PUBLIC ACCESS TO PRECINCT RESULTS AFTER POLLS CLOSE: Michigan election law, MCL 168.807, stipulates that as soon as the precinct board has obtained the precinct’s vote totals after the polls have closed, the results must be made available to any interested person who may be present in the polling place. Michigan election law, MCL 168.801, further provides that at least one door to the polling place must remain open during the closing of the polls and the generation of the precinct’s vote totals.

The polls must remain open for voting until 8:00 p.m. It is the duty of the precinct chairperson to publicly announce the closing of the polls by declaring, “The polls are now closed.” Every voter standing in line at 8:00 p.m. must be permitted to vote. The doors to the polling place must remain unlocked. Persons observing the closing of the polls may not enter the processing area and must conduct themselves in an orderly manner. The board may clear the polls if necessary to assure the orderly completion of the precinct’s records.
PROCEDURE FOR CLOSING THE POLLS:

1) Verify that all valid absent voter ballots have been tabulated (if absent voter ballots are processed in the precinct).

2) Check auxiliary bin and accurately duplicate and tabulate any ballots requiring duplication. (See: “Duplicating Ballots” below for additional information.)

3) Verify that the number of ballots tabulated equals the number of voters according to the Poll Book. (NOTE: If these totals do not agree, refer to instructions provided under “Precinct Reconciliation Steps” below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION INSPECTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AT THE CLOSE OF THE POLLS</strong> (Except as noted on the Remarks Page of this Poll Book)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ The number of voters according to this Poll Book is (include absent voter ballots if processed in precinct): ........................................... 308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ The number of ballots tabulated is: ........................................................................ 308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) Generate the totals tapes. (A minimum of 3 copies will be needed.)

5) Verify that all valid write-in votes have been tallied in the Poll Book and the totals recorded on the Statement of Votes.

6) Verify that all Provisional Envelope ballots issued, if any, were properly recorded, identified and sealed in the Provisional Ballot Form envelope.
7) Verify that the tabulator totals tape is attached to the appropriate copies of the Statement of Votes.

8) Complete the Ballot Summary.
9) Secure ballots in approved container and record the seal number on the ballot container certificate, the Statement of Votes, and the Poll Book. Ensure that the seal number is attested to by two inspectors representing different political parties.

**Materials that are secured in the approved ballot container include:**

- Used (voted) ballots
- Unused ballots
- VAT Ballots (used and unused)
- Spoiled and Defective Ballots Envelope
- Original Ballots for Which Duplicates Were Made Envelope

10) Complete the Certificate of Election Inspectors (multiple formats available).

11) Complete the Statement of Votes and prepare for return (multiple formats available). A minimum of 3 copies will be needed for most elections.

A Statement of Votes consists of the following 4 elements:

- Tabulator Tape.

- Total number of votes received by declared write-in candidates.

- Number of seal used to seal the ballot container and seal certification signed by two election inspectors representing different political parties.

- Certification signed by all members of the board of election inspectors present at the close of the polls.
## Optical Scan Statement of Votes

### Declaration of Write-In Candidate Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>TOTAL WRITE-IN VOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Smith</td>
<td>Clerk (Treas)</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Smith</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Smith</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Jones</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jody Jones</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Jones</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Jones</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Jones</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Jones</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Taylor</td>
<td>State Rep (D)</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy Taylor</td>
<td>State Rep (D)</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ballot Summary

- **Number of Ballots Delivered to Precinct**
  - Total: 400

- **Number of Absent Voter Ballots**
  - Total: 79

- **Total of lines A and B**:
  - Total: 479

- **Number of Ballots at Close of Polls**
  - Total: 110

- **Number of Unused Ballots**
  - Total: 52

- **Total of Lines C, D, E, G, H, and I**:
  - Total: 479

**Certificate of Election Inspectors**

- **Signature**
  - [Signature]

**All Inspectors Present at the Close of the Polls**

- **Names**
  - [Names listed]

**Duties**

- **Signed**
  - [Signatures]

- **Sealed**
  - [Seal]

**When You Have Completed Sections 1, 2, 3, & 4 of the "Optical Scan Statement of Votes" Form, Attach This Form to the Front of the Precinct's Official Ballot Book. Seal All Verbatim Language to Appropriate Copies and Seal in Designated Envelopes.**
12) Prepare the special envelopes for return.

