

State of Wisconsin\Government Accountability Board

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



JUDGE MICHAEL BRENNAN
Chair

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

Clerk Communication Protocol for Use by G.A.B. Staff

The following protocol has been established in response to repeated concerns expressed by clerks with respect to the volumes of election-related information sent to them via email by the Government Accountability Board (Board) during peak work periods, especially during election seasons. This protocol, developed in cooperation with county and municipal clerks, will enable the Board's staff to disseminate important information to county and municipal clerks in an effective, yet less overwhelming manner. This protocol is meant to be used only for mass communications to county and municipal clerks.

Internal Authorization and Management of Communications

- 1 Staff will continue to provide the Calendar of Election Events and SVRS election checklists for clerks. G.A.B. staff will continue to use these calendars and checklists as a guide for timing of communications.
 - A Beginning in October 2009, on approximately the 15th of each month, a representative from each of the main divisions of our agency (culled from the Review Committee, referenced below in section 2) will meet to discuss communications planned for the following month.
 - B The Review Committee (referenced below in section 2) will evaluate the list of planned communications and determine dates of delivery.
 - C At the end of each month, a "heads up" communication will be sent to all county and municipal clerks bulleting the known communications they can expect the following month.
- 2 When a need for mass email arises, what is the procedure?
 - A Requester completes Communication Request Form and submits, along with the communication, to 3-person review committee (See Attached)
 - B Committee reviews content, proofs the document for completeness, clarity, formatting and grammar, and determines priority. *(If requester is not in agreement with committee decision or if committee has questions, requester will meet with committee to address the issues).*
 - C Upon approval of the communication, the Review Committee will send an email to the requester authorizing the communication to be sent; the Help Desk will be copied on this notification.

- D High priority items will be sent directly via email. Medium and Low priority items will be posted to the Recent Elections Division Communications page.
- E Email design and layout for high priority items is the responsibility of the Requester and must adhere to the description outlined in “Delivery of Communication, 1C. For medium and low priority postings, the Requester is responsible for providing the priority, link language, and other information as described in “Delivery of Communication, 2A, B and C.
- F Before communication is sent or posted, Help Desk personnel will follow a proofing protocol (see Help Desk Communication Protocol) that ensures the communication is addressed to the correct audience, the subject line contains the topic and the audience, that nothing has been omitted inadvertently by Help Desk personnel, that any links within the communication work and that the posted link work.
- G Communication will be posted expediently. However, committee decides if communication is “high priority” requiring immediate transmission via email.
- H All communications to be emailed or posted on a particular day must be delivered to the Help Desk no later than 12:00 p.m.

Delivery of Communication

- 1 If communication is **High Priority**:
 - A An email containing the communication will be sent directly.
 - B The email subject line will contain the following information “High Priority/Topic of Communication/Audience”
 - C The body of the email will contain:
 - To:
 - Cc:
 - A few “who, what, when, action needed” type bullets
 - A link to further, more expanded, information
 - (See Exhibit B)
 - D The communication will also be posted to the Recent Elections Division Communications page (see description below) under **High Priority**. WCCA, WMCA, WTA, LWM, WASD (if applicable) will be included on **High Priority** messages.
 - E Standard Messages (“VPA is Unavailable,” “Service Outage”) do not have to be vetted through the review team. They will be sent to providers and self providers. If a standard message inadvertently sent to a relier clerk, the email subject line will indicate that the message is an outage notice and for providers only.

- 2 If Communication is **Low** or **Medium** Priority
 - A A link to each communication will be posted in the proper priority section.
 - B Each link will include a brief but clear description of the content of the communication and the audience for whom it is (or isn't) intended. There will be no attachments.
 - C When the link is clicked, each communication will utilize bullet points to highlight the "heart" of the information and what if any action is required. A link to more detailed information will follow. (See Exhibit C.)
 - D Each communication will consist of one topic only. Redundancy of messages (repeating same message in various communications) shall be avoided
 - E Periodically, an automatic SHORT message will be sent to remind clerks to check the page for **medium** or **low** priority communications. WCCA, WMCA, WTA, LWM will be included on these automatic messages. The message will indicate the date on which the last reminder was sent.

G.A.B. Website Recent Elections Division Communications page

- 1 Description (See Exhibit A):
 - A The page will be divided into 3 categories: Each will be color-coded as indicated. Examples of each level of priority:
 - High:** Communications that are urgent and require timely action or response by clerks, such as surveys or data collection requests from federal agencies, legislation with immediate impact, Types A, B and C Notices (for County Clerks), service outages (providers only), changes to forms to be used at upcoming election, procedural changes affecting upcoming election. (Every effort will be made to reduce or eliminate form changes within 30 days of an election. If a form change is necessary, the communication will outline the consequences if the clerk chooses to not reprint the form.)
 - Medium:** Information that clerks must be made aware of, but that do not require a response or immediate action (changes to forms that will be effective the next time the form is ordered, milestone notifications, SVRS checklists, 4-year purge)
 - Low:** Information that may or may not be of interest to clerks (news releases, statistical information, newspaper interviews or articles)

- B Links posted to the page will be listed by date (ex: week of 10/5/09)
- C Communications posted to this page will automatically archive to an archive page or to the Clerk Information page after 30 days.
- D Labeling communications URGENT or IMPORTANT, unless they really are, will be avoided.

Communication With Clerks Who Require Hard Copy Mailing

1 **High** Priority Communications

- A County clerks will be asked to get the information to their municipal clerks without email access (preferably by phone). The communication will also be mailed via USPS immediately (just in case the county does not relay the information).

2 **Medium** and **Low** Priority Communications

- A Hard copy mailings will be implemented two times a month, or when 4 items accumulate, whichever comes first.