

# WISCONSIN ELECTIONS COMMISSION

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** For the September 25, 2018 Commission Meeting

**TO:** Members, Wisconsin Elections Commission

**FROM:** Meagan Wolfe  
Interim Administrator

Prepared and presented by:  
Richard Rydecki  
Assistant Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Post-Election Audit Overview

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the two different post-election audit processes on which the staff is requesting feedback from the Commission in advance of the 2018 November General Election. First, the staff has outlined recommended procedures for the post-election voting equipment audit required in Wisconsin after each General Election (Wis. Stat. § 7.08(6)) and is requesting feedback and approval of those procedures. The voting equipment audit is designed to ensure that all voting systems approved for use in Wisconsin are performing up to certification standards and are accurately tabulating votes. These audits have been conducted in Wisconsin since 2006.

Second, the staff has prepared an informational memorandum on risk-limiting audits that outlines these procedures and provides analysis of the potential for implementing risk-limiting audits, or similar procedures, in Wisconsin. Staff is also requesting feedback on voluntary post-election audits that can be done as part of the county canvass process. Voluntary audits were presented to county clerks in advance of the 2018 Partisan Primary as an optional post-election process to publicly verify election results.

The below chart outlines the two different audits and provides a comparison of the processes:

Audit Type	Required under WI law?	When conducted?	Who conducts?	Purpose
Voting Equipment Audit	Yes	Before or after election results are certified by the state	Randomly selected municipalities	Audit the performance of the voting equipment
Post-election Audit	No	During or after county canvass, but prior to state certification	County Boards of Canvassers	Confirm the validity of election results

Audits are an integral aspect of ensuring public confidence in the election process and can serve several different purposes. The post-election voting equipment audit has served as a valuable check on voting equipment used in Wisconsin elections and is a tool for understanding how voting equipment interacts with voted ballots. Results from the post-election voting equipment audit have been used to improve election administration in Wisconsin and identify areas where administrative procedures were necessary to ensure that voting equipment technology was meeting performance standards. Risk-limiting audits have been recommended on the federal level as a best practice and several states have passed legislation requiring these audits, while many others are exploring post-election audit options.