

# Wisconsin Elections Commission

Special Meeting

Thursday, September 10, 2020

3:00 P.M.

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting is being held via video teleconference only. Members of the public and media may attend online or by telephone. Please visit <https://elections.wi.gov/node/7081> for login/call-in information. All public participants' phones/microphones will be muted during the meeting. Members of the public wishing to communicate to the Commissioners should email [electioncomments@wi.gov](mailto:electioncomments@wi.gov) with "Message to Commissioners" in the subject line.*

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## AGENDA

- A. Call to Order**
- B. Administrator's Report of Appropriate Meeting Notice**
- C. Voting Equipment Audit and Voluntary Canvass Audits**
- D. Voter Fraud Report**
- E. Discussion of Special Voting Deputies and Public Health Guidance**
- F. Brief Update on Voter Mailer Statistics**
- G. Closed Session**
  - 1. Litigation Update**

*§19.85(1)(g) – The Commission may confer with legal counsel concerning litigation strategy.*

- H. Adjourn**



# Wisconsin Elections Commission

212 East Washington Avenue | Third Floor | P.O. Box 7984 | Madison, WI 53707-7984  
(608) 266-8005 | elections@wi.gov | elections.wi.gov

**DATE:** For the September 1, 2020 Commission Meeting

**TO:** Members, Wisconsin Elections Commission

**FROM:** Meagan Wolfe  
Administrator

Prepared and presented by:

Cody Davies  
Election Administration Specialist

Robert Williams  
Elections Administration Specialist

**SUBJECT:** 2020 Post-Election Audit of Electronic Voting Equipment and Optional Post-Election County Canvass Audit

## 1. Post-Election Voting Equipment Audit

### Introduction

Wis. Stat. § 7.08(6) is the state embodiment of § 301(a)(5) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). Wis. Stat. § 7.08(6), requires the Wisconsin Elections Commission (“WEC”) to audit each voting system that is used in this state following each General Election:

**(6) Enforcement of federal voting system standards.** Following each general election, audit the performance of each voting system used in this state to determine the error rate of the system in counting ballots that are validly cast by electors. If the error rate exceeds the rate permitted under standards of the federal election commission in effect on October 29, 2002, the commission shall take remedial action and order remedial action to be taken by affected counties and municipalities to ensure compliance with the standards.<sup>1</sup> Each county and municipality shall comply with any order received under this subsection.

This law was passed in 2005 and came into effect on January 1, 2006. Following the November 2006 General Election, the first post-election audit was conducted in the State of Wisconsin. Wisconsin has required a “complete, permanent paper record showing all votes cast by each elector, that is verifiable by the elector, by either visual or nonvisual means as appropriate, before the elector leaves the voting area” since April 2004. Wis. Stat. § 5.91(18).

The State of Wisconsin specifically distinguishes the post-election audit requirement as separate from the required pre-election tests of electronic voting systems. The pre-election test of electronic voting system,

<sup>1</sup> The current federal standard is 1 in 500,000 ballots. Accordingly, auditing teams must reconcile the Voter Verified Paper Record with ballots or records tabulated and recorded by equipment and eliminate any potential non-tabulation related sources of error including printer malfunctions, voter generated ballot marking errors, poll worker errors, or chief inspector errors.

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defined by Wis. Stat. § 5.84, uses a pre-determined set of ballots to ensure that the voting system is properly programmed prior to Election Day. The post-election audit, on the other hand, is designed to assess how the electronic voting system performed on Election Day using a review of the actual votes cast by electors to verify the accuracy of programming and tabulation.

With the goal of confirming, to a high level of confidence, that a complete manual recount would not change the outcome of a race, the Wisconsin Elections Commission has established detailed procedures for meeting the post-election audit requirement. The voting equipment audit serves as an important tool to deter voting system fraud and detect any large-scale systemic errors. Most importantly, the post-election voting equipment audit ensures that voting systems previously certified for use in Wisconsin elections are performing up to required standards for continued certification. Information obtained in the audit provides crucial feedback that allows jurisdictions to help improve election administration in future elections.

When determining which municipalities will be selected to participate in the post-election voting equipment audit, Wisconsin Elections Commission staff use a completely transparent and random process that ensures a minimum number of reporting units for each model of equipment is represented in the total of all audited reporting units. The selection process also is designed to ensure that each county is also represented in the sample. To bolster the effectiveness of the audit process, all ballots tabulated on Election Day, including absentee ballots, are audited using counting methods that account for overvotes and undervotes, as well as blank or spoiled ballots. Through post-election audit procedures, randomized selection process, and thoroughness of the audit process, staff aims to not only meet statutory requirements, but to increase the confidence voters have in the results of Wisconsin elections.

Beginning in 2006, the Wisconsin State Elections Board conducted audits on voting equipment within the state. In 2008, staff of the former Government Accountability Board (“G.A.B.” or “Board”) reconfigured the audit program to address the unsustainably high personnel and financial expenses associated with the decision to have Board staff conduct the post-election voting equipment audit onsite in selected municipalities. Board staff then began asking municipal clerks to conduct audits at the municipal and county level, with the resulting materials to be mailed to Board offices for staff to analyze and complete. In 2010, the Board continued requiring municipalities to conduct audits at the municipal level with assistance from G.A.B. staff. In 2012, Board staff again reformed the audit program, including a decision to double the amount of reporting units selected for participation. This change meant auditing a minimum of one hundred (100) reporting units. Municipalities continued to perform voting equipment audits at the municipal level, with assistance from G.A.B. staff.

The same procedures and protocol were applied to the 2014 audit process. Municipalities were again required to perform audits at the municipal level and many municipalities worked with their respective county clerks to conduct the required voting equipment audits. G.A.B. staff provided assistance to municipalities concerning audit planning, auditing procedures, and suggested ideas and methods for resolving potential discrepancies. Staff also reviewed initial audit results to ensure audits were conducted in an appropriate manner. In limited circumstances, staff conducted an additional audit of the ballots to verify the Election Day results against the hand count audit results.

For the 2016 audit selection process, a selection limit of two reporting units per municipality was proposed by WEC staff and approved by the Commission during its October 14, 2016 meeting. The Commission later determined that reporting units selected for the audit whose ballots were hand-counted during the statewide recount for the Office of President would no longer be required to conduct the audit. Reporting units where ballots were recounted using optical scan tabulators would still be subject to the post-election voting equipment audit. In total, 42 total reporting units in 34 municipalities were ultimately audited after the 2016 Presidential and General Election.

