

FAQs (Jun 2023)

Policies and Procedures for this election

1. What kind of election will occur?

- This is a Democratic Party primary election (the Republican Party chose its candidates via alternative means.)
- Any qualified voter may vote. Voters do not register by party in Virginia.
- Greeters and check-in officers should remind voters that this is a Democratic Party Primary only. Never ask a voter their party affiliation!

2. Are face masks required inside the polling place?

- No. Face masks are optional for election officers, voters, and authorized representatives.
- By law, voters are never required to wear a face mask on election day.

3. Do we need to update the Poll Pads with the final voter file?

- No. Poll Pads will be updated with the final voter file by office staff on Sunday before Chiefs pick them up on Monday.

Absentee ballot drop box

1. What should I do if a voter brings their absentee ballot to the precinct?

- The voter may choose any one of the following:
 1. DROP BOX: Deposit the completed absentee ballot envelope in the drop box.
 2. VOTE IN-PERSON: Surrender the absentee ballot to the Chief and vote a new ballot in-person instead.
 3. RETURN BY MAIL: Mail the ballot on election day. Absentee ballots must postmarked by election day and received in our office by 12:00 PM on the third day after the election (Friday) to be counted.

2. Do we check IDs of people dropping off absentee ballots in drop boxes?

- No. Voters are not required to provide identification or identify themselves when they place a voted absentee ballot envelope in the drop box.

3. Can someone deposit a ballot for a spouse, family member, or friend?

- Yes. Per guidance from the Virginia Department of Elections, voters are permitted to place more than one voted absentee ballot in the drop box.

4. Can the drop box monitor witness an absentee envelope?

- No. Election officers should not witness an absentee ballot envelope, nor should the officer examine or verify the absentee ballot envelope.

5. Can a voter use any drop box?

- Any Fairfax County voter can use a drop box at any polling place in the County.

6. Do co-located precincts each need to set out a drop box?

- Each precinct will be given one drop box. Polling places that host 2 precincts may choose to use one shared drop box if they are using the same entrance or voting room.
- Only one co-located precinct will be assigned Collector Officers.

7. How do co-located precinct record drop box ballots on the SOR?

- If co-located precincts share a drop box, the precinct with Collector Officers records the drop box ballots on their SOR. It gets recorded in one section as a supplemental number and does not affect the totals for any other section.

Collector Officers

1. **I am assigned as a Collector Officer. What are my duties during the day?**
 - You will perform all regular officer duties and rotate among stations as designated by the Chief.
 - If the drop box fills up during the day, you should remove, count, and secure the absentee ballots.
2. **What are the Collector Officers' duties after the polls close?**
 - Immediately after polls close at 7:00 PM, these officers will remove and count all absentee ballots from the drop box, then secure them in a TripLok security bag with a chain of custody form. They should also disassemble the drop box. These officers may carry out these duties inside the voting room.
 - These officers will also be given a purple pouch containing 4 USB flash drives from the two DS200 scanners and the Election Night Numbers Sheet.
 - These officers will drive the purple pouch and the TripLok security bag to the Fairfax County Government Center, then go home (or back to the polling place, if one officer needs to pick up their car).
 - Per requirements from the Virginia Department of Elections, the two Collector Officers must travel in the same car from the polling place to the Fairfax County Government Center.
3. **How will Collector Officers sign the Statement of Results (SOR) and other closing documents?**
 - These officers will not sign any closing documents that other officers sign.
 - The only form Collector Officers should sign after 7:00 PM is the chain of custody form for recording how many absentee ballot envelopes they are transporting.
 - **TIP:** Before 7:00 PM, Collector Officers should double-check that they signed the Oath form and Compensation Sheet.

