



★ VIRGINIA ★  
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

---

the Handbook

# **Chapter 12**

## **Central Absentee Precinct (CAP)**

October 2026

---

|                                                                                         |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>12. CENTRAL ABSENTEE PRECINCT (CAP)</b>                                              | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>12.1 CHAPTER ORGANIZATION</b>                                                        | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>12.2 PRELIMINARY NOTES FOR RUNNING A CAP</b>                                         | <b>4</b>  |
| 12.2.1 LOCAL ELECTORAL BOARD                                                            | 4         |
| 12.2.2 LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MUST PROVIDE NOTICE                                         | 4         |
| <b>12.3 LOCATION OF THE CAP</b>                                                         | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>12.4 STAFFING AND HOURS</b>                                                          | <b>5</b>  |
| 12.4.1 CAP OFFICERS OF ELECTION MUST VOTE ABSENTEE                                      | 7         |
| <b>12.5 BEFORE ELECTION DAY</b>                                                         | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>12.6 ELECTION DAY</b>                                                                | <b>7</b>  |
| 12.6.1 OPENING THE CAP                                                                  | 7         |
| 12.6.2 During the Day                                                                   | 8         |
| 12.6.3 OPTIONAL NOON (12:00 P.M.) HAND COUNT                                            | 10        |
| 12.6.4 Closing the Polls at CAP—Counting Must Start Immediately, if it has not Already. | 13        |
| <b>APPENDIX A</b>                                                                       | <b>13</b> |
| <b>APPENDIX B</b>                                                                       | <b>15</b> |
| <b>APPENDIX C</b>                                                                       | <b>16</b> |



## 12. CENTRAL ABSENTEE PRECINCT (CAP)

| FORMS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | ADDITIONAL RESOURCES                                                                            | REFERENCE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | REGULATIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">CAP Ballot Receipt</a><br><a href="#">CAP Counter Record</a><br><a href="#">CAP Rejected/Unused Ballot Record</a><br><a href="#">SBE-643(PBC)Poll Count 1-1000 form</a><br><a href="#">SBE-611.1 Officer of Election Day Oath</a><br><a href="#">ELECT-C1289(B6) Ballot Collection from Drop-Off Locations</a> | <a href="#">Charter Provisions</a><br><a href="#">Virginia's Guide to Hand-Counting Ballots</a> | <a href="#">CAP Election Day Guide (EDG)</a><br><a href="#">What ifs</a><br><a href="https://www.elections.virginia.gov/election-law/SBE-Policy-2023-001">https://www.elections.virginia.gov/election-law/SBE Policy 2023-001</a><br><a href="#">Counting and Reporting of Absentee Results from the Central Absentee Precinct</a> | <a href="#">1VAC20-70-20</a> Material Omissions from Absentee Ballots<br><a href="#">1VAC20-70-40</a> Alternative Processing Procedures for Absentee Ballots Returned Before Election Day<br><a href="#">1VAC20-70-70</a> Mandatory Mailing Elements on Absentee Ballot Envelopes. |

### 12.1 CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

A central absentee precinct (CAP) is “a precinct established by a county or city [...] for the processing of absentee ballots for the county or city or any combination of precincts within the county or city.”<sup>1</sup> CAPs are used to facilitate the counting of absentee ballots centrally and streamline the process of absentee ballot tabulation. CAPs are established for a county or city upon the enactment of an ordinance by the local governing body of a county or city.<sup>2</sup> The growing number of voters who choose to vote absentee and the continuing expansion of the number of voters who are eligible to cast absentee ballots make the CAP an increasingly important tool for localities. This chapter provides an overview of why and how CAPs are established, and how they are run.

The Department of Elections Election Day Guide (EDG) for the CAP is an essential resource for planning and operating the CAP. Refer to that guide for more specific information on how to run a CAP.

Section 12.3.1 begins the chapter by providing guidance on how election officials can work with the local governing bodies to establish a CAP. §12.4 discusses the factors to consider when choosing the CAP’s location.

The discussion then turns to how CAPs are run. Section 12.5 discusses staffing and operating hours, including training and the requirement that CAP officers themselves vote absentee. Section 12.6 offers practical suggestions about how to arrange a CAP.