To conduct the 2018 Voting Equipment audit, staff proposed, and the Commission approved several changes to the process. This included changes to the completion timeline of the audit, the selection process, and municipal reimbursement. Prior to 2018 the audit was primarily conducted after the results of the election had been certified. In 2018, the completion timeline was shortened significantly, requiring that all municipalities with reporting units selected complete the audit on or before November 28, 2020, allowing Commissioners to be presented with the initial findings of the audit before certifying the 2018 General Election results.

Additionally, in the 2018 audit, the sample size of reporting units was increased to 5% of all reporting units throughout the state. This totaled 186 reporting units selected. In previous audits, a total of 100 reporting units, roughly 3% of those statewide, had been selected. Finally, in 2018, the municipal reimbursement scheme was altered slightly. A \$300 max reimbursement was left in place, but municipalities were allowed for the first time to submit documentation requesting reimbursement for costs over the maximum allowed. For the 2018 audit, the hourly rate maximum of \$10 per hour was also removed, giving auditors the opportunity to submit actual cost data for reimbursement.

For the 2020 voting equipment audit, staff are recommending a change to the reporting unit selection process regarding and the method of municipal reimbursement while leaving in place several procedures approved by the Commission for the 2018 audit. Historically, there has been a maximum selection cap of two reporting units per municipality. Staff are currently exploring options that may increase the maximum number of reporting units with the goal of a more directly proportional selection process based on the number of registered voters, while leaving the statewide total of reporting units selected unchanged at 5%. This may have a more of an impact on the election officials of larger municipalities, where the bulk of Wisconsin's voters are concentrated, in that they will most likely be selected multiple times. Staff is also recommending an adjustment to the method of municipal reimbursement by introducing a flat amount for audit set up and per ballot compensation for the conducting of the audit. A summary of recommendations can be found at the end of this memo.

### **Reporting Unit Selection Process**

For the post-election audits to be conducted in 2020, staff is recommending that the sample size be maintained at five percent of the total reporting units statewide. Staff also recommends that controlling for one reporting unit per county and five reporting units per piece of equipment remain in effect. The 2018 voting equipment audit, using these three methods, provided a sample pool of roughly 140,000 ballots.

The Wisconsin Elections Commission randomly selects a pre-determined number of reporting units across Wisconsin for audits, including a minimum of five (5) reporting units for each voting system used in Wisconsin. If fewer than five (5) reporting units for any voting system are selected through the random selection process, then additional reporting units are randomly selected for the voting system until five reporting units per voting system have been selected. Any reporting unit selected for audit that is subject to a recount is replaced by another reporting unit selected at random by the WEC. For good cause, the WEC may identify other reporting units to be audited.

To conduct audits on the municipal level, WEC chooses for audit a selected number of reporting units. The total number of reporting units selected during this process totals five percent (5%) of the reporting units in the state. As part of the five percent of reporting units selected, WEC staff also ensures that a minimum of one (1) reporting unit from each county and at least five (5) reporting units for each piece of equipment.

Selection process summary:

1. Maintain the audit sample at 5% of all reporting units statewide.
2. Ensure that at least one (1) piece of voting equipment is selected for audit in each of the 72 Wisconsin counties.
3. Ensure that a minimum of five (5) reporting units are selected for each piece of equipment certified for use in Wisconsin that records and tabulates votes.

**Audit Completion Timeline**

Prior to 2012, audits were required to be conducted no later than two weeks after the State certified the election results. For the 2012 post-election voting equipment audit, the G.A.B. determined that audits could be conducted prior to the recount deadline, a decision which revised prior requirements that no audits take place until after the period for filing a challenge to a recount of any contest on the ballot had expired. These guidelines remained in place for both the 2014 and 2016 audits. In 2016, records indicate that 20 of the audits, or 19 percent, were conducted prior to the state certification of election results and several other municipalities were scheduled to conduct audits prior to certification but rescheduled when it became apparent that a statewide recount was imminent. In 2018, the voting equipment audit was required to be completed pre-certification.

For the 2020 post-election voting equipment audit, staff is recommending that all post-election audits be conducted prior to the state deadline to certify election results on December 1, 2020. This recommendation is based on the increased willingness of municipalities to conduct the audit promptly after Election Day. Staff recognizes that this timeline may increase the workload of local election officials who have just finished administering a high-profile, high-turnout General Election. Therefore, staff is also recommending that any selected municipality may request a waiver for this requirement if they show cause that they will not be able to meet this deadline.

To facilitate this timeline and ensure that selected municipalities have the largest possible window to schedule, coordinate, conduct and report audit results to the WEC, staff is committed to scheduling the public meeting for the random selection of reporting units subject to audit on Wednesday, November 4, 2020. Selected municipalities will be timely notified and provided with reference and resource materials and a pre-recorded training webinar will be offered that will outline audit and results reporting procedures.

**Pre-Audit Preparations**

The audit must be open to the public, and the time and location of the audit must be posted at least 48 hours prior to the audit. Members of the public can observe the audit proceedings but may not interfere with the orderly conducting of the audit.

Upon notification by the Wisconsin Elections Commission that a reporting unit in their municipality was selected for audit, the municipal clerk shall make arrangements with the county clerk to preserve and retain the election materials including voter lists, the Inspectors' Statement (EL-104), Tally Sheets (EL-105), reports and results tapes printed or generated by the voting system, ballots and any other required materials that will be used during the audit. All materials subject to audit must be retained in a secure location by either the municipal or county clerk. The use of a chain of custody log to document who has had access to election materials and where they have been stored is highly recommended.

Upon agreement by a municipality and county, the county clerk or county board of canvassers may perform the audit of the selected reporting unit(s) in lieu of the municipality. In this instance, the county would be entitled to any reimbursement provided by the Wisconsin Elections Commission.

