



Wisconsin Elections Commission

201 West Washington Avenue | Second Floor | P.O. Box 7984 | Madison, WI 53707-7984
(608) 266-8005 | elections@wi.gov | elections.wi.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Nov. 14, 2024

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Riley Vetterkind, riley.vetterkind@wi.gov

Post-Election Information Voters Should Know

MADISON – All 72 of Wisconsin’s counties have posted their complete, unofficial results on their websites and now election officials at the municipal, county, and state levels are conducting the certification process, a weeks-long review stage that will ultimately result in the final, official results of the election. As of Thursday, not all counties have completed their canvasses yet. The chair of the WEC has until Dec. 1, 2024 to certify the state and federal results.

Here’s what Wisconsinites should know about the November General Election as the certification process continues:

1. Inaccurate rumors about the election continue to circulate. Make sure to get your election information from trusted sources.

The WEC maintains [a fact-checking website](#) to help dispel inaccurate information being spread about Wisconsin elections. Recently published fact checks address false information that has been circulating about the number of registered voters in Wisconsin’s database, turnout in Milwaukee, and the late-night reporting of results in Milwaukee.

When consuming election-related content online or elsewhere, election officials recommend checking multiple news sources, understanding the difference between news and opinion, considering the purpose and agenda behind information, and taking a moment to pause and reflect before reacting and/or sharing information. Of course, we also always recommend verifying election information with trusted sources, such as your state and local election officials.

“These days, inaccurate election information can sometimes sadly crowd out the accurate information,” Wisconsin Elections Commission Administrator Meagan Wolfe said. “Wisconsinites should be skeptical about what they read and hear about elections, and always try to double check with an official source, such as a state or local election office.”

2. If you’re looking to confirm that your ballot was counted, it may take up to 45 days for your voting record to show up under the “My Voter Info” portal.

Voters who attempt to use the “Track My Ballot” feature on MyVote.wi.gov will see that the feature no longer shows the status of their absentee ballot. This is because the “Track My Ballot” feature is designed to track your absentee ballot for the next scheduled election, not for an election that has already taken place. Voters who attempt to use the “Track My Ballot” feature now will see the tracker for the 2025 Spring Primary or Election.

Wisconsin Elections Commissioners

Ann S. Jacobs, chair | Marge Bostelmann | Don M. Millis | Carrie Riepl | Robert Spindell | Mark L. Thomsen

Administrator
Meagan Wolfe

If you're looking to confirm that your ballot was counted, that information will be available under the "My Voter Info" portal on MyVote.wi.gov. Please note that it may take up to 45 days after the election for your voting record to show up under the "My Voter Info" portal, so there's no need to worry if you don't immediately see your voter history for the Nov. 5 General Election. If you have questions about your voter participation, you can contact your municipal clerk. Recording voter participation is largely a manual process, whereby clerks and their staff go page-by-page through each paper poll book and either scan barcodes associated with those who voted or mark each voter's participation in the state registration database.

Recording voter participation is a separate process from recording when an absentee ballot is returned. Larger municipalities often take more time to complete the process than smaller ones because of the volume of voter participation that must be recorded.

"We understand how important it is for voters to know their vote was counted," Wolfe said. "Election officials are working hard to canvass millions of ballots and upload this information – and we ask that you remain patient while they complete this important task."

3. The WEC does not have an immediate turnout estimate.

The WEC is not required to produce an official turnout statistic, and there are no official rules on how such a statistic should be calculated. The agency may provide an unofficial estimate, but only after clerks have finished entering data.

Reporters who want an immediate, rough estimate as to unofficial turnout statewide may consider adding up the total votes cast across all candidates in the highest-turnout contest and dividing that number by the state's estimated voting age population of 4,713,323.

A breakdown of Wisconsin's voting age population estimate is available on the Wisconsin Department of Administration's website here: https://doa.wi.gov/DIR/Final_Ests_Co_2024.pdf. Refer to the "Voting Age Estimate 2024" column.

Please keep in mind that the unofficial number of votes cast in a contest is not a verified number and may not account for some voters who declined to vote in that contest.

4. The results that you see in media outlets and posted on Wisconsin county websites are unofficial.

Minor errors in the reporting of unofficial results on news media sites and elsewhere do not affect the outcome of the election.

Election officials across Wisconsin are reviewing the results through the certification process, after which they will become the final, official results of the election. The chair of the WEC needs to certify state and federal results by Dec. 1.

"While the results immediately available after Election Night can give voters a good understanding of where different contests stand, they still are unofficial," Wolfe said. "They haven't been thoroughly vetted and could be subject to small changes."

Unlike all other state and federal contests, there is no certificate of election issued by the Commission Chair in a presidential contest. Instead, the law requires that the Chair determine the result of the contest based on the certified result statements submitted by each of the 72 counties. As part of this process, a copy of the canvass determination for president and a statement of ascertainment will be sent to the Governor's office. This document is then given to the slate of presidential electors for the certified winner of the Presidential race.

5. Many Wisconsin election officials will test their voting machines to ensure they performed properly on Election Day.

Wisconsin law requires a post-election audit of voting systems used in Wisconsin after each General Election. The audit, designed to assess the accuracy and performance of each voting system approved for use in the state, is a public meeting and proper notice must be provided at least 48 hours in advance. A representative sample of reporting units that use each type of voting equipment are included in the selection process. The parameters of each audit are established by the Elections Commission.

“Wisconsin takes voting equipment security seriously by requiring all voting equipment to be tested for accuracy before Election Day, and for approximately 10% of voting equipment to be audited after a general election,” Wolfe said. “We have every reason to believe voting equipment is operating properly in Wisconsin, and we’re proud to verify that in public.”

During this process, election workers conduct an independent hand count of paper ballots and tally the results of the contests. The final hand-count tally total is then compared to the election night voting system results. Clerks can start their audits once all 72 county canvasses are complete and there are no pending recounts. Audit materials are then submitted to WEC for review, and any discrepancies are investigated by WEC staff. The audit data is then presented to the six-member, bi-partisan Wisconsin Elections Commission in a public meeting, where the Commission will determine if there are any discrepancies that require further review or violate the terms of verification.

For this election, the WEC will audit voting equipment from a 10% random sample of the reporting units statewide. For this audit, 375 reporting units were selected for testing. WEC staff met publicly in a Zoom meeting the day after the Nov. 5 General Election to make the random selection. A list of selected reporting units and municipalities can be found here: <https://elections.wi.gov/2024-voting-equipment-audit>

6. Information about potential recounts can be found on the Wisconsin Elections Commission website.

Wisconsin does not have automatic recounts, even if the unofficial results are extremely close. A contest has to have a margin of 1% or less of the total votes for the office between the leading and trailing candidates to qualify for a recount. A trailing candidate who wants to ask for a recount must wait until the last day all county boards of canvassers in the applicable districts meet. The deadline for requesting a recount for most state and federal contests is three business days after the Elections Commission receives the last statement from the county board of canvassers certifying the results for a given office. However, for the presidential contest, it is one business day.

There is no cost to the trailing candidate if the difference between the leading candidate is 0.25% or less of the total votes for the office. If the difference is more than 0.25%, the WEC will estimate the cost, which must be paid before the recount begins.

More information about recounts is available here: <https://elections.wi.gov/elections/recounts>.