

The logo for Albemarle County Elections features a stylized mountain range icon above the text. The word "Albemarle" is in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with "COUNTY" in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font directly below it. The word "ELECTIONS" is in a large, all-caps, sans-serif font, centered below "COUNTY".

Albemarle
COUNTY
ELECTIONS

Ballot Officer

9-Mar-2026



Ballot Officer Purpose

- The code of Virginia makes a point that we shall “carefully” count the ballots [§ 24.2-621]. We are expected to keep *careful* track of voted ballots, unvoted ballots, spoiled ballots, provisional ballots, unused returned absentee ballots and absentee ballots in envelopes that have been dropped off.
- For many of these counts, this responsibility falls to those officers of election who work as the ballot officer. The ballot officer **controls** the ballots.



Ballot Officer Characteristics

- Meticulous – a good ballot officer likes things to add up.
- Good with simple math (addition and subtraction of 1-4 digit numbers)
- Logical thinking –
 - If I start with 1000 ballots, in 10,100-ballot packs,
 - Issue 375 to voters to vote on the DS300,
 - Issue 20 to the SDR/Provisional officer, and
 - Issue 5 ballots to replace spoiled ballots,
 - I should have 6 packs of 100 ballots remaining ($1000 - 375 - 20 - 5 = 600$).



Being a Ballot Officer

- The following slides may make it seem very complicated to be a Ballot Officer. It is not.
- The job can actually be a lot of fun, greeting voters and encouraging them.
- There are some details to master, but once you learn those, what you need to do is straightforward.
- On the job exposure can turn a newbie Ballot Officer into an experienced one very quickly!



Ballot Table

- The ballot table should be located in such a way that it is facing the voters. Ideally it will be easy to see voters coming from the check-in tables. Voters should not be allowed behind the ballot table.
- The ballot table should have two chairs, pens for voters, a check-in slip collection bin, ballots to issue, and the Ballot Tally Sheet on it.
- If the space permits, it is handy to have a table behind the Ballot Table where Envelope 4, the Ballot Record Report and extra counted and uncounted ballots may be kept.



Ballot Officer – Starting the Day

- You need the following materials to start election day:
 - Ballots
 - Count of ballots issued to precinct
 - Ballot Record Report
 - Envelope 4
 - Ballot Tally Sheet
- You will also need to count some ballots.



Counting Ballots (1 of 2)

- Ballots are delivered to the polling place inside the DS300 ballot bin in one or more boxes.
- Inside each box, the ballots are organized in plastic, shrink-wrapped packs of 100 (nominally) ballots each.
- To count ballots:
 1. Open the pack of ballots
 2. Count 10 ballots and place on the table.
 3. Count 10 more ballots and stack on the pile of ballots at a 90-degree angle to the previous 10.
 4. Repeat step 3 until all ballots are counted.
 5. Note on the Ballot Record Report how many ballots you counted from this pack.
- Occasionally you will get less than 100 ballots in a pack. Double check your count, then do not worry about it. Just record what you actually received.



Counting Ballots (2 of 2)

- Unless you expect VERY low turnout for an election, start each day by counting out two packs of ballots into two separate stacks of 100 (ish) each.
- When you exhaust the first stack, it is time to count, or have another ballot officer count, another pack.
- Toward the end of the day, you get to play ballot counting roulette, where you try to guess whether you have to count one more pack before the polls close.
 - It is better to have a counted, unused pack of ballots than it is to run out of counted ballots.



Ballot Record Report

- Enter the # of ballots you started with from the “Receipt for Ballots” the chief has, and count how many ballot packs you have to confirm.
- For each pack you open, record the count and how many you issued.
- Track spoiled and provisional ballots at the bottom with tick marks in bundles of 5.
- Total things up at the end of the day.
- Give to the Chief to attach to SOR #1.

| GENERAL ELECTION | |
|--|--|
| Albemarle County Ballot Record Report | Attach to back of S.O.R. #1 |
| Ballot Style: «ballot_style» | Election: «Election_Date» Precinct: «Precinct_Code» «Precinct_name» |

Paper clip this report to the back of Statement of Results #1—Registrar Copy

1: How many ballots of this ballot style «ballot_style» did you start with before polls opened? _____

2: How many more ballots of this ballot style «ballot_style» did you get during the day? _____

3: How many Express vote Ballots did you start with before the polls opened? _____