### General Audit Procedures

1. The municipality shall acknowledge receipt of its selection for the post-election voting system audit and confirm with the WEC the following information for each reporting unit selected:
  - a. Voting System Type
  - b. Voting Equipment Model
  - c. Accessible Voting Equipment Model
2. The clerk shall publicly post notice of the time and location for the voting system audit at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled audit. Clerks must notify the WEC of the time and location of the audit by sending an email to [wecaudits@wi.gov](mailto:wecaudits@wi.gov).
3. Four (4) contests shall be audited, including the top contest on the ballot, the presidential or gubernatorial contest. The other audited contests shall be selected randomly by WEC staff from the other state-level contests that appear on the ballot.
4. A minimum of two individuals shall participate in the audit. Votes shall be tallied by hand for the contests included in the audit. For some voting systems, this will require counting the votes listed on the voter-verified paper audit trail generated by the voting system on Election Day. At least two auditors shall determine an independent total for each selected contest. These totals shall then be compared to each other. If the auditors' totals concur, the totals are then compared to the results generated by the voting system. Any discrepancies should be recorded and explained in the minutes of the audit and itemized on the results reporting form provided by the WEC.
5. Detailed minutes should be kept by those conducting the audit and discrepancies in vote totals should be itemized and summarized in the minutes. This information should be used when filling out the reporting forms that must be submitted to the WEC after the completion of the audit.
6. If any offices contain an overvote, no vote is counted for that office, and it is considered an undervote.
7. All write-in votes and scattering should be tallied on the combined line listed for those votes. The individual write-in candidate totals do not have to be listed as the voting equipment only produces a subtotal of the write-in votes for each contest and does not tally votes for each individual candidate.
8. Auditors should only count votes as the equipment would have counted them.

Example 1: A voter circled candidate name Jane Doe on an optical scan ballot where they should have filled in the oval next to the candidate name. No vote for this office should be counted as the voting equipment would not have counted a vote cast for a candidate in this manner.

Example 2: A voter wrote in a candidate name on an optical scan ballot and did not fill in the oval next to the write-in line. The voting equipment would not have identified this as a write-in vote on the results tape, so it should not be included in the write-in totals for purposes of the audit.

9. In some cases, it may not be clear exactly how the ballot would have been counted by the voting equipment or there may be ballots where a hand count would have determined a different outcome for individual ballots. Auditors should document in the minutes any ballots where it is unclear how the voting system would count the ballot. The auditors should include in the minutes how they counted the ballot as well as all reasonable alternatives on how the machine may have counted the ballot.

Example: Ballot 93, voter marked both Jane Doe and John Smith and attempted to erase the mark for John Smith. We counted it as a vote for Jane Doe, but the machine may have read this as an overvote in this contest. This may result in our tally having one more vote for Jane Doe and one less undervote in this contest.

10. The audit results should be compared to the results report from the voting equipment and both sets of results should be reported to the WEC. It may be possible that the auditors' totals do not match the voting equipment results report, but the auditors should be able to reasonably explain any discrepancy in the totals by reference to specific ballots and situations as notated in the minutes and reporting forms.

### Recommended Audit Procedures

Staff are currently in the process of refining the specific procedures that auditors will be utilizing this year. Following the 2018 post-election voting equipment audit, a number of purported issues identified on the reporting forms submitted by participating municipalities were ultimately found to be the result of auditor error, either in the mis-tallying of ballots or in unclear documentation of the process. Staff also gained experience by conducting audits of two reporting units in the WEC offices during the 2108 audit and will incorporate information gained through that process to the updated procedures.

As such, staff are working to redesign the tally sheets and general procedures to make them more intuitive and user-friendly. Different mockups are currently being finalized but the versions that will be disseminated to selected municipalities will be those found to produce the soundest results in a controlled usability test in which staff will conduct a "mock" audit using different material prototypes.

### Post-Audit Procedures

Each municipality conducting an audit must submit the designated reporting forms and supporting documents from the audit, including tally sheets. This submission serves as confirmation that the audit has been completed and must also detail and describe any discrepancies encountered in the process. Clerks should email these findings to [wecaudits@wi.gov](mailto:wecaudits@wi.gov).

WEC staff may, at its sole discretion, request that the municipality submit all audit materials, including the source documents (ballots, poll lists, etc.) to the WEC for further review. In such a case, the WEC will reimburse the municipality for the associated postage/shipping costs.

In the event that a discrepancy between the machine tally and the paper record tally cannot be reasonably explained, WEC staff will request that the voting equipment manufacturer investigate and explain the reasons for any differences between the machine tally and the paper record tally. Should the vendor fail to provide a sufficient written explanation, including recommendations for preventing future occurrences, within 30 days of notification, the WEC may suspend approval of the affected voting system in Wisconsin. This suspension will

be implemented immediately, pending an appeal by the vendor to the Commission, which must be filed within 30 days of the suspension.

Based upon the results of the audit, the Wisconsin Elections Commission may, at its sole discretion, choose to re-test the voting system per Wis. Adm. Code EL Chapter 7. Such test would be a condition of continuing approval of said voting system.

**Municipal Reimbursement**

To conduct the 2018 audit, the Wisconsin Elections Commission reimbursed municipalities for actual costs incurred, up to \$300 per reporting unit, for conducting each audit. Staff recommended, and the Commission approved the removal of the restriction limiting reimbursement of personnel costs to a rate of \$10 per hour. Each municipality seeking reimbursement submitted an itemized request that included the names of the auditors, the pay rate at which they were compensated, and the total sum requested for reimbursement. Audit costs exceeding \$300 per reporting unit were submitted to the WEC and full reimbursement for those costs were considered. A total of 14 municipalities submitted overage requests with 12 being granted. Approval for overage requests required staff to consult with both Administrator Wolfe and then Chair Knudson, providing them with relevant documentation submitted by the municipalities.

For the 2020 voting equipment audit, staff is recommending a change to the municipal reimbursement procedure. Instead of a flat reimbursement rate, staff recommends a base reimbursement for the cost of setup of \$50 per reporting unit and then further reimbursement at the rate of thirty-five cents (\$.35) per ballot. Staff also recommends removing the \$300 maximum reimbursement. This method of reimbursement is more equitable than those used in the past. Previously, the per ballot reimbursement rate varied wildly. With a flat rate per ballot, the municipalities that audit 100 ballots and the municipalities that audit 5,000 ballots will be eligible for the same per-ballot rate of reimbursement. There will be no further procedural hurdles for the municipalities with a higher ballot count. The change in the reimbursement structure will lead to higher costs for the agency than using the \$300 per reporting unit standard, but staff projects the estimated cost for the program to be similar to the final reimbursement cost for the 2018 audit after the overage payments are considered.

*Reimbursement Examples*

		Base Reimbursement	Ballots Counted	Subtotal	Total Reimbursement
Municipality 1	Reporting Unit 1	\$50.00	250	\$137.50	<b>\$298.13</b>
Municipality 2	Reporting Unit 1	\$50.00	1,750	\$662.50	<b>\$1,850.00</b>
	Reporting Unit 2	\$50.00	3,250	\$1,187.50	

**2. Voluntary Post-Election County Canvass Audits**

Following successful experiences in 2018, staff are also taking this opportunity to present an outline of the optional post-election audits conducted by counties as part of their canvass process. Multiple counties utilized this type of audit following the 2018 General Election and have already inquired as to whether the program will continue this November.

