



Nacogdoches County Elections Office

Central Counting Station Plan

November 5th, 2024 Elections

PURPOSE

Section 127.007 of the Texas Election Code requires the Central Counting Station Manager to establish and implement a written plan for the orderly operation of the Central Counting Station (CCS). **This plan must be made available to the public on request not later than 5:00 p.m. on the fifth day before the date of the election.**

Section 127.007(b) provides that a CCS plan must address the process for comparing the number of voters who signed the combination forms with the number of votes cast for an entire election. The Nacogdoches County Elections Office uses electronic KnowInk Poll Pads to obtain signatures from the majority of voters who participate in elections. KnowInk Poll Pads are certified for use in Texas by the Secretary of State's Office and replace combination forms. Combination forms are still used for voters to sign to receive ballots in certain situations. Some examples of voters who sign Combination forms instead of KnowInk Poll Pads are omissions voters, provisional voters, voters who cancel mail ballots, and limited ballot voters.

LOCATION

The Nacogdoches County CCS will be located at the Nacogdoches County Courthouse Annex – 203 W. Main St. – Nacogdoches, Texas 75961.

CCS PERSONNEL

The following are the roles and responsibilities inside the CCS, as contained in Sections 127.002-127.006 of the Texas Election Code:

Central County Station Manager:	Vicki Wood
Central County Station Presiding Judge:	Lane Boulware
Central Counting Station Alternate Judge:	Carol Fredenburg
Tabulation Supervisor:	Maggie Wright
Assistants to Tabulation Supervisor:	Jennifer Hudman
Assistants to Tabulation Supervisor:	Angie Dies
Assistants to Tabulation Supervisor:	Chrissy Corbett
Assistants to Tabulation Supervisor:	Tara Triana
Assistants to Tabulation Supervisor:	Dawn Luman
Assistants to Tabulation Supervisor:	Joey Morales
Assistants to Tabulation Supervisor:	Kristen Honeycutt

Assistants to Tabulation Supervisor:	Marcus Lacy
Assistants to Tabulation Supervisor:	Cindy Wingate
Central Counting Station Clerk:	Peggy Avant
Central Counting Station Clerk:	Danny Teel
Central Counting Station Clerk:	Novis Stripling
Central Counting Station Clerk:	Grace Watz
Central Counting Station Clerk:	Trey Dear
Central Counting Station Student Clerk:	Justin Phillips

The Elections Administrator, Vicki Wood, will serve as the CCS Manager to manage the overall administration of the CCS and supervision of all personnel.

Elections Deputy, Maggie Wright, will serve as the Tabulation Supervisor to operate the automatic tabulating equipment.

The Presiding Judge/Alternate Judge will serve to maintain order in the CCS, administer oaths, and receive ballots to be counted. Lane Boulware will serve as the Presiding Judge. Carol Fredenburg will serve as the Alternate Judge.

Note: The Presiding Judges are entitled to compensation at the same rate as a precinct Presiding Judge, except that the counting station judge is entitled to a minimum compensation for five hours pay regardless of the amount of time worked. Section 127.005(d) - Texas Election Code.

CCS Clerks may be appointed as needed by the CCS Manager and the Presiding Judge. Section 127.006 - Texas Election Code.

Note: To be eligible to serve as a clerk a person must be a qualified voter of the county in which the CCS is located. The general custodian of election records, an employee of the custodian, or any other employee of a political subdivision is not eligible to serve as a clerk under this section because the person is a qualified voter or a county other than the county in which the CCS is located or because of the custodian's status as a candidate or officeholder. Section 127.006(b) - Texas Election Code.

A clerk appointed by the CCS Manager serves under the CCS Manager and shall perform the functions directed by the CCS Manager. A clerk appointed by the Presiding Judge serves under the Presiding Judge and shall perform the functions directed by the Presiding Judge. Section 127.006(c) - Texas Election Code.

