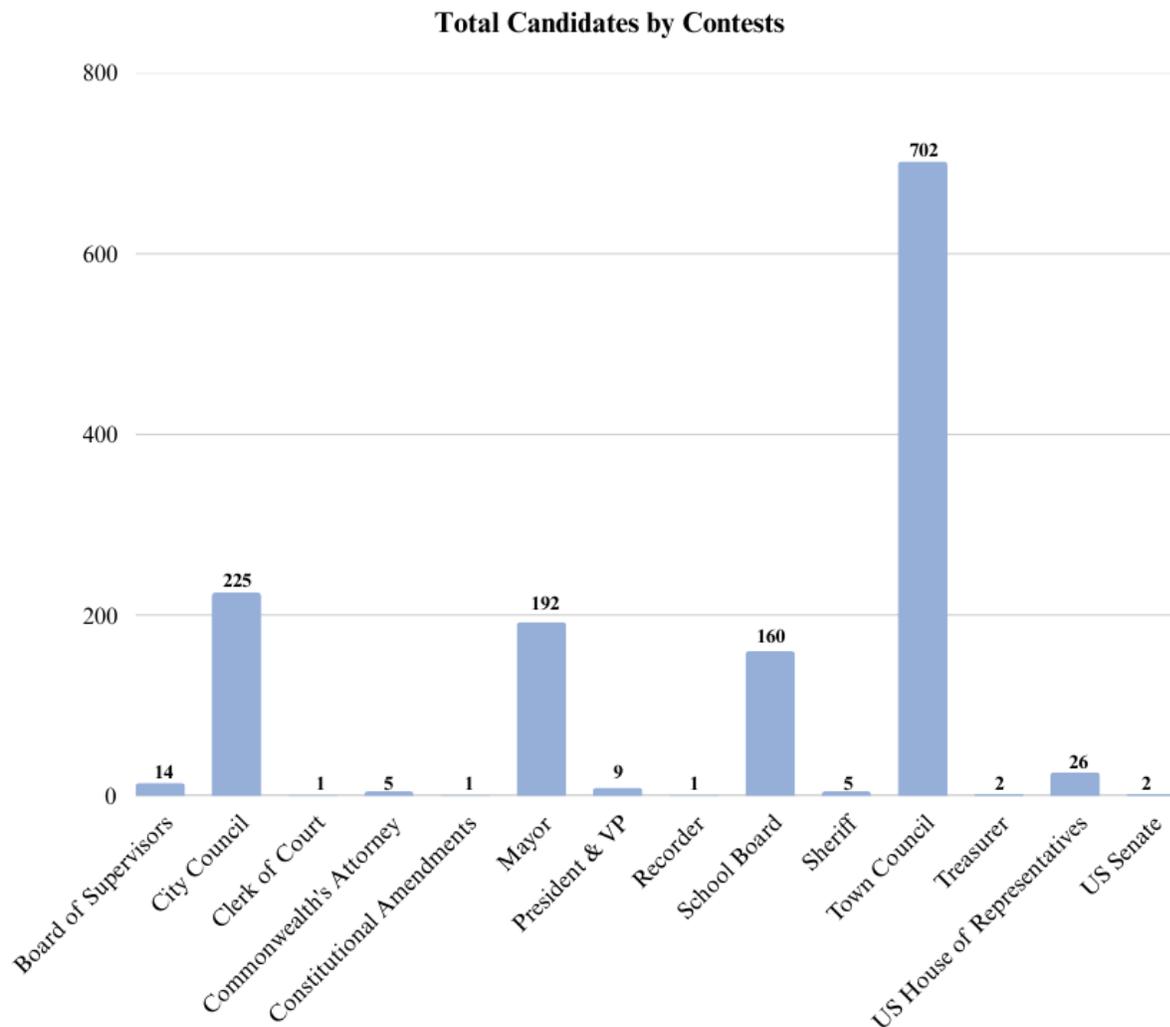
- Satellite Locations and Drop Box Security Measures
 - *Localities must report to ELECT that all required security measures have been installed no more than 90 days and no less than 60 days before Election Day.*

THE ELECTION

The 2024 General Election was held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024. The following subsections provide metrics about participation and other aspects of administering the election.

Contest and Candidates

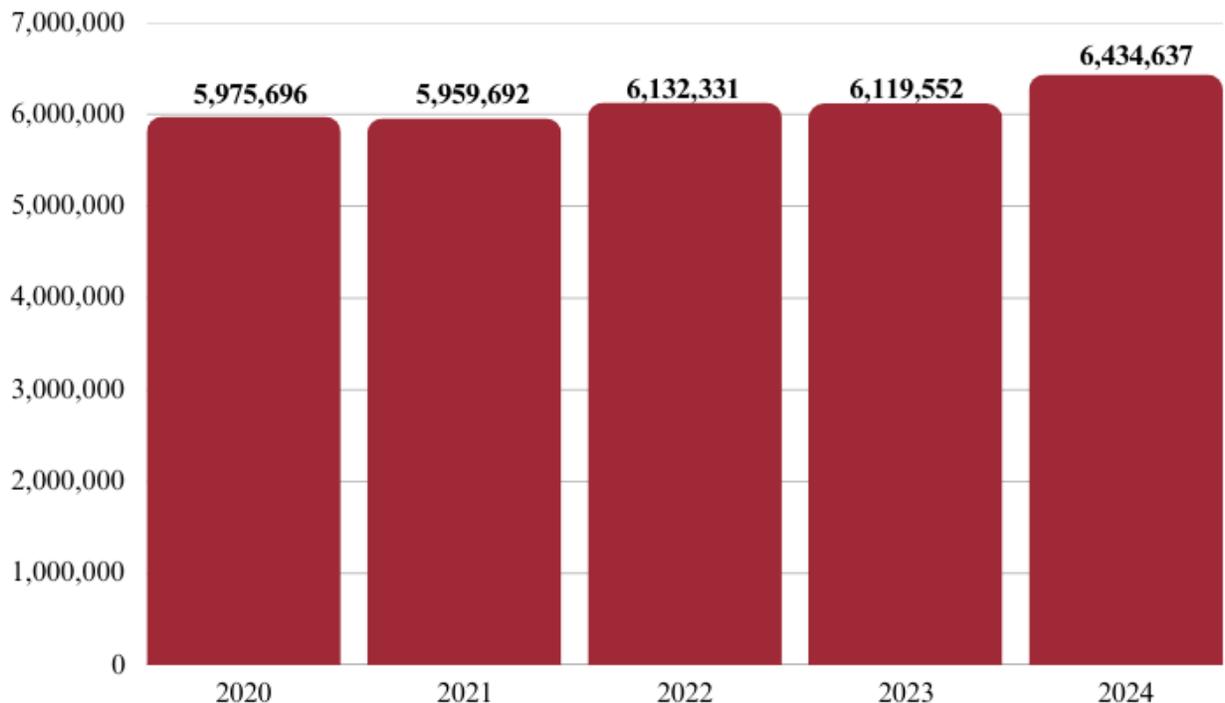
There were 964 contests and a constitutional referendum on the ballot across the Commonwealth with a total of 1,344 candidates. Statewide contests included electors for U.S. president and vice president, U.S. Senate, eleven seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, and a constitutional referendum to expand the current tax exemption to surviving spouses of soldiers who are determined by the U.S. Department of Defense to have died in the line of duty, including those who have been killed in action.



Voting Population

The chart below shows voter registration totals over the last five years, with a general gradual increase over the years. In 2024, out of 8.8 million Virginians, 6,434,637, or 73% were registered to vote. The registration numbers include both active and inactive voters. Inactive voters are those who do not respond to a notice confirming their address within 30 days of being sent the notice following the federally mandated National Change of Address (NCOA) confirmation mailings.¹⁶ Inactive voters are still fully registered and may change their status back to active with any voter-initiated action, such as updating their registration, voting, or requesting an absentee ballot. An inactive voter status does not affect a voter's ability to vote in any election. However, if an inactive voter remains inactive for two general federal elections, these individuals may have their voter registrations cancelled. As this cancellation process occurs the year following a federal general election, the total number of registered voters tend to be slightly lower in odd numbered years.

Number of Registered Voters (2020-2024)

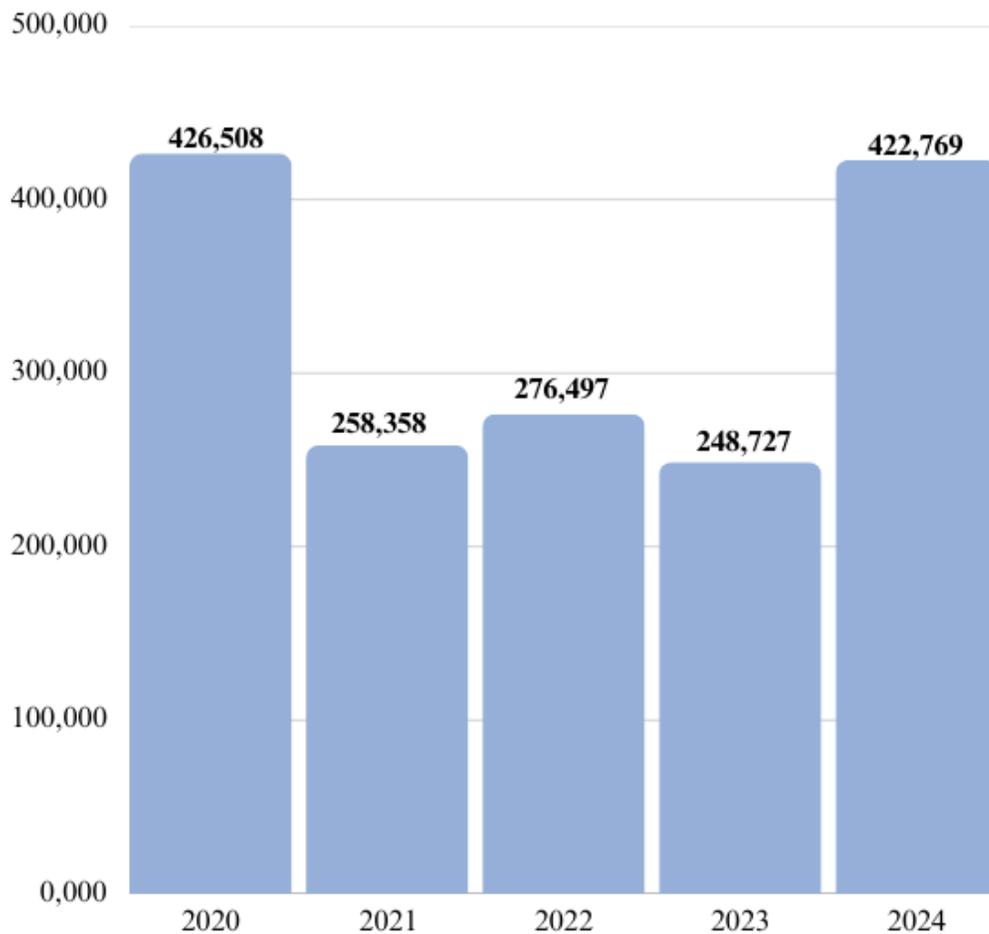


¹⁶ See National Voter Registration Act, 52 U.S.C. § 20507. See Va. Code § 24.2-428.

New Registrations

Virginia currently has more registered voters than ever before, with the largest number of new voter registrations occurring in years in which federal elections are held. In 2024, Virginia had 422,769 new voter registrants. While this was a significant increase from 2023, this number is a 0.8% decrease relative to new registrants in 2020, a year that also featured a presidential election. Additionally, although the overall number of new registrations is relatively large, only 39,717 more people voted in the 2024 Election compared to the 2020 Election despite there also being an overall increase in the number of registered voters (see Ballots Cast vs. Registered Voters graphic in next subsection). While this data is not included in the graph below, as of December 2024, 1,900 individuals are preregistered to vote, meaning they are at least 16 but will not be 18 before the next general election.¹⁷ Preregistered voters are not registered (and thus not reflected in new registrant statistics) until they become eligible to vote.

