

## BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Addison Lester, Chairman  
Darryl Hicks  
Aaron Wright

## FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Floyd L Jones, Director  
April Crosby, Elections Supervisor  
Brian Hill, County Registrar



140 Stonewall Avenue West  
Elections Office, Suite 208  
Fayetteville, GA 30214

## AGENDA

July 27, 2018  
5:00 p.m.

---

Welcome to the meeting of your Fayette County Board of Elections. Your participation is appreciated. All regularly scheduled Board meetings are open to the public and are generally held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

### Chairman to Call the Meeting to Order

### Approval of the Agenda

### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

### CERTIFICATION:

1. Certification of the July 24, 2018 General Primary Runoff Election Results.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

2. Consideration of staff's request to approve the June 26, 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Minutes. **Pages 1 - 5**

### PUBLIC HEARING:

3. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as deceased. **Pages 6 - 9**
4. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as felons. **Pages 10 - 11**

### CONSENT AGENDA:

### OLD BUSINESS:

### NEW BUSINESS:

5. Discussion of a potential Legislative Delegation initiative concerning Ethics Filing / Reporting and Vote Centers. **Pages 12 - 40**

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

### ATTORNEY'S REPORTS:

**BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

# BOARD OF ELECTIONS AGENDA REQUEST FORM

**MEETING DATE**  **AGENDA ITEM #**

**PRESENTER(S)**

**TYPE OF REQUEST**

## WORDING FOR THE AGENDA

Consideration of staff's request to approve the June 26, 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Minutes.

## BACKGROUND / HISTORY / DETAILS

O.C.G.A. 50-14-1(3)(B) reads: The regular minutes of a meeting subject to this chapter shall be promptly recorded and such records shall be open to public inspection once approved as official by the agency or its committee, but in no case later than immediately following its next regular meeting; provided, however, that nothing contained in this chapter shall prohibit the earlier release of minutes, whether approved by the agency or not. Such minutes shall, at a minimum, include the names of the members present at the meeting, a description of each motion or other proposal made, the identity of the person making and seconding the motion or other proposal, and a record of all votes. The name of each person voting for or against a proposal shall be recorded. It shall be presumed that the action taken was approved by each person in attendance unless the minutes reflect the name of the persons voting against the proposal or abstaining.

## SPECIFIC ACTION / DIRECTION SOUGHT

Approve the June 26, 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Minutes.

**BOARD OF ELECTIONS**

Addison Lester, Chairman  
 Darryl Hicks  
 Aaron Wright

**FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA**

Floyd L Jones, Director  
 April Crosby, Elections Supervisor  
 Brian Hill, County Registrar



140 Stonewall Avenue West  
 Elections Office, Suite 208  
 Fayetteville, GA 30214

**MINUTES**

June 26, 2018  
 5:00 p.m.

---

Welcome to the meeting of your Fayette County Board of Elections. Your participation is appreciated. All regularly scheduled Board meetings are open to the public and are generally held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

**Chairman to Call the Meeting to Order**

Chairman Lester called the June 26, 2018 Board of Elections Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Wright moved to approve the Agenda as published. Mr. Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

No one spoke during Public Comments.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:****1. Consideration of staff's request to approve the May 25, 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Minutes.**

Mr. Wright moved to approve the May 25, 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Minutes as presented. Chairman Lester seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0-1 with Mr. Hicks abstaining from the vote.

**PUBLIC HEARING:****2. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as deceased.**

No one spoke in favor of or in opposition to staff's recommendation.

Mr. Wright moved to approve staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as deceased. Mr. Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 1," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

**3. Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as felons.**

No one spoke in favor of or in opposition to staff's recommendation.

Mr. Wright moved to approve staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as felons. Mr. Hicks seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 2," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

There was no Consent Agenda item.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

There was no Old Business item.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **4. Consideration of staff's recommendation to revise the Calendar Year 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Schedule."**

Director Jones stated that the Meeting Schedule had originally been approved by the Board late in 2017; however, since there is a runoff election occurring the schedule would need to be changed in order to certify the runoff election results. He recommended that the Meeting Schedule be amended so that it would not meet on July 24 but would rather meet on Friday, July 27 at 5:00 p.m. in the Elections Office.