Note: A clerk is entitled to compensation at the same rate as a precinct election clerk, except that a clerk who serves for the entire time CCS is in operation is entitled to a minimum compensation of three hours pay regardless of the amount of time worked. Section 127.006(d) - Texas Election Code.

PROCEDURES FOR CONVENING THE CCS

Section 87.0241 of the Texas Election Code dictates when an entity is permitted to count ballots.

The CCS will convene based on the size and type of election as determined by the CCS Manager and the Presiding Judges.

The Early Voting Ballot Board (EVBB) will begin the process to count early voting mail ballots on Tuesday, November 5th, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

The CCS will begin the process to count early voting in-person ballots on Tuesday, November 5th, 2024 after 9:00 a.m. In accordance with Section 127.093 of the Texas Election Code, the second test of tabulating equipment will be conducted prior to beginning the process to count early voting ballots.

The CCS will begin the process to count election day ballots on Tuesday, November 5th, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS

Section 127.0015 of the Texas Election Code prescribes a required oath for all CCS personnel. The administration of oaths must take place prior to those individuals commencing any of their duties at the CCS.

This oath should be administered verbally to all members of the EVBB and all personnel at the CCS prior to the performance of any duties by the EVBB or the CCS.

For use in all elections that do not contain Party Affiliation:

"I swear (or affirm) that I will objectively work to be sure every eligible voter's vote is accepted and counted, and that only the ballots of those voters who violated the Texas Election Code will be rejected. I will make every effort to correctly reflect the voter's intent when it can be clearly determined. I will not work alone when ballots are present. I will faithfully perform my duty as an officer of the election and guard the purity of the election."

For use in Primary Elections, General Election for State and County Officers, Elections ordered by the Governor:

"I swear (or affirm) that I will objectively work to be sure every eligible voter's vote is accepted and counted, and that only the ballots of those voters who violated the Texas Election Code will be rejected. I will make every effort to correctly reflect the voter's intent when it can be clearly determined. I will not work alone when ballots are present and will work only in the presence of a member of a political party different from my own. I will faithfully perform my duty as an officer of the election and guard the purity of the election."

INTAKE OF BALLOTS AND SUPPLIES

Sections 129.051 and 129.052 of the Texas Election Code require the general custodian of election records to develop certain procedures related to inventory control and chain of custody of voting system equipment and electronic media associated with this equipment, providing for verification of equipment identifiers, verifications of seals, and verification of chain of custody.

1. All Precinct Election Judges or their designated delivery persons will bring paper ballots in sealed metal ballot boxes to the CCS at the Nacogdoches County Courthouse Annex.
2. Intake personnel will verify that the padlock numbers and the seals on the metal ballot boxes are the same as the padlock and seal numbers on the padlock and seal numbers log sheet.
3. Intake personnel will unlock the metal ballot boxes and deliver them to the Tabulation Supervisor for counting.

4. CCS Clerks will sort voter situation bags under the supervision of the Presiding Judge and the Alternate Judge until all bags for all Precincts are accounted for.
5. CCS Clerks will unbox and plug in all Poll Pads in the Poll Pad storage carts. Once all Poll Pads are accounted for, they will be transported to the Nacogdoches County Elections Office and locked in storage.
6. The Presiding Judge of the EVBB will determine the total number of provisional ballots for each precinct as this information is required to complete the Preliminary Reconciliation log.
7. The Presiding Judge of the EVBB will locate all Canceled Mail Ballot Forms along with the surrendered mail ballots. The Presiding Judge of the EVBB will then update the voter's mail ballot status in TEAM to reflect that each canceled mail ballot voter now appears as an Election Day voter.
8. CCS Clerks will locate all Omissions Voter Forms along with the corresponding Statement of Residence Forms and deliver these items to the Voter Registration Elections Deputy. The Voter Registration Elections Deputy will enter all Statement of Residence Forms in TEAM and then mark the voters as Election Day voters.