Unlike the post-election voting equipment audit, participation in county-level canvass audits is voluntary. Additionally, as these audits are not tied to voting equipment, they can be conducted in jurisdictions that utilize hand-count paper ballots, electronic voting equipment, or a combination of the two. Procedures for the canvass



audit should follow the same full hand tally procedures employed in 2018. Staff are recommending that reimbursement for participation in these voluntary audits follow the same rubric as outlined for the post-election voting equipment audit. Specifically, each participating reporting unit will be eligible for a flat reimbursement of \$50 per reporting unit with further reimbursement at \$.35 per ballot audited. As in the 2018 voluntary audits, there will be a limit of two reporting units per participating county.

### **Summary of Recommendations**

1. Maintain the audit sample at 5% of all reporting units statewide.
2. Ensure that at least one (1) piece of voting equipment is selected for audit in each of the 72 Wisconsin counties.
3. Ensure that a minimum of five (5) reporting units are selected for each piece of equipment certified for use in Wisconsin that records and tabulates votes.
4. Continue to require audit completion prior to the certification of General Election results.
5. Reimburse municipalities with a \$50 base rate per reporting unit plus \$.35 per ballot audited.
6. Offer counties the option to participate in voluntary post-election audits to be conducted concurrently with the county-level canvass and to have the reimbursement structure of this voluntary audit mirror the same reimbursement structure detailed above.

### **Recommended Motion:**

The Commission adopts the 2020 post-election audit parameters and procedures outlined above, including the selection criteria, timeline for completion, and reimbursement.

## **Appendix A: Voting Equipment Descriptions**

### **Accessible Equipment**

#### 1. *Sequoia Edge*

The State Elections Board approved Sequoia's AVC-Edge with VeriVote Printer DRE system, version 5.024 on March 22, 2006. This system was approved under NASED # N-1-07-22-22-002. Most municipalities who use the AVC-Edge utilize them to meet accessibility requirements and use another system, usually traditional paper or optical scan, to fulfill the majority of voting needs.

#### 2. *ES&S iVotronic*

The State Elections Board approved ES&S's iVotronic DRE with Real Time Audit Log, version 9.1.4.0 on April 26, 2006. This system was approved under NASED # N-2-02-22-22-005. Most municipalities that use the iVotronic utilize it to meet accessibility requirements and use another system, usually traditional paper or optical scan, to fulfill the majority of their voting needs.

#### 3. *AccuVote TSX*

The State Elections Board first approved Diebold's AccuVote TSX DRE Touch Screen and AccuView Printer Module, version 4.6.3 on March 22, 2006. This system was approved under NASED # N-1-06-22-22-001. Most municipalities that use the AccuVote TSX utilize it to meet accessibility requirements and use another system, usually traditional paper or optical scan, to fulfill the majority of their voting needs.

#### 4. *Populex*

Populex Digital Paper Ballot Voting System, version was approved by the State Elections Board at the May 17, 2006 meeting.

#### 5. *ClearBallot Group Clear Access*

ClearCast is a polling place optical scan tabulator originally approved for use by the Wisconsin Elections Commission on December 12, 2017.

### **Optical Scan Tabulators**

#### 1. *Dominion ImageCast Evolution*

ImageCast Evolution version 410A was originally approved for use in Wisconsin by the Government Accountability Board on June 18, 2015.

#### 2. *ES&S M100*

System assigned NASED # N-2-02-22-22-005. This equipment was approved by the State Elections Board April 26, 2006.

3. *ES&S DS200*

DS200 digital scanner, version 1.6.1.0, was originally approved by the Government Accountability Board on August 28, 2012.

4. *ES&S DS850*

DS850 central count digital scanner, version 1.0, was last approved by the Elections Commission on June 20, 2017.

5. *Optech Insight*

Formerly a Sequoia Product that has been acquired by Dominion Voting, the Optech Insight optical scan ballot reader, version. APXK2.10/HPX K1.42 was assigned NASED system ID # N-1-07-22-22-002. The State Elections Board approved this equipment on March 22, 2006.

6. *Diebold/Premier-AccuVote-OS*

This was formerly a Diebold Elections System Product that has been acquired by Dominion Voting. The AccuVote-OS (model D) Optical Scan, version 1.96.6, was approved by the State Elections Board along with a series of security recommendations, at the March 22, 2006 meeting. The system was assigned NASED system ID # N-1-06-22-22-001.

7. *ClearBallot Group ClearCast*

ClearCast is a polling place optical scan tabulator originally approved for use by the Wisconsin Elections Commission on December 12, 2017.



# Wisconsin Elections Commission

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** For the September 1, 2020 Commission Meeting

**TO:** Members, Wisconsin Elections Commission

**FROM:** Meagan Wolfe  
Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Report of Suspected Election Fraud, Irregularities or Violations

Wis. Stat. § 7.15(1)(g) requires municipal clerks to “report suspected elections frauds, irregularities, or violations of which the clerk has knowledge to the district attorney for the county where the suspected activity occurs and to the commission.” The Commission is then required to “annually report the information obtained ... to the legislature under s. 13.172(2).” Wis. Stat. § 13.172(2) directs state agencies to submit reports to the chief clerks of each house of the Legislature who in turn publish notice of the report in the journals of the respective houses and then distribute the report to members of the Legislature upon request.

Municipal clerks typically provide reports of suspected election fraud or irregularities to the Commission by email or letter, and in most cases the report is a copy of the referral they have made to the District Attorney under Wis. Stat. § 7.15(1)(g). Attached to this memorandum is the proposed cover letter and report to be submitted to the Legislature which summarizes the information received from local election officials. This report is limited in that it only reports District Attorney referrals made by municipal clerks that the Commission has been made aware of and it is possible that other suspected election frauds, irregularities or violations have been referred without the Commission’s knowledge. It is also possible that citizens or organizations may have filed complaints directly with a District Attorney which the Commission is not aware of and has no way of tracking.

The Commission has directed staff to compile this report to be submitted for review in the spring of each year. The report was delayed this year until September partially due to unexpected shifts in staff work priorities in March and April when this information has typically been compiled and presented to the Commission. The timeframe for this report is February 16, 2019 through August 21, 2020.