**Envelope #1** (Addressed to County Clerk) should be sealed with a red paper seal and contain:

- Poll Book
- Statement of Votes (1 copy)
- QVF Precinct List (if required)
- List of Delegates Elected (Even numbered year primary elections only)
Envelope #2 (Addressed to Board of County Canvassers) should be sealed with a red paper seal and contain:

- Statement of Votes (one copy)

Envelope #3 (Addressed to Local Clerk) should be sealed with a red paper seal and contain:

- Statement of Votes (one copy with zero tape attached)
- Voter Assist Terminal (VAT) Test Ballot
- Applications to Vote on spindle
- Address Change forms
- Authorization to Cancel forms
- Notes regarding Election Day activities
- Precinct Delegate Write-in Declaration of Intent forms (Even numbered year primary elections only)
- QVF Precinct List (if required)
**AV Envelope** (Addressed to Local Clerk):
- Absentee Ballot Applications to Vote (top section)
- Absentee Ballot Return Envelopes
- Absentee Ballots surrendered by voters who voted in person

![AV Envelope Image]

**Provisional Ballot Storage Envelope** (Addressed to Local Clerk) should be sealed with a red paper seal and contain:
- Provisional Ballot Form Envelopes

![Provisional Ballot Storage Envelope Image]

13) Special envelopes and ballot containers are then delivered to the Receiving Board by two inspectors of different political parties.

**NOTE:** The Bureau of Elections has developed a video training series that summarizes key election day management issues, including a video on Closing the Polls. These videos can be accessed at the Bureau of Elections web site at [www.michigan.gov/elections](http://www.michigan.gov/elections); under “Information for Election Administrators”; Election Day Management Training Videos.
PROCESSING ABSENT VOTER BALLOTS - FALSE READS: A “false read” is a term used to describe any situation where the tabulator rejects a ballot due to a “crossover vote” in a partisan primary or an “over vote” and the crossover vote or over vote was caused by 1) a correction (such as an erasure) 2) a stray mark that the tabulator identified as a vote or 3) an invalid write-in vote. Ballots rejected as blank may also be the result of a “false read” if a voter has made an improper mark or used an improper marking tool. Given the potential for “false reads,” it is important that all absent voter ballots rejected by the tabulator be visually inspected to verify the reason for the rejection. If it is determined that the rejection was due to a “false read,” the ballot must be duplicated. When duplicating the ballot, the stray mark, correction or invalid write-in vote must be eliminated to ensure the proper tabulation of all valid votes on the ballot.

DETERMINING THE VALIDITY OF OPTICAL SCAN BALLOT MARKINGS

Optical Scan Systems Employing Oval Target Areas

Valid markings: Each of the examples provided below is a valid vote as there is a mark within the predefined target area for casting a vote.

For ballots with ovals:                                For ballots with boxes:

Invalid markings: Each of the examples provided below is an invalid vote as a mark does not appear within the predefined target area designated for casting a vote.

For ballots with ovals:                                   For ballots with boxes:

Corrections: A correction that causes a false tabulator read does not count as a valid vote.

For ballots with ovals:                                   For ballots with boxes:
Stray Marks: A stray mark made within a predefined target area is not a valid vote. In determining whether a mark within a predefined target area is a stray mark, the board of canvassers or election official (or board of election inspectors, when visually inspecting an absentee ballot rejected by the tabulator) shall compare the mark with other marks appearing on the ballot. Note, a cross or checkmark appearing in the predefined target area is not considered a stray mark and is a valid vote even if the voter does not consistently mark the entire ballot with a cross or checkmark.

For ballots with ovals:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate A</th>
<th>Candidate B</th>
<th>Candidate C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="oval1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="oval2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="oval3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For ballots with boxes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate A</th>
<th>Candidate B</th>
<th>Candidate C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="box1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="box2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="box3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all three examples above, count the top two positions only.

**EXAMPLES OF “FALSE READ” SITUATIONS REQUIRING DUPLICATION OF THE BALLOT:**

*False overvote created by ballot correction*

False Overvote/Ballot Correction:

![Image](false_overvote.png)

Proper Duplication:

![Image](proper_duplication.png)
False overvote created by invalid write-in

Proper Duplication:

False crossover vote created by ballot correction

Proper Duplication:
False crossover vote created by invalid write-in

DUPLICATING BALLOTS: Ballots must not be duplicated until after the close of the polls. Exception: If the duplication of absent voter ballots will be carried out at an absent voter counting board precinct, ballots may be duplicated and tabulated throughout Election Day; it is not necessary to wait until after the close of the polls to begin the duplication process.

