



**Division for Research, Policy and Programs
U.S. Election Assistance Commission
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Testimony before the U.S. Election Assistance Commission

Briefing on the EAC Election Management Guidelines

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Commissioners and Mr. Wilkey, I come before you today to present five additional chapters to the Election Management Guidelines (EMG) program. These chapters – Building Community Partnerships, Canvassing and Certifying an Election, Communicating with the Public, Conducting a Recount, and Provisional Ballots – represent the culmination of more than a year of working groups, research, writing, and reviews by the EAC's Board of Advisors and Standards Board.

As are all other EMG chapters, these new chapters are meant to serve as informational guides to local and State election officials as they administer elections. **Jurisdictions are reminded to implement these voluntary practices only after reviewing State and local laws and regulations. Local election officials should contact their State election officials with questions about the legality of a specific policy or procedure in their State.**

The director of the Research, Policy, and Programs Division, Karen Lynn-Dyson, spoke about the process by which these chapters moved from early concepts to edited drafts. I will now give you a brief summary of the content in each chapter.

Building Community Partnerships

This chapter discusses the benefits of different types of partnerships. It also offers suggestions for creating new partnerships or improving those already made. An election official might consider partnerships with other election officials, other government agencies, civic organizations, local businesses, schools, universities, and advocates. These partnerships may help election officials find new poll workers, manage crises on Election Day, pool resources for language assistance, assist voters with disabilities, receive technical support, and provide improved voter outreach opportunities. The *Building Community Partnerships* chapter also provides election officials with some ideas about managing the partnerships they create and ways by which they can recognize their volunteers.

Canvassing and Certifying an Election

This chapter covers possible ways for local jurisdictions to canvass and certify an election. Of course, as with all suggestions in the Election Management Guidelines program chapters, election officials should review State and local laws and regulations before implementing any new policy or procedure in their jurisdictions. In the chapter, election officials can find information with which to begin creating internal office policies and procedures for canvassing an election and certifying the results. Information about the election calendar is outlined, potential canvass boards are defined, and interactions with observers are explained. The chapter includes a section about conducting the canvass, which includes inspecting returns, duplicating ballots, reviewing rejected ballots, and documenting the process. It concludes with the issuance of the final certification of results.

Communicating with the Public

The chapter outlines the steps any election official might take to create a comprehensive communications strategy that provides information to voters, candidates, and the public. Sections discuss the different media election officials can use – the Internet, call centers, printed materials, news media, blogs, social networking, etc. It also highlights the importance for an elections office to create internal procedures for releasing information to the public in an efficient way and with one voice. The chapter concludes with information about working specifically with the news media and for communicating during a crisis.

Conducting a Recount

This chapter explains the potential needs an election official may have during a recount and how to meet challenges that arise. The election official will likely consider timelines, staff, training, supplies and materials, locations, and cost when crafting internal office policies and procedures for conducting a recount. Equally as important is for election officials to provide information to the public about the process before it starts, during the recount, and after the resolution. As with the canvass of votes, observers are part of the recount process and information for including observers is available in the chapter. There are sections with possible options for how to hand recount paper ballots and how to conduct an electronic recount. The chapter concludes with some suggestions for finalizing the recount process.

Provisional Ballots

This final chapter discusses the federal requirements pertaining to provisional ballots – when provisional ballots must be issued and used and how the voters must be provided with information about the disposition of his or her ballot – as well as suggestions for issuing, handling, and securing provisional ballots during the election cycle. There are sections about poll worker training, designing the provisional ballot envelope, and administering provisional voting at the polls. The chapter also includes details about counting the provisional ballots and collecting data for improving the administration of elections in the future.

Each chapter contains information that I believe election officials across the country will find very helpful. Where appropriate, examples are provided to explain a given topic. These chapters were crafted by election officials with election officials in mind. They have been reviewed by the original working groups, by EAC staff, by the EAC's Board of Advisors and Standards Board. I submit them to the Commission today for your consideration.

We are prepared to answer any questions you have at this time.