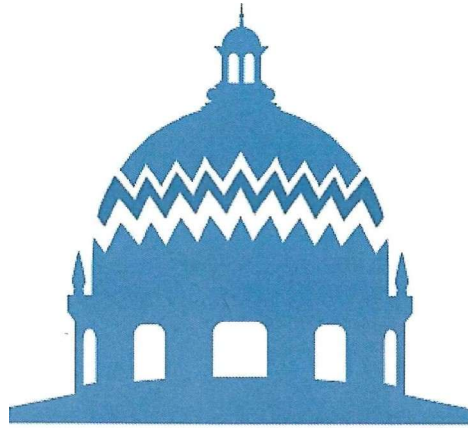




PIMA COUNTY

ELECTIONS

Politic ! Party Observer Guidelines



Contents

Introduction	3
General Guidelines	4
Early Ballot Processing Boards	5
Early Ballot Processing Boards (Continued)	6
Tabulation Room Processing	7
Reference Guide	8
Tabulation Room Procedures	9
Tabulation Room Procedures (Continued)	10

Introduction

Our goal for the Elections department is to be transparent while still protecting the safety, security and integrity of the Election and our staff. Below you will find a brief introduction to the different areas of observation and guidelines set forth to ensure the safety and efficiency of our department.

The Pima County Elections Department is responsible for processing candidate nomination petitions, campaign finance reporting, programming of the election management system, ballot layout, selecting, staffing, and operating vote centers on Election Day, tabulation of ballots and producing a canvass of official results.

The Elections department works closely with the Pima County Recorder's office throughout the election cycle. We are separate departments that both have an integral part in every election. The Recorder's office is responsible for keeping and maintaining the Pima County voter registration roll, conducting early voting, signature verification and processing provisional ballots after Election Day. Communication and teamwork between departments allows us to fulfill our obligations throughout the Election.

During the periods open to observation, the Elections office has three areas of concentration.

- Early Ballot Processing & Duplication
- Tabulation
- Write-In Assignment & Ballot Adjudication

Below are guidelines outlined for observers who will be assigned to ballot processing areas. All participating observers are required to sign a loyalty oath with the Elections Department on their first day of assignment.

General Guidelines

- Party Chairman will be notified of processing days to allow scheduling of observers.
- Every observer must sign in and show identification at reception and be on the designated observation list .¹
- No personal effects are allowed in the observation areas. Purses, briefcases, backpacks, bags, etc. must be secured in the lockers in the front lobby. The following items are permissible; notebook, red pen, sweater and water in a sealed container.
- Cell phones are not permitted in observation areas and pictures or recordings of any kind are prohibited in the ballot processing center.
- Weapons of any kind are not allowed in the facility. Firearms must be checked in at the front lobby and secured in a locker while on the premises or you may leave them in your vehicle.
- Observers will wear lanyards identifying party affiliation and be escorted by Elections staff while in the building.
- The number of political party observers will be limited to 1 per political party in each of the observation areas .
- Observers are not permitted to touch or handle ballots. Keep a mindful distance when observing to allow processing boards to work.
- Observers are permitted to take notes during observation. Only red ink is permissible for observers in processing rooms with voted ballots.
- All questions must be directed to the processing supervisor and the appropriate authority will provide answers.
- Observers may not wear clothing/accessories or display materials relating to a political party, political organization, candidate, or ballot measure .
- Keep talking to levels that do not disrupt or distract the workflow of the boards.
- Treat personnel and other visitors in a courteous manner.
- Stay within the designated observation areas to prevent disruption of workflow and safety hazards.
- No food or drink is allowed where ballots are being processed. Water in sealed containers is permissible on the floor or at the observer station.
- A live video recording remains active in all ballot processing areas. ²
- Failure to abide by the above rules may result in expulsion from the Counting Center as determined by the Pima County Elections Director.

¹ Elections Procedures Manual (2023) ; pages 140-141- Observer Guidelines

² A.R.S. § 16-621(D) - Procedures at the Counting Center

Early Ballot Processing Boards

Early Ballot Processing: Early ballots are mailed and received by the Recorder's office. They are then signature verified and logged by Recorders staff. Ballots ready to be processed are then transferred to the Elections department in batches by mail trays. These batches are now ready to be processed by the Elections department to prepare for tabulation. Batches are designated by an alpha numeric code and contain early ballots in affidavit envelopes. Example: Batch A-1, B-1, etc. The ballots in the mail trays are wrapped in batch code sheets. These sheets contain the names of the voters for the corresponding batch of ballots.

The following areas are under the Early Board Supervisors' responsibility and will be the main point of contact.

