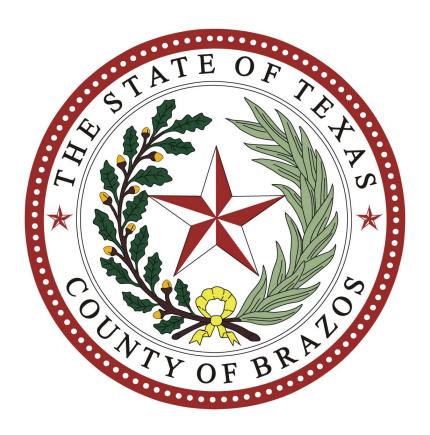# BRAZOS COUNTY

CENTRAL COUNT STATION
PROCEDURE MANUAL

Brazos County, Texas

PROCEDURES FOR CENTRAL COUNT STATION UNDER TEC § 127.007

A. INTRODUCTION

The central counting station (CCS) is at Brazos Center, 3232 Briarcrest Drive, Bryan, Texas.

B. PROCEDURES

In Advance of Election Day

- Call Constable's office and arrange for a deputy on Election Night starting at 6:30pm. Retain other security personnel as needed.

- Set up the election in Count (including any write-ins).

- Prepare a contact list of e-mails for Election Night results. Let the recipients know how many reports they will receive. Test e-mails if necessary.

- Establish intake stations and teams.

-Prepare a list of phone numbers for each polling location.

-Prepare a Reconciliation Count checklist to be used at intake.

After Early Voting

- Print the "Voter Turnout by Pollplace" report from E-pluse; verify these numbers match the number of access codes voted for each day of EV using the white Hart Reconciliation envelope and Controller end of day tapes. The totals will be used Election Day for comparison to the tabulation numbers.

- Elections Coordinator will call the members of the CCS team to verify time and place to appear on Election Day.

- Voter Registration Coordinator updates and prepares the Pollpads.

 -Early Voting Ballot Board (EVBB), the Signature Verification Committee; convenes for the first time nine days before election day to qualify existing ballots by mail. EVBB will meet again on the Saturday, Sunday or any other day prior to an election. Prepare any reject letters for mailing after the election.

EVBB

-The EVBB Judge shall direct the manual examination of all paper ballots to ascertain whether the ballots can be processed in the usual manner or if the ballots need to be duplicated to clearly reflect the voter's intent. Open ballot envelopes of qualified ballots and place paper ballots into categories as need: SOR included or not, unreadable/damaged and signature matching, etc. Sort any damaged ballots for duplication, and place on the list of duplicated ballots. Contact any voter that has a defective carrier envelope.

Tally

- Members of CCS will take the oath and sign the compensation sheet. They are currently paid $25 per hour.

- Print a zero report, and the CCS judge, EA and Entity Representatives sign it. Perform the second test. Check the CCS Test Report data against the Public Test data. Second Test Report is signed by the CCS Judge, EA and Entity Representatives. Return the test deck to the envelope and place in cabinet of Programming Room.

The Central Counting Station Judge will:

1. Verify the seals on the Early Voting Scanners and remove V-drives and tapes from the Scanner. Hand the V-Drive and tape over to Tabulation Supervisor to be processed.
2. Print a zero report, the CCS Manager, EA and other entity representatives sign it.
3. IT Staff will process the early voting V-drives. Check to see that the CCS vote numbers on the reports match the number of ballots voted on the Scanners. Return the V-drives to the "Early Voting" transfer envelope. Processed V-drives will remain in the Programming Room.
4. Scan and resolve (overvotes, undervotes, mismarks, write-ins) the mail ballots and transfer the mail ballot votes, the FPCA votes, and the limited ballot votes, to a V-drive. The Central Count Manager will oversee the resolution process and is tasked with the duty of resolving all ballot issues. Once the ballots have been scanned they will be returned to the locked and sealed transfer case. The scanned ballots will remain in the Programming Room.

Election Day Morning

- Support staff is stationed throughout the county to assist with technical problems that may arise as election judges are opening vote centers.
- Receive phone calls from all polling locations, indicating the equipment is powered up and they are ready to open polls at 7:00 am. Verify all members of the team are there.

Election Day Midday

- Prepare intake stations with tables, chairs, pens, calculator, supplies and paperwork collection boxes. Boxes should be labeled for (i) compensation sheets, (ii) blue envelopes #2, (iii) for green envelopes #4 and (iv) white reconciliation envelopes.

- Have a transfer envelope prepared and ready for each polling place in which to place the V-drives .

- Early voting ballot board reconvenes to qualify late ballots.

- CCS team meets to scan all mail ballots that have been approved by the EVBB since the initial meeting. Scan and resolve (overvotes, undervotes, mismarks, write-ins) the mail ballots and transfer the mail ballot votes, the FPCA votes, and the limited ballot votes, to a V-drive with the assistance of the IT staff.

Election Night 6:30 p.m.

- CCS judges and intake clerks arrive. They take the oath and sign the compensation sheet(s).

- Judges and clerks are currently paid $12.00 an hour (Primary Elections rate of pay determined by parties). Section 127.005(d) states that the CCS presiding judge (and we include alternate) is entitled to a minimum compensation of five hours' pay regardless of the time worked. Clerks are paid the same amount as the judges according to county policy and election services contracts. Section 127.006(d) states that the CCS clerks are entitled to a minimum compensation of three hours' pay regardless of the time worked.

