

Canvass Observation Training 2025



Canvass – Fast, Informative, Noisy



Canvass Observation Date, Time and Place

Special Election for 11th CD – September 9, 2025

Event Date: Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Time: Wednesday 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Location: Fairfax County Government Center - Suite 251
12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA

Canvass Observation Date, Time and Place

General Election – November 4, 2025

Canvassing Date: Wednesday November 5 to Thursday November 6, 2025

Time: Wednesday 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Thursday 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Location: Fairfax County Government Center - Suite 251
12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA

Canvass Observer Etiquette

- Walk in with the assumption that you are going to observe a well-run operation, the General Registrar staff or Election Officers have been well trained, and they are doing their jobs to the best of their abilities
- If you notice something questionable, take your concerns first to the Canvass Operations Supervisor, and then if there is still a concern, call or email the [HELPLINE](#)
- Be respectful, be professional, and be polite.
- Staff doing canvassing are not obligated to slow down or explain, but many will do so
- Remember: ***YOU*** represent the Republican Party

Canvass Observer Rules

- No person, regardless of official function or statutory right to be present, may disrupt the meeting or interfere with the canvass in any way.
- Inform unruly individuals that interruptions can cause errors
- Questions concerning each precinct will be taken *after* work concludes but *before* the electoral board reseals the pollbooks, pollbook count forms, and the statement of results for the precinct back into Envelope #2.
- BUT....you can request that the canvassers speak loudly enough for you to hear and to confirm any missing information
- Canvass Observation: Listen for problems.

Canvass Required by Law

- 24.2-671 through 24.2-680
Electoral Board to meet and ascertain results, conclusiveness of Results
- [GREB Handbook Chapter 14: Canvass](#)
- The purpose of the canvass is for the Electoral Board to **review** all of the optical scan paper **tapes** and compare them to the written **Statement of Results** prepared after the close of the polling places Election night (Unofficial Results) as well as the printed reports from the tabulation on Election Night.
Several other documents are also verified and compared

Canvass Required for “Official” Results

- The **“Unofficial Results” reported on Election Night are Unofficial**
Only after the Electoral Board reviews all of the results and reports those numbers to the State Board of Elections are the results official.
- **24.2-668** Provides that the election materials may be delivered back to the Registrar’s office the night of the Election instead of being taken to the Clerk of Court’s Office.
- The Electoral Board shall open all of the envelopes containing the Results from each voting location

Canvass Comparison Actions: SOR to Tapes

- **The Electoral Board manages and is responsible for the Canvass**
- The General Registrar and staff **assist** and provide any additional information that the EB may require.
- The EB compares the numbers on the Statement of Results to those on the machine tapes
- Each of the Statement of Results forms must be signed by the Election Officers who prepare them.
- If the SORs are not properly signed or if different results are reported on the SORs and the machine tapes, only the **Election Officers can change the numbers** and they must be called into the meeting to do so

Canvass Reporting by Electoral Board

- The Electoral Board prepares an abstract of the number of votes cast and counted for each candidate in every precinct including the votes cast in the In-Person absentee voting offices and Central Absentee Precinct.
- The **total number of votes for each candidate must be reported by the precinct in which the voter is registered to vote** whether that ballot was cast on Election Day in that precinct, returned in a mailed back absentee envelope, or voted in the in-person absentee offices.
- The vote count also must be reported by the location or method in which it was cast –in-person absentee, mailed absentee, Election Day

Canvass Document Archiving

- Once the results are certified by the entire EB, the secretary signs and delivers one copy of each Statement of Results to the General Registrar. These copies shall be available for public inspection during business hours.
- Then the secretary shall deliver to the Clerk of Court
 - all pollbooks or electronic records of the pollbooks
 - any printed inspection and return sheets
 - one copy of each statement of results

Canvass Changes to “Unofficial Results” sent to SBE

- Beginning with the November 2007 election

any and all changes made to the “Unofficial Results”

and any changes made to the official abstract

Must be forwarded to the State Board of Elections with the explanation of such change to be posted on the SBE website

Canvass Required for Election Certification

- The local Electoral Board Certifies the results, signs the certificates for the winning candidates, and signs the abstracts for all elections the votes for which are totally contained within that locality
- Board of Supervisors, City Council, Sheriff, School Board, etc
- **The local Electoral Board certifies the local elections and sends the results to the State Board of Elections which certifies the total results for all elections which cross local boundaries.**
- **State wide (Congress, Governor, AG, Presidential etc), House of Delegates, Virginia Senate**

Canvass – Open Meeting by Law 24.2-671.1

Open, public meeting

- All open meeting rules apply
- Location and times must be noticed on Registrar's Website
- Must be in a room large enough to accommodate observers
- Anyone can attend to **Observe**
- Observers may not actively engage in the process
- Observers **carefully** ask questions at appropriate times
- Observers may not touch any of the materials

Canvass – In Fairfax usually 2 days

- Meeting occurs in the Office of the
 - Clerk of Court, General Registrar, or another room
 - “**of sufficient size**” (usually room 251 in Fairfax Government Center)
- Must begin at or before 5 PM day after any election
- May be moved to a larger room if necessary
- Directions to different room must be posted on original room
 - and on Registrar’s office door
- Must be **completed** not later than Seven (7) days post Election Day
 - This date may be extended if holiday or other circumstances.