- **Highlighting** - Highlighting boards take the mail trays of early affidavits by batch. They begin to match and highlight the names on the batch code sheets against the affidavit envelopes to account for every ballot in that batch. If there is a discrepancy in names or count, then the Recorder's office is contacted to reconcile any discrepancy. At this step, ballots are not extracted from the envelopes or viewed. Highlighting boards do not process ballots. They work to prepare the batch trays for the next step.
- **Openers** - Opener teams take the highlighted batches of mail trays and use electric letter openers to open the affidavit envelopes by batch. The affidavit envelopes are then put back in the mail trays as they were received. At this step, ballots are not extracted from the envelopes or viewed. Opener teams do not process ballots. The teams work to prepare the batch trays for the next step.
- **Processing (single-card ballot)** - All processing boards handling voted ballots are comprised of two members of different political parties.³ Processing boards receive the mail trays by batch after they have been through both highlighting and opening stations. The boards then begin extracting the ballots from the envelopes. The ballots are visually inspected for anything that would physically prevent the ballot from running through a tabulation machine (D5850 or D5950). Ballots that are torn, damaged or are a faxed scan of a military ballot will be sent to duplication. At the end of each batch, ballots are hand counted to verify the total processed matches the total received from the Recorder's office before they are bagged and sealed for tabulation. Other than when ballots are being processed, ballots are secured in the ballot storage vaults.

³ A.R.S. § 16-551 (A); § 16-531; Elections Procedures Manual (2023), page 201- Establishing Central Counting Place Boards

Early Ballot Processing Boards (Continued)

- Processing {two-card ballot} - For elections that require a two-card ballot, processing boards follow the same procedures with a few additional steps to reconcile card counts. All processing boards handling two-card ballots are comprised of two members of different political parties. Ballots are transferred to the Elections Department in the same manner as single card elections. Processing boards receive the mail trays by batch after they have been through both highlighting and opening stations. The boards then begin extracting the ballots from the envelopes. The ballots are visually inspected for anything that would physically prevent the ballots from running through a tabulation machine (DS850 or DS 950). Ballots that are torn, damaged or are a faxed scan of a military ballot will be sent to duplication. Both cards are always sent together if duplication is needed. Processing boards will keep separate piles of the ballots to account for the different types of ballots/cards in the affidavits. At the end of each batch, ballots are hand counted to verify the total number of affidavits processed matches the total received from the Recorder's office. Boards also verify their hand count against the total card count on the processing logs before ballots are bagged and sealed for tabulation. Other than when ballots are being processed, ballots are secured in the ballot storage vaults.
- Affidavit Reviewer {two-card ballot}-As two-card ballots are being processed by the early ballot board, an affidavit reviewer will do a second check through the already processed affidavit envelopes to verify all affidavits in the batch are empty. If a ballot is found in an affidavit, the affidavit will be handed back to the board for processing. The reviewer will go through all affidavits in each batch. Reviewers do not process ballots and work independently to double check affidavits.

Duplication Processing:

- Duplication (Dup) - Ballots are sent from the Early ballot processing boards to our duplication boards. Duplication boards use an ExpressVote to mark the duplicate ballot. The originals will get stamped and assigned an alpha numeric code. The same code is also transferred on the ExpressVote ballot in order to match the duplicate against the original.⁴ Dup boards are reviewing and duplicating ballots that will not physically run through the tabulators. A second team will verify the selections made on the printed ExpressVote card against the original ballot to ensure the correct selections are made. Both the early processing and duplication boards maintain accounting forms of all batches and ballots they process.

⁴ A.R.S. § 16-6 21(A) ; Elections Procedures Manual (20 23), pages 207-208- Procedures for Duplicating a Ballot

Tabulation Room Processing

The following areas are under the Tabulation Supervisors' responsibility and will be the main point of contact.

Tabulation Process:

- Tabulation - Bagged and sealed early ballots are sent to tabulation. Ballots are run through the tabulators (D5850) and counted. If there is a discrepancy in count by batch, the batch does not continue in tabulation. It is put aside for reconciliation against records from our early ballot processing. Once the discrepancy has been found, tabulation of that batch will continue. Results from early ballots processed are not viewed until Election night at 8:00pm when the first reports are generated. However, the number of processed ballots is accounted for each day and posted to the Elections webpage in the form of a spreadsheet.⁵

Adjudication Boards:

- Adjudication - Once ballots have been scanned, Adjudication boards will electronically review any ballots flagged by the Election Management System (EMS), to determine voter intent. Voter intent is recorded on the system for that ballot as determined by the bipartisan board. A second review is performed before final determinations are accepted.⁵

Write-In Assignment Boards:

