

## Special/Provisional Ballot Process

The special/provisional ballot process begins with counting the number of special ballots returned to election headquarters on election night. The day after the election, the sorting phase begins. All special ballots are processed in precinct order. Special ballots cannot be opened or tabulated during the sorting process. The ballots are locked in a secure storage area until processed.

The Board follows the following six steps for determining the validity of special ballots, processing the ballots, and counting the ballots:

**Step One:** All special ballots are assigned a provisional ballot number and are distributed to staff for processing in precinct order.

**Task One:** Review each special ballot envelope to ensure it has the required information for further processing;

**Task Two:** If unable to determine how to process special ballot, hold for next level of review by supervisor;

**Step One Tasks Overview:**

Each special ballot is assigned a number and reviewed for accuracy and validation. The special ballot number is used to identify the ballot throughout the sorting and counting process.

**Step Two:** Input voter information from all special ballots into BOE's database.

**Task One:** Enter special ballot record number in database and search for and select voter name associated to special ballot. If voter is already in database make modifications to voter record according to the action required by the special ballot category, i.e. change of address, change of name etc.; if voter is not in database add voter as a new voter;

**Task Two:** Update database with special ballot issue code (reason the voter used a special ballot) and the special ballot status/return code (status as to whether or not the ballot will be counted);

**Task Three:** Annotate the special ballot envelope with status/return code;

**Task Four:** Print and apply voter label for scanning to each special ballot envelope;

**Task Five:** Group the special ballot envelopes into status categories, i.e. same day accepted, same day rejected, conditional acceptance (waiting on supporting documentation) or change of address, etc.;

**Step Two Tasks Overview:** In accordance with step four, each voter with a special ballot is uploaded in the database and their information is modified as needed. After processing each special ballot in the database, the clerk generates a label that is attached to each special ballot envelope. The process ends with grouping the envelopes by category for counting.

**Step Three:** Group the special ballots according to the category as determined on the provisional ballot (Categories include: change of address, change of name, same-day registrant, inactive voter, administratively challenged voter, omitted from the voter roll, listed as absentee but has not voted by absentee, out-of-precinct voter, ETC). For each of the categories listed above the envelopes are then processed for counting the ballot on the inside.

Task One: Change of Address - proceed to count ballot;

Task Two: Change of Name- proceed to count ballot;

Task Three: Same-Day Registrant- proceed to count ballot;

Task Four: Inactive Voter - proceed to count ballot;

Task Five: Administratively-Challenged Voter- proceed to count ballot;

Task Six: Omitted From the Voter Roll- proceed to count ballot;

Task Seven: Listed as absentee - proceed to count ballot;

Task Eight: Out-of-Precinct ballots that needed to be remade – proceed to recreate ballot;

**Step Three Tasks Overview:** Special ballots are grouped according to category. Up to 20 clerks are used to open the special ballot envelopes and remove the secret ballot envelope from the outer envelope. The ballots are then separated from the envelopes and stacked for counting.

Provisional ballots that were out-of-precinct are placed in a separate stack by the clerks for further review, processing and duplication.

**Step Four:** Sort "rejected" ballots according to appropriate category and put into appropriate box.

Task One: Verify for second time that ballot should be "rejected";

Task Two: Separate "rejected" ballots according to precinct by placing in "precinct- rejected" box;

Task Three: Ballot envelopes are scanned and archived;

Step Four Tasks Overview: Rejected ballots are grouped by category and reviewed for accuracy.

**Step Five:** Teams of two workers recreate appropriate ballot for out-of-precinct special ballots:

Task One: Group all ballots according to voter home precinct;

**Task Two: Pull the appropriate ballot and recreate original ballot to include contests for which votes have been validated for counting;**

**Task Three: Verify accuracy of recreated ballot and proceed to count ballot;**

**Step five Tasks Overview: Two workers duplicate each out of precinct ballot.**

**All provisional ballots are grouped according to precinct number. The clerk records the precinct and pulls official ballots from the ballot supply for duplication. One clerk reviews and recites the votes cast on the original ballot. The second clerk fills in the appropriate circle on the recreated ballot. The roles are switched for verification before submitting to the data clerk to be counted.**