

CLOSING PROCEDURES for towns that will hand count unreadable ballots

(Towns that used Method 1 for unreadable ballots)

(If you decided to **mark duplicate ballots** for unreadable ballots, skip two pages and go to the Closing Procedures for Towns that used Method 2 to Mark Duplicate Ballots.)

Towns that will hand count rejected, unreadable ballots start here:

1. **After the polling place has been officially declared closed by the Presiding Officer** and the last voter has inserted his/her ballot, use the **plastic covered key** to open the **Auxiliary compartment**. A pair of election officials must try to feed all of the ballots, if any, through the tabulator, changing the orientation if a ballot is returned.
2. If the tabulator returns some or all of the ballots, it is possible that some of the ballots contain over votes or are totally blank. Unlock the **front panel access door** (upper front lock on the ballot box) with the **plastic covered key** to make the Yes button available. While one election official **holds the YES button**, the other election official feeds the ballots into the tabulator changing orientation if a ballot is returned.
3. If the tabulator continues to return some ballots, the Presiding Officer or designated election official will give the ballots that have not been read by the tabulator to a pair of election officials to **hand count** using a Tally Sheet to record the votes for each race and question. After the ballots are hand counted, the ballots and the Tally Sheet must be given to the Presiding Officer to be added to the vote tabulator tape totals on a Summary Sheet.
4. **When you are certain** that all ballots that could be read by the optical scan tabulator have been inserted (make sure you have processed ALL absentee ballots and ballots from the Auxiliary side compartment), use the **bare key to unlock and remove the printer cover** from the top of the tabulator.
5. **Check again to be certain that all ballots that could be read by the optical scan tabulator have been fed into the tabulator.** Take the ENDER CARD from the bottom inside pocket of the black carrying case. Insert the ENDER CARD into the tabulator while pressing both the **YES and NO buttons at the same time**—it is easier if one election official holds the buttons and one election official inserts the ender card. When the ender card is inserted, **the printer will automatically print the election results tape.** Tear the tape off and have two election officials sign the tape. The signed tape will be put in a ballot bag with the tally and summary sheets after the Official Return of Votes has been completed.
6. When the machine asks: **“Do you want another printout?”**, press YES. You may post this printout on the wall on a LARGE pre-printed SIGN that reads: “UNOFFICIAL RESULTS—hand count and write-in votes NOT included.” You are not required to post the tape printout, and if your town includes multiple voting districts we suggest that you follow town specific procedures and do not post the tape. We suggest that you print 2 or 3 reports. After you have all the print outs of the tabulator results that you need, when the machine asks: “Do you want another print out?” **press the NO button.**
7. Slide the tabulator forward about 2 inches and **press the RED switch** on the back of the tabulator to turn OFF the tabulator.

(Closing Procedures for towns that hand count rejected ballots continued)

8. Use the **bare key to lock the printer cover** on top of the tabulator. Slide the machine off of the ballot box and place the machine and power cord into the black carrying case.
9. Use the **plastic covered key** to OPEN the back of the ballot box. Take the ballots out of the “Write-in Bin” first. The Presiding Officer gives the ballots to a pair or pairs of election officials to go through the ballots to hand count write-in candidate names and record the results on a Tally Sheet. The pair(s) should also look for markings of clear voter intent that could not have been “read” by the optical scan reader, such as circling of the candidate name instead of filling in the oval. If the pair agrees that there is a clear indication of voter intent that could not have been read by the tabulator, the pair will record the vote on the Tally Sheet.
10. Remove all of the ballots from the left bin. Divide the ballots and give them to pairs of election officials to quickly go through to look for markings of voter intent that could not have been “read” by the optical scan reader such as write-in candidate names where the voter did NOT fill in the oval or where a voter circled the candidate’s name instead of filling in the oval. If the pair agrees that there is a clear indication of voter intent that could not have been read by the tabulator, the pair will record the vote on the Tally Sheet.
11. When all the ballots have been reviewed, give all the Tally Sheets to the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer will add the tally sheets together with the printed results tape from the tabulator on the Summary Sheet to get the totals for all Races. **The Presiding Officer can then announce the results.**
12. The Presiding Officer and at least one election official can now prepare the Official Return of Votes OR two officials can return to the Town Offices with the Tally Sheets, Summary Sheets and results tape, the tabulator machine, procedures notebook containing the back up memory card, ballot bags and secure all of the items in the vault and prepare the Official Return of Votes the following morning.
13. **At the end of the election night, the Accu-Vote Tabulator, the Procedures Manual including the backup memory card, sealed ballot bags, and ALL election materials must be secured in the vault.**

Method 2: CLOSING PROCEDURES for towns that mark duplicate ballots for rejected or unreadable ballots

(If you are going to hand count unreadable ballots, go back to the Method 1 Closing Procedures.)