- Write-In Assignment - Once ballots have been scanned and tabulated into the EMS the assignment of official write-in candidates can begin. An export of write-in votes from the EMS is reviewed by the boards. Every write-in vote is viewed, processed and assigned to the official candidate. A cumulative total then uploads to the EMS with vote totals for each write-in candidate.⁶

⁵ A.R.S. § 16-621 and Elections Procedures Manual (2023); page 200 - Central Counting Place Procedures; Adjudication; pages 210-211

⁶ A.R.S. § 16-448; Elections Procedures Manual (2023), pages 216-217 -Write-In Tally Board Procedures

Reference Guide

Early Ballot Processing Reports

- Turnover Receipts -A receipt issued by the Recorder's office with batch total information. The receipt is signed by staff from both the Recorder 's and Elections Department upon transfer of ballots.
- Early Ballots Processed Report - Spreadsheet of batch totals received, processed, and tabulated. Totals are updated daily during processing and posted to the Elections webpage.
- Early Ballot Processing Logs - Accounting forms the boards use to document the batches each board has processed. Logs maintain a paper trail of batches and quantities processed.
- Duplication logs - Accounting forms the duplication boards use to document the batches each board has duplicated. Logs maintain a paper trail of batches and quantities processed.
- Bag Tracking Form - Form that travels with the batch of ballots from the early ballot processing room to the tabulation room. The form identifies each bag in the batch, processing board, seal number on each bag, and quantity per bag.

Tabulation Reports

- Zero Report : Prior to the start of tabulation a zero report is generated to verify that there are no results on the EMS (Election Management System). The reports are printed from both the EMS and D5850 tabulators.
- Batch Bin Reports: Automatically print after saving each batch on the DSSSO's. The reports contain information on the number of ballots sorted to each bin. The reports are placed with their corresponding batch of boxed ballots.
- Precincts Processed: This report is produced at the end of each processing day to verify the total number of ballots processed on the tabulators match the EMS system.
- Results with Public Detail : Are **only** printed for the use of Audit Batches. There are specific instructions used to generate this report to maintain the confidentiality of the results. Audit batches are hand counted after the election during the hand count audit.
- Early Ballots Processed Report: Spreadsheet of batch totals received, processed, and tabulated. Totals are updated daily during processing and posted to the Elections webpage.

Tabulation Room Procedures

*Logic & Accuracy Testing (L&A)*⁷

- Political Party Logic & Accuracy Testing: Political party observers are permitted to participate in the logic and accuracy testing. They are instructed to create a pre-marked test deck along with a report of pre-determined results prior to testing. On the day of the L&A testing, observers will be provided with a zero report from the EMS system to confirm that there are no results in the EMS or on the tabulators. They will then distribute their ballot test deck to each tabulation machine. After the ballots have been processed the test results will be provided to compare against the observer's pre-determined results. If there are any discrepancies the staff and observers work to reconcile the issue before certification. Party observers will sign a certificate to verify the logic and accuracy of the EMS system to complete the L&A process.
- Secretary of State Logic & Accuracy: Party observers are permitted to attend the State's official logic and accuracy test. The Secretary of State will provide a pre-marked test deck with pre-determined results to compare with system results. The same procedures in the party test will be applied to the SOS test under their instruction. If there are any discrepancies the staff and Secretary of State staff work to reconcile the issue before certification. If the results are accurate the Secretary of State staff will sign the official state logic and accuracy certificate to complete the L&A process.

Observer Verification

- Observers oversee their own tracking system and are provided with logs from their party headquarters for documentation.

⁷ A.R.S. § 16-449 - Required test of equipment and programs; notice; procedures manual; Elections Procedures Manual (2023), LOGIC AND ACCURACY (L&A) TESTING pages 91-100

Tabulation Room Procedures (Continued)

*Hand Count Audit Batches*⁸

- At the beginning tabulation, the area supervisor will inform the observers on how the audit process is conducted. The responsibility of the observer is to assist in choosing the ballot bags that will be a part of the random selection for the hand-count audit. The number of audit batches are based on 1% of the early ballots cast and no more than 5,000 ballots. For example, 1% of 500,000 will be 5,000 ballots and audit batches are set to the Pima County standard of 200-250 ballots per bag. The random selection of batches to process for audits starts on the first day of tabulation and continues until the required number of ballots is met which can range from 30-50 audit bags.

Concerns or Questions?

- Report any issues or concerns to the area supervisor.
- Document any questions or suggestions on the observer questionnaire and place them in the suggestion box.

⁸ A. R. S. § 16-602 - Removal of ballots from ballot boxes; disposition of ballots folded to get over excessive ballots; designated margin; hand counts; vote count verification committee.