

State of Wisconsin \ Government Accountability Board

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JUDGE THOMAS H. BARLAND
Chairperson

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 24, 2014

TO: Wisconsin County Clerks
Wisconsin Municipal Clerks
Milwaukee County Election Commission
City of Milwaukee Election Commission

FROM: Michael Haas
Elections Division Administrator

SUBJECT: 2014 General Election Reminders and Tips

As the Government Accountability Board and local election officials conduct absentee voting and make final preparations for Election Day, we wish to offer some final reminders about timely topics and resources that are available to you and your election inspectors. We understand that some of the following may seem basic for experienced clerks, but we also recognize that this is the first General Election for many clerks and all of us benefit from taking some time to ensure that we are prepared. Each general election serves as a report card for all of us as election officials, and we want to provide all of the tools necessary for a successful election. While this is not an exhaustive checklist, please note the following reminders and resources:

1. The G.A.B. will again have extended hours to serve local election officials leading up to and on Election Day. We will be answering calls and emails during the following extended hours:
 - a. Until 6:00 p.m. from Wednesday through Friday, October 29th to October 31st;
 - b. Until 8:00 p.m. on Monday, November 3rd;
 - c. From 6:00 a.m. on Election Day until midnight;

Also, on Saturday, November 1st, we will have staff on call if you contact 608-228-7079.

2. Some clerks have inquired about posting a sign informing voters that no photo ID is required. That is acceptable and we encourage that to minimize any voter confusion. You may use the attached sign we have created or a similar one that you create. Also, we have noticed that some municipal websites still contain information indicating that photo ID is required at this election. Please update any such language on websites or any other materials as soon as possible.
3. Remember to check the list of registered write-in candidates at this link:
<http://gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/2014/fall>. Write-in votes for the office of Lieutenant

Governor should not be counted unless we receive notice of a registered write-in, so please check the list of registered write-in candidates again on the Monday before Election Day.

4. We have posted a primer for voters regarding reading and marking the ballot, which is available on the Voter Information Center of our website as well as at this link: <http://gab.wi.gov/publications/quick-reference/making-your-vote-count>. You may wish to use as a resource for voters on your website or in other communications.
5. Keep in mind that daylight savings time ends on the weekend before Election Day, and confirm that clocks on voting equipment are using the correct time.
6. We have again issued correspondence to the political parties and organizations sponsoring election observers to remind them of the rules governing observer conduct which can be found at this link: <http://gab.wi.gov/node/3419>. Please ensure that you and your election inspectors are familiar with the observer rules, including recent revisions.
7. Keep in mind that challenges made by electors must be based on firsthand knowledge that an individual may not be qualified to vote because of age, citizenship, residency, felon status, competency to vote, or because the individual has already voted at the same election or has placed a bet or wager on the election. Challenges that are not valid include those based on an individual having received a parking ticket or outstanding warrant; the address on a driver's license not matching the voter's voting address; the individual having difficulty in stating their name or address or not speaking English; or the individual having arrived in a van or bus with other voters, or in a vehicle with out-of-state license plates.
8. Take some time to ensure that you will have adequate staff to handle Election Night reporting duties. As much as we can repeat that Election Night results are not official, the public and media increasingly expect accurate results and as quickly as possible. It is better to be meticulous and correct than fast and careless, but be aware that there is a greater focus on Election Night procedures, and prepare to have sufficient staff to complete reporting duties as well as to enter outstanding provisional ballots into the Provisional Ballot Tracking System (see clerk communication of October 17, 2014. Also, county clerks should remember to post election results by ward.
9. The G.A.B. has partnered with the Disability Vote Coalition to produce a brief video focused on ways in which election inspectors can assist voters with disabilities. The video includes observations and tips from voters, advocates for persons with disabilities, and municipal clerks. It effectively delivers the message that election inspectors can have as much impact on how easy or difficult it is to vote as does the physical layout of a polling place. You may wish to show the video to your election inspectors for this or future elections. It may be found on our website at <http://gab.wi.gov/accessiblevotingtrainingvideo>.
10. The Government Accountability Board continues to audit polling places during each election to ensure accessibility. A team of auditors will be sent to various counties throughout the state and will be focused on locations that have not received a preliminary visit. Please take some time to conduct a walkthrough of all polling places in your municipality to ensure that all polling places are accessible on Election Day. Also, the accessibility supply program is still being administered and new items, such as page magnifiers and smaller signature guides, have been added to the list of available items. The supply order form can be found here:

http://gab.wi.gov/sites/default/files/page/179/supply_order_form_revised_10_13_2014_pdf_20896.pdf.

11. Keep in mind that the G.A.B. has posted several short video tutorials on specific that may be helpful for you and in your election inspector training which may be found here:
<http://gab.wi.gov/publications/videos/tutorials>
12. Remember to consider and update plans for emergency preparedness, including the possibility of needing to relocate polling locations or extend voting hours. Establish clear lines of communications and contact information with law enforcement and emergency officials in advance. In the event you need to consider moving a polling place on Election Day or extending voting hours, please contact the G.A.B. as we can assist with talking through factors to consider and, if necessary, helping your legal counsel with the necessary court filings.

We hope these reminders and resources will assist in your Election Day planning. Barring any unforeseen development, we do not anticipate needing to issue additional clerk communications prior to the election, except that we will post SVRS Checklist III next week. We also plan to post the Type A notice for the 2015 Spring Election next week. Thank you very much for your continued work in this final stretch, and please contact the G.A.B. Help Desk at (608) 261-2028 or gabhelpdesk@wi.gov if you have any questions regarding the above information or other issues that arise.