

Warden & Clerk Training
September 21, 2021 Preliminary Election

Tuesday, September 7, 2021; Thursday, September 9, 2021.

TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR ELECTIONS OFFICE:
(978) 674-4046

CHANGES IN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS – 2021

- City is now a “hybrid” electoral system for municipal elections. This means that some races are “at-large” (i.e. everyone in the city votes for candidates in race) and some races are “district” based (i.e. only voters in the district vote for the race).
 - For Preliminary Election, only district races for City Council in Districts 2, 3, 4, and 7. No at large races or School Committee races.
- Because of COVID-19, Massachusetts received its US Census data late. As a result, the City could not redraw its wards and precincts to fit in the municipal districts in time for this year’s elections. As a result, we are modifying the voter processing procedures:
 - Polling locations have been centralized so they either cover an entire district or half of a district. Full list for Preliminary below:
 - District 2: Robinson School, 110 June Street, Lowell, MA
 - District 3: Reilly School, 115 Douglas Road, Lowell, MA
 - District 4: Lowell High School Cafeteria, 50 Father Morissette Blvd., Lowell, MA - Serving District 4 voters in Wards/Precincts 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 5-1, 5-2, 5-3 **-AND-**
 - District 4: Rogers School Gymnasium, 43 Highland Street, Lowell, MA - Serving District 4 voters in Wards/Precincts 4-3, 10-2, 10-3.
 - District 7: Lowell Senior Center, 276 Broadway Street, Lowell, MA
 - We still process voters the same way. Voters check in by street and name just like in normal elections, but instead of looking at Ward and Precinct the list will be sorted by Municipal District.
 - You will be checking in voters through new Electronic Poll Pads that the City has recently obtained. Check in will be just like using the poll pad for Early Voting. You will also have a paper voting list as emergency backup.
 - People are being checked in by Municipal District, not Ward and Precinct.
 - You will have two AccuVote Machines in your Polling Location (Station A and Station B). Voters can insert their ballot in either machine. At the end of the night, you will count all the ballots together for one final result for your polling location.
 - One Clerk’s Report for the polling location.

I. GENERAL DUTIES

A. Warden

1. General Management the Ward/Precinct
 - a. Opens the Poll at 7:00 AM. Closes at 8:00 PM. Voters still in line at close of election must be allowed to finish vote. (Poll workers should be at precinct by 6:00 AM – 6:30 AM).
 - b. Supervises the clerks and inspectors. Supervises election precinct. Designates the Clerk to be in charge in the Warden's absence.
 - c. Supervises the inspectors at Check-In tables to ensure accurate recording of voters.
 - d. Assigns other election officers to their stations and schedule breaks, meals, and voting to ensure coverage of precinct.
 - e. Makes sure that required material is available and posted in proper places and in quantities dictated by law.
 - f. Maintains order and handles violations of election law by election officers or others. Prevents interference with the voting process and assists voters in accordance with the law. Employs police assistance when necessary.
2. Process Absentee and Provisional Ballots
 - a. Works with the Clerk to ensure inactive voters are processed
 - b. Oversees the completion of forms, processing provisional ballots, handling challenged ballots, and ensuring that voters omitted from lists are helped properly.
 - c. Makes sure that no official ballots or specimen ballots are removed or destroyed.
3. Monitor the Polling Location
 - a. Makes certain that no unauthorized persons are within the voting area and that no campaign material is inside or displayed within 150 feet of the door to the polling place.
 - b. Makes sure that no unauthorized information is released. Only the number on the ballot box register may be given out during the election.
 - c. Makes sure that election workers refrain from expressing personal opinions about the election, politics, or the voting system.
 - d. Makes sure that election workers decline to be interviewed during the course of the election.
 - e. Administers the oath to the challenged voter:

OATH

"You do solemnly swear (or affirm) that you are the identical person whom you represent yourself to be, that you are registered in this precinct, and that you have not voted in this election."

B. Clerk

1. Keeping Records

- a. Official record keeper on Election Day. Responsible for recording materials received at the precinct.
- b. Fills out the Clerk Report, Worksheet, Payroll Record and any other forms.
- c. Keeps a record of all facts relating to election proceedings.
- d. Notes any unusual happenings during the conduct of the election.
- e. Reads and records the ballot box register before and after the election.

