Centre County Board of Elections
Ballot Return and Collection Plan
2020 General Election

Date: October 1, 2020
Version 2.0
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1 Establishing a Ballot Return and Collection Plan

1.1 BALLOT RETURN SITES

For the 2020 General Election, the Centre County Board of Elections (CCBOE) will establish a plan and adopt procedures for how Centre County voters may return their own voted absentee ballots and mail-in ballots. The CCBOE established a secure ballot return site (SBRS) at the Willowbank Office Building – the main administrative office building for Centre County Government – as an option for voters to return their own voted absentee ballot or mail-in ballot for the 2020 Primary Election. The secure ballot return receptacle (SBRR) was located in front of the Willowbank (SEE IMAGES A & B).

For the 2020 General Election, the CCBOE is considering establishing multiple SBRSs throughout Centre County to achieve four main objectives:

- Afford voters greater access to returning their own voted absentee ballots and mail-in ballots.
- Decrease the wait time for in-person voting on Tuesday, November 3, 2020.
- Provide voters another safe option for voting during COVID-19.
- Allay concerns regarding potential delays with the United States Postal Service.

The Centre County Elections Office (CCEO) is located at the Willowbank Building at 420 Holmes Street in Bellefonte, PA 16823. The CCEO will allow voters to return their own voted absentee ballots and mail-in ballots in-person to Elections staff for the 2020 General Election. The CCBOE is currently planning for this allowance with safety measures in place for COVID-19, efficiency considerations, and ease of access to voters. The CCBOE is working closely with the Pennsylvania Department of State to establish a satellite elections office (SEO) at the Ticket Center of the Bryce Jordan Center (BJC) at 127 Bryce Jordan Center, University Park, PA 16802.

The Centre County Board of Commissioners has finalized a contract for a lease of the Ticket Center at the BJC for use as a SEO. The CCBEO has designated the aforementioned location for voters to request and cast an absentee or mail-in ballot over the counter. The CCBOE is working with the Pennsylvania Department of State to establish and approve a secure connection at the SEO that is capable of connecting to the Statewide Uniform Registry of Electors (SURE) system. The Department will assist in the training of staff that will process the absentee and mail-in ballot applications. The SEO will have copies of every ballot style available to be voted in each of Centre County’s precincts. Lastly, the SEO will have a secure ballot collection receptacle to store voted absentee or mail-in ballots submitted at the location.
1.2 LOCATION OF BALLOT RETURN SITES

1.2.1 Location

The CCBOE has identified the following locations for potential SBRSs. At each location a SBRR will be mounted to the ground, floor, or wall. The receptacles will be located inside or outside the buildings.

1. Willowbank Office Building, 420 Holmes Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823
2. Patton Township Municipal Building, 100 Patton Plaza, State College, PA 16803
3. Ferguson Township Municipal Building, 3147 Research Drive, State College, PA 16801
4. State College Borough Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA, 16801
5. Spring Township Municipal Building, 1309 Blanchard Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823
6. Magisterial District Office 49-3-03 (Philipsburg MDJ Office), 118 Enterprise Drive, Philipsburg, PA 16866
7. Magisterial District Office 49-3-04 (Centre Hall MDJ Office), 2795 Earlystown Road, Centre Hall, PA 16828
8. HUB-Robeson Center, 100 Pollock Rd, University Park, PA 16802

The SBRRs at locations #1-6 will be: operational no later than Wednesday, October 7; located outside; and will be accessible 24/7. The SBRR at location #7 will be: operational no later than Wednesday, October 7; located inside the lobby; and will be accessible from 8:30AM-5:00PM, Monday-Friday. Finally, the SBRR at location #8 will be: operational no later than Monday, October 19; located outside; and will be accessible 24/7.

