General:

There was a board with pockets to put papers in at the entrance to each polling place. It contained voter information posters in both English and Spanish. There was not a sample ballot on the poster board, but there was a notice saying to see the election judge for a sample ballot. Some of the polling locations had more than one ballot, so that may have been the reason. I asked about a sample ballot at the first two sites and was provided with them. They were laminated and kept in the filing bin with labelled tabs that each location also received from the county. Each bin contained all the necessary forms like provisional ballot materials, Statement of Residences, affidavits, etc.

The county provided voting booth partitions the names of write-in candidates taped to the inside to each location.

Each location used the same electronic system to verify and check in voters. Unless otherwise noted, each voter would present ID and then the ID was scanned to pull them up. I was not able to observe if the system notated which voters voted early or by mail (question 16) but was told the system has that built in. If a voter couldn’t be found, there was a central phone number the election judge would call to see if the voter was in their system. A screen would then prompt the voter to verify that their name and address were correct. Clerks often also asked these questions out loud. The voter would sign the screen. After that, a label was printed, which was then “exchanged” for a ballot that the voter would select themselves.

There was inconsistency about what to do with the labels that were printed between the locations. Some sites were keeping the labels to verify the computer’s totals (that were called in every two hours). Some sites were keeping the labels to place in the ballot box at the end of the day. And some sites were throwing them away or were planning to throw them away. One election judge called the central location to ask about what to do with the labels and was told to include them with the ballots in the ballot box.

I did not observe any election judge print or produce a “zero tape” report. I inquired about this with a few of the judges and it caused confusion. I am not sure what Bastrop’s process is for this report or if they use a different term for this process but I cannot indicate anything other than N/O for question 21.

Statement of Residences – I did not observe the exact situation described in question 25, but election clerks did remark that the system automatically notified them when someone needed to complete a Statement of Residence. One clerk mentioned that they had seen a lot of people have to fill out the SOR that day.

I did not see any of the election judges themselves periodically checking for discarded election related materials left by previous votes. At all but one precinct, it was possible to see the whole room and some locations had election officials who where sanitizing the booths after each voter.

48. I asked each election judge if there were bilingual election clerks available on site.

55. Optical scan paper ballots were at all locations. The election judges at each site did sign the back of every ballot, but I did not see provisional ballot stamped or written on the back of any provisional ballots.

66. Each location had one, locked ballot box usually labelled “1” that completed ballots were placed into. At the last site, I observed the election judge complete a ballot seal and certification and register of official ballots, place the forms into the ballot box, and seal it. All ballot boxes were taken to a central counting location (the courthouse) but since I never went to the courthouse, I cannot say if two rotating ballot boxes for receiving voted ballots and one ballot box for depositing counted ballots.

Concerns: There was an inconsistency between locations for two main items. The first was what to do with the labels that the machine printed out. Some sites were keeping them and others were not. It is unclear if the labels were needed to verify the vote count. The second concern is that if a voter was not found in the system, it varied from precinct to precinct if they were offered to cast a provisional ballot. At two of the locations, voters said that they thought they had registered to vote online but either did not print out and send in the form or that they tried to contact someone to see if they were registered but were not able to reach anyone. If the website’s instructions were not clear, it could have mislead some voters who were then not able to cast votes.

PRECINCT 3016

12. There were not orange cones placed like at other sites to establish the 100-ft electioneering boundary. However, all signs seemed to be placed about 100 ft from the entrance to the polling place.

30. I observed one voter try to vote but was registered at another precinct. They were informed that they had to vote in the precinct in which they were registered.

29. I observed one first time voter who had a voter registration card but not an ID because he didn’t have his driver’s license yet. They completed a Reasonable Impediment form and was allowed to cast a regular ballot.

