

## Election Recount FAQs

Here are some Frequently Asked Questions about the statewide recount. We will update as necessary. And please remember that you can find the latest information, including a [recount schedule by date and by county at this link](#).

### **Why is Michigan doing a recount?**

Green Party presidential nominee Jill Stein requested a statewide recount for the Nov. 8 presidential election. She cited “[fraud or mistake](#)” as the reason she wants a recount. Stein placed fourth in the election with about 51,000 votes out of 4.9 million ballots cast. She also has sought recounts in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

### **Wasn't Donald J. Trump declared the winner of the presidential election in Michigan?**

Yes, Trump was officially certified the winner on Nov. 28 after a 14-day county canvassing process that verified the results of the election. His slate of 16 presidential electors also has been certified as having won.

### **Will my ballot be counted?**

When voters feed their ballot into the tabulator on Election Day or mail in an absentee ballot, their vote was counted. A recount doesn't change that.

The point of a recount is to verify the ballot count and election results when a losing candidate believes fraud or error caused an incorrect result.

### **Are there times when some precincts won't be recounted?**

The first step that is taken when a precinct is to be recounted is that election workers review the ballot container storing the ballots for that precinct.

Under state law, the precinct may not be recounted if the container isn't sealed properly and the number on the seal doesn't match the one recorded in the poll book. Also, the number of ballots in the container must match the recorded total. If the container isn't sealed or the numbers don't match, the precinct may not be recounted.

The cause of a precinct not being recountable is almost always simple human error made by tired precinct workers at the end of a long day.

Under of Secretary of State Ruth Johnson's leadership, Michigan has made great strides in reducing the number of precincts that can't be recounted during a recount. She successfully changed state law to make receiving boards mandatory for all cities and townships. The responsibility of these boards ensure that ballot containers are properly secured and sealed so they can be recounted if that is needed.

Johnson also successfully advocated for post-election audits that verify local election workers have correctly sealed ballot containers among other critical steps allowing precincts to be recountable. More than 1,200 post-election audits now have been performed. Also, Bureau of Elections staff has put a particular focus on more training for election workers and county canvassing boards to prevent a precinct from being unrecountable.

The certified results from election night are used when a precinct is not able to be recounted.

### **How does a recount work?**

Under the authority of the Michigan Board of State Canvassers, the Michigan Bureau of Elections directs county clerk's offices to perform a hand count of the ballots.

Multiple teams of two perform the recount under the close monitoring of watchers and lawyers from the parties and campaigns of the candidates involved. Workers count ballots precinct by precinct.

### **What's the timeline for the recount?**

The Michigan Bureau of Elections plans to complete the recount by Dec. 13, a very challenging deadline that may be required by federal law.

### **Where will my community's recount be held?**

The Michigan Bureau of Elections has an [online schedule of when and where counties will perform a recount](#).

### **Who is in charge of the recount?**

The Michigan Board of State Canvassers is responsible for conducting the recount. The four-member board is made up of two Republican members and two Democratic members. The board uses the staff of the Bureau of Elections to oversee and direct the recounting process. The Bureau of Elections works with the staffs of all 83 county clerks to perform the recounting of ballots.

### **Who pays for the recount and how much will it cost?**

Under state law, Green Party candidate Jill Stein was required to pay \$973,250, or \$125 for every precinct in the state. The money is used to reimburse county clerk's offices for the cost of the recount.

The Michigan Secretary of State's Office has estimated that the recount cost could be \$5 million although a final amount won't be known until the recount is complete. The amount is based on the official cost estimate made by the state of Wisconsin, which has a similar geographical area, and number of counties and local election jurisdictions.

### **What kind of training do the people working on the recount get? Who provides it?**

The recount workers have been trained by the staff of the county clerk's office. The Bureau of Elections has provided extensive training for county clerk's staff to ensure the workers are trained correctly and consistently as well as creating online and other training materials.

### **Will I be able to watch the recount? Can I videotape, record or take photos?**

Yes, a recount is open to the public and members of the media. Each recount location will have a public area from which anyone may watch the ballot counting.

### **Who's my contact for questions at the recount location? Can I talk to the people working on the recount?**

A Bureau of Elections staff person will be on site overseeing the recount. Members of the public can view the recount from the public area of the location but may not interact with the workers.

### **When and how will I get updates on how the recount is going? Will the certified election results change?**

People can look for [recount updates online](#). If the recount is completed, the new results will be the final, official results.