4: Line 1 + line 2 + line 3= Total ballots for your precinct

| Ballot Style: «ballot_style» | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Package Number | Ballots Counted in Package | Ballots Issued | Package Number | Ballots Counted in Package | Ballots Issued | Package Number | Ballots Counted in Package | Ballots Issued |
| 1 | | | 11 | | | 21 | | |
| 2 | | | 12 | | | 22 | | |
| 3 | | | 13 | | | 23 | | |
| 4 | | | 14 | | | 24 | | |
| 5 | | | 15 | | | 25 | | |
| 6 | | | 16 | | | 26 | | |
| 7 | | | 17 | | | 27 | | |
| 8 | | | 18 | | | 28 | | |
| 9 | | | 19 | | | 29 | | |
| 10 | | | 20 | | | 30 | | |
| Express Vote Ballots | | | Express Vote Ballots | | | Express Vote Ballots | | |
| Total Column 1 issued: | | | Total Column 2 issued: | | | Total Column 3 issued: | | |

5: Grand total issued: add totals from each column

6: How many unused ballots did you have left over? [total from line 4 – line 5]

| | | | |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Spilled * <i>Include Express Vote Ballots</i> | Stored: Env. 4 | (Keep count in this space) | Total |
| Provisional count <i>Enter the total number of provisional ballots on page 1 of S.O.R.</i> | Attached to: Env. 1A | (Keep count in this space) | Total |

***DO NOT include voided absentee ballots turned in by voters during the day. Keep the voided absentee ballots separate and in the 4-ABS envelope.**



Ballot Record Report Completion (1 of 2)

1: How many ballots of this ballot style «ballot_style» did you start with before polls opened? _____

2: How many more ballots of this ballot style «ballot_style» did you get during the day? _____

3: How many Express vote Ballots did you start with before the polls opened? _____

4: Line 1 + line 2 + line 3= Total ballots for your precinct

- Fill in line 1 with the information from the Receipt of Ballots form the chief has – count the number of ballot packs to confirm – assume 100/pack.
- In the unusual case where you get more ballots during the day, note those on line 2.
- Your ExpressVote ballots are not really ballots until they are printed on by the ExpressVote. Note how many blank ExpressVote sheets you received on line 3.



Ballot Record Report Completion (2 of 2)

5: Grand total issued: add totals from each column

6: How many **unused** ballots did you have left over? [total from line 4 – line 5]

| | | | |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Spoiled * <i>Include Express Vote Ballots</i> | Stored: Env. 4 | (Keep count in this space) | Total |
| Provisional count <i>Enter the total number of provisional ballots on page 1 of S.O.R.</i> | Attached to: Env. 1A | (Keep count in this space) | Total |

**DO NOT include voided absentee ballots turned in by voters during the day. Keep the voided absentee ballots separate and in the 4-ABS envelope.*

- Line 5 is the total ballots *you* issued, not the total that were issued **to you**. This should match the Ballot Tally Sheet.
- Track the Spoiled and Provisional ballots here.



Ballot Tally Sheet

- The ballot tally sheet is a tool that the Electoral Board recommends you use for tracking the ballots you issue during the day.
- If you have a tool you already use and like for this purpose, that is fine.
- The Ballot Tally Sheet is a general-purpose tool and you might have something that is better tailored to your polling place's specific needs.



Ballot Tally Sheet

- This sheet is used to track how many ballots you have issued.
- EVERY time you hand out a ballot, cross off or circle the next number – regular voters, spoiled ballots, provisionals.
- When you get to the end of the page, flip over or go to the next page.
- This sheet is supposed to make it easy for the Chief to do hourly reconciliations – you give him this number, and the number of provisional and spoiled ballots and with a little math on the chief's part they should get the same number as they get from the Poll Pad and DS300.

Ballot Tally Sheet

Use this sheet to keep track of ALL ballots that have been issued, including ExpressVote ballots. Cross off the next number as the ballots are handed out.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |
| | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 |
| | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 |
| | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 |
| 100 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |
| | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 |
| | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 |
| | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 |
| 200 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |
| | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 |
| | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 |
| | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 |
| 300 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |
| | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 |
| | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 |
| | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 |
| 400 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |
| | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 |
| | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 |
| | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 |

Go to next page to continue counting more ballots beyond 500.

Begin by opening a package of ballots and counting them, grouping 10 ballots at a time in criss-crossed stacks. There should be 100 ballots in each package. Note the actual count on the Ballot Record Report. When you are at the end of the ballots from a package, update the Ballot Record Report with the count of ballots actually issued for that package (usually the same as the count of the ballots in the package except for the last package).