The CCBOE proposes designating a County-owned 2020 Chrysler Voyager as a mobile SBRS that will have a SBRR mounted and securely fastened in its rear opening. The Voyager would only be used as a SBRR when it is in park, with the emergency break engaged, and the keys removed from the ignition. The Voyager would be deployed to areas of the County not covered by the eight aforementioned SBRSs. Centre County is the fifth largest county by area in the Commonwealth and this mobile SBRS would further enable more voters to participate in the democratic process. The vehicle and receptacle would be decaled with similar lettering as the non-mobile SBRRs. The CCBOE is working closely with municipal governments, public libraries, and other locations to
1.2.2 Hours of Operation

For SBRSs that have SBRRs located outdoors, the hours of operation will be 24/7. For SBRSs that have SBRRs located indoors, the hours of operation will vary but generally will be accessible Monday through Friday from 8:30AM to 5:00PM. On Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, 2020, and the final few days leading up to Election Day, the hours of operation for indoor SBRRs may be expanded. The CCBOE will also work with elections staff to set up hours of operation on evenings and weekends to enable maximum flexibility and convenience to voters.

1.2.3 Advertising and Promoting

The CCBOE will post on the County Elections’ website, social media, press releases, and legal advertisements pertinent information regarding all SBRRs, including, but not limited to, hours of operation, addresses, maps, specific placement, parking, photographs, signage, rules and regulations, and closest bus route(s).

1.2.4 Additional Transportation Option

The Centre County Office of Transportation (CCOT) will provide rides free of charge to individuals 60 and older who would like to return their own voted ballots to a SBRR. Rides can be scheduled by calling the CCOT at (814) 355-6807.

1.3 PROVIDING NOTICE OF LOCATION OF COUNTY ELECTION OFFICES AND BALLOT RETURN SITES

The CCBOE will make a list of the secure ballot return sites and the location of the CCEO at the Willowbank Building public as early as possible, including the dates and hours of operation. Seven to ten days after submitting the initial Ballot Return and Collection Plan to BEST, the CCBOE will post a notice of the plan on the home page of the County website (centrecountypa.gov) and the main webpage of the Elections & Voter Registration Office (centrecountyvotes.com). The notice posted on the websites will be in a format that is accessible for voters with disabilities. If there are changes to the site location operations, the CCEO will post updated information on the website with 24 hours. A notice of the plan will also be posted at the entrance to the Willowbank Building and the Centre County Courthouse.

The public notice, at a minimum, will include:
1.4 CONFIRMATION OF PLAN READINESS

The CCBOE submitted its initial absentee ballot and mail-in ballot return plan to the Pennsylvania Department of State, Bureau of Election Security and Technology (BEST) on Friday, September 18, 2020. If BEST requests modifications to the plan, the CCBOE will submit a modified plan within 7 days of the request. The CCBOE has determined it is in the best interest of Centre County voters to alter the plan and is submitting a supplemental plan to BEST on Thursday, October 1, 2020. If the CCBOE determines that it is in the best interest of Centre County voters to further alter the plan or increase/decrease the number of SBRRs, the CCBOE will submit another supplemental plan to BEST no later than Friday, October 9, 2020, and also provide notice to the public no later than Wednesday, October 14, 2020.

2 Ballot Return Site Design and Requirements

2.1 TYPES OF BALLOT RETURN SITES

For the 2020 General Election, the CCBOE will establish sites where voters may return their own voted absentee ballots and mail-in ballots. All sites will have a secure ballot return receptacle. As mentioned in section 1.2.2, for sites that have receptacles located outdoors, voters will be able to return their own voted ballots 24/7. For SBRSs that have SBRRs located indoors, the hours of operation will vary but generally will be accessible Monday through Friday from 8:30AM to 5:00PM. On Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, 2020, and the final few days leading up to Election Day, the hours of operation for indoor SBRRs may be expanded. The CCBOE will also work with elections staff to set up hours of operation on evenings and weekends to enable maximum flexibility and convenience to voters. Return sites will have the same features, and be of substantially similar design, color scheme, and signage so as to easily facilitate identification by voters.
2.2 SECURE RECEPTACLES

Each secure ballot return site will have a secure ballot return receptacle (SBRR) that permits voters to return their own voted ballot. A postage stamp is not needed on the return envelope when a voter deposits their ballot into a SBRR.