The procedures for duplicating ballots are detailed below:

- After identifying the ballots which must be duplicated, count out an equal number of unused ballots and remove the ballot stubs. At the top of the first “original” ballot to be duplicated write “1”; at the top of the blank ballot that will be used to create the “duplicate” write “Dup 1.” Follow the same numbering system for the remaining ballots which must be duplicated, e.g.: “2” – “Dup 2”; “3” – “Dup 3”; etc.

- Duplicate the ballots using a reader-checker process with two election inspectors who have expressed different political party preferences. One election inspector calls the valid votes from the “original” ballot as the second election inspector records the votes to the “duplicate” ballot.

- After completing the duplication process, the election inspectors who handled the procedure must verify that:
1) the “original” ballot is labeled at the top with a number “1” and the corresponding “duplicate” ballot is labeled at the top with “Dup 1” and

2) that all valid marks have been transferred from the “original” ballot to the corresponding “duplicate” ballot.

As explained above, this same numbering scheme is continued for all ballots requiring duplication. The second “original” ballot to be duplicated is numbered “2” and the “duplicate” ballot is labeled “Dup 2,” etc.

After the work is verified for accuracy, all “duplicate” ballots are tabulated. All “original” ballots are placed into a special envelope labeled “Original ballots for which duplicates were made and tabulated.” The special envelope is sealed into a ballot container along with all other used and unused ballots following the close of the polls.

NOTE: The Bureau of Elections has developed a video training series that summarizes key election day management issues, including a video on Duplicating Ballots. These videos can be accessed at the Bureau of Elections web site at www.michigan.gov/elections; under “Information for Election Administrators”; Election Day Management Training Videos.

CANVASSING AND CERTIFYING WRITE-IN VOTES: Complete the write-in tally process as outlined in Chapter 4. It is the Board of Canvassers’ responsibility to review all write-in votes to determine their validity. Thus it is important that the board of election inspectors record each name variation exactly as recorded by the voter on the Write-In Section of the Statement of Votes.

CORRECTING VOTE TOTALS: It may be necessary to correct vote totals if an invalid write-in is found in the course of reviewing ballots with write-in votes. If the invalid write-in vote is the only vote cast for the office, additional special handling is not required; return the ballot with those that did not contain a write-in vote. However, if in addition to the invalid write-in vote the voter cast one or more votes for the same candidate(s) and/or other candidates on the ballot for the same office, any additional vote(s) for the same office may be valid; proceed to Step 1 below:

Step 1: Determine if the office is overvoted (see example on page 14). Do not consider any invalid write-in votes when making this determination. An over vote results when the number of valid votes
cast for an office, minus any invalid write-in votes, exceed the total number of votes allowed for the office.

**Step 2:** If the election is a partisan primary, also determine if the partisan section of the ballot is crossover voted (see example on page 15). Do not consider any invalid write-in votes when making this determination. A cross-over vote results when valid votes, minus any invalid write-in votes, are cast within the partisan section of the ballot in more than one party column.

If the office is over voted or the votes cast for the office are affected by a cross-over vote, the votes are invalid; return the ballot with those that did not contain a write-in vote.

**Exception** – If one or more additional offices on the same ballot contain a write-in vote, these same procedures, beginning with the validity standards in section 5 above, must be repeated for each office involved.

If the office is not over voted and the votes cast for the office are not affected by a crossover vote, the votes cast for the candidate(s) under the office must be manually added to the total vote received by the candidate(s); the Total Tapes MUST be corrected.

**NOTE:** An invalid write-in vote can never cause an over vote or a crossover vote!

**PROCEDURES FOR CORRECTING VOTE TOTAL(S):**

DO NOT duplicate or retabulate the ballot! Instead, since the polls are closed and the Total Tapes have already been printed, each copy of the Total Tape must be manually corrected. To make the correction, locate the office(s) involved on the Total Tape. (It is recommended that one tape be corrected at a time.) Next, locate the name of the candidate(s) who is entitled to receive the additional vote; then in ink, next to the number of votes received by each of the candidate(s) involved, write +1 and the new corrected vote total. Make this same correction on all remaining Total Tapes copies. Double check each correction for accuracy!