Mr. Hicks moved to approve staff's recommendation to revise Calendar Year 2018 Board of Elections' Meeting Schedule by cancelling the Tuesday, July 24 meeting and rescheduling for Friday, July 27, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. in the Elections Office. Mr. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 3," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

#### **5. Consideration of staff's recommendation to approve Poll Managers, Assistant Poll Managers, and Clerks for the July 24, 2018 Primary Runoff Election.**

Director Jones presented the Board with recommended Poll Managers, Assistant Poll Managers, and Clerks for the July 24, 2018 Primary Runoff Election. Chairman Lester noted that there was a significant reduction in clerks and he asked if the Poll Managers were okay with the reduced number of clerks. Mr. Jones replied that the Poll Managers were satisfied with the number of clerks they were receiving.

Mr. Hicks moved to approve the Poll Managers, Assistant Poll Managers, and Clerks for the July 24, 2018 Primary Runoff Election. Mr. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 4," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

#### **6. Discussion concerning Senate Bill 17, commonly referred to as the "Brunch Bill."**

Director Jones stated that the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 17 allowing the cities and counties to have Sunday Alcohol Sales at 11:00 on Sunday contingent on being voted on by referendum. He stated that his biggest concerns were the cities and county not being on the same page resulting in multiple elections as well as a possibility of having a dual election with two separate databases. He said he had tried to get information from the Secretary of State's Office regarding this bill and that it has been difficult getting answers from them. Mr. Jones stated that last week the Secretary of State's Office finally clarified that as long as the county and cities pass a resolution or ordinance by August 8, 2018 then the question can be placed on the November ballot without the need for two databases. He stated that he had spoken Patrick Stough about this matter earlier in the day and that he would be communicating this information to the cities and county the next day.

Chairman Lester noted that the Agenda called the bill Senate Bill 19 yet the bill was actually Senate Bill 17. He asked which one it was. Mr. Jones replied that it was a typo and that it really was Senate Bill 17.

Mr. Wright was happy that the Secretary of State's Office provided the needed clarity. Mr. Jones agreed and he added that he was getting the sense that some of the cities would want this on the ballot while others may not.

The Board did not take action on this item and did not provide direction. A copy of this request, identified as "Attachment 5," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

**7. Discussion concerning recent notifications from the Secretary of State's Office regarding campaigning at poll locations and regarding the process of removing felons from the voters rolls.**

Director Jones briefly reviewed two notices that had been issued from the Secretary of State's Office. He stated that the United States Supreme Court recently declared Minnesota's law regarding campaigning at the polls as too broad and unconstitutional. He said the information provided by the Secretary of State showed that the Court favorably viewed Ohio's and Texas' laws, and that Georgia has similar laws to those of Ohio and Texas. He added that the information from the Secretary of State's Office provided further clarity on what is considered as campaigning at the poll locations. Mr. Jones stated that he had read that both Common Cause and the NAACP had dropped their lawsuits against the State of Georgia based on the Supreme Court's ruling.

Director Jones added that efforts are being made by the State of Georgia to fine-tune which felons are unable to vote. He stated that the information from the Secretary of State shows that people with statuses for First Offender, *Nolo Contendere*, and Conditional Discharge are eligible to register to vote and cast a ballot. He mentioned that this Agenda saw quite a number of felons removed from the Electors' List, but he was unsure if similar number of felons would be provided by the State on a month-by-month basis.

The Board did not vote on this matter and did not provide direction. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment 6," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

**8. Discussion concerning the July 24, 2018 General Primary Runoff Election.**

Director Jones stated that three offices will be up for consideration during the runoff election for the Republican Party: Governor, Lt. Governor, and Secretary of State. The Democratic Party will have one office for consideration, namely, the State School Superintendent. He stated that on July 2, 2018 the early voting site in Fayetteville will open for all three weeks, Peachtree City will open for weeks two and three, and Tyrone will open for only week three. He stated there is no voting on Independence Day and there is no Saturday voting.

Mr. Jones reported that the state is predicting a 5% turnout. He stated that Fayette County usually has about twice as many voters than the state predicts, so that means an estimated 8,400 voters will turn out for this election. He stated that although this election has a presumptive budget for three clerks per precinct, 27 precincts decided to have only one clerk, 7 precincts chose to have two clerks, none asked for three clerks, and two asked for no clerk support at all. He stated that given the staggered openings and the reduced numbers of clerks, the county was looking at a projected savings of \$24,000 for this runoff election.

Mr. Jones stated that a press release has been issued and information has been provided on both Facebook and the website informing the public of the staggered openings. He informed the Board that signs have been printed that will be placed at all three locations for all three weeks informing the voting public of when the locations would open.