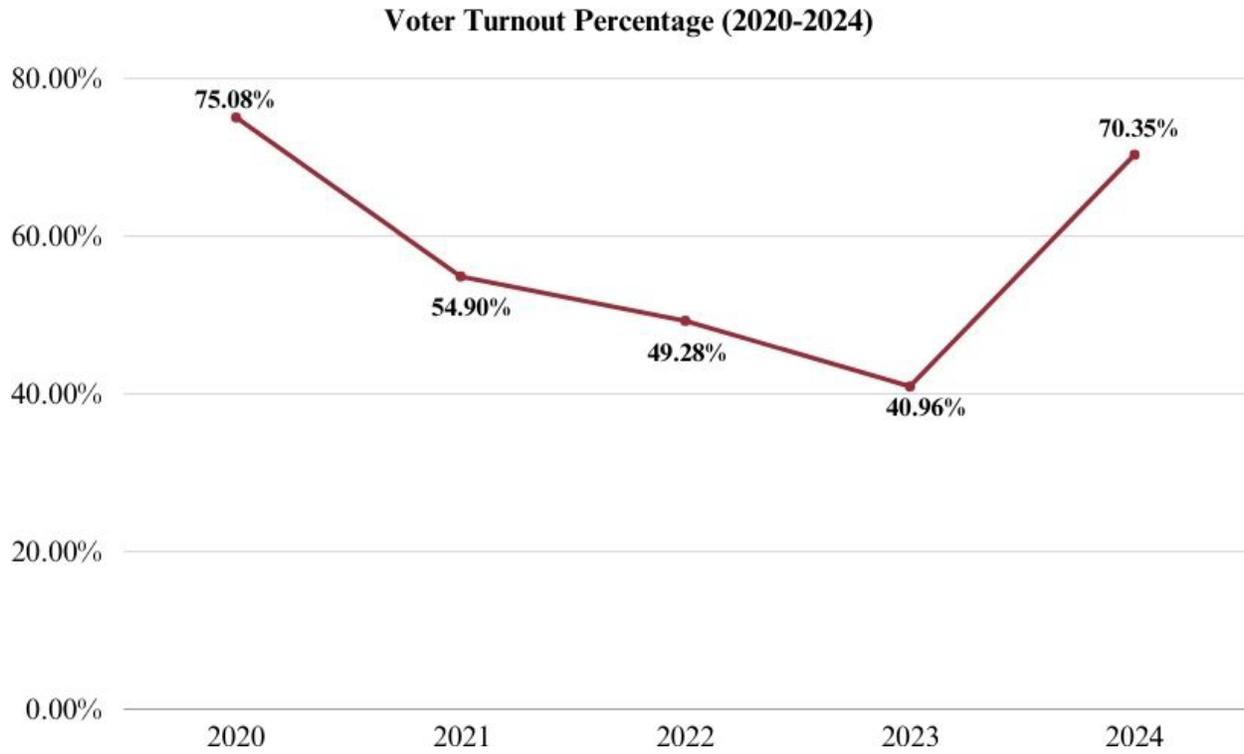
New Voter Registrants By Year



¹⁷ Va. Code § 24.2-403.1.

Voter Turnout Percentage

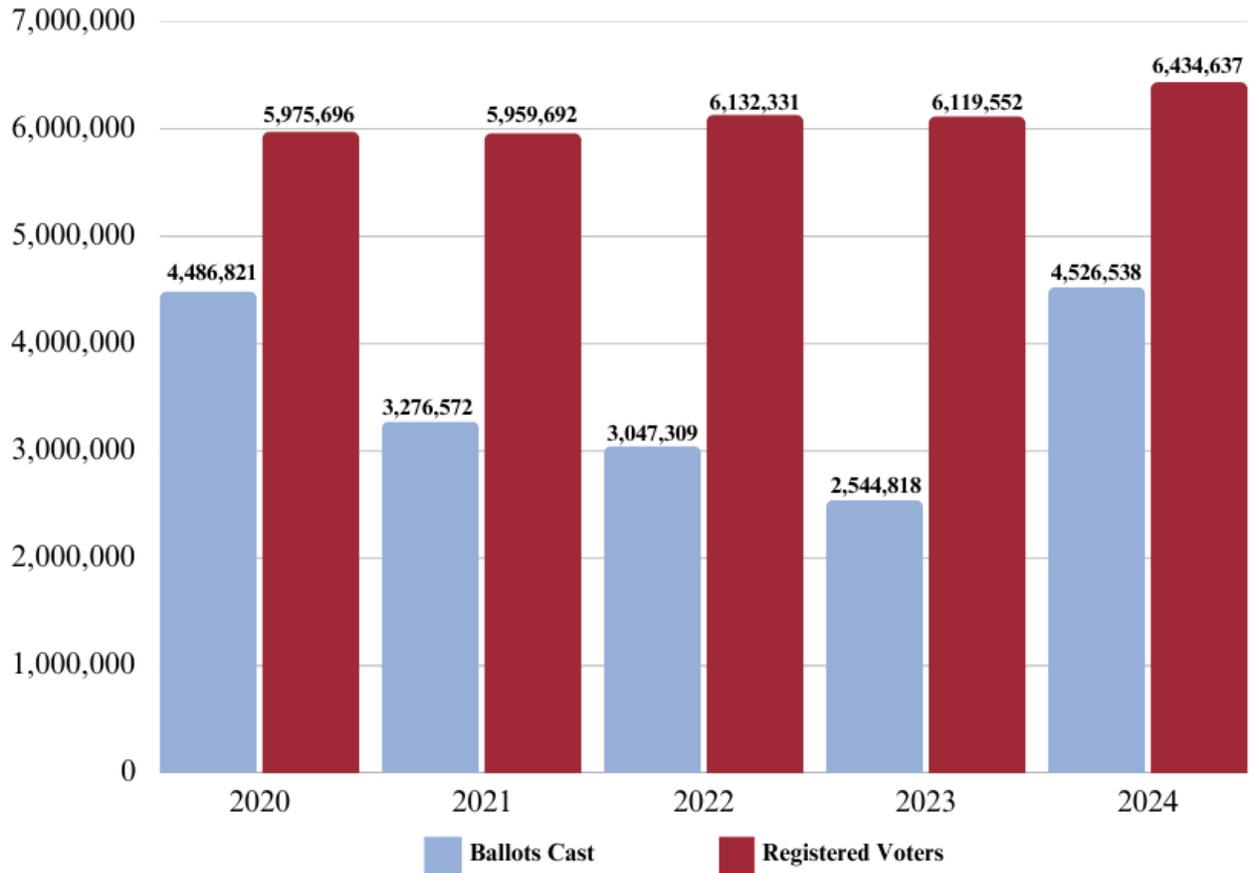
Historically, a presidential election on the ballot results in a higher voting turnout percentage compared to other election years. Voter turnout refers to the number of registered individuals who *attempted* to vote in an election. Total voter turnout for the 2024 Election was 70.35%. This demonstrates a decrease of 4.73% in voter turnout compared to the 2020 elections.



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The graph below offers an alternative way to depict voter turnout data from 2020 to 2024. ELECT calculates voter turnout as the number of ballots cast by the number of registered voters. During 2024, 4,526,538 Virginians cast ballots out of 6,434,637 registered voters, resulting in voter turnout of 70.35%.

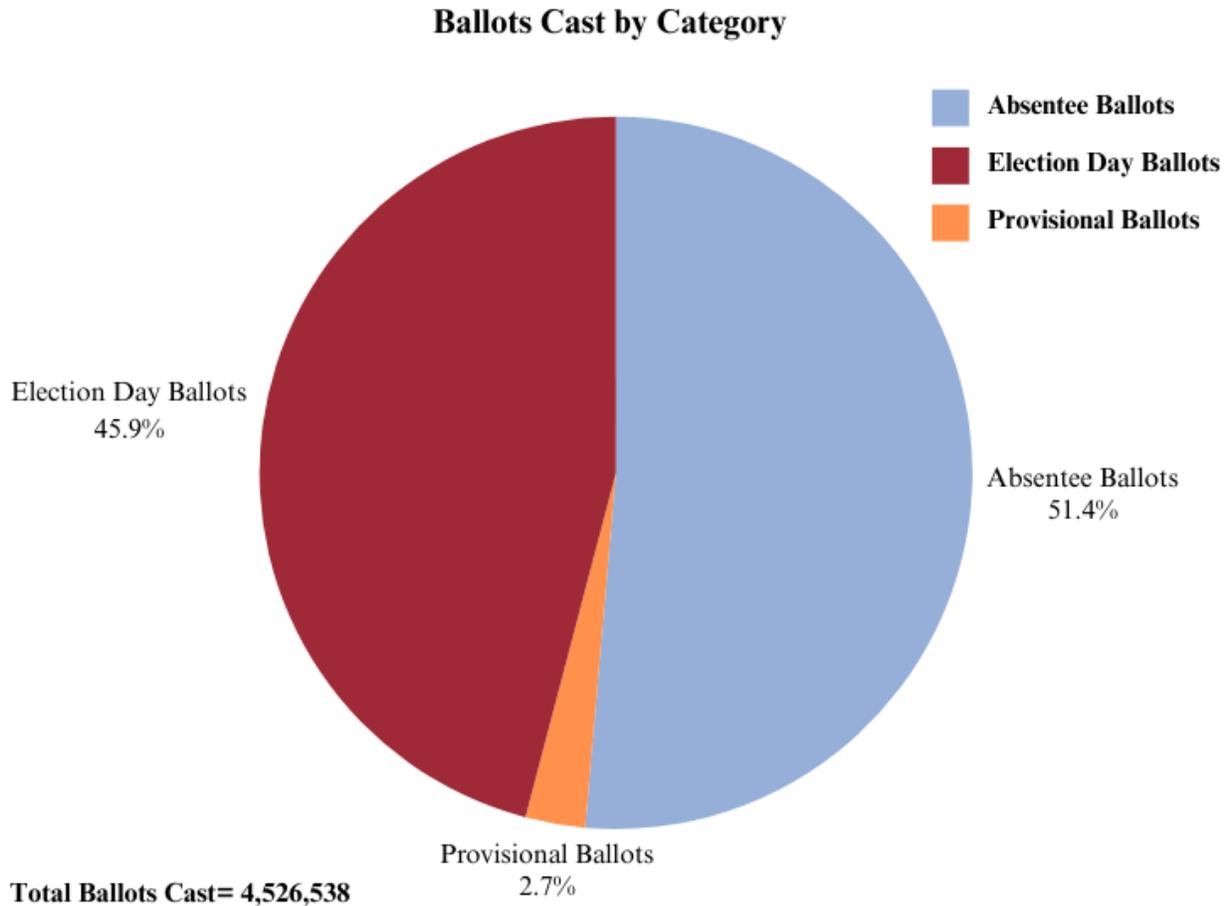
Ballots Cast vs. Registered Voters (2020-2024)



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Ballots Cast by Category

The next chart shows the types of ballots cast by category. Ballots cast refers to the total number of ballots counted towards the total results of an election. Categories of ballots cast include Election Day (In-Person), Absentee (Early In-Person, By Mail, Drop-off), and Provisional ballots.