Each SBRR will have a metal flap that opens with ease – requiring no more than 5 pounds of pressure to operate – to provide the voter enough space to insert their own voted ballot (SEE IMAGE E). The ballot deposit slot will open to no more than one inch as to not allow tampering or removal of ballots. The opening of the ballot deposit slot will also minimize the ability for liquid to be poured into the SBRR or rainwater to seep in. The ballot deposit slot will be within reach-range of no less than 15 inches and no more than 48 inches from the floor or ground.

Each SBRR will have one slot for voters to return their own voted ballot. The location of the slot will be identified with a sign stating “INSERT BALLOT HERE”.

2.3 SIGNAGE

The CCBOE will design ballot return sites to be official and secure. The CCBOE will mark each SBRR with official signage reading “OFFICIAL CENTRE COUNTY BALLOT RETURN” (IMAGES F, G, H, I, J, K). The CCBEO will not display “VOTE HERE” signage at the SBRSs.

Additional signage will include statements that:

- The secure ballot return site is being monitored by a video security surveillance system or internal camera.
- Counterfeiting, forging, tampering with, or destroying ballots is a second-degree misdemeanor pursuant to sections 1816 and 1817 of the Pennsylvania Election Code (25 P.S. §§ 3516 and 3517).
  - Each SBRS will have unique contact information for the local police department that has jurisdiction where the SBRR is located and the Centre County District Attorney’s Office.
- Third-party return of ballots is prohibited unless the person returning the ballot is rendering assistance to a disabled voter or an emergency absentee voter. Moreover, such assistance requires a declaration signed by the voter and the person rendering assistance.
- Requesting that the designated CCEO should be notified immediately in the event the receptacle is full, not functioning, or is damaged in any fashion, and will provide a phone number and email address for such purpose. The non-emergency number for the Centre County Emergency Communications Office will serve as the phone number and will be
2.4 ACCESSIBILITY OF BALLOT RETURN SITES

The CCBOE will ensure that all ballot return sites are accessible to voters with disabilities and that the design and placement of each site will meet accessibility requirements.

2.5 SECURITY

The CCBOE will ensure the following at each secure ballot return site:

- Only personnel authorized by the CCBOE will have access to the ballots inside of SBRR.
- Each SBRR will be mounted to the ground, floor, or wall in a manner to prevent their unauthorized removal.
- All SBRR should be secured by a lock and sealed with a tamper-evident seal. Only authorized election officials designated by the CCBOE will access the keys of the lock.
- The CCBOE will ensure adequate lighting is provided at all SBRSs when in use.
- All SBRRs will be monitored by a video security surveillance system. Video surveillance will be retained by the CCEO through January 21, 2021. Video surveillance will be retained from the first day absentee ballots and mail-in ballots are available for voters to obtain from the CCEO or mailed out to voters, whichever happens first.
- To prevent physical damage and unauthorized entry, the SBRRs that are located outdoors will be constructed of durable material able to withstand vandalism, removal, and inclement weather.
- The mobile SBRS will have two GoPros recording the drop box in the rear of the vehicle when actively being used by voters returning their own voted ballots.

3 Ballot Collection and Chain of Custody Procedures

CCBOE will develop ballot collection and chain of custody procedures for ballots returned to the CCEO or a SBRS. These procedures will be consistent with Pennsylvania law and Pennsylvania Department of State directives.