Section 12.7 discusses in-person absentee voting as it relates to a CAP. This begins with an overview of in-person absentee rules generally, followed by best practices and specifics for voting in-person absentee. Other pre-election activities are discussed in §12.8. A planning checklist is provided to aid registrars in thinking about how to prepare their CAP in §12.8.1. Section 12.8.2 discusses pre-processing of absentee ballots. Section 12.8.3 shows how preparing a CAP is essentially the same as preparing any other precinct.

<sup>1</sup> See [§24.2-101](#).

<sup>2</sup> See [§24.2-712\(A\)](#).



Election Day activities are discussed in §12.9. Section 12.9.1 discusses how to open a CAP for voting, including an explanation of ballot delivery and set up procedures. Section 12.9.2 outlines CAP activities during Election Day: how to split CAP members into processing teams, how to process ballots, and special circumstances that may arise during processing. Section 12.9.3 discusses the option to begin hand counting at 12:00 p.m. The procedures for hand counting ballots are provided. Finally, §12.9.4 discusses closing the CAP.

## 12.2 PRELIMINARY NOTES FOR RUNNING A CAP

### 12.2.1 LOCAL ELECTORAL BOARD

The local electoral board must take the following steps to establish a CAP:

- Find a suitable location for the CAP and ensure that it will be available whenever needed.
- Determine the projected per election cost of operating the CAP.
- Request that the local governing body of the county or city enact an ordinance establishing the CAP.
- Provide to the local governing body the location of the recommended site and the funding required.
  - If the location of the CAP changes, the relocation of the CAP is considered a covered practice under §24.2-129 (5) and subject to preclearance.<sup>3</sup>



#### Law Note

The Attorney General's 2021 opinion 21-40 stated that central absentee voter precincts, voters satellite offices, and the offices of the general registrar that are used as the designated location for early voting are considered "polling places." As such, the CAP must meet the same requirements as any other polling place, being accessible to voters with disabilities under the ADA and offer curbside voting. For more information, see [2021 Op. Va. Att'y Gen. 40 \(Sept. 1, 2021\)](#).

### 12.2.2 LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MUST PROVIDE NOTICE



Before adopting an ordinance, the local governing body must give such public notice as is required for any other ordinance that creates a change in an election district, precinct, or polling place.<sup>4</sup>

- Notice of the adoption of the ordinance must be published in a newspaper with general circulation in the precinct once a week for two successive weeks prior to enactment.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See [§24.2-129 \(5\)](#). See also [2021 Op. Va. Att'y Gen. 40 \(Sept. 1, 2021\)](#). See also GREB Handbook, Chapter 3 Precincts and Polling Places.

<sup>4</sup> See [§24.2-306](#).

<sup>5</sup> See [§24.2-306\(A\)](#).



- Forward a copy of the final adopted ordinance to the Department of Elections immediately after enactment.<sup>6</sup>
- Finally, submit a JIRA ticket to the Department of Elections.

## 12.3 LOCATION OF THE CAP

Prior to Election Day, in-person and by-mail absentee voting are conducted in the office of the general registrar and any designated satellite location.<sup>7</sup> However, on Election Day, the room in which the CAP will be located should not be in the immediate office of the general registrar. It should, however, be located as close to that office as possible. It must also meet certain other requirements:

- The room must:
  - be large enough to permit the proper organization of the required work and to hear the appeal of any absentee voter who may appear on election day.
  - be equipped, on election day, with sufficient furniture (i.e., tables and chairs) for assigned officers of election and for organizing the precinct lists of absentee ballot applicants and the ballots and accompanying material for each precinct.
  - not be used for any other function at the time of the CAP.
- The CAP must meet the same accessibility standards as any polling place.<sup>8</sup>



### Law Note

Pursuant to §24.2-712(H), It is unlawful for any person (i) to knowingly carry on or about his person any firearm as defined in § [18.2-308.2:2](#) and (ii) to knowingly do so within 100 feet of any building, or part thereof, used as a central absentee precinct, unless such person is (a) a law-enforcement officer or a retired law-enforcement officer qualified pursuant to subsection C of § [18.2-308.016](#); (b) occupying his own private property that falls within 100 feet of the building used as a meeting place; or (c) an armed security officer, licensed pursuant to Article 4 (§ [9.1-138](#) et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1, whose employment or performance of his duties occurs within 100 feet of any central absentee voter precinct.