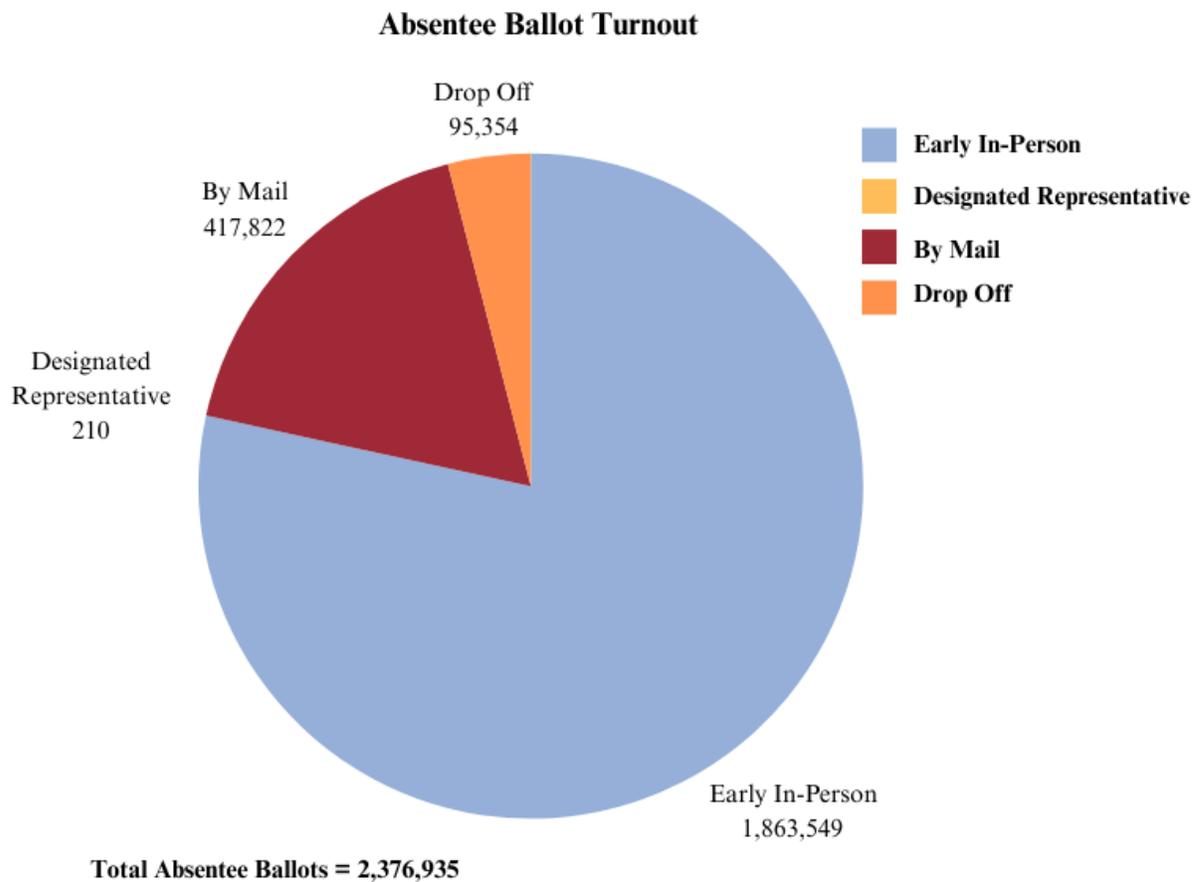


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Absentee Voting

In 2024, 51.4% of ballots cast were attributed to absentee voting. After legislation passed in 2020 to expand early voting, over 50% of ballots cast in the two subsequent presidential election years (2020 and 2024) were absentee. However, when compared to 2020 absentee statistics, 2024 absentee turnout was down 8.5%.¹⁸ Public health concerns brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic may have contributed to the increase in absentee voter participation during the 2020 presidential election. However, regardless of the slight decrease from the 2020 General Election, absentee voting remains popular with voters.

Absentee ballots cast via in-person early voting remains the most common method, followed by mail returned via the United States Postal Service (USPS). The chart below provides statistics on the method of absentee voter turnout.



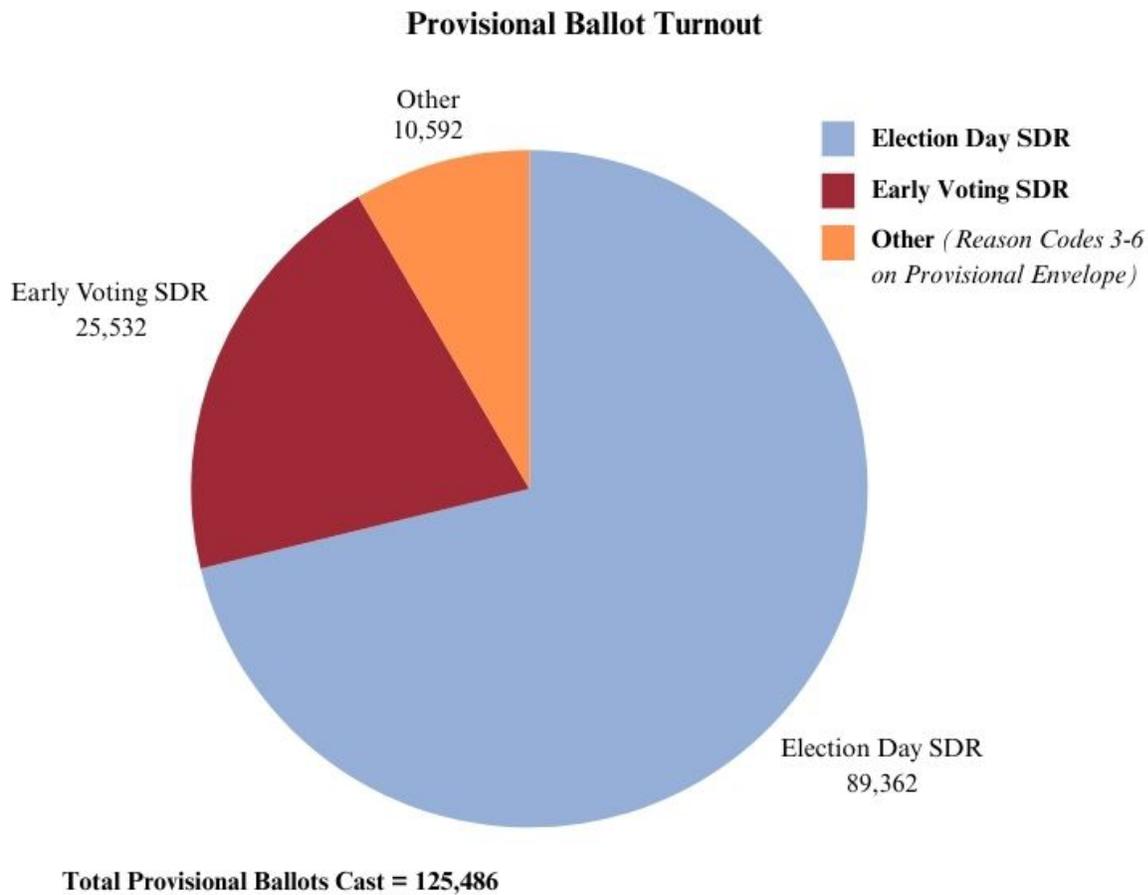
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¹⁸ ELECT, 2020 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formwarehouse/maintenance-reports/PostElectionReport_FinalRevised_211001.pdf.

Provisional Voting

The next chart shows provisional voter turnout grouped by reason code on the provisional ballot envelope. A provisional ballot refers to a method for people to vote whose eligibility to vote cannot be confirmed at the polling place. These ballots are reviewed by the local electoral boards during the post-election canvass to determine if the voter is eligible to vote, and if so, that vote will be counted. Provisional ballots are handled, tracked, and counted separately from other ballots, and officers of election are instructed to select a reason code to denote why a voter is being given a provisional ballot:

- Reason #1 – Same Day Registration (SDR) or voter’s name does not appear in the pollbook.
- Reason #3 – Voter is voting after normal poll closing time due to a court order
- Reason #4 – Voter applied for an absentee ballot but does not have the ballot
- Reason #5 – Voter is shown in the pollbook as already having voted
- Reason #6 – Other
- Reason #7 – Voter did not show the required ID nor sign the ID confirmation statement

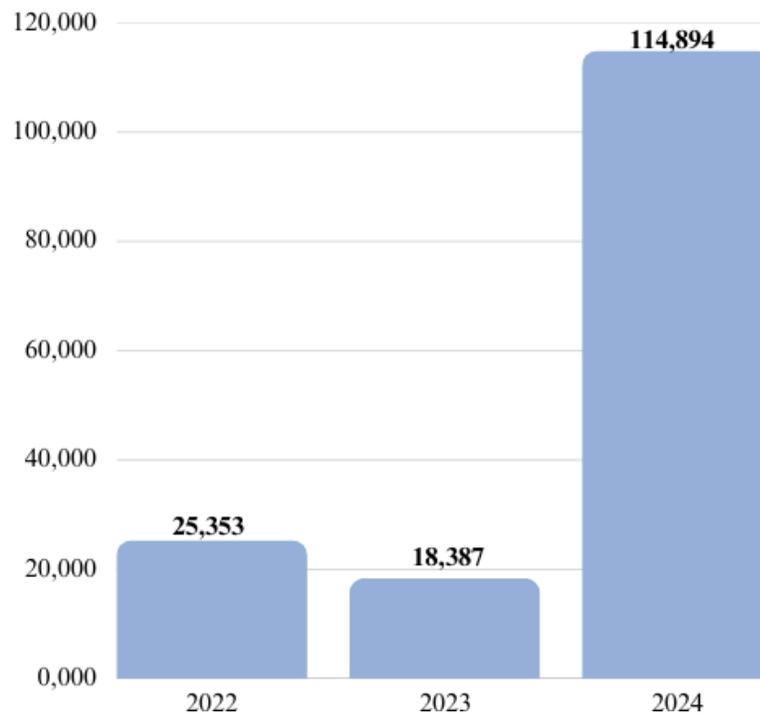


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Same Day Registration

The 2024 General Election saw the first use of SDR in a presidential election, which was first available to voters in 2022. SDR provides voters the right to register to vote up to and including Election Day at the office of their general registrar or their polling place.¹⁹ This impacts the 21 days before an election when registration records are closed,²⁰ during which individuals can use SDR to complete a voter registration application and vote a provisional ballot at the same time. The use of provisional ballots is necessary for the SDR process due to the administrative delay in entering registration information into VERIS, which necessitates post-election verification that an SDR voter was eligible to be registered and did not vote in multiple locations. While a significant increase in SDR voters was expected compared to the previous two general elections, the volume of SDR voters was significantly higher relative to the two previous general elections.

Same Day Registration Ballots (2022-2024)



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¹⁹ Va. Code § 24.2-420.1.

²⁰ Va. Code § 24.2-416.

POST-ELECTION PERIOD

The focus on elections tends to be on Election Day itself and the immediate leadup. However, the period immediately following an election is crucial, as localities confirm election night results, adjudicate provisional ballots, conduct important equipment checks, and, most importantly, certify election results. Key tasks in this period include:

- Locality Data Entry
- Canvass and Local Certification
- State Abstract Review
- Risk-Limiting Audit (RLA)
- Electoral College

2024 Post-Election Timeline



Canvass Process - Triple Check of Results

All election results go through a multi-tiered reporting structure initiated in the precincts with the preparation of the statement of results by the chief officer of election, followed by a secondary review by electoral boards as part of its preparation of the abstracts of votes during the canvass process, followed by a review of abstracts by ELECT staff.

On the day immediately following the election, general registrars and electoral boards were required to start the canvass. The purpose of the canvass is to compile and certify vote totals and voter turnout for each precinct within the locality. The canvass requires actions by the officers of elections, general registrar, and electoral board members. To prepare and conduct the canvass, localities must review all voting system results tapes, pollbook data, and the statements of results from precincts to create the abstract of votes. Provisional ballots must also be researched and adjudicated during the canvass, including those of SDR voters.

The canvass concluded on November 15, 2024, which is the deadline provided to electoral boards to certify under Virginia law, meaning localities have just ten days to complete all the

required canvass tasks.²¹ To illustrate this challenge, Fairfax County, the largest locality in the Commonwealth, had to complete its canvass, which included adjudicating 16,153 provisional ballots, in this 10-day period. The certified abstracts of votes prepared by the electoral boards were then provided to ELECT for review.

Risk-Limiting Audit

While ELECT staff conducted important data verification checks on the submitted abstracts of votes and flagged potential inconsistencies, localities prepared to conduct an RLA of at least one contest. The purpose of the RLA is to confirm that voting systems accurately report the results of the election. For the 2024 General Election, Virginia law required an RLA of a randomly selected U.S. House of Representatives race. Additionally, the SBE voted prior to the election to conduct an RLA of the U.S. Senate race.

At its RLA meeting held on September 3, 2024, the First Congressional District was randomly selected for the required RLA. Additionally at this meeting, the SBE decided to utilize two different approved methods for conducting the RLAs: the batch comparison method for the U.S. House contest and the ballot polling method for the U.S. Senate contest.

In recent years, batch comparison audits have been conducted on local races, wholly contained within one jurisdiction, in Orange, Loudoun, and Arlington counties. However, the First District batch comparison RLA for 2024 was the largest-scale batch comparison RLA ever conducted in the Commonwealth. It required 137,627 ballots across seven localities to be reviewed. In comparison, the U.S. Senate RLA, which utilized the ballot polling method, only required 1,878 ballots to be reviewed. Both audits met their risk limits and confirmed with over 90% confidence that the voting systems accurately reported election night results. Additional information on the 2024 RLAs can be found on ELECT's website.²²

RLAs play an integral role in verifying the accuracy of voting systems and are one aspect of a larger effort to ensure that Virginia runs fair and free elections. Voting machines are certified by the SBE, undergo logic and accuracy testing before every election, and are subject to post-election audits to monitor their reliability and functionality. Additionally, electoral boards must submit detailed security plans that outline the measures that their localities are taking to store and protect sensitive election technology and data.