2. Assists Warden

- a. Works collaboratively with Warden to organize opening and closing of polls at end of the night.
- b. Makes sure workers have a good working area when polls close.
- c. Assists voters who ask for instructions
- d. Assumes responsibilities of the Warden in the Warden's absence.

II. HANDLING BALLOTS IN ACCUVOTE MACHINE

1. The ballot box shall not be opened, nor any ballot removed, until the polls are closed, except in order to make room for more ballots.
2. The Warden may, in the presence of all election officers and police officer, slide open the side of the box and press down the ballots. In the event that the ballot box is too full to operate, the Warden may, in the presence of a police officer, remove ballots from the ballot box and secure them in a container/storage bin. The container shall be kept from public view or access. Ballots SHALL NOT BE PROCESSED until the close of polls.

III. INSTRUCTION/ASSISTANCE TO VOTERS (HANDICAPPED/ENGLISH AS 2nd LANGUAGE)

1. Poll workers may answer questions and instruct voter on proper method of marking ballot.
2. A voter can ask for assistance in casting his ballot due to blindness, physical disability, or inability to read English from a person of his own choice or two poll workers of different parties.
 - a. Only one person shall be allowed in a voting booth except in cases of assistance provided to a physically disabled or blind person or a person who cannot read or who cannot read English.
3. REMEMBER: You can only assist in the voter in the voting process. You CANNOT seek to persuade or influence any voter to vote for or against any candidate, political party or ballot question.

IV. INACTIVE VOTERS

1. If a voter has an "I" under the box, they are an inactive voter. You must check them for ID.
2. Inactive voters must complete an "Affirmation of Current and Continuous Residence.
3. An inactive voter who does not have identification must be challenged, however, the ballot will still be put into the tabulator and counted.

V. PROCESSING ABSENTEE BALLOTS

1. Absentee ballots are delivered by an Election Commissioner during the day, until the polls close at 8:00 P.M.
2. The Election Commission, not the Warden or Clerk, determines the validity of absentee ballots. If a ballot is sent to the polls, election officers must process it through unless the person's name has been marked on the Voting List as having voted in person, or the name is not on any Voting List. Inform the Election Commission Office if the name does not appear on any Voting List.
3. The Warden or Clerk should process absentee ballots as soon as possible, when there is free time.
1. The Warden makes sure that the name of the absentee voter who signed the absentee ballot envelope is on either the Voting List or the UOCAVA list in the front of the Check-in book. You will note that the letters [AV] or [ABSENTEE] are written in the box next to the absentee voter's name on the Voting List.
2. Open the absentee ballot envelope carefully so you do not deface, mark, or tear the ballot.
3. Mark if any cards are missing on the affixed "Absentee Ballot Card Check" sticker
4. The Warden removes the ballot from its envelope, without unfolding or examining it and gives it to the Inspector. Without examining it, the Inspector unfolds it and feeds it into the AccuVote. If the ballot is not accepted, try flattening the ballot out with a ruler and feeding it again. If the scanner still won't accept the ballot, place it in the Auxiliary Compartment. **Do not place any Absentee Ballots in the spoiled ballot envelope.**
5. Return all envelopes in SUPPLY BAG!

VI. PROCESSING PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

1. If the voter's name does not appear on the voting list, listed incorrectly, or is an inactive voter that does not have the proper ID, you may vote by PROVISIONAL BALLOT.
1. If they are listed on the voting list but need to show ID and do not have acceptable identification, write the letters "PV" next to their name on the voting list.
2. Have the voter complete the "Provisional Ballot Affirmation." The poll worker must complete the top corners. In the top right corner, insert the name of the city/town and the ward/precinct. In the top left corner, insert the provisional ballot number. The poll worker must also complete the bottom left section labeled "Precinct Election Official."
3. After the voter completes the Affirmation, ask the voter for identification. Record the identification in the precinct election official box—if they provide it. **EVEN IF THE VOTER DOES NOT PROVIDE IDENTIFICATION, THE VOTER MUST BE ALLOWED TO CAST A PROVISIONAL BALLOT!**