## 12.4 STAFFING AND HOURS

Generally, officers appointed to the CAP must report on Election Day not later than 5:15 a.m.<sup>9</sup> and must remain until the results have been finally ascertained.<sup>10</sup> **At least three officers of election**

<sup>6</sup> See §§[24.2-306\(C\)](#) and [24.2-712\(B\)](#).

<sup>7</sup> See §§[24.2-701.1](#), [24.2-701.2](#), and [24.2-707](#).

<sup>8</sup> See [§24.2-310\(C\)](#).

<sup>9</sup> See [§24.2-639](#).

<sup>10</sup> See [§24.2-712\(E\)\(2\)](#).



**must be appointed to the CAP;** additional officers may be appointed by the electoral board as needed.<sup>11</sup>

- The general registrar may delay the opening of the CAP until after 6:00 a.m. if the office of the registrar is open to receive ballots before the CAP is open.<sup>12</sup> Officers of election whose primary responsibility is to assist with closing the precinct and reporting the results of votes, must arrive at least one hour before polls close.<sup>13</sup>
  - The office of the general registrar must be available to provide any service to walk-in absentee voters that would otherwise be available to them at the CAP.
  - Ballots or other documents brought to the registrar's office before the CAP opens must be delivered by the registrar to the CAP.
- The Code provides localities with some flexibility in staffing the CAP.<sup>14</sup>
- The chief and assistant chief must be present all times the CAP is open; **other officers may work split shifts.**
- Additional officers may be required to adequately perform all the duties.
  - Officers will be required to work in teams to cast and count the ballots.
  - The chief officer should be free to organize the work of all and ensure that each team follows proper procedures.
- The total number of officers needed is determined by the number of absentee ballots to be handled and/or the number of differing ballot styles.
  - The number of absentee voters in previous, similar elections can help determine the number of officers needed for a given election. These statistics are available:
    - On ELECT's Election Night Reporting page for each separate election. On [ELECT's results page](#), click on the link for the election, then either click Vote Method for an office or navigate to the Reports page to see the Voter Turnout report.
    - Depending on the election, on file in the office of the general registrar.
    - *For elections held before June 2023*, see the [Election Results](#) page of the Department's Website. Select the "CSV documents" link under the Voter Turnout by Election section.
- **A given team of officers may process only the ballots of one election district at a time.** Given a sufficient number of different ballot styles, additional teams of officers may be needed.
- If all of the voters in the county or city do not vote in the same Congressional, State Senate or House of Delegates district, multiple ballot styles may be used.
- The number of email ballots and other hand-counted ballots for a given election will impact the number of officers needed.
- The officers of election appointed to serve in a CAP should be trained specifically for their duties in the CAP.



<sup>11</sup> See [§24.2-712\(B\)](#).

<sup>12</sup> See [§24.2-712\(G\)](#).

<sup>13</sup> See [§24.2-115](#).

<sup>14</sup> See [§24.2-712](#).



### 12.4.1 CAP OFFICERS OF ELECTION MUST VOTE ABSENTEE

The officers of election appointed to serve in a CAP must vote by absentee ballot, as they are not permitted to leave the CAP on Election Day for any purpose, unless they are designated to work a split shift, an option that is not available to chief and assistant chief(s).

They may apply and vote by-mail or in-person **but** must observe the same deadlines for doing so as all other absentee voters.



An officer of election who is assigned to serve in a precinct other than the officer's precinct of residence after noon on the Saturday before the election may apply for and vote absentee in-person before 2:00 p.m. on the day before the election at the office of the general registrar in the county or city in which he lives.