The report provides the Legislature with four key pieces of information: date on which the Commission received information from the municipal clerk about the referral, the county in which the referral was made, a brief description of the suspected election fraud, irregularity or violation, and the election during which the event occurred. Where the referral was specific or contained multiple instances of the same type of activity that was referred, the report notes the multiple activity referred in parentheses.

For most types of referrals, the Commission has no information about whether the District Attorney found enough evidence to file charges or whether any charges resulted in a conviction.

*Wisconsin Elections Commissioners*

Ann S. Jacobs, chair | Marge Bostelmann | Julie M. Glancey | Dean Knudson | Robert Spindell | Mark L. Thomsen

Administrator  
Meagan Wolfe

**Recommended Motion:**

Direct Commission staff to submit the attached cover letter and report titled “Report of Suspected Election Fraud, Irregularities or Violations” to the Legislature per Wis. Stat. §§ 7.15(1)(g) and 13.172(2).



# Wisconsin Elections Commission

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September \_\_, 2020

Sent Via Email Only

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## **Re: Submission of Report to Legislature – Report of Suspected Election Fraud, Irregularities or Violations pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 7.15(1)(g)**

Chief Clerks Fuller and Renk:

Enclosed please find the Wisconsin Election Commission's report to the Legislature of suspected election fraud, irregularities or violations as reported to the Commission by municipal clerks pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 7.15(1)(g). This report is submitted to your offices pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 13.172(2) and notice of this report is to be included in the journals of each respective house, with distribution of the report to members of the Legislature upon request.

### Report Notes

The report provides the Legislature with four key pieces of information: date on which the Commission received information from the municipal clerk about the referral, the county in which the referral was made, a brief description of the suspected election fraud, irregularity or violation, and the election during which the event occurred. Where the referral was specific or contained multiple instances of the same type of activity that was referred, the report notes the multiple activity referred in parentheses.

This report includes notices of referrals received February 16, 2019 through August 21, 2020 and is limited in that it only reports referrals to District Attorneys made by municipal clerks that the Commission has been made aware of, and it is possible that other suspected election frauds, irregularities or violations have been referred without the Commission's knowledge. It is also possible that citizens or organizations have filed complaints directly with a District Attorney which the Commission has no way of knowing or tracking. For most types of referrals, the Commission has no information about whether the District Attorney found enough evidence to file charges or whether any charges resulted in a conviction.

*Wisconsin Elections Commissioners*

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Administrator  
Meagan Wolfe

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact the Elections Helpdesk at 608-261-2028 or [elections@wi.gov](mailto:elections@wi.gov).

Sincerely,

**WISCONSIN ELECTIONS COMMISSION**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meagan H.M. Wolfe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping underline.

Meagan Wolfe  
Administrator

Cc: Wisconsin Elections Commission

Enclosure



# Wisconsin Elections Commission

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## Report of Suspected Election Fraud, Irregularities or Violations

Pursuant to the requirement contained in Wis. Stat. § 7.15(1)(g), the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) submits to the Wisconsin Legislature the following report of “suspected election fraud, irregularities or violations” based on information submitted to the WEC by municipal clerks. This report is submitted to the chief clerks of each house of the Legislature per Wis. Stat. § 13.172(2).

The timeframe for this report is information the WEC received from February 16, 2019 through August 21, 2020. Please see the transmittal letter to the chief clerks which accompanies this report that describes the contents and limitations of this report.

Date	County	Suspected Election Fraud, Irregularity or Violation	Related Election
2/26/19	Racine	Voting twice in same election (two different municipalities)	2018 General Election
2/26/19	Racine	Voting twice in same election (two different municipalities)	2018 General Election
2/26/19	Racine	Voting twice in same election (two different municipalities)	2018 General Election
4/26/20	Eau Claire	Incorrect Voter Registration Address	2019 Spring Election
4/26/20	Eau Claire	Incorrect Voter Registration Address	2019 Spring Election
4/26/19	Eau Claire	Voting twice in same election (two different municipalities)	2019 Spring Election
5/15/19	Milwaukee	Undeliverable Election Day Registration Confirmation Postcard	2019 Spring Election
6/18/19	Rock	Voting twice in same election (absentee and at polls)	2018 General Election
1/29/20	Kenosha	Incorrect Voter Registration Address	Not applicable
2/17/20	Ozaukee	Ineligible Voter Registration – Felony	Not applicable
2/25/20	Wood	Incorrect Voter Registration Information	2020 Spring Primary
4/21/20	Brown	Voting twice in same election (in-person absentee and absentee by mail)	2020 Spring Election
5/12/20	Milwaukee	Undeliverable Election Day Registration Confirmation Postcard	2020 Spring Election
6/1/20	Milwaukee	Undeliverable Election Day Registration Confirmation Postcard (5 instances)	2020 Spring Election
8/21/20	Waukesha	Voting twice in same election (absentee and at polls)	2020 Partisan Primary

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Ann S. Jacobs, chair | Marge Bostelmann | Julie M. Glancey | Dean Knudson | Robert Spindell | Mark L. Thomsen

Administrator  
 Meagan Wolfe





# Wisconsin Elections Commission

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**DATE:** For the September 10, 2020 Wisconsin Elections Commission Meeting

**TO:** Members, Wisconsin Elections Commission

**FROM:** Meagan Wolfe  
Administrator

Prepared and Presented by  
Richard Rydecki, Deputy Administrator

**SUBJECT: Nursing Home and Care Facility Voting Program for the November General Election**

At the September 1, 2020 of the Wisconsin Elections Commission, staff were directed by the Commissioners to provide research regarding the possibility of reinstating the Special Voting Deputy (SVD) program for the November 3, 2020 General Election. State law requires that municipal clerks appoint and send SVDs into nursing homes and care facilities to conduct absentee voting for the eligible voters who reside in those facilities. This program was suspended by the Commission earlier this year due to concerns over COVID-19 and in consideration that residents of these facilities are among the most vulnerable populations in regard to infection rates and COVID-related deaths. When discussing the suspension of SVD voting during the September 1 meeting, Commissioners specifically cited concerns raised by the disability and aging advocacy community as one reason to revisit this decision, so the member organizations of the WEC Accessibility Advisory Committee have been surveyed as a part of this research and their feedback has been incorporated into this document. This memorandum will also provide a history of the Commission's previous actions regarding the SVD program and summarize the information provided by public health officials regarding the resumption of SVDs entering care facilities to conduct absentee voting.