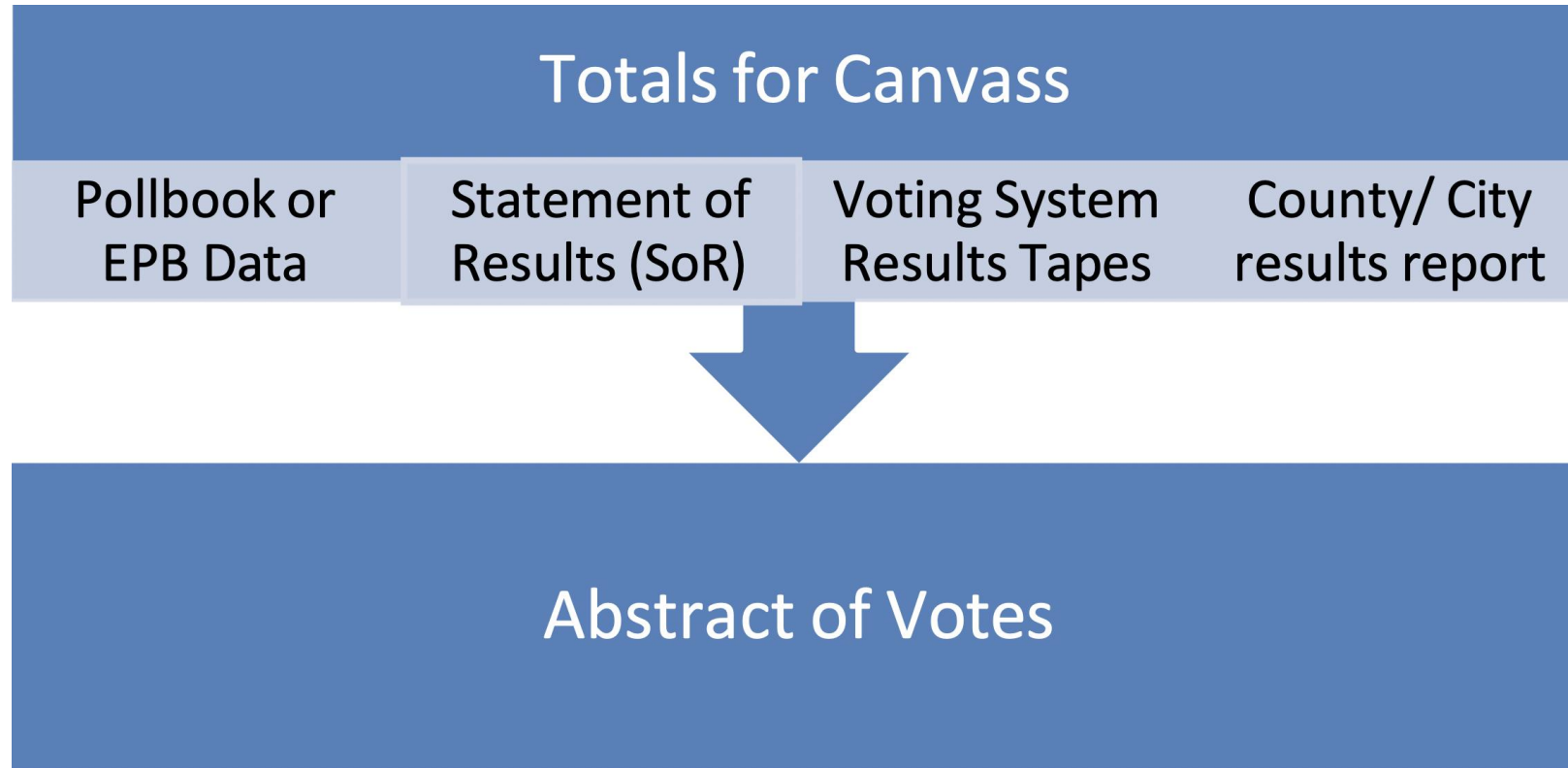
Canvass – Volunteer Attendance Rules

- Each party or independent candidate or primary candidate is entitled to have as many representatives as there are teams of officials working to ascertain the results.
- The room must be of **sufficient size and configuration** to allow the representatives and observers reasonable access and proximity to view the ballots as the teams work to ascertain the results
- The representatives and observers shall be prohibited from interfering with the officials in any way
- It is unlawful for any person to knowingly possess any firearm within 40 feet of any building where the Electoral Board meets to ascertain results of the election Code 24.2-308.2.2

Canvass – What do the Canvassers do?

