

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



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C. D. Dubelbay
County Administrator

SUBJECT: **RELEASE AND AUDIT OF UNOFFICIAL ELECTION RESULTS**
[ARS § 16-551, ARS § 16-622]

DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE: **The Office of the County Administrator**
Division of Elections

I. STATEMENT

This Administrative Procedure sets forth the requirements for the release and audit of unofficial election results. Division of Elections employees are required to comply with this procedure, the Secretary of State's Electronic Voting System Instructions and Procedures Manual ("SOS Manual"), and Arizona law to ensure that unofficial election results are fully and accurately disclosed.

II. DEFINITIONS

Audit - verification of results transmitted to the central computer from each of the polling places with the final results tape produced immediately after the polls close, and the ballot report showing the number of names in the poll list.

Ballot Report - the report completed by the election board workers that accounts for all of the ballots issued to the polling place. The report includes the number of names that have been entered in the poll list.

Ballots to be Verified - ballots cast at the polls by a voter whose name has been flagged as having been sent an Early Ballot, or whose name does not appear on the roster of eligible voters for that polling place, or whose eligibility to cast a ballot in the election is questionable for some other reason.

Election Summary Report - the cumulative report that shows the total votes cast by race or issue that are on the ballot. The election summary reports produced prior to the canvass by the Board of Supervisors shall be identified as unofficial.

Official Canvass - includes the returns produced by each precinct at the polls on election day, the tally of certified write-in votes, the early votes, and the verified ballots that have been certified by the Board of Supervisors.

Statement of Votes Cast (SOVC) - a report showing the breakdown of votes cast by precinct within each race or issue on the ballot.

Unofficial Returns - all returns released to the public after 8:00 p.m. on election night up until the Board of Supervisors canvasses the election results.

III. PROCESS

- A. Initial results shall be disclosed in accordance with ARS § 16-551 and ARS § 16-222 one hour following the closing of the polls on election day. The initial results shall include the tally of all the Early ballots received from the Recorder and processed by the Early Ballot processing boards by 3:00 p.m. election day, as well as the tally of votes from all of the precincts that have transmitted by 8:00 p.m. Additional unofficial results may be released to the public and the secretary of state until all polling places have reported the results from the voting area. The interval between reports shall be no more than thirty (30) minutes until all polling places have reported.
- B. The Final Unofficial Election Night Summary shall be produced by the Elections Division when the last polling place has been transmitted to and received by the Division. The Final Unofficial Election Night Summary report shall be available to the public until the Board of Supervisors canvasses the votes for the election. After the Board of Supervisors canvasses the election, the official results shall be available to the public. Any precinct by precinct reports released prior to the completion of the audit will be stamped "**UNOFFICIAL AND UNAUDITED**".
- C. The audit of the election night returns shall begin as soon as the polls close and the items returned from the polls have been delivered to the central receiving station. The copy of the final results tape produced at the polling place, the unofficial copy of the ballot report and the unofficial copy of the poll list will be forwarded to the audit board. The audit board will compare the total of ballots cast shown on the final results tape to the entry on the ballot report showing the number of names entered in the poll list book. The final results tape will then be compared to the SOVC report to ensure that the results produced at the close of the polls are the same results that were received by the central computer on election night.

Discrepancies shall be identified and corrective action shall be taken. The audit shall be completed prior to presenting the election results to the Board of Supervisors for the official canvass. The SVOC report shall be released to the public after the audit is completed.

- D. Any Early Ballot not turned over to the division of elections by 3:00 p.m. on election day and all Early Ballots turned in at the polls on election day shall be processed and counted with the Ballots to be Verified that are returned from the County Recorder as verified to court. The statutory deadline is currently 96 hours after the close of the polls for all of the ballots to be verified to be returned to the division of elections.

IV. DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Division of Elections shall prepare and distribute, post on the Internet, and transmit to the Secretary of State the unofficial results beginning at 8:00 p.m. on election night and continuing until the final unofficial election night summary report is complete.
- B. The Division of Elections shall conduct the audit on the precinct results transmitted to election central to ensure that the result produced at the polling place when the polls closed correspond to the results transmitted from the polling place, and both of those numbers match the number of names entered in the poll list.
- C. The Division of Elections shall prepare the official results for the canvass of the election after the completion of the audit.
- D. The Division of Election shall immediately notify the County Administrator, County Attorney, political party representatives and Secretary of State should any discrepancy be found during the course of the audit. To the extent possible, the scope of the problem discovered and the proposed corrective action will be presented with the notification. The Elections Manager will provide updated information to the above listed offices as it becomes available.

V. REPORTS

The Division of Elections is responsible for preparation and distribution of the following reports in accordance with this Procedure and Arizona law: **Unofficial Election Night Cumulative Report, Statement of Votes Cast (SVOC), Audit Report.**