3.1 BALLOT COLLECTION AT BALLOT RETURN SITES

- Ballots will be collected from ballot return sites only by personnel authorized by the CCBOE and at times determined by the CCBOE, at least every 24 hours, excluding Saturdays and Sundays.
• Authorized personnel will be accompanied by a member of the Centre County Sheriff’s Office to provide security. The member of the Sheriff’s Office will not assist with the retrieval of voted ballots but will be present during the retrieval process.
• The CCBOE will designate at least two election officials to collect voted ballots from a ballot return site. Each designated election official will carry identification or an official designation that identifies them as an election official authorized to collect voted ballots (See IMAGES L & M).
• Election officials designated to collect voted ballots by the CCBOE will sign a declaration declaring that he or she will timely and securely collect and return voted ballots, will not permit any person to tamper with a ballot return site or its contents, and that he or she will faithfully and securely perform his or her duties. These declarations will be stored at the CCEO for 22 months after the certifications of the official election results.
• Election officials designated to collect voted ballots will receive a training from the CCEO prior to retrieving ballots.
• Election officials will follow the directions outlined in the Ballot Return Site Collection Form (ATTACHMENT A) when retrieving the voted ballots from the ballot return receptacle and when returning the voted ballots to the CCEO.

3.2 TRANSPORT AND RECEIPT OF RETRIEVED BALLOTS TO THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

• Ballots collected from any ballot return site will be immediately transported to the CCEO.
• Upon arrival at the CCEO, county elections official will note the time of arrival on the Ballot Return Site Collection Form.
• The elections officials retrieving ballots will inspect the secure ballot transfer container for evidence of tampering and should receive the retrieved ballots by signing the retrieval form and including the date and time of receipt. In the event tampering is evident, that fact must be noted on the retrieval form.
• The completed Ballot Return Site Collection Form will be maintained in a manner prescribed by the CCBOE to ensure that the form is traceable to its respective secure ballot container.
• The elections official at the CCEO should note the number of ballots delivered on the Ballot Return Site Collection Form.
3.3 ELECTION DAY AND POST-ELECTION PROCEDURES

- The CCBOE will arrange for election officials to retrieve ballots on election night and transport them to the CCEO at the Willowbank Building.
- Elections officials will be at the ballot return receptacles immediately prior to 8:00PM or at the time the polls should otherwise be closed.
- At 8:00:00PM on Tuesday, November 3, 2020, or later if the polling place hours have been extended, all ballot return sites and receptacles will be closed and locked.
- Elections officials will be accompanied by a member of the Centre County Sheriff’s Office to provide security. The member of the Sheriff’s Office will not assist with the retrieval of voted ballots but will be present during the retrieval process.
- Elections officials will ensure that no voted ballots are returned to the ballot return receptacles after the close of polls. Each receptacle’s ballot deposit slot will be sealed shut and locked with a “defeater” bar. At each site, a notice signed by the CCBOE will be posted by the elections officials that the polling is closed for the election.

4 Processing of Collected Ballots

All ballots collected from a return site will be processed in the same manner as absentee ballots and mail-in ballots personally delivered to the CCEO at the Willowbank Building by the voter and ballots received via the USPS or any other delivery service.
# # #

## 5 Version History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Approved</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>09/17/2020</td>
<td>Initial Ballot Return and Collection Plan</td>
<td>Centre County Board of Elections</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>10/01/2020</td>
<td>Supplemental Ballot Return and Collection Plan</td>
<td>Centre County Board of Elections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 Images

IMAGE A – Willowbank Secure Ballot Drop Box - Far

IMAGE B – Willowbank Secure Ballot Drop Box - Near
TLP: WHITE

IMAGE C – Locations of Secure Ballot Drop Boxes

IMAGE: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fc/Map_of_Centre_County%2C_Pennsylvania_No_Text.png
IMAGE E – Close up of Ballot Deposit Slot
IMAGES F, G, H, I, J, K – Signage for SBRRs
We, the Centre County Board of Elections, do hereby designate ____________________________________________ to collect voted ballots from ballot return sites for the 2020 General Election.