- Each team should be comprised of one Democrat and one Republican.
- Make sure all precinct documents are included, using a checklist.
- Each should check one copy of the statement of results to ensure matching information, and all required signatures have been entered.
- Ensure that all voting systems in the polling location are properly accounted for in the statement of results and that all machine tapes from all voting systems in use are present
- Compare the number of voters voting with the total number shown as voting on the statement of results. This is done by checking either the last page of the pollbook count sheet or the “Checked-In” count from the EPB. If they do not agree and no statement adequately explaining the disagreement has been entered, the officers must be called in to correct the statement of results or to enter the missing explanation

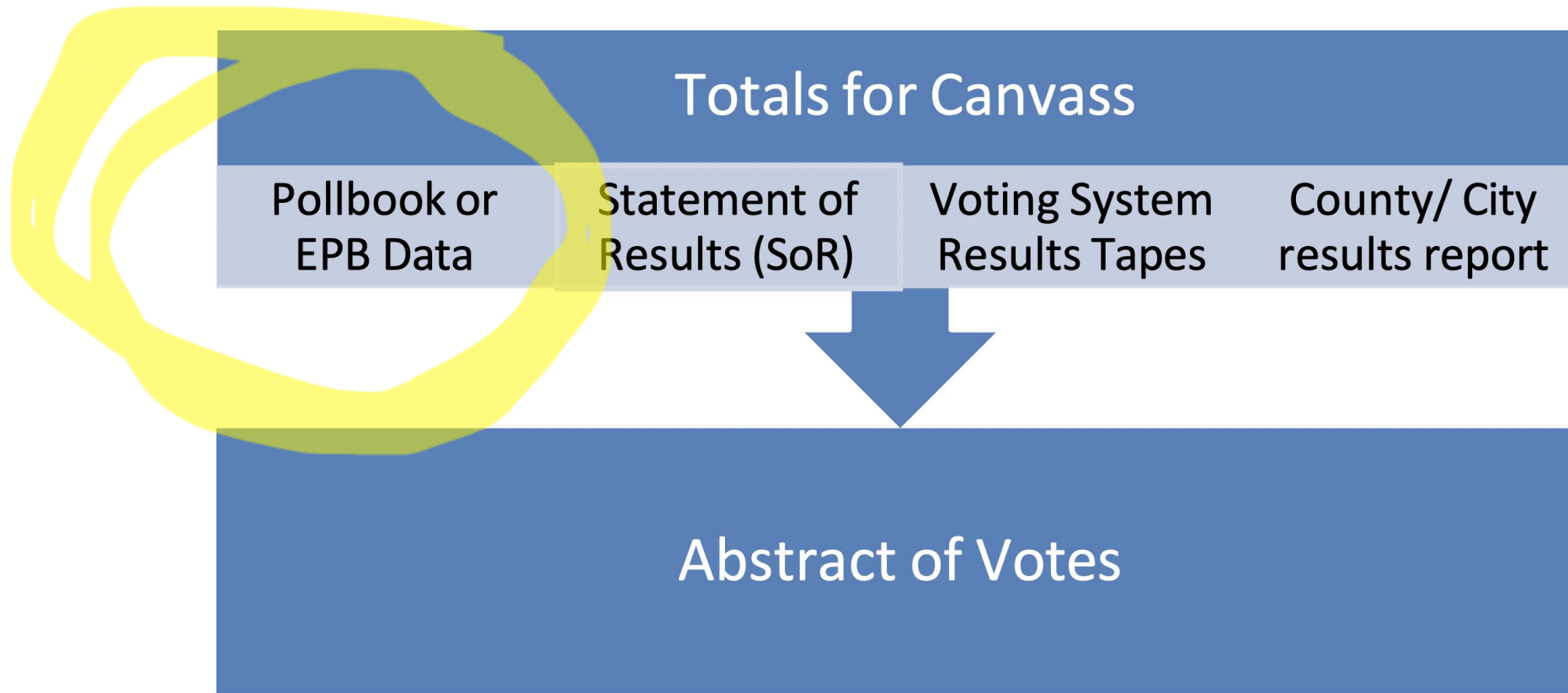
Canvass – Document Overview



Canvass – Statement of Results (p. 1)

STATEMENT OF RESULTS – B (REGISTRAR'S COPY)		Return in Envelope #2
Precinct: 100 SAMPLE (Nov 2024)		Fairfax County – Presidential Election – Nov 5, 2024
What to do at the beginning of the day		
☐ Print opening tapes from each DS200.		
☐ Have two officers sign all three zero totals reports on opening tapes.		
What to do at the end of the day		
☐ Print closing tapes from each DS200.		
☐ Have two officers sign all three voting results reports on closing tapes.		
☐ Fill out every section of SOR A and SOR B using blue or black ink .		
☐ Staple appropriate tapes to this page – see right column.		
☐ Fold bottom of tape to fit on SOR.		
1 Voters checked in		
On any Poll Pad, open Menu, then Summary Report.		
Total number of voters checked in		
2 Curbside voters		
On any Poll Pad, open Menu, then Summary Report.		
Total number of curbside check-ins		
3 Ballots cast		
Using the Ballot Status Accounting Report from each DS200's closing tape, record the number of ballots cast ("Public Count").		
Ballots cast on DS200 #1		
Ballots cast on DS200 #2		+
Ballots counted by hand because they could not be scanned (usually 0)		+
Total number of ballots cast		=
4 Does the number of voters checked in (box 1) match the number of ballots cast (box 3)?		
___ Yes ___ No, because...		
☐ An election officer did not properly check in some voters (write details below)		
☐ Fleeing voters left without casting their ballot, requiring their ballot to be voided (write details below)		
☐ Other (write details below)		
COMPLETE BOTH SIDES →		
S-0		