State Certification

After confirmation of the audited races, review of local abstracts of votes by ELECT, certification of local results by electoral boards, and review of locality abstracts by ELECT, ELECT presented the SBE abstracts of votes for the following elections: electors for U.S. president and vice president, U.S. senator, U.S. representative (Districts 1 through 11), Commonwealth's attorney for Emporia City and Greensville County, and the constitutional

²¹ Va. Code § 24.2-671(A).

²² ELECT, Risk-limiting Audits, <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/resultsreports/election-security/rla/>.

amendment referendum. The SBE certified all races as presented at its meeting on December 2, 2024.

Electoral College

After certification by the SBE, ELECT prepared for Governor Youngkin’s review and issuance of a Certificate of Ascertainment of Electors, which sets forth the presidential and vice-presidential electors chosen by the voters of the Commonwealth. Consistent with federal law, this certificate was provided to the archivist of the United States, with duplicate original versions provided to the electors to conduct their business.

The capstone to the 2024 General Election effort in the Commonwealth was the meeting of the electors at the Virginia Capitol at noon on December 17, 2024. After filling a vacancy due to one elector being absent, the electors cast their votes for president for Kamala Harris and for vice president for Tim Walz and created eight Certificates of Votes. The electors directed that six of the Certificates of Votes be combined with the six Certificates of Ascertainment and be provided to recipients as follows: one set to the chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, two sets to the archivist of the United States, and two sets to the Virginia commissioner of elections. The additional Certificates of Votes were provided to the librarian of Virginia and the SBE chairman.

2024 GENERAL REGISTRAR SURVEY & REFLECTIONS

Keeping in the tradition of the past two years, ELECT surveyed general registrars to solicit feedback on election administration topics. This provides ELECT and policymakers with information regarding administrative challenges faced by general registrars, areas for change or improvement in training and guidance, and general concerns about working environment, resources, and future election administration.

Methodology

The survey utilized a mixed-method research design of multiple choice and short answer questions. It contained 26 questions in total.

Participation

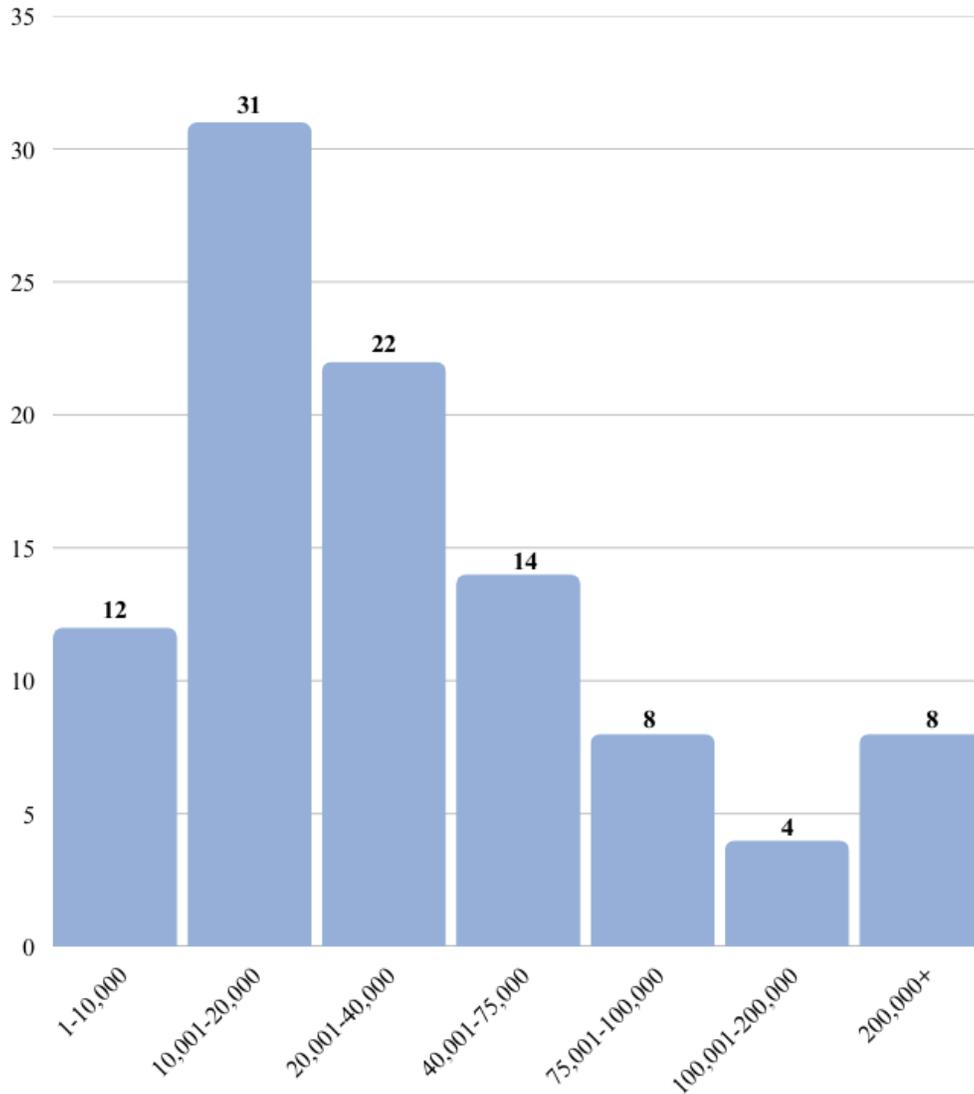
The survey was live from Thursday, December 5, 2024-Monday, December 23, 2025. 99 out of 133 general registrars consented to participating in the survey, which equated to 74% response rate among the total population of general registrars. There was an average response time of forty-two minutes and fifty-one seconds per respondent.

{Continued on next page}

Demographics

Various levels of tenure were reflected in the participants of the survey, ranging from 0-3 years up to 12 plus years of election administration experience, with 54% of the respondents having twelve or more years of work history. Respondents also serve diverse geographic populations of the Commonwealth with rural, suburban and urban communities, including localities with populations of less than 10,000 and over 200,000 residents, represented. The mean survey participant works in mid-sized localities with populations ranging from 10,000-40,000 residents.

Number of Survey Responses by Locality Size



Frequently Discussed Topics in Election Administration

While there was a wide range of issues discussed by general registrars in their responses to the 2024 ELECT Survey, certain topics received repeated mention. This section provides an overview of these topics and direct feedback from general registrars.

Same Day Registration

In the 2022 ELECT Survey, general registrars overwhelmingly listed SDR as one of the top challenges in administering the election, with over 75% of respondents ranking it as their first or second top challenge. As a result, ELECT solicited input from general registrars as part of an effort to explore options to streamline the SDR process, including in relation to training and forms. This led to a redesigned provisional ballot envelope which contained the voter registration application on one side and the more traditional provisional elements on the reverse. This would require SDR voters to only fill out the voter registration side of the envelope, thereby reducing the administrative time spent on each SDR voter.

In the 2023 ELECT Survey, provisional voting/SDR was still reported as a top challenge, with 20% of respondents ranking it as their top challenge and 23% ranking it second. However, 50% of respondents stated that the process established for provisional voting/SDR in the 2023 versus 2022 was either somewhat improved or much improved. After the 2023 General Election, ELECT again worked with general registrars to refine the redesigned provisional envelope (see Appendix B).

In the 2024 Elect Survey, general registrars once again listed SDR as a top challenge, with over 86% ranking it first or second. Based upon comments in the survey, this high percentage appears to be attributable to the large volume of SDR voters in 2024. However, based upon feedback after the three elections with SDR, there also appears to be a prevailing view of SDR as an inherently burdensome from an administrative standpoint due to its nature as a provisional voting process.

The post-election administrative burden for SDR was an area of emphasis for respondents to the 2024 ELECT Survey. This process for SDR generally consists of two phases, the research and registration phase and the adjudication phase. General registrars have always had the responsibility of conducting research on provisional voters to make recommendations about eligibility to the electoral board but, with SDR, they must additionally register these individuals and enter this information into VERIS. Aside from the processing of SDRs being a labor-intensive task, it is also done under a tight timeframe. All SDR voter information must be entered into VERIS by a date certain to provide ELECT time to run an SDR duplicate report to identify any individuals who voted SDR in multiple localities before these ballots are considered by electoral boards. Previously, the deadline for entering SDR voters into VERIS was the Friday after the election. After discussions with general registrars and in anticipation of a high volume of SDR voters, this deadline was extended to the Monday after the election.²³ Even with this extension, though, research and registration during this period takes significant staff resources when there is a high volume of SDR voters. After any duplicate SDRs are resolved, general registrars then assist the electoral boards in the adjudication process which must be completed in time for the electoral board to meet its 10-day certification deadline.²⁴

²³ This was made possible due to the extension of the canvass deadline by the 2024 Acts of Assembly 738.

²⁴ Va. Code § 24.2-671.

General registrars were asked in the 2024 ELECT Survey, based upon their experience in multiple elections, to identify process changes that would ease the administrative burden of SDR. They suggested a range of ideas for process improvements. These included pushing back the registration deadline to closer to the election, the elimination of SDR altogether, only providing SDR during early voting, only providing SDR at the general registrar's office, more staffing availability, enhanced technology at the polling locations (including pollbook/laptop connectivity for the purpose of SDR and the ability to complete SDR applications electronically), and a better mechanism to determine the proper polling location for SDR voters before they complete the required form.

Based upon the feedback from general registrars over the past three years and the efforts of general registrars and ELECT to improve the process, the following are key takeaways:

- Since SDR must be a provisional process due to technological constraints, it is necessarily burdensome from an administrative standpoint in the current framework for Virginia elections, both at the polling place for voters and officers of election and in the post-election process for general registrars and their staffs.
- After each election in which SDR has been used, ELECT has solicited general registrar feedback and explored ways in which the SDR process can be streamlined for voters and election officials/staff. ELECT continued this practice after the 2024 General Election and is actively exploring additional measures for process improvements, particularly in relation to data entry. ELECT will also review its SDR training and make updates and/or additions where necessary.
- If SDR continues to be used in large numbers, more significant structural changes will likely be required to substantially reduce the administrative burden, such as limiting SDR to the general registrar's office or taking necessary action (including legislative) to provide technological means to not require provisional voting for SDR.

Improved Performance of VERIS

A common concern raised in the 2023 ELECT Survey about the 2024 Election cycle was the reliability of Virginia's Election and Registration Information System (VERIS). An aging system implemented in 2007, VERIS serves as the statewide voter registration system tasked with maintaining voter rolls and supporting other key aspects of the Commonwealth's electoral process. ELECT is actively building a new system to replace VERIS but continues to focus on efforts to maximize the current system's existing functionality. In 2024, the ELECT technical team (IT) led a massive effort to minimize technical debt and focused their efforts on performance issues rather than technical enhancements. Some of the highlights from this work include:

- Continuous cycle of report optimization to increase efficiency.
- Completing logging and endpoints project on all external applications.
- True load-balance for production server.
- Moved from hybrid to full cloud.