Steven G. Dershem, Chair
Michael Pipe, Vice-Chair
Mark Higgins

• Centre County Elections Office – 814-355-6703
• Willowbank Site (Bellefonte Police – 814-353-2320)
• Patton Site (Patton Township Police – 814-234-0271)
• Ferguson Site (Ferguson Township Police – 814-237-1172)
• State College Site (State College Police – 814-234-7150)
• Spring Twp Site (Spring Twp Police – 814-355-5134)
• Philipsburg & Centre Hall - Magisterial District Offices
  (Pennsylvania State Police – 814-355-7545)
• HUB (Penn State University Police – 814-863-1111)
• ALL SITES (Centre County District Attorney – 814-355-6735)
7 Attachments

- Attachment A – Secure Ballot Return Receptacle Installation Form
- Attachment B – Ballot Return Site Collection Form
- Attachment C – Election Night Ballot Return Site Collection Closing Form
Attachment A
Secure Ballot Return Receptacle
Installation Form
Secure Ballot Return Receptacle Installation Form

Secure Ballot Return Receptacle (Drop Box) Installation Team Members:


Location (circle):

- Centre Hall – MDJ Office
- Ferguson Township Building
- HUB-Robeson Center
- Patton Township Building
- Philipsburg – MDJ Office
- Spring Township Building
- State College Borough Building
- Willowbank Office Building

Completion of installation of Drop Box Date & Time ____________________________

Inspect for destruction of exterior of the drop box __________ __________

Inspect slot for ballots __________ __________

Inspect for ballots on the walls and floor of the drop box __________ __________

Inspect for ballots in the bin __________ __________

Inspect for ballots in the bag __________ __________

Insert the bag into the bin and place the bin into the drop box

Return bin and close door of the drop box

Confirm drop box is locked __________ __________

New Seal ID# ________________________________

Sign off __________ __________

Departure from drop box Date & Time ________________________________

Final sign off __________ __________

______________________________

COMPLETE BACK SIDE
UPON RETURN TO ELECTIONS OFFICE
All keys are returned to the Elections Office

Complete information below and place in the secure ballot drop box folder at Elections Office

Form completed and submitted by Ballot Installation Team:

_______________________________       ___________________________________    _____________________________
Print Name         Signature       Date & Time

_______________________________       ___________________________________    _____________________________
Print Name         Signature       Date & Time

Form received in the Centre County Elections Office by:

__________________________________________________________
Print Name

__________________________________________________________
Signature

__________________________________________________________
Date & Time

Elections Office Timestamp below
COMPLETE FORM RECEIVED
Attachment B
Ballot Return Site Collection Form
Secure Ballot Return Collection Form

Ballot Retrieval Team Members: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (circle):</th>
<th>Centre Hall – MDJ Office</th>
<th>Philipsburg – MDJ Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ferguson Township Building</td>
<td>Spring Township Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HUB-Robeson Center</td>
<td>State College Borough Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patton Township Building</td>
<td>Willowbank Office Building</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arrival at Drop Box Date & Time ________________________________

Inspect for destruction of exterior of the drop box ___________ ___________

Security Seal Sticker Intact ___________ ___________

Seal ID# ________________________________

PLACE SECURITY SEAL HERE

Remove seal and open box

Inspect slot for stuck ballots ___________ ___________

Remove bag and bin from box

Inspect for ballots on the walls and floor of the drop box

Remove bag from bin and inspect for ballots in the bin

Confirm all ballots from box are in bag ___________ ___________

Pull drawn string and tighten top of bag with rope and metal cinch

Secure padlock in cinch ___________ ___________

Secure metal rope cinch with steel cable wire security seal

Steel cable wire security seal ID# ________________________________

Return bin, with new bag, and close door of drop box

Confirm drop box is locked ___________ ___________

New Security Seal Sticker ID# ________________________________

Place bag in container of vehicle

Sign off ___________ ___________

Departure from drop box Date & Time ________________________________

Final sign off ___________ ___________

COMPLETE BACK SIDE UPON RETURN TO ELECTIONS OFFICE

Version 3.0 – 10/01/2020
## Ballot bag received by the County Elections Office in Room 144:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Elections Office staff members confirm steel cable security seal ID# __________ __________