Canvass – Document Overview Poll Pad Data



Canvass – Statement of Results (p. 1)

STATEMENT OF RESULTS – B (REGISTRAR'S COPY)		Return in Envelope #2
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What to do at the beginning of the day		
☐ Print opening tapes from each DS200.		
☐ Have two officers sign all three zero totals reports on opening tapes.		
What to do at the end of the day		
☐ Print closing tapes from each DS200.		
☐ Have two officers sign all three voting results reports on closing tapes.		
☐ Fill out every section of SOR A and SOR B using blue or black ink .		
☐ Staple appropriate tapes to this page – see right column.		
☐ Fold bottom of tape to fit on SOR.		
1	Voters checked in On any Poll Pad, open Menu, then Summary Report.	
	Total number of voters checked in	
2	Curbside voters On any Poll Pad, open Menu, then Summary Report.	
	Total number of curbside check-ins	
3	Ballots cast Using the Ballot Status Accounting Report from each DS200's closing tape, record the number of ballots cast ("Public Count").	



Staple DS200 tapes here
(with first item on top)

Closing tapes

☐ DS200 #1:
Voting Results Report
(with 2 signatures)

☐ DS200 #1:
Write-In Report

☐ DS200 #2:
Voting Results Report
(with 2 signatures)

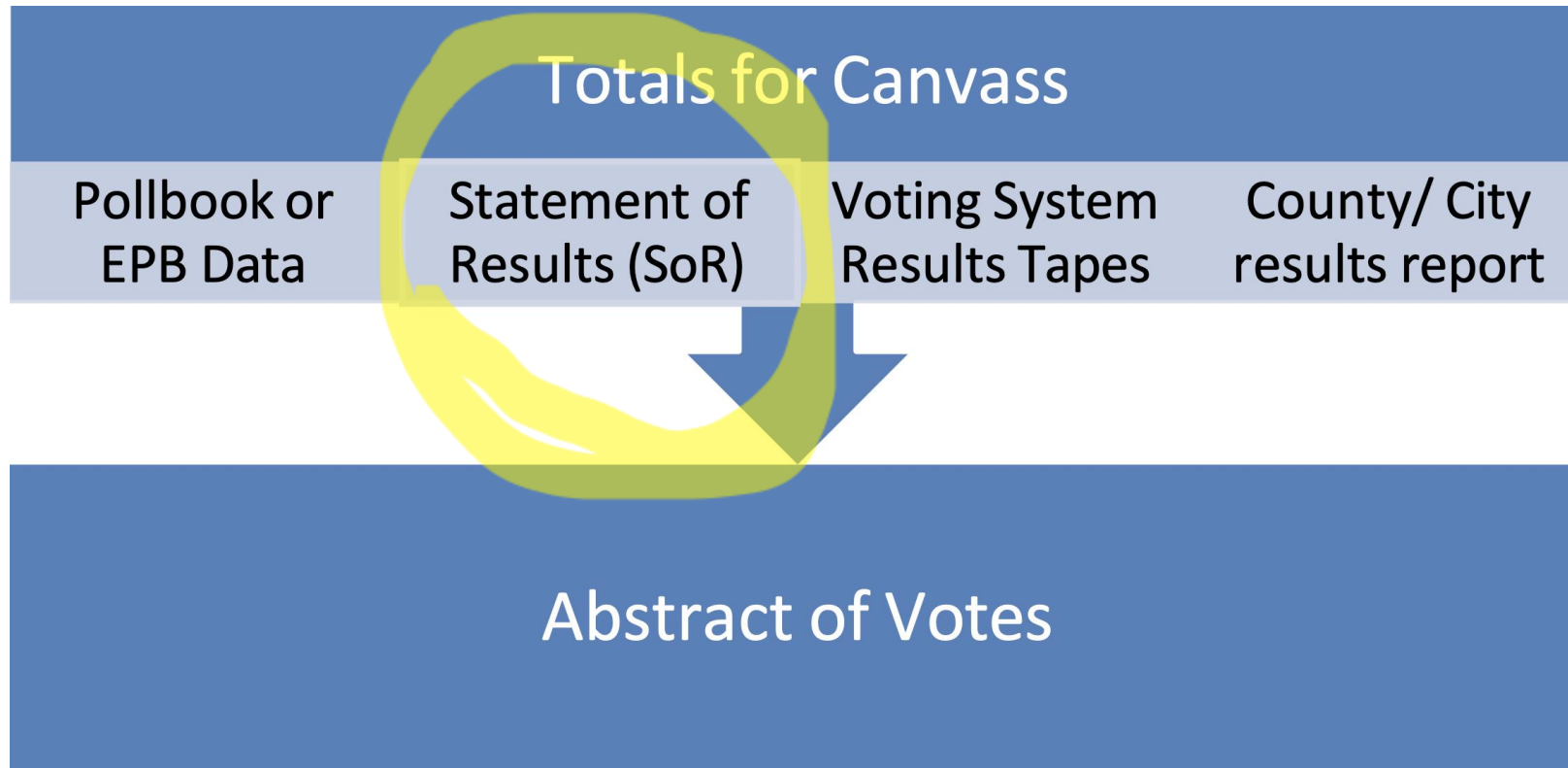
☐ DS200 #2:
Write-In Report

Opening tapes

☐ DS200 #1:
Zero Totals Report
(with 2 signatures)