## 12.5 BEFORE ELECTION DAY

The preparation necessary for CAP is the same as preparing a typical polling place for Election Day. For a detailed checklist for polling place preparation, please read GREB Chapter 10 Election Day Prep.<sup>15</sup> For more information on how to preprocess absentee ballots before CAP is opened on Election Day, please read GREB Chapter 7 Absentee Voting.<sup>16</sup> Appendices A, B, and C of this chapter also provide information on preparing CAP and the preprocessing of absentee ballots.

## 12.6 ELECTION DAY

### 12.6.1 OPENING THE CAP

#### 12.6.1.1 Ballot Delivery on Election Day

The general registrar must deliver all absentee ballot containers of returned ballots to the CAP officers. The chief officer of CAP must sign the receipt for the ballots he/she is accepting from the general registrar.

#### 12.6.1.2 Election Day Set Up

Take the following steps to set up before the polls open on Election Day:

- Welcome authorized representatives.
- Chief election officer must administer the Officer of Election Oath for all the other officers, and they all sign the Oath form. The chief signs at the bottom and completes the information below the signature line.
- Chief will establish and name (A, B, C, etc.) the teams to process ballots.
- Set out election supplies.
- Set out ballot boxes.
- Set up voting equipment.
- Post required signs and posters.
- Fill in the number of absentee ballots delivered to the CAP on the Ballot Record Report

<sup>15</sup> See ELECT, [GREB Handbook](#).

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*



- Open the polls at 6:00 am (or later time determined by the general registrar)

### 12.6.2 During the Day

If any voter enters the CAP while the polls are open, the officers should take care to preserve the privacy and security of any absentee materials they are working on at that time. As a polling place, the CAP is subject to the same requirements and restrictions regarding the presence of authorized representatives as any other polling place.<sup>17</sup> While a rare occurrence, curbside voting needs to be made available under §24.2-649.1 in the event a voter brings an unmarked ballot to the CAP pursuant to §24.2-712(C).<sup>18</sup> Please note, you are permitted to conduct a special Election Day page program for high school students at the CAP.<sup>19</sup>

#### 12.6.2.1 Processing Absentee Ballots

Teams of officers work together during the day to process paper ballots. Each team consists of three officers and is named (Team A, Team B, Team C, etc.) by the chief. The three officers are the check-in officer, the pollbook officer, and the ballot officer. See the CAP EDG for specific procedures for each station. The station duties listed in the CAP Election Day Guide is best practices. Localities may rearrange the duties to suit their specific needs.

#### Materials Needed for Each Team

| Station One<br>Check-In Officer                              | Station Two<br>Pollbook Officer                                     | Station Three<br>Ballot Officer                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CAP Pollbook (Final AB Report)                               | Pollbook Count form for each ballot style                           | Letter opener and stapler                                                |
| Ballots in return envelopes                                  | Black or blue pen                                                   | Ballot Box – one per ballot style                                        |
| Black or blue pen                                            | Rejected Ballot Count form                                          | Container for empty envelopes of accepted ballots-one per ballot style   |
| Ruler                                                        | Unused Ballot Count form                                            | Container to hold rejected ballots-may be in the possession of the chief |
| Provisional ballot log and Envelope 1                        | Ruler                                                               | Container to hold unused ballots                                         |
| Rejected ballot log – this may be handled by a separate team | Rejected Ballot Count form – this may be handled by a separate team | Container to hold hand count ballots                                     |

<sup>17</sup> See [§24.2-604\(C\)](#).

<sup>18</sup> See [§24.2-649.1](#).

<sup>19</sup> See [§24.2-604.3](#).



## 12.6.2.2 WHEN A BALLOT IS REJECTED

- Follow the procedures in the CAP Election Day Guide for processing the ballot and determining whether it should be rejected. As a reminder, the absentee ballot cure process applies to any ballot received by the Friday immediately preceding Election Day.<sup>20</sup>

**Regulation Note****1VAC20-70-20: Material Omissions from Absentee Ballots**

A timely received absentee ballot is not invalid if it contains an error or omission that is not material to proper processing. See the regulation in 1VAC20-70-20 for a list of material and non-material omissions. The regulation contains the catchall provision that, if there is an omission on an Envelope B that is not addressed in this regulation, then whether this omission is material must be determined by a majority of the officers of the election present.