52-58. I observed one provisional voter. Voter could not be found as registered in the system but did have an acceptable form of identification. They were provided a green envelope with the provisional ballot affidavit and ballot to complete at the same time. They were not required to complete the provisional voter affidavit prior to casting their provisional ballot. After completing, their ballot was placed in the green envelop, which was then placed in a white envelope. Their name was added to the Combination List. The judges signature was on the back of all of the ballots, but I am not sure if provisional was stamped on the back of the ballot. I didn’t see if the voter was provided a notice to provisional voter.

PRECINCT 3012

2-8. The parking lot at the polling place was unpaved, uneven, and there was a big tree near the entrance. However, the location was offering curbside voting and had a sign indicating that with a handicap symbol on it. There was also a paved ramp that looked to be wide enough leading from the parking area to the building where voting was taking place.

29. I observed the clerks have difficulty finding one voter in the system. They initially clicked the wrong person, caught it, started over, found the correct voter, and allowed them to vote.

30. I observed one voter try to vote but was at the wrong precinct. They were sent to the correct precinct.

33. I did not directly observe the election judge check for materials left in the booths but it was a small room. I think he could make a case that walking through the room and glancing to both sides could count as checking for discarded materials. He walked through the room periodically.

54. I did not observe any provisional voting at this location but did verify that they had provisional ballot affidavit envelopes.

56. I did not observe but I asked the judge and they said yes.

One voter asked for a new ballot after making a mistake. The judge provided the voter with a new ballot and took the mistake ballot. The judge filled out an orange form and placed it and the spoiled ballot into a special envelope.

PRECINCT 1002

2. When approaching the polling location from the side parking lot, I noticed that the sidewalk is cracked and a little uneven. However, the parking lot closest to the entrance was even and accessible.

13. Even though I observed no electioneering within the 100 foot barrier, there were many politically affiliated and non-partisan groups just on the other side of the barrier at this location.

17. The judge at the site was maintaining two physical combination forms, one for provisional voting and the other for curbside. This was in addition to the electronic format.

20. About half of the booth partitions didn’t have the required materials in them.

25-26. I observed one voter be required by the electronic system to fill out the Statements of Residence and then I observed it being placed into the envelope for the county voter registrar.

30. I observed one voter try to vote but was at the wrong precinct. They were sent to the correct precinct.

44. One voter requested assistance and brought their own assistant. I observed the assistant take the Oath of Assistance. The assistant filled out the oath form and a line on the combination form. Two officials observed but technically did not assist. I asked the judge and was told, and saw the form, that everyone had taken the Oath of Assistance that morning.

48. When I asked the election judge if there was bilingual assistance available, she said she didn’t know.

56. I did not observe but I asked the judge and they said yes.

I observed and then asked the judge about their curbside voting process. Here is how it worked. They would get a phone call from the courthouse letting them know a curbside voter was on their way or someone would pull into the spot. The clerk would bring in their ID and check them in on the system. After they verified, they took their ID, a ballot, and the Combination Form to sign back out to the voter. The clerk would then take the completed ballot inside and place into the ballot box. The clerk would then bring the vote an I Voted sticker. When I observed curbside voting, two clerks were present.

I observed a mail in ballot that the voter brought in. The judge voided the mail in ballot by filling out the request to cancel ballot form/surrender form.

PRECINCT 1003

17. This location was also offering curbside voting. There were two combination forms that indicated that so far that day they had 2 curbside voters and one provisional voter.

20. The voting booth partitions were placed on tall tables for people to stand while they filled out their ballot. One voter asked if there were seats available for the tables but there were not. They were provided with a clip board and directed to a chair in a less busy area with plenty of space for privacy. The election workers were able to accommodate the voter but I noticed that since they were not voting in a booth, they did not have the list of write in candidates

25. I observed one voter complete a Statement of Residence when the system prompted the clerk to ask her to complete it.

29. I observed one person with a passport try to vote but she couldn’t be found in the system. When asked, she said that she had registered to vote online but had not printed and sent in the registration. She was informed that she could cast a provisional ballot but decided not to. She was provided with a voter registration form which she completed and provided to the clerk. She did not cast a ballot.