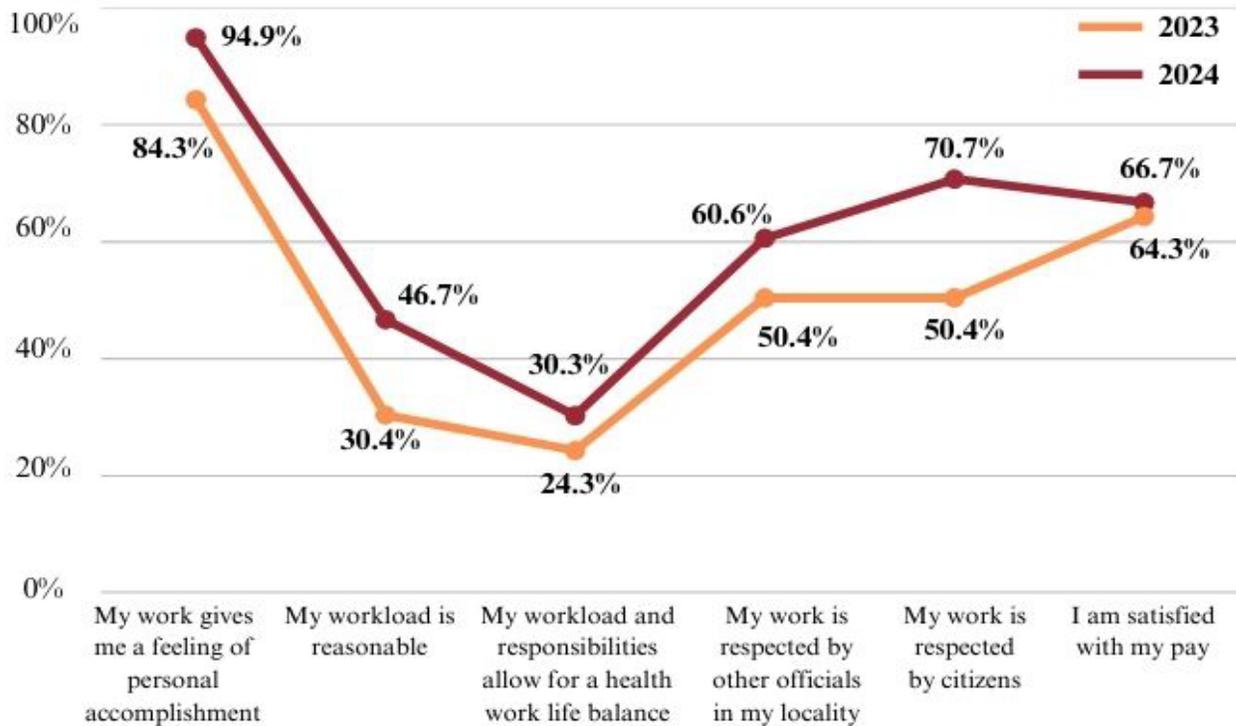
- Executed the first Commonwealth of Virginia statewide change freeze for the November General Election to ensure no changes were being made that could impact operations.

As a result of these efforts, 65% of 2024 ELECT Survey respondents reported an improvement in the performance of VERIS over the previous year.

Job Satisfaction, Workload, and Well-Being

As election laws and policies have changed, so has the role of a general registrar. Over the last five years, general registrars in the Commonwealth have adapted and successfully implemented many legislative changes making election officials in the Commonwealth some of the most experienced election administrators in the country. As shown in the next graph, ELECT surveyed general registrars regarding their overall job-satisfaction and well-being both in 2023 and 2024 to compare sentiments across multiple-election cycles.

General Registrar Survey Responses



Overwhelmingly, general registrars saw increased job satisfaction despite the intense workload and scrutiny inherent in a presidential election year. When asked about their overall job satisfaction in 2024, 42% of general registrars who responded indicated that they were very satisfied with their current role, an increase of 7% over the previous year, while 39% indicated they were somewhat satisfied. Only 11% of general registrars reported that they were either somewhat or very dissatisfied in the role, which saw no change over the previous year.

Additionally, 95% of general registrars who responded to the survey said that they either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that their work gives them a feeling of personal accomplishment and 91% of respondents affirmed that they were proud to work in elections. In addition, 86.6% of general registrars reported that they feel that they fully utilize their skills, abilities, and knowledge in their work.

The survey results also indicated that general registrars felt more supported in their roles this year than in 2023 by both the public and their peers. When compared to responses gathered in the previous year, general registrars saw a 15% increase in how they perceived their work to be respected by the public and a roughly 10% positive increase in how they perceived other officials in their locality viewed their work.

In 2023, ELECT asked general registrars about the impacts of the role on their physical and mental health. 66% of general registrars responded that the job had a negative impact.²⁵ In 2024, ELECT asked the same question to track the effect of the role across multiple years, most respondents indicated that the impact to their health remained the same or declined when compared to previous years. Many general registrars still struggle with work life balance in addition to large workloads. One general registrar wrote,

“I need to learn to put this job in perspective and not let it take over my entire life during election season. I need to learn to stop taking everything to heart. You would think after all my years of service I would have learned that.”

Helping election administrators to find ways to deal with job stress on their physical and mental health will be key to retaining their expertise and talent moving forward.

The rigor of Commonwealth’s election schedule also contributes to the intensity of the role. Virginia is unique in that it hosts general elections every year. Unlike many states, Virginia holds off-year elections, which is a general election that takes place in the United States when neither a presidential nor midterm election is held. Virginia election officials are some of the most experienced in the nation. One general registrar noted,

“Yes, we are experienced, and Virginia is better because of it. However, we simply do not have an appropriate amount of time to review and implement improvements to our processes to better serve our voters because our time between elections is so limited.”

Over the last five years, election administrators in the Commonwealth implemented over 100 pieces of legislation all the while hosting at least two elections every year. Legislation has been introduced to reduce the number of primaries during a presidential year to two as well as to study the Virginia election cycle for possible reductions and improvements.²⁶

²⁵ ELECT, 2023 Post-Election Survey of General Registrars, Virginia Department of Elections.

²⁶ See SB 1119, 2025 Reg. Sess. See HB 1794, 2025 Reg. Sess. See SJ 253, 2025 Reg. Sess.

Staffing

When asked about resourcing needs in 2024, general registrars reiterated from last year that space and staffing were still among their top challenges.

As localities work to comply with the numerous new legal requirements from recent years, many question whether staffing levels, dictated by the individual localities, have kept up with need. In reviewing data from both the 2023 and 2024 surveys, it is apparent that limited staffing, particularly in small to mid-size localities, may strain the uniformity and purity of elections in the Commonwealth. The 2023 Report, which saw an 88.7% response rate, indicated that 61% of localities operate with one or no full-time staff person outside of the general registrar. This leaves many elections offices in the Commonwealth operating with single points of failure, where an unexpected accident or illness may be detrimental to staffing an office or even running an election. It also hinders continuity in operations in the event of a general registrar dismissal or retirement. The following are comments from general registrars on this issue:

“[W]hile it was a challenging year, I love my job and just wish our locality saw the need for least one full time assistant. I’m 60 years old and would like to properly have the chance to train my assistant in becoming a registrar.”

“[S]maller offices need to have at least one full-time deputy position (subsidized by the state) which would allow for coverage in the office should an emergency arise with the General Registrar. A part-time two day a week deputy is just not willing to run the office independently especially in such a busy election year.”

“[Y]ou can't expect to hire part-time help and they do things 100 percent correct. It's also hard to find part-time (employees) willing to put up with the demands of the workload in the elections office.”

Lack of staffing also contributes to burnout among local election administrators. One respondent reflected

“[B]eing a small locality that only utilizes Deputy Registrars on an ‘on-call’ basis, a GR (general registrar) has to be in the office every hour of every day during the 45-Day Early Voting period. You have to postpone doctor’s appointments and miss out on a lot of family functions.”

Registrars repeatedly highlighted the need for the state to step in and provide funding for one full-time deputy registrar. While general registrars’ official salaries are reimbursed by the state, additional office staff salaries currently are not. The operational needs of many localities are left to the decision of County and City Administrators. Those general registrars without dedicated full-time staff often must rely on officers of election or electoral board members to fill staffing gaps in addition to excessive amounts of overtime. Budgetary language was proposed during the 2025 General Assembly Session to fund a full-time deputy registrar at 80% of the general

registrar’s salary.²⁷ While this amendment failed in committee, it initiated an important discussion around staffing and resource needs in the Commonwealth’s local elections offices.

General registrars also highlighted the need for dedicated legal representation in the survey. A 1983 opinion of the Office of the Attorney General found that local counsel has an obligation to defend general registrars and electoral boards in litigation.²⁸ However, the access that these officials have to legal resources for consultation are often limited. With ELECT unable to provide legal advice to localities, many are left with unanswered questions that could result in legal liability. Feedback from the 2024 ELECT Survey included the following,

“GRs and EBs need independent legal advice. We cannot always depend on our local govt attorneys. Some can, some can't. The AG (Attorney General) isn't our legal representation. The Department has made it clear they can't provide legal advice. The idea that GRs and EBs are dealing with such a consequential and litigious area of government administration without any dedicated legal representation is unwise and not very well thought out.”

Several general registrars also noted that workloads were increasing for officers of elections. General registrars used words like overwhelmed, frustrated, and stressed to describe the morale of their officers. With increasingly complex processes, some general registrars cited the need for experienced officers of election in key leadership positions within the precinct. This can sometimes come into conflict with the requirement of party parity, as there are not sufficient officers of experience always available from both parties. Officers of election with strong skill sets are especially needed for SDR due to its nature as a provisional process; errors in paperwork in that process can lead to a vote not being counted during the canvass. This complexity has also rendered recruitment and retention a difficult task. One general registrar stated

“[W]e have done everything in our power to recruit and retain competent officers of election to sufficiently staff our polling locations. With the increase in their ED (Election Day) workload, we've lost several who just do not want to deal with the stress anymore.”

SPECIAL TOPICS FROM 2024 GENERAL ELECTION

In the lead up and execution of any general election, instances occur that require ELECT and localities to address emerging election-related concerns on a variety of election administration topics. This section provides an overview of some of the noteworthy issues that impacted the administration of the 2024 General Election.

USPS and Absentee Ballots

Absentee ballot complaints for 2024 primarily focused on issues with receiving or returning absentee ballots. As discussed in the TRAINING AND PREPARATION section above, while

²⁷ See SB 800, Member Request, Item 78 #1s, 2025 Reg. Sess.

²⁸ 82 Va. Att’y Gen. 225 (1983), 1983 Va. Att’y Gen. WL 225.

ELECT worked closely with USPS to address past and present issues, localities and voters still faced challenges when mailing in their absentee ballots. The types of issues, and number of localities that experienced the issues, are as follows:

- Late returned absentee ballots (30)
- Delays in ballots arriving to voters (42)
- Mail returned to the general registrar’s office or voter as “undeliverable” (39)
- Absentee ballots without a postmark (29)
- Intelligent Mail Barcode (IMB) was not scanned (27)
- Ballots lost in the mail (32)

Through ELECT’s voter education efforts and media outreach, voters were encouraged to return their mail-in ballots as soon as possible to avoid their ballots arriving too late to be counted. Voters also had the option to return their mail-in ballots in person to the general registrar’s office, to a drop off location, or to their polling place or Central Absentee Precinct on Election Day. ELECT will continue to communicate and collaborate with the USPS to ensure that all mail-in ballots are prioritized, delivered, and counted.

Electoral Board Member and General Registrar Compliance Issues

Throughout every election year, the SBE and ELECT receive, evaluate, and monitor compliance issues that are raised in relation to the performance of duties by electoral board members and general registrars. Generally, issues can be addressed through training and guidance. However, when there are repeated issues or there is an instance of a severe dereliction of duty, the SBE must decide whether more severe action is required in the form of petitioning the circuit court for removal proceedings due to failure to discharge duties.²⁹

At its January 15, 2025, meeting, the SBE considered whether to petition for removal proceedings against the Franklin City General Registrar, two members of the Radford City Electoral Board, one member of the Waynesboro City Electoral Board, and one member of the Norfolk City Electoral Board. The SBE heard testimony from the officials and from all interested parties. The board ultimately voted to file removal petitions in the circuit court in the cases of Franklin City, Waynesboro City, and Norfolk City.^{30, 31}

VOTER ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

For the 2024 General Election, ELECT executed a five-week, statewide “We Count Virginia” voter education awareness campaign to educate Virginians about the timing of Election Day and the early voting period and to reinforce the fact that when a person votes in Virginia — whether early in person, by mail, or on Election Day — it counts. The campaign ran from September 30 through November 5, with an emphasis placed on October. The media campaign leveraged

²⁹ Va. Code § 24.2-103.

³⁰ Va. Code § 24.2-235.

³¹ The Waynesboro City Electoral Board member resigned after this decision but before proceedings were commenced in the circuit court.

online, radio, and print channels. Campaign materials were presented in Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese where possible.

Campaign Components

The following provides a summary of ELECT's outreach efforts in the campaign. For the full components of the campaign, please see Appendix C.