If one or more additional offices on the same ballot contain a write-in vote, these same procedures, must be repeated for each office involved. If no additional offices on the same ballot contain a write-in vote, return the ballot with those that did not contain a write-in vote.
**PRECINCT RECONCILIATION STEPS:** If the total number of ballots tabulated and total number of voters who were issued a ballot (according to the Poll Book) *do not agree*, attempt to identify the reason for the discrepancy. Complete the following steps:

1) Verify that all absent voter ballots have been processed and tabulated by going through all of the return envelopes. Verify that the names of all absent voter’s for whom an application and return envelope were received for processing are included in the (e)Poll Book total.

2) Verify that all ballots requiring duplication were removed from the Auxilliary Bin and were duplicated and tabulated.

3) Verify if any Provisional Envelope ballots were issued. The number of ballots tabulated will be 1 less than the number of voters listed in the (e)Poll Book for each Envelope ballot issued.

4) Compare the Applications to Vote to the (e)Poll Book.

5) Physically count the total number of ballots tabulated. (Include the ballots removed from the main or primary bin and the write-in bin to complete this count.) It is recommended that the ballots be counted into stacks of 25. Conduct the count by physically picking up and moving each ballot into piles while counting out loud. The count should be carried out by teams of two; one team member will place the ballots into the piles while the second team member visually verifies the count.

6) Research any discrepancies among the number of ballots counted, the number of names in the poll book, the number of applications to vote and the number of ballots tabulated as reflected on the totals tape.

7) Document all steps taken to reconcile the numbers in the Remarks section of the Poll Book.

**BALLOT CONTAINER SEALING PROCEDURES:** All ballot containers used to transport and store *voted* and *unvoted* ballots must be properly sealed after the polls close. The proper procedures for sealing ballot containers will vary depending upon the type of seal being used.
**Note:** The Bureau of Elections has developed a video training segment that demonstrates the proper (and improper) procedures for sealing some of the most commonly-used ballot containers. These videos can be accessed at the Bureau of Elections web site at [www.michigan.gov/elections](http://www.michigan.gov/elections); under “Information for Election Administrators”; Election Day Management Training Videos.

The following provides an overview of the various procedures which may be employed. Please note that regardless of the type of seal used, a certificate containing 1) the number on the seal used to seal the container 2) the signatures of the two election officials (with different political party preferences) that sealed the container and witnessed the sealing and 3) the date upon which the seal was affixed to the container must be inserted into a plastic sleeve and affixed to the container using an official seal.

The serial number appearing on the seal used to secure the ballot container must be recorded in three places: 1) the Poll Book (Election Inspectors Certificate), 2) on the Statement of Votes, and 3) on the Ballot Container Certificate.

Every precinct must be staffed with at least two election inspectors (one Republican; one Democrat) who have been fully trained on the use of election seals and are prepared to ensure that all ballot containers are properly sealed after the polls close.

*If a two-sided ballot container is used* to store the ballots, *both sides must be properly sealed and both seals must be properly recorded.* (Here it merits emphasis that the “back door” must be *permanently sealed* and a completed Ballot Container Certificate bearing 1) the seal serial number 2) the signatures of the election officials who sealed the “back door” and 3) the date the “back door” was sealed must be affixed to the permanent seal. It is the responsibility of the city or township clerk to ensure that the “back door” is permanently sealed prior to the election. Ballot containers with dual openings that are not sealed according to the following instructions may not be used.

Sealing the “back door” in accordance with these procedures will help to ensure that your precincts will be recountable in the event of an election recount. Following these procedures will also eliminate the need for your election inspectors to record the “back door” seal number in the Poll Book and Statement of Votes at the close of the polls and allow them to give their full attention to sealing and documenting the “front door” seal as required by law.

While some election officials tell us that they maintain a record of the seals used to seal the “back door,” producing such records at recounts can be problematic as these records are often times lost as
administrations change. In addition, unless the office record is attested to by two election officials and dated prior to the election in question, the record itself can be challenged.

If a tabulator ballot receptacle is used to store the ballots, the top of the receptacle must be sealed with a security lid and any doors which provide access to the receptacle must be sealed even if the doors can be locked with a key. All seals must be properly recorded. (As noted above, a tabulator ballot receptacle cannot be used to store ballots unless it passed a ballot container inspection carried out by the Board of County Canvassers. Tabulator ballot receptacles which do not carry a current ballot container approval sticker may not be used to secure ballots.