30. I observed one voter try to vote but was at the wrong precinct. They were sent to the correct precinct.

33. One of the election workers was cleaning the voting booths after each voter.

40. One of the accessible voting devices was turned off and had one of the booth partitions placed over it. I asked the judge if they had experienced problems with the machine and she said no, that they had decided to not turn it on or break the seal. There was another machine available and she said that no one had requested to use it so far that day. Both machines could be seen by election workers the whole time I was there.

56. I did not observe but I asked the judge and they said yes.

PRECINCT 3015

17. I did not observe any provisional or curbside voting when I was there but was told that they had 2 of each so far that day.

20. An additional voting booth was created by the poll workers in order to have a booth that was more wheelchair accessible. They used an extra partition, but it didn’t have the write in candidates.

30. I observed multiple voters try to vote but was at the wrong precinct. They were sent to the correct precinct.

42. I observed two voters receive assistance from election workers. Two workers were present in both instances and I verified with the judge that everyone had received the Oath of Assistance that morning. I did not observe the oath though.

49-51. I observed a voter bring in their own interpreter, who was offered, completed, and signed the Oath

52. There were three people who tried to vote but couldn’t be found in the system. All three said they filled out the registration form online but did not print it out and send it in. The election judge called to see if they were on the list of registered voters, but they were not. One of the people was registered to vote in another county and the other two could not be found as registered in the whole state. I do not know if they resided in the precinct they were trying to vote. They were not offered provisional ballots. I inquired with the judge about the decision privately and her response was that there was no change that the ballot board would pass their ballots since they aren’t registered. I cannot verify with certainty that this played a factor, but I did observe that all three people were people of color. There was an additional (Spanish speaking) couple who were registered to vote in Travis county who were informed they needed to vote in Travis county.

66. The ballot box was labelled with a “2” instead of a “1.” I asked the election judge and was told that the first box arrived with an issue. They notified the county and the box was replaced before ballots were cast into it.

PRECINCT 3014

2. The polling location was in a firehouse. There is a short concrete lip when going from the outside to inside of the firehouse. The location might meet ADA standards, but I am not certain.

6. The parking lot was unpaved but they made a temporary handicapped parking space near the entrance. They were also offering curbside voting.

17**.** I did not observe any curbside voting but did see the Combination Form. When I arrived, they had already had 2 curbside and 4 provisional votes, as well as one reasonable impediment that day.

22. At one point, privacy was compromised when there were more voters than booths. Voters were allowed to pull up chairs and fill out their ballots outside of a booth.

37. Instead of printing out anything, I observed the judge hand write the totals from the two computers onto a form. The judge filled out and signed an official form per Bastrop’s process that had the precinct totals after the polls closed. It was just not technically printed out.

There was an individual who was still registered in Travis but lived in the precinct. They were offered a provisional ballot but they decided to try and vote in Travis county instead.

I observed two instances of provisional voting. There was an individual who lives in Bastrop but was still registered in Travis county so they were offered a provisional ballot. Voter was informed that it’s up to the ballot board if the ballot will be accepted. They filled out the ballot before filling out the green envelope. They were added to the Combination Form and added to the list of provisional voters. The voter folded up their ballot and placed it into the white privacy envelope, which was then placed into the green envelope. The green envelope was placed in the ballot box. The voter was provided the notice to provisional voter letter. The second provisional voter lives in the county and says they voted at that location before. The election judge called the central number and the individual wasn’t registered anywhere in the state. The voter had both a driver’s license and a concealed carry license. They went through the same provisional voting process.

There was a third individual who the election worker was not able to locate in the system. They were a Spanish speaker and were assisted entirely in Spanish but the summary of the situation that I heard the election worker say was that the individual thought that they could vote anywhere regardless of county or precinct. The individual’s address on file was still listed as being in Austin and they were only living in the Bastrop area temporarily. Since they were not a permanent resident of the county, they were not given the option of voting provisionally.

I observed the judge fill out the spoiled ballot form and offer the voter a new ballot while I was there. The form and ballot were placed in an envelope together.