Elections Office staff members remove padlock from cinch and steel cable security seal

Ballot retrieval team removes ballots from bag and confirms bag is empty __________ __________

Ballot retrieval team counts the following:
- Return Envelope Ballot Count: __________
- Secrecy envelopes w/o return envelope: __________
- Ballots w/o any envelope __________
- Initials: __________ __________

Elections Office staff independently verifies totals listed above
- Return Envelope Ballot Count: __________
- Secrecy envelopes w/o return envelope: __________
- Ballots w/o any envelope __________
- Initials: __________ __________

All keys, padlocks, and bags are returned to the Elections Office

Complete information below and place in the secure ballot drop box folder at Elections Office

### Form completed and submitted by Ballot Retrieval Team:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print Name</td>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>Date &amp; Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Form received in the Centre County Elections Office by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print Name</th>
<th>Voted Ballots Returned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Elections Office Timestamp**

**COMPLETED FORM RECEIVED**

---
Attachment C
Election Night Ballot Return
Site Collection Closing Form
Election Night Ballot Return
Site Collection Closing Form

Ballot Retrieval & Site Closing Team Members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (circle):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centre Hall – MDJ Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferguson Township Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUB-Robeson Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patton Township Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philipsburg – MDJ Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Township Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State College Borough Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willowbank Office Building</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arrival at Drop Box (Date & Time): **Tuesday, November 3, 2020**

If necessary, Closing Team Member gets “in line” at 8PM to demarcate the last voter

Inspect for destruction of exterior of the drop box __________ __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Security Seal Intact</th>
<th>Seal ID#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Remove Seal and open drop box door

Inspect slot for stuck ballots __________ __________

Install “Defeater” Bar and lock ballot deposit slot

Confirm ballot deposit slot is locked __________ __________

Remove bag and bin from box, Inspect for ballots on the walls and floor of the drop box,
Remove bag from bin, and Inspect for ballots in the bin

Confirm all ballots from box are in bag __________ __________

Pull drawn string and tighten top of bag with rope and metal cinch

Secure padlock in cinch __________ __________

Secure metal rope cinch with steel cable wire security seal

Steel cable wire security seal ID# ________________

Remove bin and take picture of empty drop box __________ __________

Replace bin and close door of drop box and lock

Confirm drop box is locked __________ __________

Place bag containing ballots in vehicle

Sign off __________ __________

Departure from drop box (Date & Time) ________________

Final sign off __________ __________

---

COMPLETE BACK SIDE UPON RETURN TO ELECTIONS OFFICE
Security bag received in the County Elections Office by:

Print Name ____________________ Signature ____________________ Date & Time ____________________

Elections Office staff members confirm steel cable security seal ID# __________ __________

Elections Office staff members remove padlock from cinch and steel cable security seal

Ballot retrieval team removes ballots from bag and confirms bag is empty __________ __________

Ballot retrieval team counts the following:
  Return Envelope Ballot Count: __________
  Secrecy envelopes w/o return envelope: __________
  Ballots w/o any envelope __________
  Initials: __________ __________

Elections Office staff independently verifies totals listed above
  Return Envelope Ballot Count: __________
  Secrecy envelopes w/o return envelope: __________
  Ballots w/o any envelope __________
  Initials: __________ __________

All keys, padlocks, and bags are returned to the Elections Office

Send photo of empty ballot drop box to Elections Staff with the location of drop box

Complete information below and place in the secure ballot drop box folder at Elections Office

---

Form completed and submitted by Ballot Retrieval & Site Closing Team:

Print Name ____________________ Signature ____________________ Date & Time ____________________

Print Name ____________________ Signature ____________________ Date & Time ____________________

---

Form received in the Centre County Elections Office by:

Print Name ____________________ Voted Ballots Returned

Signature ____________________ Date & Time ____________________

---

Elections Office Timestamp
COMPLETED FORM RECEIVED