

Standard Operating Procedure



Voting Location Closing Procedures

Department:	City Clerk's Office
Division:	ELE - Elections
Category:	VDL – Voting Day Locations
SOP Number:	016
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Purpose

To describe how all voting locations are closed and outline the process by which results are printed by vote tabulators after the close of voting at 8:00 p.m. on voting day.

Application

This procedure applies to all eligible electors, candidates, scrutineers and election officials.

Procedure

Advanced Voting

Announcing Closure

- a) An election official at each advanced voting location shall announce that the voting location is closed and lock the doors to the building.
- b) The election official shall allow any voters who are in the voting location at the time of the announcement to complete the voting process.
- c) If the line up extends beyond the doors, election officials will bring voters in line into the voting place prior to closing and locking the doors.

Ensuring all Ballots Have Been Processed

- a) At the end of each advanced voting day, the election official shall check the auxiliary compartment of the ballot box for ballots to ensure all ballots have been processed.
- b) If any ballots are in the auxiliary compartment of the ballot box they shall be processed through the vote tabulator.

Tabulator Cannot Process the Ballot

- a) Where there are marks on the ballot in the designated voting space(s) but the vote tabulator cannot process the ballot, the election official will:

1. Mark the ballot by writing "rejected" clearly across it and give it a serial number which will be recorded on the spoiled ballot.
2. Prepare a replacement ballot in full view of any candidates or scrutineers present by marking a new ballot with the same marks made on the original ballot.
3. Record the serial number on the appropriate replaced/declined envelopes form.
4. Substitute the replacement ballot for the spoiled ballot and feed the replacement ballot into the vote tabulator.
5. Place the rejected ballot in the "rejected" envelope.

Closing an Advanced Voting Location

- a) Document the number of ballots processed through the vote tabulator on the display. The number will later be recorded on the statement form.
- b) Secure the vote tabulator against receiving any more ballots by initiating the "close voting location" procedure for the tabulator.
- c) Turn off and unplug the vote tabulator.
- d) At the close of voting at each advanced voting day, a seal will be placed on the ballot box to verify that it has not been opened or tampered. A new ballot box will be issued on subsequent advanced voting days.
- e) On the final day of advanced voting, the vote tabulator and all other materials will be delivered to the designated location at City Hall and securely stored until voting begins again on following advanced voting days.
- f) For the advanced voting period, the total of the votes shall not be printed and the tabulation of results be completed until after the close of all voting locations at 8:00 p.m. on voting day.
- g) If tabulators are used for on-site tabulation at special voting locations, the above procedures will be used when relocating vote tabulators to various locations on voting day.

Voting Day

Announcing Closure

- a) At 8:00 p.m. on voting day, an election official will announce that the voting location is closed and lock the doors to the building.
- b) The election official will allow any voters who are in the voting location at the time of the announcement to complete the voting process.
- c) If the line up extends beyond the doors, election officials will bring voters in line into the voting place prior to closing and locking the doors.

Ensuring all Ballots Have Been Processed

- a) After the close of voting, the election official shall, check the auxiliary compartment of the ballot box for ballots to ensure all ballots have been processed.

Tabulator Cannot Process the Ballot

- a) Where there are marks on the ballot in the designated voting space(s) but the vote tabulator cannot process the ballot, the election official shall:
 1. Mark the ballot by writing "rejected" clearly across it and give it a serial number which will be recorded on the spoiled ballot.
 2. Prepare a replacement ballot in full view of any candidates or scrutineers present by marking a new ballot with the same marks made on the original ballot.
 3. Record the serial number on the appropriate replaced/declined envelopes form.
 4. Substitute the replacement ballot for the spoiled ballot and feed the replacement ballot into the vote tabulator.
 5. Place the rejected ballot in the "rejected" envelope.

Closing a Voting Location

- a) An election official will look at the display on the vote tabulator and write down the number of ballots processed through the unit. The number will be recorded on the statement form.
- b) Secure the vote tabulator against receiving any more ballots by initiating the "close voting location" procedure for the tabulator.
- c) Print a voting results tape which shows the number of votes cast for each candidate.
- d) Sign the voting results tape along with any scrutineers or candidates who are present and wish to sign.
- e) Remove the zero totals report and attached voting results report from the vote tabulator and place them in the statement envelope.
- f) Provide additional copies of printouts for any scrutineer upon request.
- g) Turn off the vote tabulator.
- h) Remove the ballot bag from the ballot box and seal the bag to ensure it cannot be reopened and that no further ballots can be placed in the bag without breaking the seal.
- i) The vote tabulator, ballot bag(s) and all other materials will be delivered to the designated location at City Hall and securely stored.

Closing Location when Tabulator is Not Operating

- a) If a vote tabulator has been used to tabulate votes cast at a voting location but the tabulation of the votes cannot be completed because the vote tabulator is not operating at the time of closing, the election official shall:
1. Seal the ballot box in such a manner that it cannot be opened or any ballots be deposited in it without breaking the seal.
 2. Secure the vote tabulator against receiving any more ballots.
 3. Deliver the ballot box, all supplies, and vote tabulator to City Hall where a back-up vote tabulator is located.
 4. Set up a back-up vote tabulator and verify that the totals of the back-up vote tabulator are zero for all candidates, by-laws and questions.
 5. Process all of the ballots from the ballot box into the back-up vote tabulator.
 6. Follow the closing procedures outlined above.

Definitions

"Act" means the [Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. c 32](#) as amended.

"Advanced voting period" means the period of voting prior to voting day in accordance with the Act.

"Auxiliary compartment" means the compartment of the ballot box where elector's ballots are temporarily stored in the event that a vote tabulator fails to operate.

"Ballot" means a ballot prepared under subsections 41(1), 41(2) and 41(6) of the Act.

"Ballot bag" means the bag affixed on the inside of the ballot box which all ballots will be deposited into after being processed through a tabulator. After the close of voting the ballot bag is removed from the box and sealed and used to transport the ballots to a location designated by the City Clerk.

"Candidate" means a person who has been nominated under section 33 of the Elections Act.

"City Clerk" means the Clerk of the municipality, responsible for conducting election duties as outlined in the Elections Act.

"Election official" means any individual appointed by the City Clerk, where powers and duties in relation to an election are delegated.

"Memory card" means a removable device where all tabulated ballot totals are stored.

"Rejected ballot" means a ballot that is not able to be processed by the tabulator and where a replacement ballot must be issued. A rejected ballot may be spoiled, damaged or marked in such a way that it cannot be processed by the tabulator.

“Scrutineer” means a person appointed in writing by a candidate to oversee the voting process at a specific voting place or during results tabulation.

“Special voting locations” means a voting place that has been designated in accordance with Section 45. (7) of the Act.

“Vote tabulator” means a machine that digitally scans the ballots to read the votes and tabulate the results on a memory card.

“Voting day” means the day on which the final votes will be taken in accordance with Section 5 of the Act. This Municipal Election voting day will be October 24, 2022.

“Voting location” means the physical location (building) and its surrounding property which has been designated by the City Clerk under Section 45 of the Act and where electors may attend to cast their vote using a vote tabulator in the Municipal Election.

References

[Municipal Elections Act, 1996.](#)