Broadcast Media (Radio)

- Markets included Washington D.C., Richmond/Petersburg, Hampton Roads, Bristol/Tri-Cities, Roanoke/Lynchburg, Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, Winchester/Culpeper, and Fredericksburg.
- Rural radio ran in 16 markets defined as rural by the Office of Management and Budget.
- Campaign advertising ran on Spanish radio stations in Richmond, Hampton Roads, and D.C., and a Korean radio station in D.C.
- Ads were also run on top streaming platforms such as Spotify, AudioGo, and Amazon.

Print Media

- Print ads were placed in 18 major daily newspapers as well as Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and African American publications. One half-page color insertion was published in each publication.
- Flyers in English, Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese were also developed for ELECT to distribute to its partners, localities, and advisory boards in support of the voter education campaign.

Social Media and Online Advertising

- ELECT issued 50 social graphics and post captions for Facebook and X, along with a social media posting schedule that started on September 16.
- Online banner ads ran statewide in English, Spanish, and Korean newspaper websites.
- Online ads also included mobile ads and Facebook/Instagram story ads targeted to English and Spanish speakers 18+ statewide.

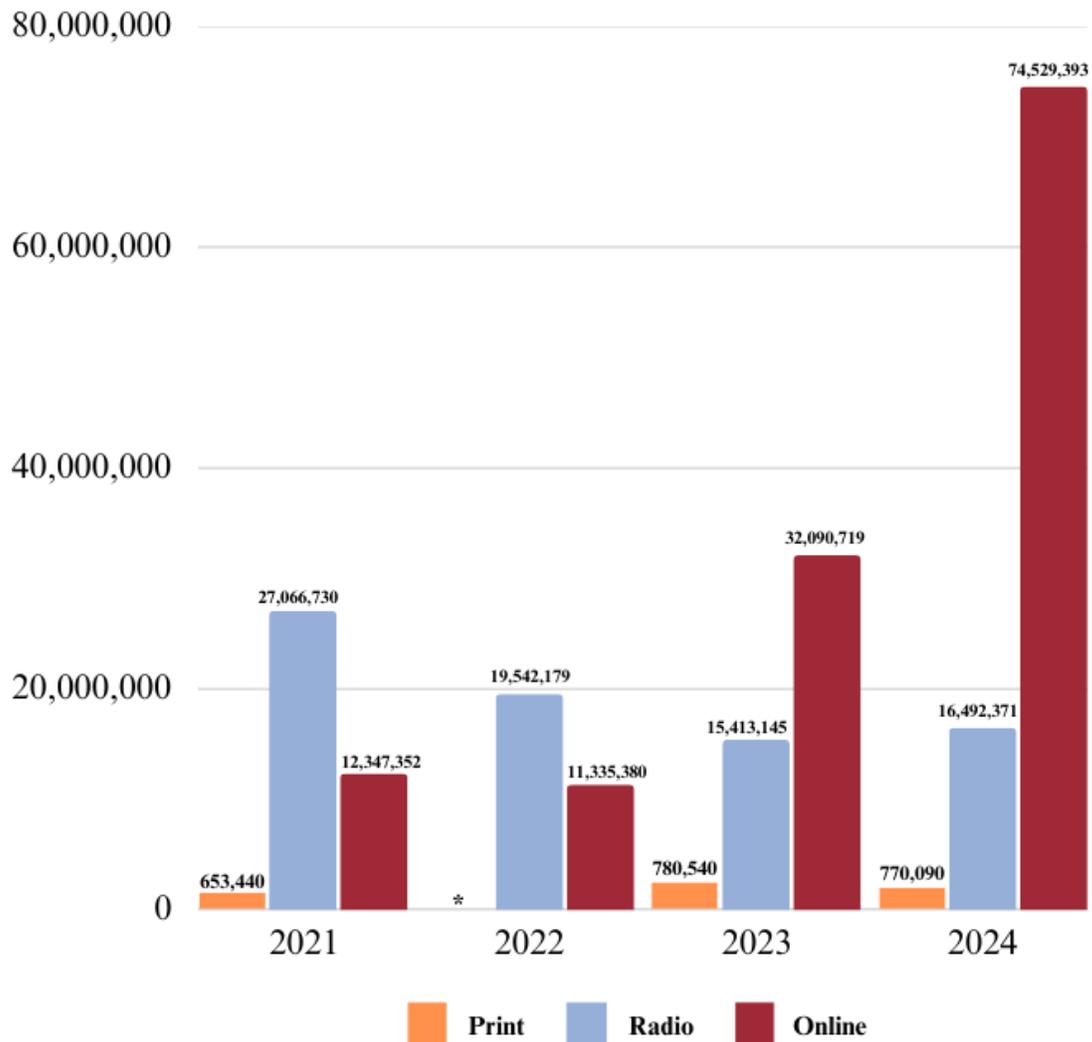
Media Analytics

The campaign garnered over 91.7 million impressions across online, radio, and print. An impression is defined as an individual view, and multiple impressions can be attributed to a single individual.

- Online advertisements received 74,529,393 impressions or 81% of overall impressions (this includes mobile, paid social, banner ads, and streaming audio).
- Radio advertisements received 16,492,371 impressions or 18% of overall impressions (of measured markets).
- Print advertisements received 770,090 impressions or 1% of overall impressions.

ELECT began reporting media analytics in 2021. Compared to previous years, the 2024 campaign has garnered the most impressions to date. This year’s campaign nearly doubled all impressions across radio, print, and online platforms, with online impressions having the most impact by a significant margin. However, there was a decline in CTR compared to last year.

Media Impressions by Year, by Type



*In 2022, ELECT did not report on the number of printed newspaper impressions, but ELECT did have ads placed on fifty-seven newspaper websites, four of which were in Spanish, generating 4,214,064 impressions.³²

³² ELECT, 2022 Gen. Election Retrospective, p. 31 (March 7, 2023).

CONSTITUENT SERVICES

As part of its post-election reporting, ELECT provides data regarding inquiries and complaints fielded during the election cycle. ELECT provides three primary avenues for the submission of inquiries and complaints: a call center, an online complaint tool, and a voter complaint form.

As previously discussed, there have been significant changes to Virginia's election laws in recent years. The SBE, ELECT, and local election officials made great efforts to implement these changes in the most efficient and streamlined manner possible, including by increasing the amount of voter information available on ELECT's website, translating more voter information (Korean, Vietnamese, and Spanish, emphasizing the accessibility of its website for voters with disabilities (including better website navigation and more screen reader-friendly tools and documents), improving processes and procedures by providing more guidance documents, promulgating regulations to address gaps in approved legislation, and increasing training opportunities. Local election officials bolstered the training materials for staff and officers of election, to ensure they were more prepared and had a greater knowledge of election law and procedures when serving in a polling place. These efforts may have contributed to the overall decline in calls and complaints to ELECT. Further, voters also appear to be looking for and receiving more of their information online, as shown in the VOTER ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN section of this report.

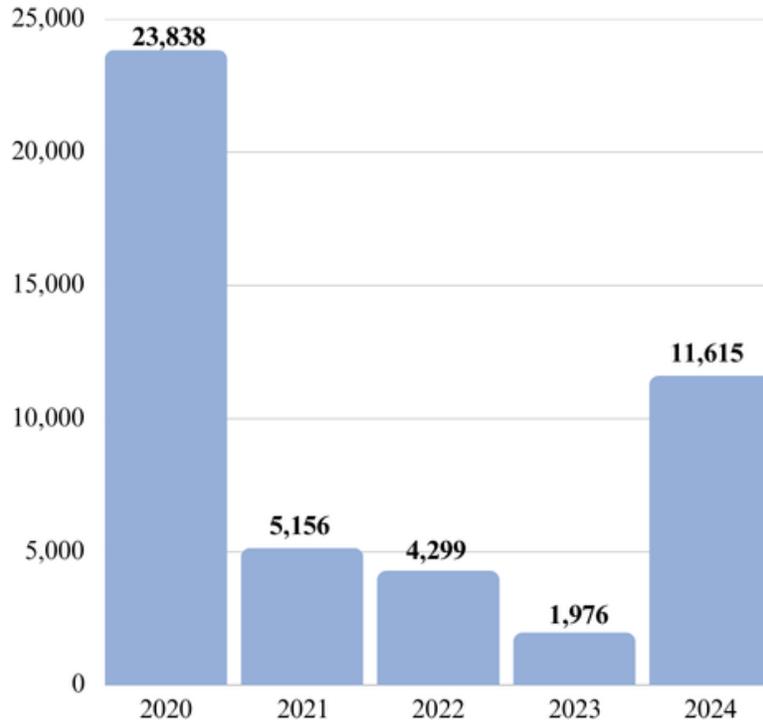
Call Center

To manage the influx of calls and provide the best customer service possible, ELECT contracted with a third-party vendor to operate a call center from August 26 to November 8 to field constituent inquiries. While the call center was operational, voters who called ELECT's phone numbers were redirected to the call center. Most calls were addressed by the call center, with only 81 calls transferred to ELECT for staff review. The average wait time for callers was 37 seconds and the average talk time was a little over three minutes.

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The following graph shows the total amount of calls received by the call center in each of the last five elections. As expected, due to the traditionally increased interest in presidential elections, the highest number of calls were received in 2020 and 2024. However, there was a 48% reduction in number of calls received in 2024 compared to 2020.

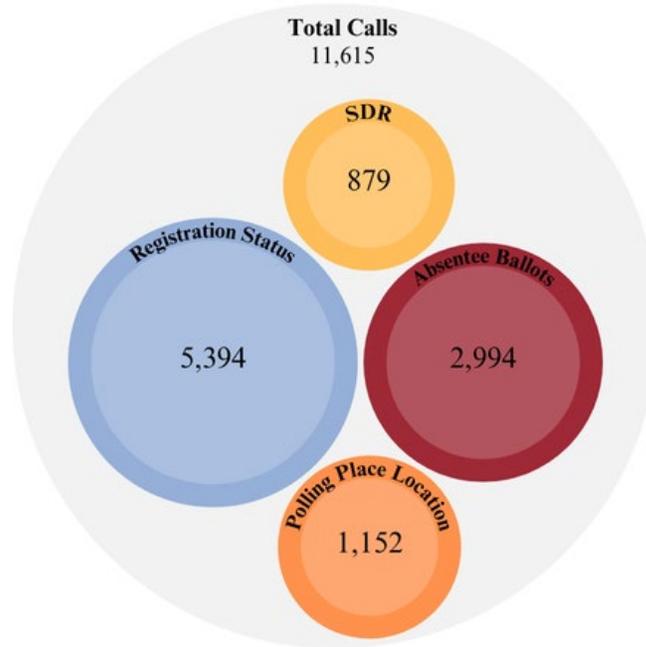
Total Calls by Year (2020-2024)



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Out of the 11,615 calls received while the call center was open, the topics that received the most calls remained the same as in previous years and included questions about registration statuses, absentee ballots, and polling locations, as shown in the graphic below.

Calls Received by Topic

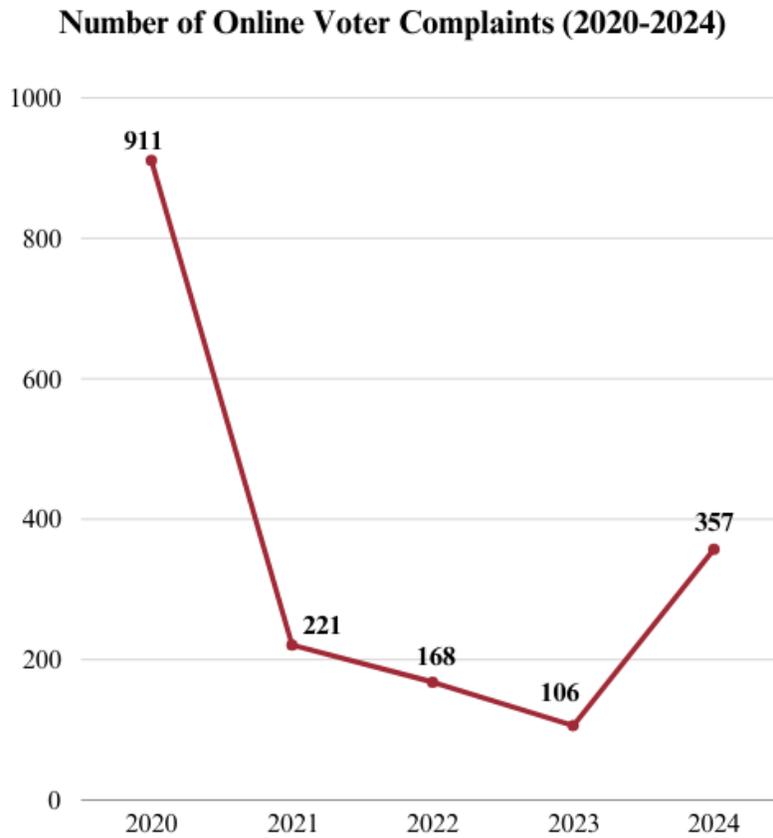


Online Complaints

ELECT provides an online tool for voters to raise issues during an election cycle and have them resolved quickly. Typically, ELECT forwards these issues to general registrars to address. In many cases, the general registrar or officers of election are already aware of a particular situation and working on a response. In 2024, 62 complaints were filed before Election Day, 106 were filed on Election Day, and 89 were filed after Election Day.

