Reconciliation of Ballots

Montana Secretary of State

sosmt.gov • soselections@mt.gov

Updated January 2016
Reconciliation of Ballots

**Why Reconcile?**

- Reconciling ballots is an administrative tool that allows the EA to determine whether the number of ballots received, issued and returned balances with the number of ballots cast.
- Reconciling ballots is simple and transparent, and helps to instill confidence in the election process.
Reconciliation of Ballots

When to Reconcile?

• When sending ballots to polls
• The day before Election Day if doing early preparation
• On Election Day at polls
• Daily (or as often as necessary) for Absentee Ballots
Reconciliation of Ballots

What Forms to Use?

1. Certificate of Number of Ballots Sent to Polling Place
2. Absentee Ballot Daily Reconciliation Report
3. Early Preparation of Absentee Ballots Form
4. Poll Book Ballot Reconciliation Report
Certificate of Number of Ballots Sent to Polling Place

Total Ballots Cast

- Ballot Reconciliation Report (Poll Book Reconciliation)
- Early Preparation of Absentee Ballots Reconciliation
- Absentee Ballot Reconciliation (Daily or as Needed)
Reconciling Absentee Ballots – Process

- Reconcile daily, or as often as necessary for each county
- Complete a separate form for each precinct, each day (or as often as necessary)
  - Forms can be found at http://sosmt.gov/Elections/Officials/Forms/
- Process is easy, efficient and transparent
Absentee Ballot Reconciliation

After Ballots accepted they are given to Affirmation Reconciliation board

Affirmation Reconciliation Board - sorts envelopes:
1. by ballot style;
2. ballot sequence number

Affirmation Reconciliation Board - after sorting is completed will compare BP34 report to each ballot style to reconcile those envelopes - BP 34 report and physical # of envelopes should match

If an envelope is not accounted for (Military or misfiled) - must check with Election Coordinator or assigned staff how to proceed

Secrecy Envelopes are removed from Affirmation Envelope. Affirmation envelopes are placed on spindles to insure all envelopes are empty

Recount Secrecy Envelopes - should agree with BP34 report

Complete Part 1 of the Ballot Reconciliation

Make a copy of ballot reconciliation and attach copy to BP34 report. Give report to Election Coordinator or assigned staff to review

Original Ballot Reconciliation Form attached with Secrecy Envelopes - using a rubber band to keep envelopes & reconciliation form together

All ballots are sealed until Sequestered Board of Early Processing Board opens to process ballots for tabulation
EPB-REMOVES SECRECY ENVELOPES AND RECONCILIATION FORM FROM SEALED CONTAINER

EPB – COUNTS THE NUMBER OF SECRECY ENVELOPES. THIS NUMBER SHOULD AGREE WITH THE NUMBER IN PART 1

REMOVE BALLOTS FROM SECRECY ENVELOPE – PLACE SECRECY ENVELOPE OVER THE SPINDLE TO MAKE SURE ALL ENVELOPES ARE EMPTY

UNFOLD BALLOTS, PLACE BALLOTS IN THE SAME DIRECTION

COUNT BALLOTS

ENTER NUMBER OF BALLOTS ONTO RECONCILIATION FORM

PLACE BALLOTS AND RECONCILIATION FORM INTO SEALED CONTAINER UNTIL ELECTION DAY
TABULATION BOARD

TABULATION BOARD
REMOVE SEALS

REMOVES BALLOTS AND RECONCILIATION FORM

THEY ENTER NUMBER ON SCANNER ON RECONCILIATION FORM

BEGIN SCANNING BALLOTS

WHEN BALLOTS HAVE BEEN SCANNED THE TAB. BOARD ENTERS THE ENDING NUMBER ON THE SCANNER ONTO THE RECONCILIATION FORM

RESOLUTION BALLOTS ARE NOTED ON THE RECONCILIATION FORM

BALLOTS ARE SEALED ACCORDING TO SECURITY PROCEDURES & POST ELECTION AUDIT PROCEDURES
PREPARING FOR CANVASS

POLL ELECTIONS

1. ENTER TOTALS INTO A SPREADSHEET FROM:
   • POLLBOOK
   • BALLOT RECONCILIATION FORM(S)
   • PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

2. ENTER TOTALS FROM:
   • 650 SCANNERS
   • M100 SCANNERS
   • HAND COUNT BALLOTS

TOTALS SHOULD AGREE
Reconciling Ballots Will Save You Time and Headaches!

• Reconcile as often as necessary

• Make sure poll workers are trained on how to complete the poll book ballot reconciliation form

• Reconciling ballots protects your office, and your poll workers, and is a paper trail that you can produce in the event of an election challenge