Ballots issued for SPOILED ballots or PROVISIONAL/SDR ballots are counted here AND on the Ballot Record Report.

Envelope 4

- Spoiled ballots are marked “spoiled” and kept in here.

4

ENCLOSURE

SPOILED BALLOTS

- VOTER MADE ERROR OR BALLOT IS DEFECTIVE, AND
- VOTER RETURNS SPOILED BALLOT FOR A NEW BALLOT

VOID BALLOTS

- BALLOTS ISSUED - BUT NOT VOTED BY THE VOTER

INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFICERS OF ELECTION:

- SEAL THIS ENVELOPE WITH LABEL.
- TWO OFFICERS VERIFYING CONTENTS **MUST** SIGN AND DATE LABEL.

Election Date: _____
 City or
 County or Town: _____
 Precinct: _____
 District: _____

TO: CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

OPEN THIS ENVELOPE ONLY

- ON ORDER OF A COURT
- WITH AUTHORIZATION OF THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS
§ 24.2-663, CODE OF VIRGINIA

RETENTION . . .

- FEDERAL ELECTION = TWO (2) YEARS
- ALL OTHER ELECTIONS = ONE (1) YEAR

DISPOSITION . . . **DESTROY**

REV 8/16



Issue a Ballot Process

1. The voter arrives at the ballot table.
2. The ballot officer takes the check-in slip from them and places it in the check-in slip container.
3. The ballot officer marks the Ballot Tally Sheet to account for the ballot being issued.
4. The ballot officer gives a pen and a ballot to the voter.
5. The ballot officer directs the voter to the marking booths.
6. Go back to #1 and repeat the process.
 - If you have more than one ballot style you will be tracking them separately – in this case it can be handy to have one ballot officer issuing one style, and one issuing another.
 - If your stack of counted and stacked ballots runs low, count another stack.
 - From time to time pens need to be recovered from the DS300.



Hourly Reconciliation

- Every hour the chief or assistant chief will ask you for your count.
- What they need is 3 numbers:
 - The total from the ballot tally sheet of ballots you issued
 - The total spoiled ballot count
 - The total provisional ballot count.
- When they take your total and subtract from that the spoiled and the provisional ballots, they should get the same number as the check-in count on the Poll Pad and the Public Count on the DS300.

Running Out of Ballots

- First, this is not supposed to happen, the Registrar and the Electoral Board look at the ballot order hard to make sure there are plenty of ballots.
- If you can project that you will have a problem, contact the registrar's office. They can print more ballots and send them to you before you run out. For example, if it is 10am and you have used half of your ballots, talk to the Chief about making the call.
- If it is the end of the day and you just have a few voters left, the last few voters can always vote using the ExpressVote ballots, which can function as an emergency ballot supply in a rare pinch.



Packing Voted Ballots

- At the end of the day, the voted ballots are removed from the DS300, stacked and placed in ballot boxes. Several EOs will usually help with this. The ballots do not need to be counted, or sorted, or all oriented the same way (e.g., face up). They should be put in the box so they lie flat.
- The box will have a “3A” label placed on its end, and an inventory label placed on its top. On the top and over the edge will be three labels with the signatures of all of the EOs placed so that someone opening the box would damage the label. If you need more than one box, they all get these labels.
- The box inventory sheet wants a count of the number of ballots. This is a count of the number in ALL the boxes (not just the box you are labelling) and can be taken from the public count on the DS300. You do not need to count the ballots in each box.



Box 3A



Packing Unvoted Ballots

- At the end of the day, the unvoted ballots are placed in ballot boxes. The ballots that are still in packs should not be taken out of the packs.
- The box will have a “6” label placed on its end. On the top will be three labels with the signatures of two EOs placed so that someone opening the box would damage the label. If you need more than one box, they all get these labels.
- The unused ExpressVote blanks are not ballots (because they have not been printed on) and should not be included in Box 6. They are returned in the envelope they came in.



Afterword

- A good ballot officer controls their ballots. They know at all times how many they have, and how many they have issued, and for what reasons they were issued.
- It is not unusual for one election officer to serve as a ballot officer all day, with other EOs sitting second chair with them. The primary ballot officer should make sure that everyone who works the ballot table knows how to do all the parts of the job.
- Never hurry at the expense of doing the job right.