- At least two officers of election, one representing each political party, should write and sign a statement explaining the reason the ballot was rejected. This should be done directly on the unopened envelope or on an attachment to the unopened envelope.
- Complete the Rejected Ballot Log as each rejected ballot is processed. Record the voter's name and the Virginia resident address and a detailed explanation of why the ballot was rejected. For rejected UOCAVA voters, list the current military or overseas mailing address.
- Copy the return envelope and envelope B for each rejected ballot and give to the registrar along with a copy of the Rejected Ballot Log.
- Within 90 days of the election, the registrar or electoral board must send a letter to each voter, whose ballot was rejected, explaining why the ballot was rejected.<sup>21</sup>
- Notice is required for a ballot rejected as late.

## 12.6.2.3 HAVA ID AND OTHER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- **HAVA requires** voters who register to vote by mail on or after January 1, 2004, to provide **specific ID** when they vote by mail the first time in a federal election. If the HAVA ID is not provided by the voter, an absentee ballot returned by mail must be set aside as a provisional ballot and sent to the electoral board that will not be able to count the ballot unless qualified ID is provided by the Friday noon deadline.
  - **Federal law** provides limited **exemptions** to HAVA ID requirements for federal elections; state ID requirements must still be met (UOCAVA

<sup>20</sup> See [§24.2-709.1\(C\)](#)

<sup>21</sup> See [§24.2-711](#).



voters, a handicapped or elderly voter when the Commissioner of Elections determines no accessible polling place is available and voters moving outside Virginia are eligible to request ballots for President and Vice-President only.)

- Since 2011 Virginia has required counting the ballots of any otherwise qualified absentee voter who dies after casting his ballot that is returned before Election Day.<sup>22</sup> *Disqualification for other reason, such as felony conviction, requires excluding the ballot from those to be counted, if possible.*

### 12.6.3 OPTIONAL NOON (12:00 P.M.) HAND COUNT AND BALLOT DUPLICATION

The Code of Virginia §24.2-712 authorizes officers to begin the process of hand counting any non-machine-readable ballots that are deemed valid at noon (12:00 PM) on Election Day.<sup>23</sup> Such non-machine-readable ballots may include:

- Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs)
- Ballots that were returned by overseas or uniformed voters.
- Ballots that were returned by voters with disabilities who used the electronic ballot marking tool.

Pursuant to §24.2-709.2, “If, in the processing and counting of absentee ballots, any machine-readable ballot is damaged or defective such that it cannot properly be counted by the electronic voting systems, a true duplicate copy shall be made of the damaged or defective ballot by a team of election officials representing both parties. The duplicate ballot shall be substituted for the damaged ballot. Every duplicate ballot shall be clearly labeled as such and shall bear an identifier that shall be recorded on the damaged ballot.” In other words, if a ballot would be machine-readable but for damage to the ballot or some other defect on the ballot makes the ballot unreadable by the voting system, then it must be duplicated. Please reference [Virginia’s Guide to Hand-counting and Duplicating Ballots](#) when duplicating damaged or defective absentee ballots at the CAP.

The use of cell phones or other communication devices is prohibited during this period once hand counting begins, and the prohibition remains in effect until the polls close. People remaining in the CAP during this period must sign a statement under oath that they will not transmit any counts until after the polls close. Violation of this oath is a Class 1 misdemeanor.<sup>24</sup>

Once the CAP has been properly secured and oaths have been administered, hand counting and duplication of ballots may proceed.

#### 12.6.3.1 HAND COUNTING TEAMS

Hand-counted ballots are handled by teams of three officers as follows:

<sup>22</sup> See [§24.2-709\(C\)](#).

<sup>23</sup> See [§24.2-712\(D\)](#).

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*



- Tally sheet officer one: records the votes cast for each candidate and write-in as announced by the reporting officer.
- Tally sheet officer two: records the votes cast for each candidate and write-in as announced by the reporting officer.
- Reporting officer three: Reads out loud, in a clear voice, one complete ballot at a time, all the candidates and write-ins receiving a vote on each ballot for each office.