## History

The Commission first considered the complications surrounding COVID-19 and SVD voting during a special meeting held on March 12, 2020. At this meeting, the Commission determined that special voting deputies fell under the definition of "non-essential" individuals who are prohibited from visiting nursing homes and other care facilities due to the COVID-19 public health emergency declared by Governor Evers in Executive Order #72. The Governor's public health order is no longer in effect, so the Commission later reconsidered this decision ahead of the fall 2020 election cycle. The state and federal agencies that regulate nursing homes and care facilities continued to emphasize their guidance that non-essential visitors to these facilities, such as SVDs, should be restricted. Therefore, the Commission directed that clerks should not send SVDs into care facilities for the August Partisan Primary or November General election and should instead mail absentee ballots to residents who request them. The decision for the August and November elections was made during a special meeting on June 24, 2020 and staff notified local election officials of this decision on the same day (<https://elections.wi.gov/node/6939>). Staff have not issued any guidance contrary to this decision since the Commission made this determination and the decision has since been incorporated into training for local election officials ahead of the November 3 General Election.

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## **Public Health Considerations**

In preparation for this meeting, staff arranged for a call with several staff members at the Department of Health Services to discuss the viability of resuming SVD visits at nursing homes and care facilities for the November election. Participating on the call were public health policy advisors, representatives from the Division of Quality Assurance (the Division that regulates care facilities), assisted living and nursing home program management staff, a Respiratory Disease Epidemiologist and the public health official who has assisted previous agency efforts to develop elections-related public health guidance. WEC staff outlined the SVD voting process for these individuals and asked them to identify if and how this type of voting could be done safely and consistently across facilities. The consensus among these eight individuals was that their public health guidance from prior elections has not changed they would not advise that SVDs be used for this election. DHS representatives then provided feedback regarding possible procedures that could be used during SVD voting and updates on the availability of rapid result testing at the facilities.

According to the DHS public health officials WEC staff spoke with, almost all counties across the state are seeing high numbers of positive tests for COVID-19. According to activity level data provided by DHS, 64 of 72 Wisconsin counties are currently showing high activity levels for COVID-19, and the remaining 8 are currently showing medium activity levels (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/local.htm>). In April, the state was seeing an average of 100-200 new cases of COVID-19 per day and those numbers have risen to an average of 700-900 new cases per day, according to recent data. While some/much of this increase can be attributed to an increase in the availability of testing, the percent of people tested that are positive is similar in recent weeks (9-11%) to the percent positivity we had in April (9-10%), and is trending upward (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/data.htm>).

Restrictions on group activities and facility visitation policies would also make deploying SVDs difficult to coordinate and voting difficult to conduct in a safe and controlled manner. DHS officials reported that visits are still significantly restricted at these facilities and no guidance has been issued for inside visits because they are currently prohibited in care facilities. In addition, group activities that involve congregation are not allowed, a fact that would make it difficult for SVDs to efficiently conduct voting in a common area or activity room. Public health officials and facility management staff also indicated it would be unlikely SVDs would be able to make room visits, which is another component of the process that would not be uniform across facilities and increase the likelihood that voters in facilities served by SVDs would still have to vote a by mail absentee ballot.

Public health officials also indicated that influenza season is approaching and is a complicating factor that may make it unlikely that a facility would consent to SVD visits. Influenza activity is currently low in Wisconsin, but these rates have historically risen into the fall. Residents in facilities served by SVDs are also at high risk for influenza and facility administrators are concerned about protecting residents from exposure to both COVID-19 and influenza. SVD visits would represent risk of exposure to both of these viruses.

WEC staff also discussed recommendations for how this voting could be conducted if the decision was made to send SVDs into nursing homes and care facilities. Issues such as COVID-19 testing, health screenings, personal protective equipment (PPE), room set up and voting procedures were also discussed during this call. A potential process was discussed that would involve screening all SVDs for COVID-19 symptoms prior to conducting visits, requiring SVDs to use a type and level of PPE determined by facility rules, and creating a partitioned room with separate air circulation systems on each side of the room so that contact and air flow could be limited between voters and SVDs. Public health officials also expressed concern about SVDs making visits to multiple facilities in the same day, or over the course of several days due to the increased risk of

exposure and spread. Any limitations on SVD usage and scheduling would complicate the planning process for local election officials who are required to appoint and train SVDs and coordinate multiple visits to each facility.

Representatives from DHS also discussed the availability of onsite COVID-19 testing at nursing homes and care facilities. Rapid onsite testing is currently under development and expected to be available soon at some facilities, but it was unclear when this testing would be available at all facilities served by SVDs. Public health officials stated that this testing was not a perfect solution as the rapid tests have accuracy issues and there might also be a window that a test might not cover where a test could come back negative for an SVD who has since become infected or developed a detectable level of infection.

This discussion made it clear that consistency of facility availability and consistency of procedures across facilities and jurisdictions would be unlikely, if not impossible. While there is always some discrepancy between procedures employed at different facilities, SVD voting is generally conducted in a uniform manner and conducted in accordance with state law and the administrative procedures outlined in the WEC *Absentee Voting in Residential Care Facilities and Retirement Homes* manual.

### **Feedback from Aging and Disability Advocates**

In preparation for this meeting, WEC staff also requested feedback regarding SVD voting for the November General Election from advocates in the aging and disability community. Staff also reviewed previous testimony that these groups have provided on this topic for both the June 10 and June 24, 2020 Commission meetings. From this review it is apparent that the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition (WDVC) was in favor of the Commission's decision to direct clerks to mail absentee ballots to all voters in facilities normally served by SVDs. They also felt that the Commission should provide additional training and guidance for care facility staff regarding the voting process for residents and any assistance opportunities that are available for these voters. The WDVC testimony provided for the June 24, 2020 meeting listed these specific bullet points as recommendations for increased support of care facility residents and facility staff in advance of the August 11, 2020 Partisan Primary:

- Mail absentee ballots to voters who have a request on file (as was done in April).
- Provide a consistent process for other residents to receive assistance with requesting an absentee ballot and with voter registration as needed.
- In the absence of SVDs, care facility staff should be allowed to assist voters, and should receive training.
- Care facility social service staff should keep voter registration forms and absentee ballot request forms on file and make them available to residents who wish to vote. New residents should be given the option to for assistance with voter registration, and to request an absentee ballot as part of the intake process.