☐ DS200 #2:
Zero Totals Report
(with 2 signatures)

Canvass – Document Overview SOR - Ballot Counts



Canvass –SOR p. 1 - Ballots Cast Counts

3	Ballots cast Using the Ballot Status Accounting Report from each DS200's closing tape, record the number of ballots cast (" Public Count ").	
	Ballots cast on DS200 #1	
	Ballots cast on DS200 #2	+
	Ballots counted by hand because they could not be scanned <i>(usually 0)</i>	+
	Total number of ballots cast	=

☐ DS200 #2:
Zero Totals Report
(with 2 signatures)

4	Does the number of voters checked in (box 1) match the number of ballots cast (box 3)?
	___ Yes ___ No, because... ☐ An election officer did not properly check in some voters (write details below) ☐ Fleeing voters left without casting their ballot, requiring their ballot to be voided (write details below) ☐ Other (write details below)

Canvass – SOR (p. 2) Ballot Counts -Used and Unused

STATEMENT OF RESULTS – B (REGISTRAR'S COPY)		Return in Envelope #2	
Precinct: 100 SAMPLE (Nov 2024)		Fairfax County – Presidential Election – Nov 5, 2024	
5 Ballots Issued			
Number of ballots received in cage before election day		1,000	
Number of additional ballots received on election day (usually 0)		+	
Total number of ballots issued		=	
6 Ballots Used and Unused			
"Total Standard Ballot Sheets" from DS200 #1's Ballot Status Accounting Report			
"Total Standard Ballot Sheets" from DS200 #2's Ballot Status Accounting Report		+	
Number of hand-counted ballots (usually 0)		+	
Number of spoiled ballots in Envelope #4		+	
Number of voided ballots in Envelope #4		+	
Number of provisional ballots in Envelope #1A (SDR)		+	
Number of provisional ballots in Envelope #1A (non-SDR)		+	
Number of unused ballots in sealed packs (e.g. 5 packs x 200 = 1,000)		+	
Number of unused ballots in open pack(s)		+	
Total number of ballots used and unused		=	
7 Does the number of ballots issued (box 5) match the number of ballots used and unused (box 6)?			
☐ Yes ☐ No, because...			
☐ There were more or less than 200 ballots in one or more of the packs (write details below)			
☐ Some ExpressVote cards were spoiled, voided, or used for provisional voters (write details below)			
☐ Other (write details below)			
8 Collect signatures to certify			
We hereby certify that the two copies of the Statement of Results are a complete record of this election and all information entered here is true and correct.			
1 Chief:	X	11 EO:	X
2 A/Chief:	X	12 EO:	X
3 EO:	X	13 EO:	X
4 EO:	X	14 EO:	X
5 EO:	X	15 EO:	X
6 EO:	X	16 EO:	X
7 EO:	X	17 EO:	X
8 EO:	X	18 EO:	X
9 EO:	X	19 EO:	X
10 EO:	X	20 EO:	X

COMPLETE BOTH SIDES →

S-0

Canvass – SOR (p. 2) – Ballot Counts – Used and Unused

STATEMENT OF RESULTS – B (REGISTRAR'S COPY)		Return in Envelope #2
Precinct: 100 SAMPLE (Nov 2024)		Fairfax County – Presidential Election – Nov 5, 2024
5	Ballots Issued	
	Number of ballots received in cage before election day	1,000
	Number of additional ballots received on election day (<i>usually 0</i>)	+
	Total number of ballots issued	=
6	Ballots Used and Unused	
	"Total Standard Ballot Sheets" from DS200 #1's Ballot Status Accounting Report	
	"Total Standard Ballot Sheets" from DS200 #2's Ballot Status Accounting Report	+
	Number of hand-counted ballots (<i>usually 0</i>)	+
	Number of spoiled ballots in Envelope #4	+
	Number of voided ballots in Envelope #4	+
	Number of provisional ballots in Envelope #1A (SDR)	+
	Number of provisional ballots in Envelope #1A (non-SDR)	+
	Number of unused ballots in sealed packs (<i>e.g. 5 packs x 200 = 1,000</i>)	+
	Number of unused ballots in open pack(s)	+
	Total number of ballots used and unused	=
7	Does the number of ballots issued (box 5) match the number of ballots used and unused (box 6)?	
	☐ Yes ☐ No, because... ☐ There were more or less than 200 ballots in one or more of the packs (write details below) ☐ Some ExpressVote cards were spoiled, voided, or used for provisional voters (write details below) ☐ Other (write details below)	

Canvass – Hand Count Report

HAND COUNT REPORT

If any ballots stored in the DS200 auxiliary compartment during the day cannot be scanned on the DS200 at the end of the day, they must be hand-counted and recorded on this form.

HAND COUNT REPORT

RETURN IN
#2 ENVELOPE

Precinct: 100 PATRIOT (Nov 2022)

Fairfax County – General Election – Nov 8, 2022

INSTRUCTIONS:

- If there are no hand-counted ballots, you do not need to complete this form.

