

2021 GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT CANVASS PROCEDURES

For the November 2, 2021 General Election, the Board anticipates receiving a large number of absentee and mail-in ballots. In order to efficiently process these ballots, the Board deputizes and authorizes its staff to comply with the following procedures and to complete the absentee and mail-in ballot pre-canvass and canvass and voting machine ballot pre-canvass in accordance with the Election Code.

Absentee and Mail-in Ballot Receipt and Sorting

Upon receipt by the Board, envelopes containing absentee and mail-in ballots will be time stamped with the date the Board received them, screened for compliance with the Election Code and scanned into the SURE system. Envelopes containing absentee and mail-in ballots will be organized and sorted by Ward and Division to prepare for the Pre-Canvass and Canvass, and shall be securely maintained until that time. That process shall include:

- The envelope of any elector for whom the Board has received due proof of death prior to 7 a.m. on Election Day shall be set aside.
- The envelope of any elector whose proof of identification has not been verified by the Board shall be set aside until proof of identification is received and verified.
- The envelope of any elector whose ballot or application has been timely and properly challenged will be set aside until such challenge is finally determined.

Absentee and Mail-in Ballot Pre-Canvass and Canvass Procedures

1. Beginning on or after 7 a.m. on Election Day at the Board of Elections ballot processing facility, 11311 Roosevelt Blvd., staff will begin the Pre-canvass of the absentee and mail-in ballots received by the Board prior to the finalization of poll books.
2. A list of all envelopes that are to be examined during the Pre-Canvass and Canvass shall be posted publicly and/or provided to observers present.
3. Staff shall examine each envelope and perform the following steps:
 - a. Staff shall verify that the elector is entitled to vote by comparing the written information on the declaration envelope with the pre-printed name on the declaration envelope from the list of absentee and mail-in voters.
 - b. Staff shall determine if they are satisfied that the declaration is sufficient.
 - i. If the examiner is unsure whether the declaration is sufficient for any reason, including because the envelope lacks a signature or date, the envelope shall be set aside for review by the secondary examination staff and/or the Board and the envelope shall not be opened prior to noon on the day following Election Day.
4. Any envelope whose declaration is not determined to be sufficient upon initial examination or which was submitted by an elector who was not entitled to vote shall be

set aside for review by the secondary examination staff and/or the Board and the envelope shall not be opened prior to noon on the day following Election Day.

5. Envelopes not set aside shall then be brought to the extraction area. If the secrecy envelope within the declaration envelope contains any text, mark or symbol which reveals the identity of the voter, the voter's political affiliation or the voter's candidate preference, or if the ballot is not inside a secrecy envelope, the secrecy envelope and ballot shall be set aside.
6. Board staff shall then extract the ballot from each secrecy envelope not set aside and scan all ballots contained therein.
7. Results shall be uploaded to results.philadelphiavotes.com. To the best of their ability, the staff shall post results of absentee and mail-in ballots scanned on Election Day with the first results posted after polls close at 8pm and after the last voting machine results of the night, with updates as additional results become available.
8. Any final determination regarding the canvassing of envelopes set aside or for which the staff could not make a sufficiency determination will be made by the Board of Elections.

Voting Machine Ballot Pre-Canvass Procedure

Election Night

1. ExpressVote XL hopper sacks containing sealed hoppers with voted paper ballots will be collected by the Philadelphia Police Department when they collect the USBs from each polling place.
2. Police will drop off USBs at their designated Regional Transmission Center (RTC).
3. Police will transfer all hopper sacks to Board of Elections' staff.
4. Board staff will track to make sure all sacks have been returned, and hopper sack RFID tags will be scanned.
5. Hopper sacks will be loaded into trucks.
6. After all sacks have been loaded, trucks will be escorted by police to the Board of Elections ballot processing facility, 11311 Roosevelt Blvd.
7. The Philadelphia Police Department will assign a detail to guard the ballots.

Wednesday Onward

1. All personnel handling the ballots will be deputized.
2. The Board of Elections intends to begin the Voting Machine pre-canvass process as early as 9:00 a.m. on the day following Election Day at the Board of Elections ballot processing facility, 11311 Roosevelt Blvd.
3. Hopper sacks will be unloaded - hoppers laid out, seal cards placed on top, and provisional ballot envelopes placed in boxes.
4. Board staff will verify seals.
5. Board staff will prepare the ballots for the Pre-Canvass and Canvass:
 - a. Staff will break seals using wire cutters and remove ExpressVote XL paper ballots.
 - b. Ballots will be hand shuffled with at least six cuts to ensure a proper randomization of ballots.
 - c. Rubber bands will be placed around each stack of ballots.
 - d. The ward and division card will be removed from the hopper and placed under the rubber band.
 - e. Repeat for all hoppers in a division, place all bundles of ballots for a division into a bag, place bag in designated box for that ward.
6. Ballots will be securely stored until the Canvass.
7. The Philadelphia Police Department will assign a detail to guard the ballots

Absentee and Mail-in Ballot Pre-Canvass and Canvass Observer Procedures

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to keep the staff safe, those permitted to be present for the Pre-Canvass and Canvass (collectively, “Canvass”), other than Board of Elections personnel, may be limited to Observers pursuant to 25 P.S. § 2650 and 25 P.S. § 3146.8 of the Pennsylvania Election Code. Observers may be appointed as follows:

- Any candidate may appoint themselves, qualified electors of Philadelphia, or Pennsylvania-licensed attorneys representing said candidate as Observers for the Canvass.
- Any party or political body or body of citizens¹ which now is, or hereafter may be, entitled to have watchers at any primary or election may appoint qualified electors of Philadelphia or Pennsylvania-licensed attorneys representing said party or body as Observers for the Canvass.

Observer certificates for the Canvass will be issued as follows:

- Those entitled to appoint Observers must email vote@phila.gov with the name of each appointed Observer, the Observer’s address, and—if the Observer is their attorney—their PA Bar number.
- Due to security restrictions, Observer requests must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, October 29, 2021 in order to be approved prior to Election Day. Late requests will be accepted on a rolling basis and processed within two business days.

Observers must be approved by the Board and pass a security and health screening in order to be admitted to the Canvass. Observers must wear a face mask and comply with other safety guidelines at all times. Observers must remain within the physical area designated for Observers behind the railing. One Observer per candidate (inclusive of the candidate themselves) and three Observers per party or body shall be permitted to be present at any one time. To the extent the number of Observers requesting to be present in this area at any given time exceeds the number consistent with social distancing guidelines and/or reasonable capacity limitations within the Observer area, the Board of Elections will limit in-person viewing by endeavoring to allow Observers to view in-person on a rotating basis. Observers may not disrupt or interfere with Board staff completing the Canvass. Observers shall not be permitted to take photographs, video, and audio recordings, or use cell phones inside the observation area during the Canvass. A designated area will be provided for pictures, video, and cell phone use. Violators will be removed and have their Observer eligibility revoked.

¹ Body of Citizens: Body which has not yet but intends to become a political party or political body as defined by 25 P.S. § 2831 through the nomination of candidates and/or the receiving of votes in a future election.