



Wisconsin Elections Commission

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DATE: October 23, 2024

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

FROM: WEC Staff

SUBJECT: General Reminders for the Nov. 5, 2024, General Election

The information below provides important reminders for clerks as the Nov. 5, 2024, General Election approaches.

Public Notice Requirements:

The following notices are required to be published or posted ahead of Election Day:

- Type B Notice
 - Instructions to voters and a sample ballot.
 - Required to be published or posted by Nov. 4, 2024.
- Type C Notice of Referendum
 - Referendum explanatory statement which describes the effect of a “yes” or “no” vote.
 - Required to be published or posted by Nov. 4, 2024.
- Type D Notice
 - Details the hours and locations of polling places, as well as a public notice for the Local Board of Canvassers.
 - Required to be published or posted by Nov. 4, 2024.

These notices are also required to be posted at each polling place. The notices should be placed together in the polling place so that they can be easily read by electors entering the polling place or waiting in line to vote.

For more information about public notices and templates, please visit <https://elections.wi.gov/clerks/election-notices>.

Central Count Website Posting:

Wis. Stat. 7.52(1)(c) requires municipalities that use a central count facility to process their absentee ballots to post at the clerk’s office and on their website the number of absentee ballots that have been issued and returned to be counted by that jurisdiction. This brings transparency to the process so that voters, candidates, and the public know how many ballots may still be added to the unofficial totals once they are processed at central

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count and later added to the number of ballots voted in-person at polling locations. This should be posted to your website no later than the closing hour of the polls. This list does not include the names or addresses of any

electors. If you count your absentee ballots at your regular polling place, you are not a central count municipality and do not need to post this information.

For more information about central count posting requirements, please visit <https://elections.wi.gov/memo/central-count-reminders>.

Voting Equipment:

Public Test of Voting Equipment:

All municipalities are required to conduct a public test of their automatic tabulating equipment no earlier than 10 days before an election. For the Nov. 5, 2024, General Election, the earliest date for the public test of automatic tabulating equipment is Saturday, Oct. 26, 2024. The public test of voting equipment is a public meeting, and notice of the meeting is required to be published or posted at least 48 hours before the test occurs.

The public test of voting equipment is intended to confirm the accuracy of voting equipment programming and bring transparency to the process. The test provides an opportunity for the public to witness how election officials are preparing for the upcoming election and to understand that the ballots will be tabulated correctly by the equipment on Election Day.

Daylight Savings Time:

Daylight Savings is Sunday, Nov. 3, 2024. Your voting equipment has an internal clock that will need to be adjusted to reflect the change in time. This is vital to reflect the time that the polls were opened and closed and will be reviewed during the municipal and county boards of canvass. If you do not know how to adjust the clock on your voting equipment, please contact your voting equipment vendor.

Voting Equipment Audit:

The WEC will audit at least 10% of all reporting units statewide for the voting equipment audit after the Nov. 5, 2024, General Election. As a result, approximately 370 reporting units will be randomly selected for audits. The cities of Milwaukee and Madison will have no more than four reporting units selected, the next 20 largest municipalities by registered voter population will have no more than three reporting units selected, and all other municipalities will have no more than one reporting unit selected.

The random drawing of the selected contests and municipalities will occur on Nov. 6, 2024. All selected municipalities will be notified of their selection and provided with training and general information about the audit program.

Emergency Extension of Voting Hours on Election Day:

On Election Day, voting at polling places could be disrupted by an emergency or other unforeseen circumstances. If this occurs, municipalities can petition their county circuit court to extend voting hours at the affected polling place, usually for the duration of time during which the polling place was not open to voters. If an extension of voting hours is necessary, it is the responsibility of the municipality to seek a court order authorizing an extension.

Wis. Stat. § 6.96 provides for an extension of voting hours by federal court order. While the statute refers to a federal court order, Wisconsin circuit courts have regularly determined that they also have inherent jurisdiction

and authority to issue such orders. Time is of the essence in seeking a court order so that election inspectors, voters, and the media can be advised whether voting hours will be extended.

The Wisconsin Elections Commission maintains a repository of sample forms and documents that you and your local counsel can use as a starting point if necessary. Those resources are available on our website:

[https://elections.wi.gov/memo/court-document-templates-extension-polling-hours.](https://elections.wi.gov/memo/court-document-templates-extension-polling-hours)”

Post-Election Day Reminders:

Registered Write-In Candidates:

As a reminder, the WEC gathers a list of all state and federal registered write-in candidates and sends it along to county clerks on the Friday before an election. All voters written in for a registered write-in candidate should be tallied and officially reported. Guidance on how to correctly count and tally vote for write-in candidates can be found at <https://elections.wi.gov/resources/manuals/counting-votes-manuals>.

Unofficial Election Results:

All results gathered on Election Day are unofficial until the various boards of canvass meet and certify the election. Unofficial results need to be reported to your county clerk. At the municipal level, Wis. Stat. §7.51(4)(c) requires that the results be reported to the county clerk within two hours after the results are tabulated. At the county level, Wis. Stat. §7.60(1) requires the county clerk to post the unofficial returns on the county website within two hours after receiving the results from the polling place. The WEC provides links to each county’s results webpage on the agency website.

It is important to indicate that the results from election night are unofficial until the various boards of canvass meet, review the returns, and certify the election. As these results are unofficial, it is common for the overall totals to change slightly as the returns are reviewed and write-in votes are correctly attributed.

Boards of Canvass:

Election night tallying and canvass procedures must be completed without adjournment until results are reported to the county. Any delays in tallying and reporting unofficial results on election night could impact other deadlines associated with the municipal and county canvasses.

Questions:

Please contact the WEC Help Desk at elections@wi.gov or 608-261-2028.