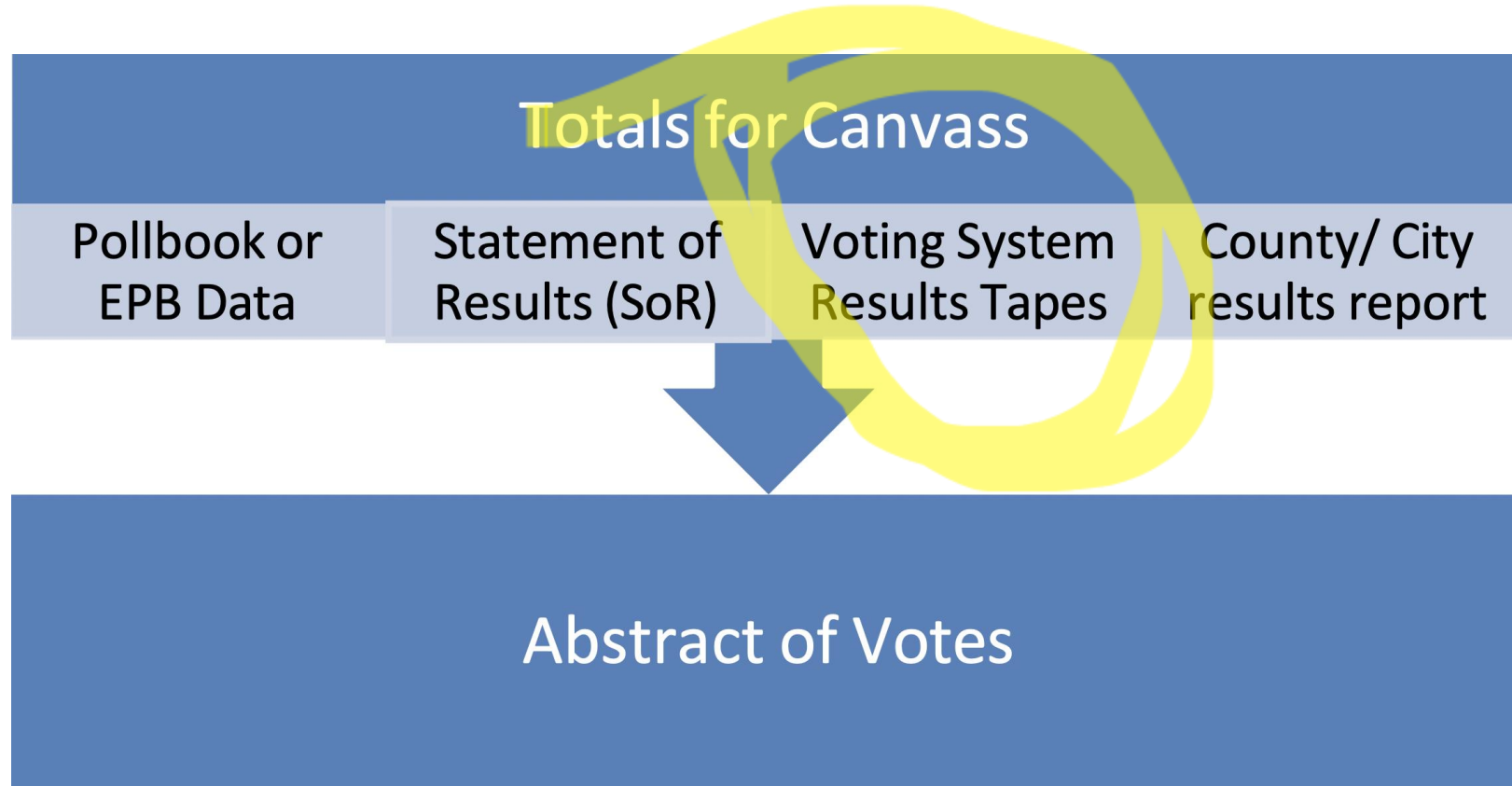
- If any ballots stored in the DS200 Auxiliary Compartment cannot later be scanned on the DS200, immediately call and notify the Office of Elections at 703-324-4735. These ballots must be hand-counted.

- Use this form to tally and total votes from all hand-counted ballots.

- If any hand-counted ballots contain write-in votes, make sure to indicate candidate is a write-in candidate.

Office	Name of candidate <i>(note if write-in)</i>	Tally of votes	Total votes received
EXAMPLE: President	EXAMPLE: George Washington		EXAMPLE: 15
EXAMPLE: President	EXAMPLE: WRITE-IN: Malala Yousafzai		EXAMPLE: 10
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

Canvass – Document Overview



Canvass – Printed Return Sheet (with paper tapes)

PRINTED RETURN SHEET

For this required form, simply attach a copy of the DS200 tapes and have all officers sign at the bottom.