1. After the last voter has voted, but **BEFORE the Ender Card has been inserted**, unlock the **front panel access door** with the **plastic covered key** to make the Yes and No Buttons available. Unlock the **side auxiliary compartment** with the plastic covered key and remove all ballots from the Auxiliary compartment. If by chance there are any ballots in the Auxiliary compartment (tabulator rejected ballots that have not had a duplicate ballot marked which are most likely over voted ballots that a voter chose not to correct), two officials must try to insert these ballots in different orientations into the ballot box while holding the **YES** button. **If these ballots continue to be rejected**, give these ballots to a pair of election officials to create duplicate ballots using the procedures outlined in **Section 5**. As the officials mark the duplicate ballots, the officials will label the original ballots with the “This voter’s markings on this ballot were transferred to a machine readable ballot” and then bring the sets of ballots back to the Presiding Officer. The ballots marked by the election officials will then be fed through the tabulator. The rejected or unreadable ballots that have been labeled and attested by 2 election officials will be added to the manila “Spoiled Ballot” envelope.

2. If the tabulator returns (rejects) any duplicate ballots, it is possible that some of the ballots contained over votes. While one election official **holds the YES button** to override any over votes, the other election official feeds the remaining ballots into the tabulator, changing orientation if a ballot is returned. You should not have any ballots that cannot be read by the tabulator using the YES button if the duplicate ballots were marked correctly.

5. **When you are certain** that all ballots that could be read by the optic scan tabulator have been inserted (make sure you have processed ALL absentee ballots and ballots from the Auxiliary side compartment), use the **bare key to unlock and remove the printer cover** from the top of the tabulator.

6. **Check again to be certain that all ballots that could be read by the optic scan tabulator have been fed into the tabulator.** Take the ENDER CARD from the bottom inside pocket of the black carrying case. Insert the ENDER CARD into the tabulator while pressing both the **YES and NO buttons at the same time**—it is easier if one election official holds the buttons and one election official inserts the ender card. When the ender card is inserted, **the printer will automatically print the election results tape.** Tear the tape off and have two election officials sign the tape. The signed tape will be put in a ballot bag with the tally and summary sheets after the Official Return of Votes has been completed.

7. When the machine asks: “**Do you want another printout**”, press YES. You may post this printout on the wall on a LARGE Pre- Printed SIGN that reads: “UNOFFICIAL RESULTS—Hand count and Write-in votes NOT included” or you may follow your town/city procedures for handling the printer

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7. (continued) tape results in towns with multiple voting districts. We suggest that you print 2 or 3 reports. After you have all the Tabulator Results Print Outs that you need, when the machine asks “Do you want another print out?” **press the NO button.**

8. Slide the tabulator forward about 2 inches and **press the RED switch** on the back of the tabulator to turn OFF the tabulator.

9. Use the **bare key to lock the printer cover** on top of the tabulator. Slide the machine off of the ballot box and place the machine and power cord into the black carrying case. Use the **plastic covered key** to OPEN the back of the ballot box.

10. Your first task is to **locate all of the duplicate ballots** in the ballot box. Remove the top few ballots from the regular bin and from the write-in bin looking for the Duplicate Ballot # markings. As you find a duplicate ballot, staple the duplicate ballot to the original ballot with the same number. Continue to remove a few ballots at a time from the top of the two compartments until you have found and stapled all of the duplicate ballots to the original ballots. When you are certain that you have all of the duplicate and original ballots stapled together, place these stapled ballots into a ballot bag. You do not need to review these ballots any further because they have already been checked for write-in names, overvotes, or unusual markings.
11. Take the remaining ballots out of the “Write-in Bin” (the ballot bin on the right) first. The Presiding Officer gives these ballots to a pair or pairs of election officials to go through the ballots to hand count Write-in Candidate names and record the results on a Tally Sheet. The pair should also look for markings of clear voter intent that could not have been “read” by the optical scan reader, such as circling of the candidate name instead of filling in the oval. If the pair agrees that there is a clear indication of voter intent that could not have been read by the tabulator, the pair will record the vote on the Tally Sheet.
12. Remove all of the ballots from the left regular ballot bin. Divide the ballots and give them to pairs of election officials to quickly look for markings of voter intent that could not have been “read” by the optical scan reader such as writing in a candidate’s name without filling in the oval or circling of the candidate’s name instead of filling in the oval. If the pair agrees that there is a clear indication of voter intent that could not have been read by the tabulator, the pair will record the vote for the candidate on the Tally Sheet. **Towns using Method 2 will have a very small number of ballots to hand count—only those ballots where a voter has written in a candidate or where a voter has made a clear expression of voter intent that cannot be read by the tabulator** (such as circling the candidate’s name).
13. When all the ballots have been reviewed, the pair(s) of election officials will give all the ballots and Tally Sheets to the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer will add the tally sheets together with the Printed Results Tape from the Tabulator on the Summary Sheet to get the totals for all Races. **The Presiding Officer can then announce the results.**
14. The Presiding Officer and at least one election official can now prepare the Official Return of Votes OR two officials can return to the town offices with the Tally Sheets, Summary Sheets and results tape, the tabulator machine, procedures notebook containing the back up memory card, sealed ballot bags and secure all of the items in the vault and prepare the Official Return of Votes on the following morning.
15. **At the end of the election night, the Accu-Vote Tabulator, Procedures notebook containing the back up memory card, sealed ballot bags, and ALL election materials must be secured in the vault.**