A fourth officer should also be viewing and verifying votes as read.

#### 12.6.3.2 HAND COUNTING PROCESS

At the direction of the chief, and using the guidelines provided in Virginia's Guide to Hand-Counting and Duplicating Ballots, begin the hand count ballots using the following procedure:<sup>25</sup>

- Both tally sheet officers will simultaneously record a tic mark on the tally sheet for each candidate or write-in as read aloud.
- Each time a candidate receives the 5th vote, the two tally sheet officers will simultaneously speak out loud the word "Tally."
  - This indicates that the counts agree.
  - **If the counts do not agree, stop and recount until the error is found.**
- Each time the tally agrees, set the ballots aside to indicate they have been reconciled.
- Begin the process again with the next ballots until you reach "Tally" and they have been reconciled.
- Set aside all "questionable ballots" as the ballots are read aloud.
- Continue counting until all ballots have been completed or set aside for review.

#### 12.6.3.3 QUESTIONABLE BALLOTS

- Examine each questionable ballot to determine which are valid and which are void.
- Tally the valid ballots.
- When a ballot is not marked according to the instruction and the voter's intent is questionable, the team members should consult with the chief officer. Using the State Board of Elections guidelines, the chief and the officers must agree whether the voter's intention can be determined.
- If "yes," place a tic mark for the selected candidate.
- If "no," process as any other void ballot (see below).

#### 12.6.3.4 HAND COUNTING WRITE-IN VOTES ON PAPER BALLOTS

Election officers must record and count the write-in names **as they are written by the voter**. The officers are **not** to make any decision as to count or not count similarly

<sup>25</sup> See [Virginia's Guide to Hand-Counting and Duplicating Ballots](#) in Formswarehouse.



spelled names as possibly being the same person. It is the responsibility of the electoral board to make that decision.

- Write in the name of each person who received a write-in vote on the Write-In Certification sheet of the Statement of Results and place a tic mark in the vote column.
- Count all write-in votes with the exact-same-spelled name as votes for that same person by adding the tic mark next to his/her name.
- Count similarly spelled names (e.g., Pat Brown vs. Patricia Brown) separately. They must be listed as a separate write-in entry on the Write-In Certification sheet of the SOR.
- DO NOT COUNT a write-in vote cast with a rubber stamp or sticker.
- DO NOT COUNT a write-in vote for any person for any office if that person's name is preprinted on the ballot for that office.
- DO NOT COUNT any write-in vote that has more votes than the number allowed for that particular office.
- DO NOT COUNT if the voter has voted for the same person for the same office more than one time.<sup>26</sup>

#### 12.6.3.5 Hand Counted Void Ballots

There are situations when counting paper ballots that require you to void a part of a ballot or void the entire ballot.<sup>27</sup>

If a ballot is found to have been voted for a greater number of names for **any one office** than the number of persons required to fill that office, void all votes on the ballot for that particular office only. Use the following procedure:

- Write "VOID" on the front of the ballot over the office section being voided.
- Write a statement on the back of the ballot stating why the office was voided (Sample Statement: "The Office of Mayor section of this ballot was voided because the voter voted for more than one candidate").
- Place this ballot with all other ballots to be counted.
- Count only the remaining offices that are valid.

If you find a ballot which has been over voted for **all offices**, you must void the entire ballot. Use the following procedure:

- Write "VOID" on the front of the ballot over each office section.
- Write a statement on the back of the ballot stating why the ballot was voided (Sample Statement: "This entire ballot was voided because the voter over voted in each office listed on the ballot").
- Place the voided ballot in Envelope 4.

<sup>26</sup> See [§24.2-644\(D\)](#).

<sup>27</sup> See [§24.2-663](#).



#### 12.6.4 Closing the Polls at CAP—Counting Must Start Immediately, if it has not Already.

##### 12.6.4.1 Closing Procedures

Close the polls using the procedures outlined in the CAP Election Day Guide.

##### 12.6.4.2 Hand Count and Duplicating Ballots

If hand counting has not already begun (see Optional 12:00 Hand Count above), begin counting any ballots that need to be hand counted or duplicated.

