

North Carolina *Provisional Ballot Survey*

Provisional Ballots Cast: 77,469
Provisional Ballots Counted: 50,370
Percent Counted: 65.0%
Percent of Vote: 1.44%

DESIGN

1. Who designs the provisional ballot, the state or county?

The state designs the provisional ballot envelope, which contains the affirmation of the voter and a registration/update form. The ballots actually voted are like the other paper ballots used and are inserted in the envelope. Once the provisional voter is approved, the ballots are removed and counted. The envelope is kept as a record.

2. Is the entity responsible for designing the provisional ballot designated by statute or rule?

There are design standards required by state statute.

3. Does North Carolina have a provisional ballot that also serves as a voter registration application?

Yes, the provisional ballot also serves as a registration application or registration update as required by state statute.

4. Is North Carolina's provisional ballot visually distinguishable from a regular ballot?

Provisional ballot envelopes are distinguishable from regular ballots. Each provisional ballot, once it is marked, is placed in the provisional ballot envelope. The envelope is bar-coded for "retrievability." Only if the poll worker and voter fail to follow law and procedure would the ballots placed in an optical scan tabulator at the precinct. Seventy-five counties use this optical scan system. Twenty-five counties use DRE electronic voting systems, where provisional ballots are paper ballots.

AVAILABILITY AND STANDARDS

1. Are there a required number of provisional ballots at polling places?

No.

2. What would do poll workers do if the polling place runs out of provisional ballots?

Before a precinct runs out, poll workers would call the county office to have more provisional ballots delivered.

3. Are provisional ballots tracked through distribution to polling sites through counting?

Yes, a precinct count of the voted, spoiled, and remaining unused ballots and provisional envelopes must reconcile with the number of provisional envelopes and ballots delivered to that precinct. Provisional ballot envelopes have a bar code.

COUNTING PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

1. Who determines whether or not a provisional ballot is valid?

State law provides that the County Boards of Elections determine the eligibility of provisional ballots in their jurisdictions. Each county board is made of three members, a Chairman, Secretary, and Member. There is only one municipality with an Election Board. They determine the validity of provisional ballots in their municipal election.

2. What is the time frame for counting provisional ballots?

State law sets the deadline for counting provisional ballots to be the County Board Canvass.

3. What is the process for determining the eligibility of a provisional ballot?

Based upon research of documentation of voter information at the County Elections Office, the County Board of Elections approves or denies a provisional ballot.

4. Who can observe the process?

The public can observe this process as long as they do not interfere with the ongoing operations of the County Board Office.

5. Is a provisional ballot counted if it is cast in the wrong precinct?

An otherwise valid provisional ballot cast in the wrong precinct, but the right county, will be counted in the races for which the voter is eligible to vote.

6. What information must voters provide on the provisional ballot?

The voter provides their name, address, birth date, signature, and party affiliation, the same data that is required to register to vote, on the provisional ballot envelope.

7. May a voter remedy a provisional ballot that may be rejected?

To have his ballot counted, the voter who cast a deficient provisional ballot must appear in person at the county office and remedy the problem before the county canvass.

8. If voters remedy a flawed provisional ballot, how are they notified of this opportunity?

The voter is not notified, but they may call the county office to determine if there is a deficiency.

9. What can voters do if they failed to bring ID to the polls?

The voter can provide ID up until the final decision on the provisional ballot is made at the county canvass.

NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

1. What is the state's Free Notification System to inform voters whether their provisional ballot was counted?

Voters can check to see whether their ballot was counted on the State Board of Elections website. They can also receive the information by phone.

2. Who administers the Free Notification System?

The state administers the notification system.

3. What is the timeline for posting information to the Free Notification System?

After the county canvass, the county provides the state with the provisional ballot information, which is then posted by the state. Voters access the data using a personal identification number (PIN). Access is by the Internet or information can be received by phone once the PIN is confirmed.