(Statement to Wisconsin Election Commission Regarding Special Voting Deputies for the August Primary, June 24, 2020)

In addition, feedback provided from these groups in advance of this meeting stressed the importance of keeping residents of these facilities safe and following the guidance from public health officials when determining if SVD voting should resume. Both the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition and the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) submitted remarks that have been provided to the Commission in advance of the meeting. The WDVC stated, in part:

“Based on the most recent guidance from health experts at DHS, it’s our understanding that DHS health leaders continue to have significant concerns and their consensus was they would **not** advise that SVDs be used for this election. Given the high vulnerability of so many care facility residents, we would defer to the health experts and their conclusion that it is not safe to dispatch SVDs for the November election.”

When asked “Despite any concerns you may have, would you be supportive of resuming SVD visits for the November General Election?” a representative from GWAAR provided the following response:

“No, while I, like most, wish we were not in the middle of a pandemic; we are, and we must make decisions that keep SVDs, residents, staff, and families safe. While it is a hard decision to curtail the SVD visits, making the decision early allows advocates, WEC staff, clerks, families, facility staff, and residents time to plan and prepare for alternate options. This hard decision made earlier, is far less negative and disruptive than the chaos that results from numerous last minute changes to the voting process.”

Instead, these groups urged the WEC to update existing training resources, partner with DHS on additional training opportunities and utilize existing and new distribution channels to provide materials to support facility staff who assist residents with the voting process. Staff have already created a template letter that municipal clerks can use to send to facility administrators and staff of facilities normally served by SVDs to inform them of the deadlines associated with voter registration and absentee ballot requests and provide information about absentee voting. Staff have also created an information packet that care facility staff can use with voters that outlines processes for voting the ballot, assisting voters, witnessing and returning the ballot and this information was posted to the agency website in July 2020. The packet was also sent out to about 15,000 email addresses by DHS to all nursing homes and assisted living providers in the state in addition to other entities that provide residential treatment services.

### **Additional Training Opportunities**

Staff plan to update both the template letter and care facility staff information packet ahead of the November General Election and use the distribution channels provided by both DHS and agency aging and disability advocacy partners to distribute this information to relevant parties. Staff has already agreed to participate in a webinar offered by care facility providers regarding the voting process for voters who reside in those facilities and have discussed the possibility of presenting and answering questions during weekly webinars offered by the DHS Department of Quality Assurance staff for the long term care facility administrators and staff. Staff would also welcome the opportunity to partner with the WDVC on a training webinar for staff in facilities normally served by SVDs, as suggested in the comments they submitted for this meeting.

### **Potential Impact on Clerks**

Any change made to reinstate SVD voting prior to the November General Election would also impact clerk preparation for the election. Staff contacted leadership at the Wisconsin Municipal Clerks Association to discuss the potential reinstatement of SVD voting with them and they reported several concerns for consideration by the Commission. Clerks stated they have already generated labels for many of their care facility voters and it will be difficult to identify those voters and recreate those records in the statewide election management system to accurately reflect the ballot delivery method. The planning process for these visits has not begun as clerks were informed after the June 24, 2020 Commission meeting that SVD voting will not take place for the remainder of 2020 elections. This process takes time and resources to complete as the clerks have

to liaise with each qualified facility in their jurisdiction to identify appropriate times for both required visits and prepare the appropriate notices.

Clerks also expressed concern over recruiting enough staff to serve as SVDs. Many clerks use existing staff or poll workers as SVDs and many of those individuals are at increased risk for COVID-19 and may have concerns about entering nursing homes and care facilities. At this point, no training has been created for the safe administration of SVD voting and clerks would have to train their SVDs on these procedures along with the normal voting procedures used for care facility voting. Lastly, clerks have indicated they have already begun to reach out to care facilities in their jurisdiction to explain that ballots will be mailed to residents and provide guidance on how facility staff can assist with voting. They have also developed processes for the efficient delivery and return of ballots to these facilities. All of this preparation would have to be reconsidered if it was decided to serve these facilities with SVDs.

### **Conclusion**

Staff has conducted research regarding the possibility to reinstate Special Voting Deputy voting as directed by the Commission. Public health officials, advocates for the aging and disability community and clerks have been asked to provide feedback on the viability of this program for the November General Election and all have identified concerns with reversing this decision. Each of these issues is a significant individual barrier and when combined would make it even more difficult to send SVDs into care facilities and nursing homes to conduct voting. Even if the program were reinstated, it is probable that SVD voting would not be available at all qualified facilities and that lack of uniformity would create training and messaging complications for voters who reside in those facilities, interested family members and facility staff. Throughout the pandemic, we have asked for guidance from public health officials on how to conduct voting safely in Wisconsin and those officials all expressed significant concerns over the reinstatement of this program. This fact, coupled with the concerns cited by advocates and clerks, suggest that staff efforts could be redirected to provide additional training, support and resources to ensure that voters who reside in care facilities normally served by SVDs are able to vote efficiently using a by mail absentee ballot.

## Comments from Barbara Beckert of the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition

Thank you for the opportunity to share comments to inform members of the Wisconsin Election Commission as they consider the viability of resuming SVD visits at nursing homes and care facilities for the November election. I am responding on behalf of Disability Rights Wisconsin, as well as in my role as a coordinator of the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition.

We appreciate the time and thought that Commissioners are dedicating to carefully evaluate the options for safely supporting the voting rights of residents of care facilities during the pandemic.

Many Wisconsinites with disabilities and older adults live in residential care facilities such as community based residential facilities (CBRFs) residential care apartment complexes, adult family homes, or nursing homes. As advocates for people with disabilities and older adults, we have a deep commitment to ensuring they have the resources, support, and any accommodations necessary to register to vote and to cast a ballot.

In previous years, we have strongly supported the use of Special Voting Deputies and have in fact advocated for expansion of this practice as many care facilities do not have SVDs. We have been especially concerned that group homes where many people with disabilities live, are often unaware of SVDs and may not otherwise support residents with voting.

Because of the pandemic, our commitment to supporting the voting rights of residents has to be balanced with a consideration of the health risk of bringing in SVDs and observers. Residents of care facilities continue to be at high risk of COVID 19. Based on the most recent guidance from health experts at DHS, it's our understanding that DHS health leaders continue to have significant concerns and their consensus was they would **not** advise that SVDs be used for this election. Given the high vulnerability of so many care facility residents, we would defer to the health experts and their conclusion that it is not safe to dispatch SVDs for the November election.