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The following chart shows total online complaints over the past five years. In 2024, ELECT received 357 complaints from August to November, significantly lower than the 911 complaints in 2020.³³



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³³ This was also lower than the 599 complaints related to the 2016 presidential election. See ELECT, November 3, 2020 Post-Election Report, p. 24 (Oct. 1, 2021).

The next chart provides a breakdown of online complaints, by issue, over the last five years.

Complaint Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Absentee Ballots	161	24	18	12	51
Accessibility	9	6	8	2	13
Ballots	232	21	20	13	43
Candidates	0	0	0	8	5
General Comments	42	16	15	12	26
Identification	23	11	11	6	22
Law Enforcement	0	2	0	0	0
Long Lines	3	0	0	0	4
Other	160	38	33	22	60
Vandalism	1	0	0	0	5
Voter Fraud	4	137	18	8	30
Voter Intimidation	56	53	21	17	66
Voter Registration	51	16	16	4	21
Voting Equipment	36	15	8	2	11
Total	911	221	168	106	357

Voter intimidation was the most common complaint this year, with a total of 66 complaints. The number of complaints in this category follows the trends that ELECT has seen in previous years; voter intimidation complaints tend to go up during presidential elections and statewide elections when voter turnout and interest are higher. Many of the submissions were related to the experience while approaching a polling place, cited the aggressive nature of campaigning outside of the polling place. The total voter intimidation complaints for 2024 exceeded 2020, which may be partly attributable to a continued increase in political polarization (i.e., campaign activity by the opposing party may now be viewed as more openly hostile than previously). Political parties and campaigns may wish to consider counseling their employees and volunteers on how to interact with voters to avoid perceptions of intimidation. Other voter intimidation complaints related to how close campaign signs were to the entrance of a polling place.³⁴ While ELECT works to address complaints once received, it is often the case that the general registrar has already resolved the matter.

Voter registration complaints often arose when voters learned they were not registered to vote when checking in at a polling place, even though they had previously registered. There are a variety of reasons why these voters were not registered where expected, including if they had not voted in the previous two federal election cycles after being placed on inactive status.³⁵ Voters may also have registered to vote after the close of books; voters who register during that period

³⁴ Va. Code § 24.2-604 (requires campaign workers and campaign materials to remain 40 away from the entrance of a polling place).

³⁵ Va. Code § 24.2-428.2.

are not processed until after the election.³⁶ Regardless, SDR allowed these voters to register and vote a provisional ballot on Election Day. Also worth noting is the previously addressed effort to push back the date for the closing of registration records to be closer to Election Day, which may be beneficial to reduce these instances.

Identification complaints, the volume of which was about the same as in 2020, primarily focused on issues about acceptable voter identification at the polling place. The types of acceptable voter identifications are outlined in the Code of Virginia and the federal Help America Vote Act.³⁷ Based upon these, ELECT compiles a list of acceptable identifications for use by officers of election, which is available on its website.³⁸ Despite this list being available at the polling place, and extensive training by the general registrars and ELECT, there were still some instances of uncertainty. ELECT continually reviews the list of acceptable identification to provide clarification, where possible, and explores additional avenues for training.

Voter Complaint Form

ELECT provides a Voter Complaint Form on its website, which is used for both complaints alleging violations of the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA)³⁹ and informal, general complaints. Information about the Voter Complaint Form process can be found on ELECT's website.⁴⁰ Complaints that do not allege a HAVA violation are processed as an informal complaint and forwarded to the applicable locality for local officials to address.⁴¹

ELECT received 31 complaints using the Voter Complaint Form. Upon review by ELECT staff, no complaints rose to the level of an alleged violation of HAVA. A response was issued in each case, and complaints were forwarded to the appropriate localities for further action and awareness. ELECT plans to review the HAVA compliance process in 2025 to determine whether any process improvements are necessary.

CONCLUSION

The successful administration of three safe and secure statewide elections in the Commonwealth in 2024 was a collective effort of dedicated officials and staff at the local, state, and federal levels. Virginia continues to be a model of well-run elections for states across the country. Nonetheless, ELECT is constantly searching for improvements to improve the experience of voters and local election officials. The feedback from general registrars and other information gathered in this report will provide valuable insights into the administration of elections in the Commonwealth to the public, lawmakers, and all other important stakeholders in our democracy.

³⁶ Va. Code § 24.2-416.

³⁷ Va. Code § 24.2-643(B). *See* 52 U.S.C. § 21083.

³⁸ ELECT, Acceptable Forms of Voter Identification (Sept. 2024).

³⁹ Help America Vote Act of 2002, 52 U.S.C §§ 21081-21112.

⁴⁰ ELECT, Virginia Voters' Election Day Complaint Form (Sept. 2017).

⁴¹ 1 Va. Admin. Code § 20-20-80.

Appendix A: Terminology

Many terms are used to describe different aspects of an election and its results. For purposes of the data included in this report, please keep the following definitions in mind:

Absentee Voting is the process of casting ballots other than in-person at the polling place on Election Day, including in-person voting in the early voting period and by mailed/dropped off ballots.

Authorized Representatives are qualified voters of any jurisdiction in the Commonwealth tasked with seeing and hearing what is occurring at the voter check-in table on behalf of a political party or an independent candidate.

Ballots Cast refers to the total number of ballots counted towards the total results of an election. For example, one paper ballot may have three elections on it. No matter how many bubbles are filled in for each race - all three races, one race, or none at all - the one paper ballot is considered one ballot cast.

Department of Elections (ELECT) is the Virginia state agency that is tasked with the administrative and programmatic operations assigned by law and, further, discharges duties as delegated by the State Board of Elections.

General Registrars are election administrators appointed by the electoral board of a county or city. They are responsible for all aspects of voter registration and election administration duties as assigned by law and delegated by the electoral board. Some have the additional title of “director of elections.”

General Registrar and Electoral Board Handbook (GREB Handbook) is a guidance document created by ELECT to provide an overview of election-related tasks, processes, procedures, and statutory and regulatory requirements for local election officials.

Electoral Boards are local three-member boards appointed by the chief judge of a judicial circuit to administer elections for a county or city. They are composed of (i) two members from the political party that received the highest number of votes at the preceding gubernatorial election and (ii) one member from the party that received the next highest number of votes at the preceding gubernatorial election. For a list of full duties, please see Chapter 2 of the GREB Handbook found on ELECT’s website.⁴²

Officers of Election local election officials appointed by the electoral board to administer elections at polling places in all elections.

⁴² ELECT, GREB Handbook, Chapter 2, Local Electoral Boards, (Aug. 2024).

Virginia Election Registration Information System (VERIS) is the centralized election administration and voter registration system currently in use in Virginia that is operated and maintained by the Department of Elections.

Voter Turnout refers to the number of registered individuals that attempted to vote in an election. ELECT calculates turnout as the amount of ballots cast by the amount of active and inactive voters and is commonly expressed as a percentage.

Votes Cast refers to the number of votes cast that go towards a particular election, meaning a particular candidate, referendum, etc. Referring to the example above, one paper ballot may have three races on it. If a voter makes one selection in each of the three races, a total of three votes have been cast on the one ballot.

Appendix B: Provisional Ballot Envelope

Same Day Registration Provisional Ballot
*Voter resides in this precinct but is **not** on this precinct's pollbook*



Precinct # _____

Primary elections—Party ballot D R

Starred (*) items are required. *If you do not complete all of the items that are marked with *, your application may be denied.*

1 * Yes No I am a citizen of the United States of America
 * Full social security number _____ - _____ - _____ SSN never issued
 * Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY) ____ / ____ / ____
 * Gender _____

2 * Last Name _____ Jr. Sr. II III IV (Circle one) Other (write in) _____
 * First Name _____ * Middle Name _____ None
 * Residence Address (May not be a P.O. Box) _____ Apt. _____
 * City/Town _____ * ZIP Code _____
 Email _____ Phone _____ - _____ - _____

3 * Yes No I have been convicted of a felony or judged mentally incapacitated and disqualified to vote.
 Yes No If yes, has your right to vote been restored?

4 I am an active-duty uniformed services member, spouse or dependent; or an overseas citizen.
 I am providing a mailing address (below) because my residence address cannot receive mail or I am homeless.
 I am providing a Virginia P.O. Box (below) to protect my residence address from public disclosure because I or a household member is/has:
 An active or retired law enforcement officer, judge, magistrate, U.S. or Virginia Attorney General attorney.
 Been granted a court issued protective order.
 In fear for personal safety from being threatened or stalked by another person.
 A participant in the Virginia Attorney General's Address Confidentiality Program.
 Been approved to be a foster parent.
 A current or former state or local election official, their employee, or Commonwealth elector for President or Vice President

My mailing address _____
 (Complete only if you have checked a box in this section)

5 I am currently registered to vote in another state. Name of state _____

6 I am interested in being an officer of election (poll worker) on Election Day. Send me information.

7 * **AFFIRMATION: I swear/affirm, under felony penalty for making willfully false material statements or entries, that the information provided on this form is true and that, to the best of my knowledge, I am eligible to vote in this election. I authorize the cancellation of my current registration and I hereby affirm that I have read the Privacy Act Notice and Warning.**
 (See other side of envelope for Privacy Act Notice and Warning.)

*** Signature** _____ **Today's date** ____ / ____ / ____
 (MM/DD/YYYY)

By checking this box, I affirm both that I am an individual with physical disabilities and the Affirmation Statement above. Pursuant to Article II, § 2 of the Constitution of Virginia, individuals with physical disabilities are not required to sign the application for voter registrations.

Election Officer Use

#1 Same Day Registration (not on pollbook)
 Time: _____ a.m. p.m. (circle one)
 Yes No Did voter show ID or complete ID Confirmation Statement?
Comments
Election Officer Signature _____

Office/Electoral Board Use

Voter ID # _____
Adjudication Count Do not count
Voter Identification
 1. If the voter returns with the proper identification, check this box and sign _____
 2. Attach a copy of the identification document.

ELECT-653-English-07/2024

Provisional Ballot - All other provisional reasons

Precinct # _____

Voter is on this precinct's pollbook

Primary elections—Party ballot D R

Starred (*) items are required. If you do not complete all of the items that are marked with *, your vote may not count.

1 * Last Name _____ Jr. Sr. II III IV (Circle one) Other (write in) _____
 * First Name _____ * Middle Name _____ None

2 * Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY) ____ / ____ / ____

3 * Social Security Number _____ - _____ - _____
Last 4 digits required
 Providing your full Social Security number may help determine your eligibility to vote.

4 * Residence Address (May not be a P.O. Box) _____ Apt. _____
 * City/Town _____ * ZIP Code _____
 If address is different than voter registration record, provide the date you moved (MM/DD/YYYY) ____ / ____ / ____

5 Email _____ Phone _____ - _____ - _____

6 Statement of Voter

To the best of my knowledge, I am a registered voter of this locality, and I am eligible to vote in this election. I hereby affirm that I have read the Privacy Act Notice and Warning.

▶ * Signature **X** _____ Today's date ____ / ____ / ____
 (MM/DD/YYYY)

Privacy Act Notice: This form requires personal information, including information related to your Social Security number, for identification purposes and to prevent fraud. Federal law (the Privacy Act and Help America Vote Act) and state law (the Virginia Constitution, Article II, § 2; Title 24.2 of the Code of Virginia; and the Virginia Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act) authorize collecting this information and restrict its use to official purposes only. Failure to provide the requested information may prevent determining your eligibility to vote and result in your provisional ballot not being counted.