PRINTED RETURN SHEET		RETURN IN #2A ENVELOPE	
Precinct: 100 PATRIOT (SAMPLE)		Fairfax County – General Election – Nov 8, 2022	
 PRINTED RETURN SHEET			
This form must be signed by all officers of election <u>present during closing procedures</u> and placed in Envelope #2A. The Clerk of Circuit Court must make it available for public inspection on the day following the election and for sixty days thereafter.			
DS200 Serial Number(s):			
#1:	DS0000111111	#2: DS0000222222	
Election officer signatures We hereby certify that the attached totals tapes are a true and correct copy of the election results printed out by the electronic voting machines used in this precinct.			
#	POSITION	NAME	SIGNATURE
1	Chief		X
2	Asst Chief		X
3	EO		X
4	EO		X
5	EO		X
6	EO		X
7	EO		X
8	EO		X
9	EO		X
10	EO		X
11	EO		X
12	EO		X
13	EO		X
14	EO		X
15	EO		X

ELECT-658-FFX Rev. 10/2022

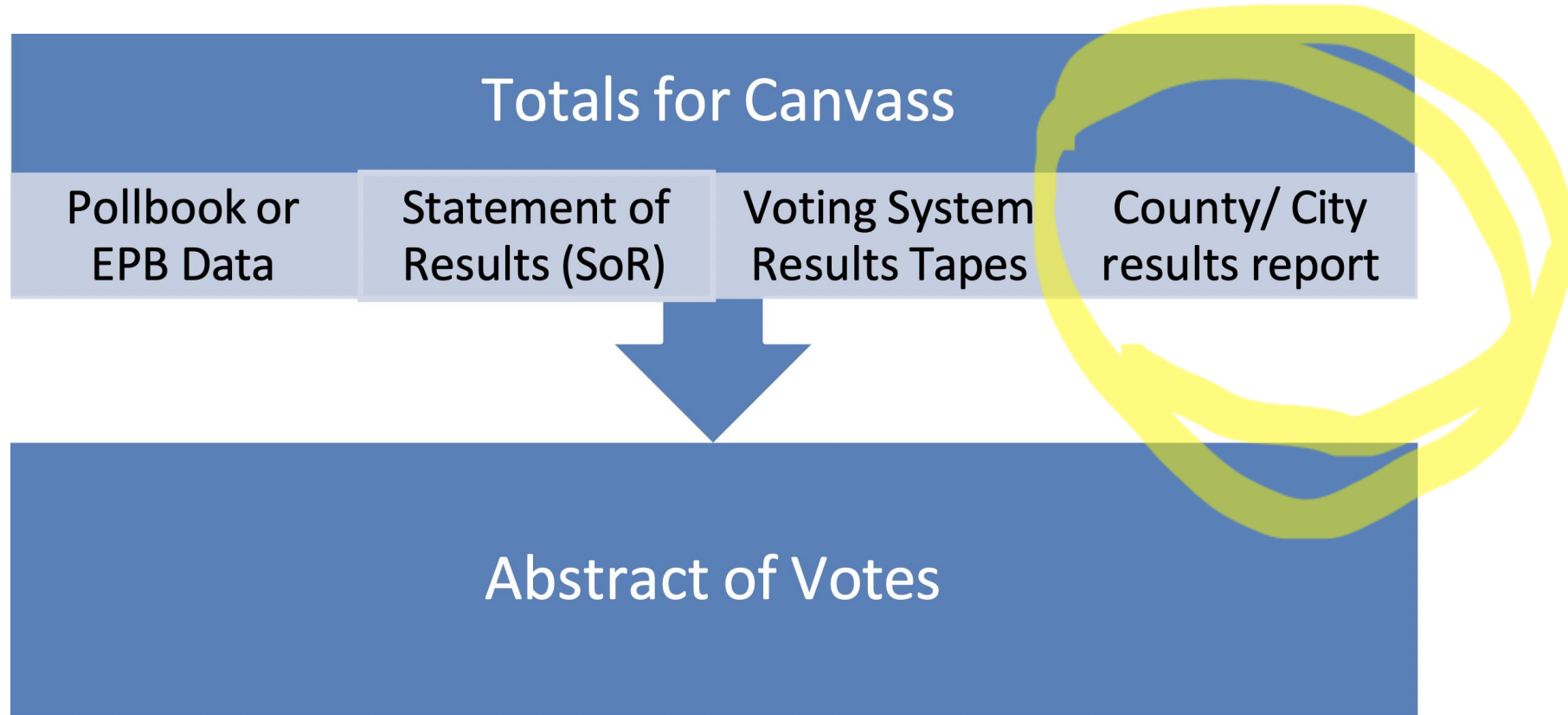
Staple tapes here

From each DS200 opened for voting:

1. Zero totals report
2. Voting results report



Canvass – Document Overview



Posted on Door – Precinct Results Notice

RESULTS NOTICE		Post on Building Door
Precinct: 104 CHAPEL	Fairfax County – Presidential Election – Nov 5, 2024	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELECTION OFFICERS: Copy information below from **Results Worksheet**. Then post this notice on or near door of polling place so it is visible from outside.

Total Voters Checked In (from Poll Pads)		SDR Provisionals (from Envelopes #1A)	
Total Curbside Voters (from Poll Pads)		Non-SDR Provisionals (from Envelopes #1A)	
Total Counted Ballots (from DS200s)		NOTE: Same-day registration voters cast a provisional ballot. If their registration form is accepted and processed, the Electoral Board will adjudicate their provisional ballot.	

