

State of Wisconsin \ Government Accountability Board

212 East Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor
Post Office Box 7984
Madison, WI 53707-7984
Voice (608) 266-8005
Fax (608) 267-0500
E-mail: gab@wisconsin.gov
<http://gab.wi.gov>



JUDGE THOMAS H. BARLAND
Chairperson

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

For Local Election Officials on Election Day

Twelve Tips for Avoiding Discrepancies in Voter Numbers at End of Elections (Ensuring your voter numbers are reconciled on February 15, Primary Election Night)

Throughout past elections, the Government Accountability Board (G.A.B.) staff has had to spend a major amount of time working with clerks to correct voter number disparities that should have been discovered and resolved on election night, before the election results were sent to the municipal clerk. G.A.B. staff believe the number of discrepancies can be significantly reduced and even eliminated if local election officials take the necessary time to carefully and thoroughly follow the 12 tips that G.A.B. staff prepared for avoiding unexplained, unaccountable and undocumented disparities in voter numbers at the end of election activity on election night. The problems are discovered by the G.A.B. staff weeks and months following the election. The further in time these “number” problems get from election night, the more difficult they are to resolve.

G.A.B. staff have created the following 12 tips in a checklist formant as a way of helping local election officials and clerks to identify variances in voter numbers on election day/night, and ways to reconcile or resolve such differences before election results for submitted to the municipal clerk.

- 1. Make sure a copy of the Election Day Manual is available in the polling place and be sure to use it for answering questions.
- 2. Throughout the day, election inspectors should compare the two poll books to ensure that the voter numbers match in each poll book. We suggest local election officials go page by page comparing the numbers to the names.
- 3. If a number is unused for any reason, note the reason on the GAB-104 and make a note to subtract it when reporting the last voter number issued.
- 4. The supplemental poll book is part of the poll book and should be treated as such. Record the voter numbers on this log and reconcile as you do on the rest of the poll book.
- 5. Voters must announce their name and address. Election Inspectors should carefully note that the voter number is assigned to the correct person and the same person in both poll books.

- 6. All electors who register on Election Day, including those with a name and/or address change, should have their information recorded on the supplemental poll book and not in the poll book even if their prior name and address appears in the poll book prior to coming to the polling place.
- 7. If a voter registers on Election Day, but chooses not to vote, and does not receive a ballot, the voter should NOT receive a voter number.
- 8. If a voter had a problem using the touch screen voting machine and for some reason the ballot did not get counted, the voter should have a voter number assigned to their name.
- 9. In the case of a ballot being rejected by a voting machine, and the voter has made an effort to fill out a ballot, but when it came time to put it in the machine the voter was frustrated that the machine did not take the ballot and the voter did not complete a new ballot, then, the voter should have a number assigned to their name in the poll book. The poll workers should over-ride the machine so that the ballot is accepted
- 10. If a voter receives a number and for any reason does not put a ballot in the machine, the voter number should remain next to the voter's name in the poll book. This would include those that got upset that the line was too long, those that took their ballot with them, those that were confused and chose not to finish their ballot.
 - The only time this is not a rule is if the voter recalled while in line that they were a felon or otherwise not qualified to vote. In this case, the voter should not have a number assigned next to their name and should be recorded on the inspectors statement as 'issued in error number not used'
- 11. If an absentee voter's absentee certification envelope was not properly completed and was rejected by the poll workers, then, the voter should not have received a voter number.
- 12. If the absentee voter's absentee certification envelope was properly completed, the voter should be given a voter number even if the ballot is bounced by the machine. The poll workers should over-ride the machine so that the ballot is accepted.

Special Note: Please note that the most accurate way to gather the total number of electors who have voted in your election is to count the number of electors with the voter number next to their name in the poll book and the supplemental poll book.

If you require any further assistance with any election day or post election day processes, please contact your local municipal clerk. If your municipal clerk is not available, you may contact the Government Accountability Board Help Desk at (608) 261-2028, or via email at GABhelpdesk@wi.gov. G.A.B. staff will be available on Election night, February 14, until 10:00 p.m. to assist answer your questions. Thank you.