##### 12.6.4.3 Pollbook Count Forms

Certify the pollbook Count form, the Unused Ballot Count form and the Rejected Ballot Count form.

##### 12.6.4.4 Reporting Results of Absentee Ballots from Central Absentee Precinct Results

After the polls have closed at 7:00 PM, localities will initiate ballots totals as follows:<sup>28</sup>

- i. *Early In-Person* machines at **7:00 PM**.
- ii. *Mail-In Ballots* machines at **7:00 PM**, if finished processing, and **8:00 PM**, if not.
- iii. Any mail-in ballots not processed by 8:00 PM on Election Night can be processed and included in the Post-Election CAP totals.

The *consolidated total* of both in-person and mailed-in absentee ballots, processed as of Election Day, will be entered into the election night reporting system on the night of the election. By Precinct totals will be added as time allows. On the night of the Election and in the days following, the consolidated totals will be separated by precinct as time allows. All absentee ballot totals by precinct will be provided by *no later* than **5:00 P.M.**, on the **tenth day** following the election.<sup>29</sup> Based on locality inputs, the Department of Elections will post these separated absentee ballot results on its website for the public.<sup>30</sup>



**For details on how to process absentee ballots in VERIS, consult the Absentee Processing Step-by-Step document.**

<sup>28</sup> See § [24.2-712\(E\)](#).

<sup>29</sup> See § [24.2-667.1](#).

<sup>30</sup> See §§ [24.2-105.1](#) and [24.2-667.1](#).



---

## APPENDIX A

### HOW TO ARRANGE A CAP

Officers of election should arrange the necessary furniture, equipment, and materials in the room in which the CAP is located upon the arrival of all the officers. To save time on Election Day, if access is available to the CAP room the afternoon before the election, the officers may arrange their tables and chairs and post their signs. They should not set up the voting machines.

- Tables on which to organize the ballots for each precinct or voting district, both before and after processing
- Tables on which to organize lists of absentee ballot applications, pollbooks, and *Statements of Results* forms, both before and after processing
  - Separate paper pollbooks are required for each election district.
  - Adjust setup accordingly if EPBs are used.
- Tables on which to organize oaths, packing envelopes and other paperwork.
- A table with privacy for any voter who needs to vote in-person on election day.
- A table for the chief officer
- Tables and chairs for each team of officers
- Tables for personal needs during breaks (do not smoke inside the polling place)
- Tables for voting machines (unless the equipment has legs)
- Containers on each team's table for processing ballots and envelopes
- Separate ballot containers for each election district
- Extra chairs as needed.
- Power cords and surge protectors sufficient to operate the equipment.

Since most of these activities are sequential rather than simultaneous, the same furniture can be utilized for several of the various functions.

On Election Day, the registrar should immediately deliver to the officers all applicant lists and voted ballots. The voted ballots should be securely transported in covered, sealed containers. Unless processed earlier according to §24.2-709.1, the voted ballots should be sealed up in their unopened marked ballot envelope **B**. That sealed envelope **B** should be inside the voter's opened return envelope. If necessary, a brief review should be conducted of the procedures to be followed and the materials to be handled. The general registrar may participate in this review provided one or more assistant registrars cover the registrar's office. Generally, however, the chief officer should know the responsibilities, duties, and requirements for the CAP, and should conduct the review.



## APPENDIX B

### IN-PERSON ABSENTEE VOTING STEPS

We previously stated that a CAP only exists on Election Day. Prior to that time, in-person and by-mail absentee voting is conducted in the office of the general registrar and may additionally be conducted in your locality's voter satellite offices. Because absentee voting is so closely related to the CAP, we provide the following information to help electoral boards and registrars.

