

Voting continues until the last voter who was in line when the polls closed has voted. This means that the last voter may be voting after voting hours. After the last voter has voted, the election judges (also called poll workers) begin closing the polling place. They generate results from the voting units, close the electronic pollbooks¹, reconcile voter turnout with votes cast, account for voting supplies, and remove signs. Performing these tasks must be their top priority as all of the required steps must be performed properly and efficiently.

Closing Up the Voting Units

Early Voting: When the last voter has voted, the election judges compare the tamper tape number on the side compartment against the paperwork. When the number has been verified, the election judges open the side compartment and turn off the voting unit. The election judges close the side compartment, attach another piece of tamper tape, record the tamper tape number, close the voting unit, attach a seal, and record seal number on the paperwork. **No** report will print.

Election Day: When the last voter has voted, the election judges compare the tamper tape number on the side compartment against the paperwork. Once verified, the election judges open the side compartment, insert a supervisor card, enter a password, and select the option for “ending the election.” Ending the election prevents any additional votes from being cast on the voting unit. Once this is complete, a report (“totals report”) automatically prints and is connected to the zero report (printed before voting began). The election judges print a second totals report and post it in the voting room.

When the reports have printed, the election judges remove the memory card from the side compartment and turn off the voting unit. The judges close the voting unit, attach a seal, and record the seal number on the paperwork. The election judges repeat this process on every voting unit.

If the local board has instructed the election judges to accumulate and electronically transmit election results, the judges insert each memory card into a designated voting unit. This voting unit tallies the results from each of the voting units and prints a precinct totals report. The election judges connect the designated unit to a telephone line and send the precinct results to the centrally located database. The judges post the precinct totals report.

Closing Up the Electronic Pollbooks

After the last voter has checked in to vote, the election judges close the election in the electronic pollbooks, print a report showing the number of voters who checked in to vote, and turn off the electronic pollbooks. During early voting, the judges may place the pollbooks nightly in the transport cases or may leave them connected in the secured voting room. If they are stored in the transfer case, the judges place the pollbooks in transport cases, seal the cases, and record the seal number on the paperwork provided by the local board.

Other Activities

After the polls close, election judges reconcile statistics from the voting units and electronic pollbooks, complete paperwork associated with closing the polls, account for election critical supplies, remove signs both inside and outside the voting room, and generally clean up the voting room. A bipartisan pair of election officials returns to the local board’s facility the memory cards (election night only), orange ballot bag with voted provisional ballots, paperwork and other critical supplies. After the polls close on the last day of early voting, a bonded transportation company returns the sealed voting units to the local board of elections.

¹ An electronic pollbook is an electronic tablet-like device that holds the State’s list of registered voter and is used by check-in judges to check in voters as they appear to vote.

Role of Challengers and Watchers

Please be respectful of the critical work that the election judges are performing. Their priority is performing all of the required tasks correctly and efficiently. Give the election judges space to perform their work, and do **not** interfere with their ability to perform these critical tasks.

You have the right to observe this process, but this does not mean that you may stand and look over the shoulder of the election judges. The election judges will read the voting units' seal numbers and tamper tape numbers out loud so that you can hear the numbers and if you wish, record them on your paperwork. The election judges are not required to provide a verbal summary of the tasks they are performing.

When closing the polls, election judges probably will not have the time to explain the closing process and answer questions. If you have questions or would like an explanation of certain tasks, wait until the chief judges have completed all of their tasks.

Please refer to the State Board of Elections' *Instructions and Information for Challengers, Watchers, and Other Election Observers* (available at www.elections.maryland.gov and click "Get Involved" on side navigation bar) for information about how to become a challenger and watcher and the specific rights and responsibilities of challengers and watchers.