4. Completed the Provisional Voting Roster with the voter's name, address, date of birth, political party and ballot number as well as reason code. The Provisional Voting Roster becomes part of the Clerk's Record.
5. Hand the voter a Provisional Ballot packet in the blue folder. Be sure to write the word "Provisional" on the top of the ballot in the middle. Be sure to write the provisional ballot number and ward and precinct on the Information Sheet and the Ballot Envelope.
6. Instruct the voter to a voting booth to complete their ballot and then seal it in the envelope after they complete voting on it and then to go to the check-out.
7. At the check-out, make sure that the sealed ballot envelope is stored in the orange bag.
 - a. **REMEMBER! Provisional ballots DO NOT GO IN THE ACCUEVOTE and DO NOT GO IN THE BALLOT BIN at the end of the night. They go in the separate ORANGE NYLON BAG!**

VII. CLOSING THE POLLS

1. The general public is allowed inside the polling place after the polls close. The public must observe from outside the voting area.
2. Only election officers may handle ballots. All ballots cast must be kept in full view of the public while the counting of ballots is going on, until they are sealed in the Voted Ballot bin.
3. The Warden closed out the AccuVote machine using an ENDER SHEET (located in the AccuVote case)
4. **Print 2 Tapes**
5. **Separating the ballots**
 - a. Organize the voted ballots into two piles: machine counted and hand counted.
 - b. **REMEMBER!** Keep hand count ballots and machine counted ballots separate.
 - c. **REMEMBER!** You are combining all the ballots at the end of the night from both black ballot bins.
6. **Count Ballots with Write-Ins**
 - a. Select the Write-in Ballot Tally Sheets
 - b. Designate one poll worker to read the ballot and one to record the write-in names on the tally sheets. Write these names on the top of the tally sheet.
 - c. Place the write-in ballot tally sheets in the Clerk's Report Folder
7. **Hand Count Ballots**
 - a. Select the HAND COUNT Sheets
 - b. Designate one poll worker to read the ballot and one to record the votes on the tally sheets.
 - c. Place the write-in ballot tally sheets in the Clerk's Report Folder
8. **Complete Adjustment Report.**
9. **Adjust ticker tapes and sign**
 - a. Printout 1-2: Sign the first printout and put it in the Precinct Tape Envelope. Place the Precinct Tape and return with the Clerk's Report.
 - b. . Printout 3: Sign the second printout and post it on the wall for the public to see.
10. **Announce adjusted results in precinct.**

VIII. COVID-19 SAFETY PLANS AND CHANGES

1. **In response to COVID-19, the following changes to procedure have been put in place to protect poll workers and the public.**
 - a. All poll workers will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) kits provided by the state. For poll workers, these kits include disinfectant wipes, sanitary protective gloves, surgical masks, and individual bottles of hand sanitizer. The kit also includes a hand sanitizer pump, alcohol screen wipes, sanitary headset covers, and guides for voters to use. City will also include face shields and barriers at check-in table.
 - b. All poll workers are **REQUIRED** to wear a face mask and face shield when working the polls and when closer than 6 feet with voters, poll workers, or others. Failure of poll workers to wear the face mask and shield will be grounds for dismissal.
 - c. The state is permitting municipalities to eliminate the check-out table for the 2020 elections. As such, there will only be a **check in** table for this election. Voters must still be monitored and a poll worker must be assigned to the AccuVote/Ballot Box to make sure voters are putting their ballot in.
 - d. Voters lining up must maintain social distancing of 6 feet while in line and at polls. Duct tape will be provided for poll workers to use to measure out distance.
 - e. Voters are strongly encouraged to wear a mask. However, we cannot stop a voter who refuses to wear one to vote. For these voters that refuse to wear a mask, an **isolation table** will be set up at each polling location:
 - i. Isolation table will be in far corner of polling location.
 - ii. Voter will be provided ballot with privacy screen. Warden, clerk, or one inspector will escort voter to table.
 - iii. Voter will be left alone to vote, and then once done will be required to raise hand.
 - iv. Poll worker will then come to voter and assess area to make sure path to ballot box is clear as possible. Then poll worker will escort voter to ballot box.
 - v. If there are multiple mask less voters, they must wait one at a time, socially distanced in line, to use isolation table.
 - f. A hand sanitizer pump will be set up at check in table for voters to use. Ballots should be kept behind the Plexiglas barriers and handed to voter.
 - g. A poll worker should go around at certain times to wipe down ballot markers and high contact areas.
 - h. Observers will be required to wear face masks.