Electors for President and Vice President				
	Democratic Party Harris / Walz	Republican Party Trump / Vance	Green Party Stein / Ware III	Libertarian Party Oliver / ter Maat
TOTAL VOTES				
	Independent De la Cruz / Garcia	Independent West / Abdullah	Write-Ins	
TOTAL VOTES				

Member, United States Senate			
	Timothy M. Kaine – D	Hung Cao – R	Write-Ins
TOTAL VOTES			

Member, House of Representatives, 11 th Congressional District			
	Gerald E. "Gerry" Connolly - D	Mike L. Van Meter - R	Write-Ins
TOTAL VOTES			

Proposed Constitutional Amendment		
	Yes	No
TOTAL VOTES		

Fairfax County Bond Issues				
	Transportation Bonds		Public Safety Bonds	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
TOTAL VOTES				

Remove and discard this notice on or after:
Thursday, November 7, 2024

Posted on Door – Precinct Results Notice

RESULTS NOTICE

Post on Building Door

Precinct: **104 CHAPEL**

Fairfax County – Presidential Election – Nov 5, 2024

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELECTION OFFICERS: Copy information below from **Results Worksheet**. Then post this notice on or near door of polling place so it is visible from outside.

Total Voters Checked In (from Poll Pads)		SDR Provisionals (from Envelopes #1A)	
Total Curbside Voters (from Poll Pads)		Non-SDR Provisionals (from Envelopes #1A)	
Total Counted Ballots (from DS200s)		NOTE: Same-day registration voters cast a provisional ballot. If their registration form is accepted and processed, the Electoral Board will adjudicate their provisional ballot.	

Electors for President and Vice President				
	<u>Democratic Party</u> Harris / Walz	<u>Republican Party</u> Trump / Vance	<u>Green Party</u> Stein / Ware III	<u>Libertarian Party</u> Oliver / ter Maat
TOTAL VOTES				
	<u>Independent</u> De la Cruz / Garcia	<u>Independent</u> West / Abdullah	Write-Ins	
TOTAL VOTES				

Posted on Door – Results Notice

Member, United States Senate			
	Timothy M. Kaine – D	Hung Cao – R	Write-Ins
TOTAL VOTES			

Member, House of Representatives, 11 th Congressional District			
	Gerald E. "Gerry" Connolly - D	Mike L. Van Meter - R	Write-Ins
TOTAL VOTES			

Proposed Constitutional Amendment		
	Yes	No
TOTAL VOTES		

Fairfax County Bond Issues				
	Transportation Bonds		Public Safety Bonds	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
TOTAL VOTES				

Remove and discard this notice on or after:
Thursday, November 7, 2024

Canvass – County Results Report

One member of the board (Democratic or Republican) may complete the county/city results report worksheet, with:

- The total number of votes cast in the precinct for each candidate or issue response listed
- The total number of write-in votes cast for each office
- The number of over-votes cast in the precinct for each candidate.
- The total number of votes cast for all candidates, including write-ins (for non-primaries), for any one single-seat office, or responses for any one issue, must not exceed the total number of persons voting in that precinct and in that district.

Canvass – Abstract of Votes Cast Report

- The “Abstract of Votes” VERIS report is generated after vote totals for each office or issue are submitted into VERIS from the SOR.
- VERIS = Virginia Election and Registration Information System
- Towards the end of canvass, the local electoral board should have the general registrar or staff retrieve the “Abstract of Votes” VERIS report.

Canvass – Possible Error Reports

After entering the election results, voter turnout, and Election Day and Provisional voting credit into VERIS, three separate reports should be generated to check for accuracy. The electoral board should analyze and resolve votes cast/voter turnout discrepancies that are flagged in these reports

- 1) Election Error Results v2 – by Office
- 2) Turnout Versus Vote Cast Error Report
- 3) Voting Credit Audit by Locality.

Canvass – Election Error Results (by Office)

The Election Error Results (by Office) report identifies precincts having a higher number of votes cast than turnout.

If there are more votes than turnout, documentation must be provided by the officers of election on the statement of results. Undocumented errors must be corrected

Canvass – Turnout Versus Vote Cast Error Report

The Turnout Versus Vote Cast Error report identifies precincts having a higher number of turnout than votes cast.

While a small percentage (i.e., less than 3%) may be explained by undervotes, a larger percentage might be due to a gross error such as completely missing a precinct or voting machine. This report is designed to help catch those situations.

Canvass –Voting Credit Audit By Locality Error Report

The Voting Credit Audit by Locality report compares voter turnout and voting credit for each precinct.

The Voting Credit Audit by Locality report identifies differences in voter turnout and voting credit.

An exact match of the numbers is best; however, a slight deviation between numbers may occur.

Canvass – Certificates of Election

The certificate of election is made out by the secretary of the electoral board once the board has determined the election results and verified with the general registrar each winning candidate's compliance with §24.2-948.2.45

The secretary must make out a certificate for each person who received the highest number of votes.

Links, Email, and Phone References

- To contact the RPV Helpline: help@virginia.gop 804-600-4809
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- To review materials/get updates: <https://fairfaxgop.org/fairfax-gop-poll-watcher-resources/>
- For local questions/scheduling help: pollwatchers@fairfaxgop.org 703-397-8129