NOTE: Traditional canvass ballot bags are not approved for the storage and security of ballots under the 30-day post election State security period as required under the provisions of Michigan election law. In the event of a recount, ballots that are secured in a ballot bag alone may not be recounted.
PROPER USE OF ELECTION SEALS

**Flat Metal Seals:** Close and lock the container. Insert a horseshoe seal adaptor through the metal hasp. Insert the tip of the metal seal through both sides of the horseshoe adaptor. Next, insert the tip of the seal through the grommet on the plastic sleeve. Insert the tip of the seal into the metal ball applying force until the seal is fully seated.

**Pull-Tite Seals:** Close and lock the container. Insert the pull-tite seal through the metal hasp on the container. The use of a horseshoe adaptor is not required. Insert the tip of the seal through the grommet on the plastic sleeve. Insert the tip of the seal into the opening at the opposite end. Continue pulling the tip of the seal through the opening to ensure a snug fit.

**Padlock Seals (wire and plastic seal):** Close and lock the container. Insert the tip of the seal through the hasp on the container. Insert the tip of the seal into the opening at the top of the plastic applying force until the seal is fully seated.

**Programs:** Programs removed from optical scan tabulators must be sealed in an approved ballot container. Programs cannot be erased or transferred to another electronic medium for extended retention until clearance is received from the Department of State’s Bureau of Elections.

ESTABLISHMENT AND USE OF RECEIVING BOARDS MANDATORY:

**INTRODUCTION**

A Receiving Board is an independent board established to ensure the recountability of election precincts. The Election Commission of a jurisdiction must establish the Receiving Board by resolution and must appoint the Receiving Board inspectors. Members must be qualified election inspectors and the board must have an equal number of Receiving Board inspectors from each major political party. As of August 15, 2012, Receiving Boards are required by Michigan election law, MCL 168.679a.

**APPOINTMENT**

The Receiving Board must be established by resolution of a jurisdiction’s Election Commission. The resolution may establish the Receiving Board one time for all future elections.

The Receiving Board inspectors must be appointed by the jurisdiction’s Election Commission. Each inspector must be qualified to be an election inspector and have an election inspector application on
file. Inspectors appointed to serve in an Election Day precinct or absent voter counting board may be appointed to serve as Receiving Board inspectors as well.

**Responsibilities**

Under oath, the Receiving Board inspectors receive the sealed ballot container, the Poll Book and the Statement of Votes from each precinct after the polls close. Two election inspectors (one from each major political party) deliver those items properly sealed to the Receiving Board inspectors after their closing duties have been completed. Election inspectors must remain present until Receiving Board inspectors have completed the verification.

The Receiving Board inspectors verify:

- the Poll Book and/or Statement of Votes are not sealed into the ballot container
- the ballot container is properly sealed and the seal number is accurately recorded
- the number of names entered in the Poll Book balances with the number of ballots counted

After verifying these items, the Receiving Board inspectors put the Poll Book and Statement of Votes back into the appropriate envelopes and reseal with a red paper seal, initialing, and dating the seal.

**Corrective Action**

If the Receiving Board inspectors find the Poll Book and/or Statement of Votes are inadvertently sealed in the ballot container or the ballot container improperly sealed and/or recorded, they should direct the election inspectors to take necessary actions to correct the mistake and fully document those actions in the Remarks section of the Poll Book. The remarks must be signed by both the election and Receiving Board inspectors.

If the number of names entered into the Poll Book does not balance with the number of ballots counted by the tabulator, a full explanation must be recorded in the Remarks section of the Poll Book. If no explanation was provided, the Receiving Board inspectors should assist the election inspectors in determining the cause of the imbalance and instruct the election inspectors to fully document the cause in the Remarks section of the Poll Book. The remarks must be signed by both the election and Receiving Board inspectors.

**E-Pollbook**

Receiving Board inspectors may be utilized to print the final reports of the precinct and assist the election inspectors in completing the Poll Book and Statement of Votes. The Receiving Board
inspectors would print the List of Voters, Ballot Summary and the Remarks Reports from the encrypted flash drive.

NOTE: A Receiving Board Guide as well as standard checklist is included in Appendix I.