SCANNING STATIONS

Assistant Tabulation Supervisors will scan ballots under the supervision of the Tabulation Supervisor. Assistant Tabulation Supervisors will record the Precinct and Batch# generated in Central Scan once ballots are scanned. Assistant Tabulation Supervisors will put scanned ballots back into their metal ballot boxes. Assistant Tabulation Supervisors will record the lock and seal# of the ballot boxes for storage.

DUPLICATION OF BALLOTS

Certain ballots that are counted with automatic tabulating equipment may have to be duplicated if the ballot is damaged or cannot be read with the equipment. The Presiding Judge, with any assistants they deemed necessary, will duplicate any damaged ballots in accordance with Section 127.126 of the Texas Election Code. The EVBB will duplicate ballots for FPCA voters who were emailed ballots that they printed and mailed in.

For all ballots duplicated, the original ballot serial number and replacement ballot serial number will be recorded on Ballot Replacement Log. The replaced ballot will be clearly marked as being replaced and stored behind the Ballot Replacement Log in a clear bag.

RESOLVING VOTER INTENT

The Presiding Judge, Alternate Judge, and CCS Clerks will determine voter intent on the ballots that Central Count flags as having voter intent issues. The voter intent will be documented in Central Count only, not on the original voted ballot.

TABULATION PROCEDURES

Once all ballots have been scanned, the Tabulation Supervisor shall transfer all scanned ballots to vDrives from the scanning stations. Each vDrive will be read into Verity Count. After all vDrives have been read, the Tabulation Supervisor shall tabulate the results.

PRINTING OF PRECINCT RETURNS AND ELECTION TOTALS

The Tabulation Supervisor and the Tabulation Assistants are the only ones authorized to operate the automatic tabulating equipment or handle ballots that are automatically counted. After the counting and tabulation of ballots, the Presiding Judge of the CCS is responsible for preparing the precinct election returns. The Presiding Judge is required to sign the precinct returns to certify their accuracy. Section 127.131 – Texas Election Code.

The Presiding Judge of the CCS in cooperation with the Elections Administrator may withhold the release of unofficial results until the last voter has voted. Section 121.1311 – Texas Election Code.

Unofficial election results will be released via Nacogdoches County Elections Office website www.NacVotes.com beginning no earlier than 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. Election Day results will be released once ballots from all precincts have been counted.

RECONCILIATION

In accordance with Texas Election Code Section 127.131(f), the Presiding Judge of the CCS shall provide and attest to a written reconciliation of votes and voters at the close of tabulation for election day and again after the CCS meets for the last time to process late-arriving ballots by mail and provisional ballots. The reconciliation forms shall be posted on www.NacVotes.com along with election returns and results.

REPORTING RESULTS TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

For certain elections including primary elections, the general election for state and county officers, and constitutional amendment elections, the Elections Division of the Office of the Texas Secretary of State is required to tabulate the unofficial results statewide. Section 68.001 – Texas Election Code.

POLL WATCHERS

Poll watchers are entitled to be present during the time the CCS has convened for the “purpose of processing or preparing to process election results and until the election officers complete their duties at the station.” (Section 33.055, Texas Election Code).

The poll watcher must deliver both their certificate completion of the Texas SoS Poll Watcher Training and their certificate of appointment to the Presiding Judge of the CCS and the Presiding Judge must countersign their certificate of appointment.

Poll watcher(s) are permitted to stand or sit to observe the counting activities. The Presiding Judge may dictate where the poll watcher(s) may stand and/or sit in order to prevent interference with the duties of the CCS personnel while still being able to observe all activities.

All activities of poll watchers shall be in compliance with the current Poll Watchers Guide issued by the Secretary of State.

DELIVERY OF MATERIALS TO THE GENERAL CUSTODIAN OF ELECTION RECORDS

After the completion of the counting of ballots both on election day and after election day, all ballots and election records will be retained by this office, who is the general custodian of election records, through the appropriate retention period.