

Deaf Smith County Central Counting and Accumulation Plan

November 7th, 2023, Special Election

I. Staff:

The Central Counting and Accumulation Station Staff shall be as follows:

1. Central Counting Station Manager and Tabulation Supervisor:  
Rachel Garman
2. Presiding Judge: Ronny Sanders
3. Alternate Judge: Amy Contreras, Ruby Contreras, Leticia Enriquez, and Kim Sanders
4. As allowable by law, the Manager shall appoint other clerks and possibly election judges, as provided by law. If others are appointed, it will be documented in writing.

II. Poll Watchers:

Poll watchers are welcome to observe the activities as permitted by law and will submit the appropriate poll watcher paperwork prescribed by the Texas Secretary of State to the Presiding Judge of the Counting Station.

III. Tests:

In-house testing will be done on a portion of the machinery. All ballot styles, all precincts, all contests will be tested, as well as under and overvotes, in compliance with the law. Notice will be published in the newspaper several days in advance. The testing board will consist of the Election Administrator, and Elections Office Staff. The public is welcome to attend.

Test 2 will commence just before ballots are accumulated and tallied on election night. The testing board shall consist of the Central Counting Station Manager, the Presiding and Alternate Judges of the Central Counting Station and clerks. Poll watchers are welcome. The object of Test 2 is to test the accumulation/tallying equipment to ensure it is still functioning properly, not to test the paper or anything else, so as is customary across the State, after a zero report is printed, the ballot media from Test 1 will be compared to the ballot media from Test 2.

Test 3 will commence immediately after the last of the votes are accumulated/tallied on election night, as required by law. The testing board shall consist of the Central Counting Station Manager, the Presiding and Alternate Judges of the Counting Station, and clerks. Poll watchers are welcome. The object of Test 3 is to test the accumulation/tallying equipment to ensure it is still functioning properly, so as is customary across the State, after a zero report is printed, the ballot media from Test 1 will be compared with the results from Test 1, Test 2, and Test 3.

All testing materials shall be sealed and stored in compliance with the Election Code, using tamper evident ballot boxes.

IV. Ballot Security:

- A. USB Media Devices (vDrives): The transfer cases for the scanned ballot data are USB media devices, to be locked and sealed inside the scanner. They shall be secured by digital encryption and by a physical seal, which is logged and signed at the polling place by either the presiding or alternate judges and shall not leave the possession of the judge or person delivering the media devices until it is handed in person to the clerk posting guard at the Central Counting Station. The Manager of the Central Counting Station shall post one of the Central Counting Station Clerks as guard over the media until such time as they are handed to the Manager in person. Once included for tallying, the scanner media shall be sealed inside an envelope and the Central Counting Station Manager and Presiding, and Alternate Judges shall seal the envelope by signing across the sealed flap. Any poll watchers present are also welcome to sign the sealed envelope.
- B. Receipt of Ballot Boxes/Transfer Cases: All personal voting records shall be sealed inside a tamper evident bank bag, the seal number of which shall be logged and signed at the polling place by either the presiding or alternate judges and shall not leave the possession of the judge or person delivering the media devices until it is handed in person to the clerk posting guard at the Central Counting Station.

#### V. Sorting and Duplicating:

Sorting and Duplicating will not need to be done under normal circumstances, since the ballot marking devices and scanners are electronic, and have built-in logic for accomplishing all of that. However, in the case of an emergency, in which the scanners are not working properly, paper ballot sorting and duplication shall be conducted by the Counting Station personnel as dictated by law.

#### VI. Accumulating:

After EACH insertion of a media driver, the Manager and Presiding Judge will verify for each location and document that the accumulator's record of number of votes cast matches the number of votes shown on the tapes from the voting equipment printed out at the precinct polling places and shall verify that it matches the number of voters process in the pollbooks. Voter intent shall be conducted at this time by the Counting Station personnel as dictated by law.

#### Central Count Station Procedures:

1. The only person(s) allowed in the Central Count Station (first floor accessed through County Clerk elevator) are:
  - Rachel Garman
  - Ronny Sanders
  - Hart Representative
  - County Clerk Employees
  - Any Judges who are turning in their USB and tallying votes
  - The appointed CCS persons from each party (Margaret Del Toro and Jared Blakenship)
  - Any poll watcher who are properly appointed and assigned to the Central Count Station
2. If you enter/leave the room, you will need to fill out a sign in/out sheet.
3. Election Officials will wear name tags.

## VII. Reporting:

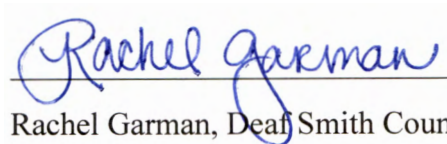
- A. A list of emails of people who wish to have reports shall be kept, and reports shall be provided at the following intervals:
  - a. At or shortly after 7 pm: The early voting returns containing Early Voting in Person and Absentee votes qualified and accepted at the first ballot board meeting.
  - b. Election Night Returns: After the election locations have come in and their votes accumulated, an election night return will be released by email to everyone on the email list.
  - c. Returns shall not be released unofficially before the close of polls at 7 pm, under penalty of law. Also, recording devices and phones must be disabled in the Central Counting Station, unless they are being used for election business as specifically approved by the Presiding Judge.
  - d. Precinct Reports and Election Reports (Cumulative Reports) shall be printed and released by paper/email to whomever has requested it.

## VIII. Securing Records, Seals, and Ballot Transfer Media at the end of Election Night:

All ballot transfer media shall be sealed inside a tamper evident bank bag, the seal number of which shall be logged, and signatures attested to the seal and the number shall be provided by the Presiding and Alternate Judges and the Central Counting Station Manager.

## VIII. Comparing voted ballots and number of signatures:

The Central Counting Station Manager will review the number of voters signed in and the number of the public count on the scanner. Then will complete the Preliminary Election Reconciliation – Unofficial Totals and place on Deaf Smith County Clerk's website at [www.co.deaf-smith.tx.us](http://www.co.deaf-smith.tx.us).



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Rachel Garman, Deaf Smith County Clerk