



# **Liberty County Elections Central Counting Station Plan**

## **OBJECTIVES**

**The goal of this Central Counting Station Plan is to provide public notification of the orderly operation of Central Count as follows:**

- **Early Voting in Person: Compare the number of early voters on early voting check-in poll pad reports to the number of ballots case**
- **Election Day: Compare the number of voters who check-in on the poll pads with the number of ballots cast.**
- **By Mail: Compare the number of mail-in ballots mailed out, the number of ballots received, and the number of ballots counted.**

**For more information please contact:**

Lee Haidusek Chambers

County Clerk

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**APRIL 17, 2024**

## **CENTRAL COUNTING STATION**

On Election night, this is the place where optical scan ballots are tabulated by a high-speed processing scanner.

The Central Count members include a CCS manager, Tabulation Team, Resolution Team, Receiving Team, Early Voting Ballot Board Team, Transport/Review Team and the Retention Team. We also the County Clerk and/or County Clerk Deputy to report voter lists and results to the Secretary of State.

## **EARLY VOTING BALLOT BOARD**

Meets at Election Office on designated days, posted by the EVBB Judge, where they start the process of getting early voted ballots ready to be counted by:

1. Early voting clerk presents the list of persons that voted by mail, along with the ballot boxes with the voted ballots, applications, and any necessary documents.
2. Ballot by mail applications are reviewed by Early Voting Ballot Board, (see Early Voting Ballot Board handbook for more detail on rules and regulations)
3. Ballots are checked by early voting locations to make sure the count is correct and straighten the ballots and locked up till Tabulation team gets ready to count early.

## **TABULATION TEAM**

The Tabulation Team comes in around 2:00 P.M. on the day of election (depending on the size of the election) and starts preparing to count early votes.

1. Checks tabulating machine by using test deck provided by Hart Intercivic to make sure machine is calculating correctly
2. Opens all mail-in ballots approved by the Early Voting Ballot Board and prepares the ballots for scanning and counting.
3. Opens all process provisional ballots approved by the Early Voting Ballot Board and prepares them for entry into the tabulation station machine and counting.
4. The early voting machines are retrieved from the secure location along with the early voting ballots, the early voting machine printouts are reviewed

to reconcile the total ballots against the total number of voters, then the scanner drives are uploaded into the tabulation station machine.

5. Once the election day machines are delivered with the election day ballots, the printouts are checked by the Resolution Team to reconcile the total ballots against the total number of voters, then the scanner drives are uploaded into the tabulation station machine. The reports are printed and signed by the Central Count Manager and Tabulation Manager.

6. After all votes have been counted, the County Clerk and/or Central Counting Station Manager prints all reports required by the State, County, and local authorities, then they run a test on the tabulating machine for a final time to check accuracy.

## **RESOLUTION/REVIEW TEAM**

This consists of 3 people that verify the numbers on the machine tapes, the poll pads, and the ballot scanner, including any reported spoiled or cancelled ballots from the voting location. Once the numbers are reconciled, the Resolution Team releases the scanner drive to be processed at the Central Counting Station tabulation machine. At the request of the Tabulation Team, if the ballots from a location cannot be reconciled or require further inquiry to validate the vote, the Resolution Team will work with the Tabulating Team to resolve any conflict between the machine tapes, the poll pads, and the scanner results. The Resolution Team will also review and approve any issues that arrive with ballots that need to be manually entered to be counted.

## **RECEIVING TEAM**

This consist of two or more people that, as the election day judges bring back the Hart scanners, ballot boxes, poll pads, supplies and other Hart election equipment, will check the seal numbers to make sure the scanner, poll pads, Hart machines, and ballot boxes have not been tampered with, then check in the equipment, supplies and reports. At that point, the required documents are turned over to the Resolution/Review Team. The team will check to make sure there is a copy of signature pages and there is a report from the judge of that location giving the total number of voters and total number of ballots used. Any provisional ballots are processed and prepared to be turned over to the Voter Registrar for verification to see if they are a registered voter on the next business day. Once the Receiving/Review team deems that the location is ready for counting, the Election Judge is cleared to leave the premises. The scanner machine is then turned over to

the Tabulation Team for counting. Once the counting is completed and reconciled, the scanners and drives are then turned over to the Retention Team.

## **RETENTION TEAM**

All voted ballots, reports and replaced ballots are placed in sealed and locked boxes by location and a list of seal numbers are placed in an envelope for County Clerk. These are held in a locked room in the Election facility for the designated time required by law. They are only removed for the purposes of a mandated partial manual count by the County Clerk. The state mandates a partial manual count that certain races be counted manually to make sure the totals counted through the tabulating machine are correct. The Secretary of State will send a notice to the County Clerk telling them which races and which precincts to count manually.

By law overseas military ballots have 5 days after the election to be received, also after provisional ballots are checked, any ballots that have been approved must be counted by hand. Early voting ballot board is responsible for reviewing and approving these ballots. After the votes are manually entered in the tabulating machine, the County Clerk will add these votes to the finals for canvassing.