Election equipment (Poll Pads, ExpressVote, DS200, Admin Tablet, equipment cart)

1. **How many Poll Pads, DS200 ballot scanners, and ExpressVote ballot marking devices should we set up?**
 - Set up all Poll Pads, even if you don't use every one of them for check-in.
 - Set up both DS200s. If you choose to use just one, turn the other around but make sure it fully open and ready as a backup.
 - Set up one ExpressVote.
2. **Should we ask each voter if they want to use the ExpressVote?**
 - No. Offer each voter a regular printed ballot unless they ask for an ExpressVote ballot.
 - Any voter may choose to use the ExpressVote. Don't hide it in a corner. Place it prominently at a wheelchair-accessible table with a privacy booth around it.
3. **Why do three people need to unload and reload the DS200s into and out of the equipment cart?**
 - The DS200 is top heavy. To prevent potential injury to officers or damage to the scanner from jostling, the weight should be balanced among the three officers while smoothly sliding it out of and into the cart. Watch the videos below for demonstrations:
 1. [VIDEO: Unloading DS200 from equipment cart](#)
 2. [VIDEO: Loading DS200 into equipment cart](#)
4. **What must be locked inside the equipment cart on Monday night after we finish setting up the polling place?**
 - The DS200s, Poll Pads, and ExpressVotes MUST be locked in the equipment cart overnight. The cardboard privacy booths and blue bag can be removed to make room for the Poll Pads. Reminder: Do not unseal or open any voting equipment before election morning.

5. **Does the equipment cart need to be locked during the day on Tuesday?**
 - Yes. Just lock it—you don't need to use a zip-tie seal.
 6. **When do we remove the USB flash drives from the DS200 scanners?**
 - Immediately after polls close, begin shutting down the DS200 scanners. Wait until the DS200 is completely shut down and the screen is black before you remove the USB flash drives. Follow the step-by-step instructions in the DS200 Closing guide.
 7. **Do we remove USB flash drives from the second DS200 scanner, even if no ballots were cast on it?**
 - Yes.
 8. **Do the Poll Pads get turned off at the end of the day before packing them in their case?**
 - No. Leave them powered on when packing them.
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General questions

1. **What are the most important things I need to know when checking in voters?**
 - Always repeat each voter's name audibly (not the address). Do this every time!
 - Remember that you cannot ask for a driver's license if a voter provides a different form of valid ID.
 - Use the **Check-In Table guide** to make sure you are completing all necessary steps for each voter! Follow the same procedure for every voter.
 2. **Are voters permitted to bring signs or wear clothing that clearly supports a candidate in the polling place?**
 - Voters can wear clothing that supports a political candidate or issue. However, a voter cannot bring in signage, do any campaigning, or hand out literature inside the voting room or within 40 feet of the polling place entrance.
 - Election officers are not permitted to wear clothing that supports a candidate or party.
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Chief questions (provisional voters, Authorized Representatives, forms, etc.)

1. **What is the difference between the ID Confirmation Statement and the Affirmation of Eligibility?**
 - An ID Confirmation Statement is for voters who do not have acceptable ID.
 - An Affirmation of Eligibility is for voters who are marked as Inactive on the Poll Pad.
 - In both situations, once the form is completed, a voter may be checked in on the Poll Pad to vote normally.
2. **Where should I store ballots during the day?**
 - The Chief can decide to store ballots in the equipment cart or at the ballot table. If the cart is located in the voting room near the chief's table, it can remain unlocked at the chief's discretion. If the cart is located outside the voting room, it must remain locked.
 - If the additional ballots are stored at the ballot table, the ballots and table must NEVER be left unattended.
3. **How many election officers have to assist a curbside voter?**
 - On election day, the best practice is to have 2 officers go outside for curbside voting. If you cannot spare a second officer at certain times, you may send only one officer.
 - You can have another officer assume double duty while two officers are outside assisting curbside voters. For example, one officer could both issue ballots and direct voters to open voting booths. Or you could temporarily have a check-in officer issue ballots.
 - A High School Page (only in November) may accompany the election officer(s) assisting curbside voters to observe the process.