Warning: Intentionally making a materially false statement on this form constitutes the crime of election fraud, punishable as a felony in Virginia. Violators may be sentenced up to 10 years in prison, or up to 12 months in jail and/or fined up to \$2,500.

Election Officer Use

Select a Reason

#3 Voting after hours due to court order

#4 Vote by mail - no ballot to surrender

#5 Shown on pollbook as already voted

#6 Other _____

#7 Voter does not have required ID and declined to complete the ID Confirmation Statement

Comments

Election Officer Signature **X** _____

Staff/Electoral Board Use

Voter ID # _____

Adjudication Count Do not count

Voter Identification

1. If the voter returns with the proper identification, check this box and sign _____

2. Attach a copy of the identification document.

ELECT-653-English-07/2024

Appendix C: Voter Education Campaign Materials

Radio

Radio Broadcasting

:30

AVO: An important message from the Virginia Department of Elections:
We count, Virginia. The voice of Virginians will be heard in the November General Election. Vote early in person, by mail, or on Election Day, November fifth. When you vote, it counts. That's something you can count on. Learn more at Vote dot Virginia dot gov.

Mensaje importante del Departamento de Elecciones de Virginia:
¡Virginia sí cuenta! Los ciudadanos de Virginia decidirán su futuro en las elecciones generales de noviembre. Vota por anticipado en persona, por correo o el día de las elecciones el 5 de noviembre. ¡Tu voto sí cuenta! ¡Cuenta con eso! Más información en Vote punto Virginia punto gov.

버지니아 선거 관리부에서 전하는 중요한 메시지가 있습니다. 버지니아의 투표가 중요합니다. 11월 총선에서 버지니아 주민들의 목소리를 들려주세요. 직접 또는 메일을 통해 사전 투표를 하거나 11월 5일 선거일에 투표하세요. 여러분의 투표가 정말 중요합니다. 투표의 힘을 믿으세요. 더 자세한 내용은 Vote dot Virginia dot gov에서 알아보세요.

Streaming Radio



:30

AVO: The November General Election is fast approaching. And the Virginia Department of Elections wants you to know: Your vote matters. Count on it. Whether you vote early, in person, through November second. Or on Election Day, November fifth, when polling locations will be open from 6am to 7pm. You vote. We count. Virginia wins. Learn more and make your voting plan at Vote dot Virginia dot gov. We count Virginia.

Public Radio

:15

The November General Election is fast approaching. Whether you cast your ballot during early in-person voting, by mail, or on Election Day, November fifth. We count Virginia. Learn more at Vote dot Virginia dot gov

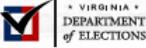
Digital Ads

WE COUNT VIRGINIA



Election Day is Nov. 5. Vote early in person through Nov. 2.

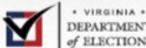
LEARN MORE




버지니아의 투표가 중요합니다

선거일은 11월 5일입니다. 직접 사전투표는 11월 2일까지입니다.

자세히 알아보기




VIRGINIA SÍ CUENTA

El día de las elecciones es el 5 de noviembre. Vote por anticipado en persona hasta el 2 de noviembre.

MÁS INFORMACIÓN



WE COUNT VIRGINIA

VOTING MAKES A DIFFERENCE. COUNT ON IT.



Election Day is Nov. 5. Vote early in person through Nov. 2.

LEARN MORE




WE COUNT VIRGINIA

WHEN YOU VOTE, IT COUNTS.

Election Day is Nov. 5. Vote early in person through Nov. 2.



WE COUNT VIRGINIA

WHEN YOU VOTE, IT COUNTS.

Election Day is Nov. 5. Vote early in person through Nov. 2.



WE COUNT VIRGINIA

WHEN YOU VOTE, IT COUNTS.

Election Day is Nov. 5. Vote early in person through Nov. 2.



08:56

Autoweek

NEWS

Here's Why Polestar SPAC Plans Are a Big Deal

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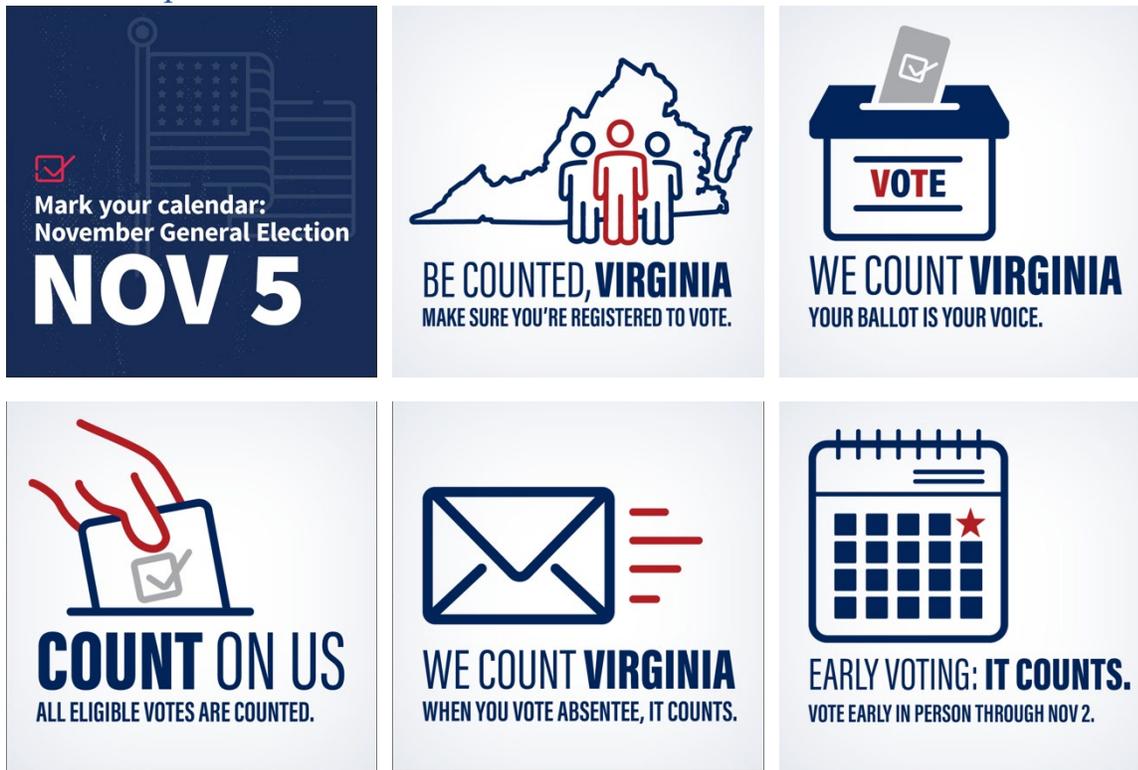
Latest News

WE COUNT VIRGINIA

WHEN YOU VOTE, IT COUNTS. E

When you vote, it counts. Election Day is Nov 5. Vote early in person through Nov 2. We count Virginia. Learn more at Vote.Virginia.gov

Social Graphics



WANT TO MARK YOUR BALLOT?

MARK YOUR CALENDAR.

- **SEPT 20:** First day of early voting.
- **OCT 15:** Last day to register to vote a regular ballot.
- **OCT 16:** First day of same-day registration for provisional ballot.
- **OCT 25:** Last day to request an absentee ballot.
- **NOV 2:** Last day to vote early, in person.
- **NOV 5:** Election Day. Polls open 6am - 7pm.
Last day to drop off or postmark an absentee ballot.

Make your voting plan at Vote.Virginia.gov

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT of ELECTIONS

VIRGINIA IS FOR VOTERS

Print

WE COUNT VIRGINIA
YOUR VOTE MAKES A DIFFERENCE.
COUNT ON IT.

Election Day is Nov. 5.
Vote early in person through Nov. 2.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS
LEARN MORE AT VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV

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VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS
LEARN MORE AT VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV

VIRGINIA SÍ CUENTA
TU VOTO HACE LA DIFERENCIA.
¡CUENTA CON ESO!

El día de las elecciones es el 5 de noviembre.
Vota por anticipado en persona hasta el 2 de noviembre.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS
MÁS INFORMACIÓN EN VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV

버지니아의 투표가 중요합니다
여러분의 투표가 변화를 일으킵니다.
투표의 힘을 믿으세요.

선거일은 11월 5일입니다.
사전 투표일은 11월 2일까지입니다.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS
자세한 내용은 VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV에 방문하세요.

BỘ PHIẾU CÙNG VIRGINIA
MỖI LÁ PHIẾU CỦA QUÝ VỊ SẼ TẠO NÊN SỰ KHÁC BIỆT.
MỖI LÁ PHIẾU ĐỀU GIÁ TRỊ.

Ngày Bầu cử - Ngày 5 tháng 11.
Bỏ phiếu trực tiếp: Ngày 2 tháng 11.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS
THÊM NHIỀU THÔNG TIN TẠI VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV

Flyers



WE COUNT VIRGINIA WHEN YOU VOTE, IT COUNTS.

Remember these important dates:

- SEP 20:** First day of early voting
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- OCT 16:** First day of same-day registration for provisional ballot
- OCT 25:** Last day to request an absentee ballot
- NOV 2:** Last day to vote early, in person
- NOV 5:** Last day to drop off or postmark an absentee ballot
- NOV 5:** Election Day, polls open 6 am - 7 pm

LEARN MORE AT VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV




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- NOV 5:** Election Day, polls open 6 am - 7 pm

LEARN MORE AT VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV




VIRGINIA SÍ CUENTA ¡TU VOTO SÍ CUENTA!

Recuerda estas fechas importantes:

- 20 DE SEPTIEMBRE:** Primer día para votar anticipadamente en persona
- 15 DE OCTUBRE:** Último día para registrarte y votar con boleta regular
- 16 DE OCTUBRE:** Primer día de registro para votar con boleta provisional
- 25 DE OCTUBRE:** Último día para solicitar una boleta de voto ausente
- 2 DE NOVIEMBRE:** Último día para votar anticipadamente en persona
- 5 DE NOVIEMBRE:** Último día para entregar o sellar una boleta de voto ausente
- 5 DE NOVIEMBRE:** Día de las Elecciones. Las urnas abren de 6 a. m. a 7 p. m.

MÁS INFORMACIÓN EN VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV




버지니아의 투표가 중요합니다 여러분의 투표가 정말 중요합니다.

다음 중요한 투표 날짜를 꼭 기억하세요.

- 9월 20일: 사전 투표 첫 날
- 10월 15일: 일반 투표용지에 투표하기 위해 등록하는 마지막 날
- 10월 16일: 상임 투표를 위한 당일 등록 첫 날
- 10월 25일: 부재자 투표 신청 마지막 날
- 11월 2일: 직접 사전투표할 수 있는 마지막 날
- 11월 5일: 부재자 투표를 드롭오프 또는 우편 투표하는 마지막 날
- 11월 5일: 선거일, 투표 시간 오전 6시~오후 7시

자세한 내용은 VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV에서 알아보세요.




BỘ PHIẾU CÙNG VIRGINIA MỖI LÁ PHIẾU CỦA QUÝ VỊ ĐỀU VỒ CÙNG GIÁ TRỊ.

Hãy ghi nhớ những ngày quan trọng sau:

- NGÀY 20 THÁNG 9: Ngày đầu tiên bỏ phiếu sớm
- NGÀY 15 THÁNG 10: Ngày cuối cùng để đăng ký bỏ phiếu bầu cử thường kỳ
- NGÀY 16 THÁNG 10: Ngày đầu tiên đăng ký bỏ phiếu bầu cử trong ngày
- NGÀY 25 THÁNG 10: Ngày cuối cùng để yêu cầu bỏ phiếu vắng mặt
- NGÀY 2 THÁNG 11: Ngày cuối cùng để bỏ phiếu sớm, trực tiếp
- NGÀY 5 THÁNG 11: Ngày cuối cùng để nộp hoặc đăng chiếu đơn xin bỏ phiếu vắng mặt
- NGÀY 5 THÁNG 11: Ngày bầu cử, điện lực phiếu mờ của bỏ phiếu sáng đến 7 giờ

THÊM THÔNG TIN TẠI VOTE.VIRGINIA.GOV