The following guidelines are to be followed for in-person absentee voting:

- In-person absentee voting must be available 45 days prior to primary and general elections. The exception to this legal requirement would be for a special election when the ballots must be available as soon as possible. Note: In-person absentee voting begins before the close of registration for that election.
- Identification requirements for in person absentee voting are the same as for voting at the polls on Election Day. See Chapter 7 for further details on administering in person absentee voting.
- Any voting equipment used for in-person absentee voting for this purpose must be programmed and tested in the same manner as voting equipment used on election day.<sup>31</sup>
- When entering the absentee application into VERIS, you must select the following:
  - **"Application Received By"** method is **"In-person,"**
  - **"Ballot Sent By"** is **"In-person,"**
  - **"Ballot Received By"** method is **"In-person,"**
  - **"Ballot Status"** is **"On Machine."**



This will capture the information that the voter has cast his/her ballot on voting equipment prior to Election Day. It will prevent the voter from voting again either by absentee ballot or in-person on Election Day and will also prevent a voter who transfers his/her registration from voting again in the new locality.

- **An accessible machine is required for in-person absentee voting.**<sup>32</sup>
- **For specific instructions on using VERIS for in-person absentee voters, see the VERIS Step-by-Step instructions for absentee voting located on the VERIS home page.**

<sup>31</sup> See [§§24.2-632-634](#). See also Chapter 15, Recounts and Contested Elections.

<sup>32</sup> See [§24.2-626.1](#).



---

## APPENDIX C

### Expedited Processing VERIS Cheat Sheet

#### Batch Ballot Process

As ballots are received by mail that have a VERIS barcode on the return address label:

1. Note on the outer envelope the date received.
2. Open the outer envelope and remove the inner envelope (B)
3. Examine the inner envelope (B) containing the ballot to verify completion of the required voter information.
4. Note the ballot status on the outer envelope.
5. Save the inner envelopes (B) that can be pre-processed in a separate stack from the inner envelopes (B) of ballots with issues.
6. Note on the outer envelope if an acceptable ID was included in the outer envelope.
7. Batch the outer envelopes by Election, Date Received, Method Received (Mail, Mail (Non-USPS), In Person, Designated Representative), ID Included in the outer envelope or not.

#### VERIS Process - Individually Entering Ballots Pre-Processed (Not Recommended)

8. Go to "Absentee Search" in VERIS
9. Enter the voter's name or ID number on the return address label.
10. Make sure you have the correct voter.
11. Make sure you have the correct election from the drop-down box. If not, select the correct election from the drop-down box.
12. At the "Absentee Ballots" line (Not the AB Application line) click on the pencil
13. Change the ballot status from "Marked" to "Pre-Processed" in the drop-down box.
14. In the "Status Reason" box type "Pre-Processed" and the date of the pre-processing
15. Scroll down and click "Save."

#### VERIS Process - Batch Processing \* (Recommended for High Volume of ballots)

16. For each batch without IDs, click the link under Absentee from the VERIS Home Page named "AB Batch Receipt – without IDs."
17. For each batch with IDs, click the link under Absentee from the VERIS Home Page named "AB Batch Receipt – with IDs."
18. Enter the Date Received
19. Enter the Received by Method (Mail, Mail (Non-USPS), In Person, Designated Representative)
20. Scan the barcode on the return address label for each outer envelope in the batch.
21. The voters name, YOB and last 4 of the SNN will list on the VERIS page in the Received Ballots section with Status defaulted to Marked and Status Reason defaulted to Ballot Returned
22. After all the envelopes in the batch have been scanned, changed the Status for each voter as noted on the outer envelope and update the Status Reason as necessary.
23. Click "Save"



- a. This will update the ballot status, status reason, receipt date, and receipt method for the matching ballot records in VERIS.
- b. All entries with a ballot status of Marked, Pre-processed (Early Voting), or On Machine (Election Day or CAP) will record the voter's voting credit for that election.
- c. If the ballots are received using the "with ID" option, the Voter's Personal ID Provided flag is set to "Yes."

### **Pre-Process Ballots**

24. Open the absentee ballot record in VERIS either through batch processing or the individual process and change the ballot status to Pre-Processed. For batch processing, Ballots that were previously entered as "marked" will default to the status "pre-processed" once re-scanned into VERIS through the batch process.

**For ballots with errors, each office should set uniform internal procedures to ensure that voters only receive Voter Credit if their ballot is eligible to be counted. See the Pre-Processing Guidance for the Department's recommended procedures.**