It is not sufficient to simply decide not to dispatch SVDs – we count on our policy makers to do more to support the voting rights of care facility residents. Containing the spread of COVID-19 and protecting residents of nursing homes and other care facilities who are at greatest risk is of critical importance and requires new approaches to support residents with voting. Given the information from DHS about the significant health risks related to use of SVDs for the November election, DRW and the Disability Vote Coalition would recommend that Commissioners endorse other substantive action to ensure Wisconsinites living in care facilities

have the opportunity to fully participate in the electoral process, as good citizens of our state and country.

If Special Voting Deputies (SVD) are not provided to administer in-person absentee voting, other support should be provided to ensure that residents of care facilities have the opportunity to cast a ballot for the November 3<sup>rd</sup> election. The WEC *July 13th memo and Absentee Voting at Care Facilities Informational Documents* were a good first step, but more is needed.

Additional action could include:

- In addition to continuing to mail absentee ballots to voters who have a request on file (as was done in April and August), provide a consistent process for other residents to receive assistance with requesting an absentee ballot and with voter registration as needed.
- In the absence of SVDs, care facility staff should be allowed to assist voters, and should receive training. We would welcome the chance to partner with WEC staff on a webinar. DHS staff could also be a resource.
- Partner with Municipal clerks, to get their ideas and partnership on how best to support care facilities in their community.
- Care facility social service staff should keep voter registration forms and absentee ballot request forms on file and make them available to residents who wish to vote. New residents should be given the option for assistance with voter registration, and to request an absentee ballot as part of the intake process.

We would also encourage action by the Department of Health Services and DQA to remind care facilities staff that long-term care facility staff have a responsibility to assist residents in exercising their right to vote. This can include activities such as helping residents complete their ballots, voter registration forms and/or absentee requests or by acting as a witness. Facility staff should only assist the resident with their permission and may not influence their decision nor disclose to others who the resident voted for. Facility staff can read the ballot, candidate names, party affiliations, ballot instructions and can mark the ballot as directed by the voter. Staff cannot answer questions about candidates or their political platform.

Name: Janet Zander

Organization: Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.

### **Special Voting Deputy Program Research for the November General Election**

1. What concerns do you have regarding the possible resumption of SVD visits at qualified nursing homes and care facilities? I have multiple concerns about the possible resumption of SVD visits at nursing homes and care facilities. As much as their assistance and support would be beneficial, it is highly unlikely that visitation policies currently in place for these residential care facilities would allow for their visits. With COVID-19 cases on the rise in many communities and influenza activity likely to increase beginning in October (twindemic), efforts to prevent the spread of the viruses will likely require visitor restrictions in care facilities in all or parts of Wisconsin. Last minute cancellations of SVD visits would leave residents, families and facility staff unprepared and with no adequate back up plan to provide the voter assistance needed. Additionally, should SVD visits be allowed in some, but not all facilities, residents in facilities would receive inconsistent voting support – making communication and training very difficult and resulting in a chaotic process.
2. Despite any concerns you may have, would you be supportive of resuming SVD visits for the November General Election? No, while I like most, wish we were not in the middle of a pandemic; we are, and we must make decisions that keep SVDs, residents, staff, and families safe. While it is a hard decision to curtail the SVD visits, making the decision early allows advocates, WEC staff, clerks, families, facility staff, and residents time to plan and prepare for alternate options. This hard decision made earlier, is far less negative and disruptive than the chaos that results from numerous last minute changes to the voting process.
3. Based on your current knowledge of visitation and public health procedures at these facilities do you think SVD voting could be done in a safe and effective manner? No, even with extensive PPE, SVDs would be unable to maintain the physical distancing needed to comply with efforts to prevent the spread of the virus. SVDs work in pairs and their visits must be scheduled and advertised in advance. Additionally, observers from the political parties can request to have observers present during SVD voting. Currently visits by close family members are approved on a day-to-day basis depending upon community spread and the presence/absence of COVID-19 in the facility. The day-to-day monitoring needed to control the spread is not conducive to scheduling or implementing the SVDs visits or the SVD voting process.



4. If SVD visits were to be reinstated what procedures would you recommend to keep voters, facility staff and SVDs safe? In order to even consider reinstating SVDs COVID-19 rapid, point-of-care testing equipment and supplies would need to be available at every facility served by SVDs. This is not currently the situation.
  
5. If possible, what temporary changes would you recommend to ensure the safety of all those involved?
  
6. Is there any other information you would like the Commissioners to consider as part of their decision making process?



# Wisconsin Elections Commission

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**DATE:** For the September 10, 2020 Wisconsin Elections Commission Meeting

**TO:** Members, Wisconsin Elections Commission

**FROM:** Meagan Wolfe  
Administrator

**SUBJECT: Brief Update on Voter Mailer Statistics**

This memo is to provide the Commission and the public with a brief overview of the statistics related to the voter mailer that was sent to approximately 2.6 million registered Wisconsin voters on September 1. The data related to the mailing changes continually and the numbers continue to increase. The information presented below is as of 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 8.

- 1) The WEC offices have **received approximately 450 paper absentee ballot requests** by mail from voters who received the mailing. These forms are now being scanned and data entered into the statewide voter registration system for municipal clerks to approve or deny.
- 2) WEC believes the bulk of the paper absentee ballot requests being returned by mail are currently in transit. **Approximately 21,423 mail pieces have been charged to WEC's business rely mail account**, meaning voters have utilized the return envelope provided and are likely returning their absentee ballot request. We expect many of these mail pieces to arrive in the WEC office on September 10.
- 3) In addition to the paper-based process, many voters have also made their absentee ballot requests through myvote.wi.gov. **53,709 voters have submitted their absentee request through MyVote** between September 2 and September 8. A graph showing the number of requests by date is attached as *Figure 1*.
- 4) The mailer also provides information to voters about how to update their voter registration if they have moved or if their name has changed. Between September 2 and September 8, **26,044 voters have updated their registration**. It should be noted that increased traffic may be due to other efforts on Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat alerting voters to registration opportunities.
- 5) The WEC mailer also provides voters with contact information for the WEC where staff can assist with voting related questions. This is an especially important option for voters who may not feel comfortable with or have access to technology. Between September 2 and September 8 **WEC staff and call center received and responded to 4,992 calls**. This includes offering extended hour support over the Labor Day weekend and holiday.
- 6) Voter also have options to contact the WEC helpdesk by email or through the MyVote.wi.gov website. Between September 2 and September 8, **WEC staff received and responded to more than 3,419 emails**.

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Figure 1.