- Instruct the intake team in procedures and assign duties. The Intake teams consist of two people (a representative from each party). Distribute name tags to CCS staff. Give the security person instructions.

Election Night 7:00 p.m.

- Staff accepts calls from the election workers, reporting that the polls have closed.
- Print "Unofficial Results" report for early voting and ballot by mail.

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

- Post Early Voting and Absentee results to the Secretary of State's. Mark all results "Unofficial" and "Early Voting only". Release report to anyone waiting in candidate/media area.

Trustee Crew:
1. Meet Judges at cars and help unload supplies
2. Direct Judges/Alternate Judges with Controller, Scanner, voted ballots and supply bag to the receiving table.
3. Load Controllers, Scanners and supply bags into van/truck to be taken to Arena Hall after election tabulation is complete; voted ballots will be returned to the Elections Administration office and stored in the Programming Room or the Mail Room under the live stream cameras.

Runners:
1. Transport the checked-in Controller, Scanner and supply bags to the Audit table.
2. Transport supply bags, when all forms have been removed, to an area for transporting to Arena Hall.
3. Transport the Pink Provisional ballot bag to the Provisional ballot table to be taken to the Elections Administration office by a staff member.

INTAKE
 Pollpad table (s)
1. Judge and/or Alternate Judge delivers Pollpad case to check-in table.
2. Pollpad check-in staff verifies the seal on the case and insures all equipment has been turned in.

3. Staff place Pollpads in designated area for transport to Elections Administration Office.

Receiving table: (Controller & Supply bags)
1. Set up number of intake staff as needed. Two individual will work as a team to check in Controllers, Scanners & supply bags. If possible, one from each party except in a Primary or Primary run-off election.
2. Judge and/or Alternate Judge delivers to intake table Controller, Scanner, voted ballots and supply bag.
3. Check-in staff opens supply bag and verifies all required forms, envelopes and other supplies are there and makes notation on check list.
4. Check-in staff opens Scanner and VERIFIES seal number against the number on the ballot and seal certificate (located in the Scanner). They DO NOT break the seal, just verify. If Scanner seal does not match, the Central Count Station Manager is contacted for further instructions.
5. Check-in staff also checks for box containing toggle, paddles & headphones and Instruction book (Red).
6. Receipt is given to Judge and they are free to go.
7. Controller, Scanner, ballot bag and Supply bag are placed on the floor for pick-up and delivery to Audit table(s).

Audit Table (s)

1. Set up number of audit tables as needed.
2. Audit staff consists of two individuals, one from each party.
3. Audit staff removes envelopes from the supply bag and place in appropriate box under their table. Provisional bag is sent directly to the provisional table.
4. Audit staff will tear off the Scanner tape and place it in the transfer envelope along with the Ballot & Seal Certificate.
5. Audit staff breaks the seal and removes the V-drives and place both in the transfer envelope.
6. If a Scanner comes in without a receipt the Audit staff will power up the Scanner and print the receipt.
7. The transfer envelope is then sent by runner to the Tally table.

Tally Table

1. The Tabulation supervisor removes the V-drive from the transfer envelope.
2. The number of votes on the V-drive are compared to the number of vote on the Scanner receipt.
3. If they match, the V-drive is tabulated and results are added to the cumulative vote count number.
4. The V-drive, Scanner receipt, ballot & seal certificate and seal are placed back into the transfer envelope for storage.
5. Print Unofficial Results reports periodically to be released to media and candidates.

- Release the CCS intake clerks after all of the precincts have reported.

Results Release

- The CCS team will determine how often to release results, but should be released as soon as practical. The CCS Judge, EA and Entity Representative sign each printed UNOFFICIAL cumulative report that will be retained as an election record.

- Review the reports, number of provisional ballots, and number of outstanding FPCA overseas ballots to determine if an outcome for an election could be changed before reporting the final results.

- Final results should be released (depending on election the order varies) to:
  - -Secretary of State's office via online reporting
  - -Public via releasing copies of Unofficial Cumulative Report to anyone waiting in the candidate/media area.
  - -Public via posting the Unofficial Cumulative Report on the Brazosvotes website.

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

Conclusion

- Print other reports for the election records including an Audit Log and Precinct Report.
- Do not Finalize the election in Count after all V-drives have been read (if you do, you can use the manual vote adjustment procedure). Post the unofficial results on the county website if not already done.
- The Elections Administrator, Elections Coordinator and Voter Registration Coordinator each take an Unofficial Cumulative Report home.
- The Elections Administrator must fill out and post the Reconciliation form on Brazosvotes.

Post-Election Night

- Assist the Early Voting Ballot Board (and CCS judges if they are present) with tallying Election Day provisional votes, timely overseas FPCA votes, and late mail ballots; when the EVBB meets on the designated date and time. Finalize the election in Count. (Use manual vote adjustment procedures only if need according to the Hart Best Practices guide.) The CCS Judge, EA and Entity Representatives team signs the final official cumulative report for an election record.

- Print Official reports to accompany canvassing materials.

- Post Official results and Final Reconciliation on the website (Brazosvotes.org) after the canvassing deadline.