Mr. Wright asked if the political parties had been provided the signs. Mr. Jones replied he had not spoken to the parties about this but he would send them the information.

The Board did not vote on this item and did not provide direction. A copy of this request, identified as "Attachment 7," follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

**Compensatory Time:** Director Jones stated that the Board was aware that Elections Supervisor April Crosby had an overage of compensatory time and over the months that time has been reduced. He stated that the effort to reduce the comp time began in earnest in May 2017 and since that time Mrs. Crosby has been able to take an aggregate of about 3 ½ months off. He reported that Mrs. Crosby still has 30 hours to take before she is in compliance with policy. He explained that she already has more days scheduled off meaning the next time the Board meets, Mrs. Crosby will be in compliance with the policy.

**ATTORNEY'S REPORTS:**

There was no Attorney's Report.

**BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:**

**Contractual Employees:** Mr. Wright asked if there was further information on making the poll workers contractual workers. Mr. Stough replied that County Attorney Dennis Davenport would further review the matter but there was nothing to report on that issue at this time.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

There was no Executive Session.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Hicks moved to adjourn the June 26, 2018 Board of Elections Meeting. Mr. Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

The June 26, 2018 Board of Elections Meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m.

---

Floyd L. Jones, Director

---

Addison Lester, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Elections of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 27th day of July 2018. Referenced attachments are available upon request in the Board of Elections' Office.

---

Floyd L. Jones, Director

# BOARD OF ELECTIONS AGENDA REQUEST FORM

**MEETING DATE**  **AGENDA ITEM #**

**PRESENTER(S)**

**TYPE OF REQUEST**

## WORDING FOR THE AGENDA

Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as deceased.

## BACKGROUND / HISTORY / DETAILS

O.C.G.A. 21-2-228(d) and 21-2-231 provide instructions pertaining to the removal of registered voters from an Electors List.

The Secretary of State's Office provides monthly reports to county offices detailing deceased voters. This request is based the information provided from the Secretary of State's Office. Families are notified by an official letter informing them of the removal of these electors.

Each person in question has been notified of this meeting via first-class mail as required by law.

## SPECIFIC ACTION / DIRECTION SOUGHT

Conduct Public Hearing on staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as deceased.



## GEORGIA SECRETARY OF STATE VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM

### CANCELLED VOTERS DECEASED

Cancelled Date	Status with Reason	Last Name	First Name	Suffix	Race	Gender	Residence Address	Voter Registration #
07/02/2018	Cancelled Deceased	BABB	JACK		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	243 EASTIN RD FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214-3647	00098883
07/02/2018	Cancelled Deceased	BENSON	JACK		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	105 POND TRCE FAYETTEVILLE GA 30215-5352	00630797
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	GRAY	MARGARETT		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	111 ASHTON PARK PEACHTREE CITY GA 30269-3664	05556780
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	HATTEN	AMY		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	23 COBBLESTONE CRK PEACHTREE CITY GA 30269	05176546
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	HATTON	EMOGENE		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	190 WOODGATE DR FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214-2450	06970864
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	ISON	CHARLES		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	110 EMILY PARK FAYETTEVILLE GA 30215-6897	01712279
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	KOON	JEAN		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	155 VICTORIA DR FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214	00119888
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	MASK	GEORGE		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	577 HARP RD FAYETTEVILLE GA 30215	02928980
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	MAY	SARDAJHII		Unknown	FEMALE	118 EASTIN RD FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214	10448155
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	MILES	MARILYN		Black not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	135 ELENOR DR FAYETTEVILLE GA 30215-2054	02591979
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	OBERG	PATRICIA		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	190 CEDAR CIR FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214-1214	00092409
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	PAPPAS	ACHILLES		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	724 REDWOOD PARK PEACHTREE CITY GA 30269	05785807
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	PARKER	DOROTHY		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	416 JOURNEYS END PEACHTREE CITY GA 30269	04823777
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	POLZIN	JUDITH		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	192 LAKE RD FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214-3524	01661934

**GEORGIA SECRETARY OF STATE VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM**

07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	ROWER	ALFRED		Black not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	175 CHAUCER PKWY FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214	03954896
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	WILLIAMS	JOHN		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	115 STRATFORD WAY FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214- 7311	00105462
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	WILLIAMS	JOHN	JR	White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	2023 VILLAGE PARK DR PEACHTREE CITY GA 30269-2983	01720633
07/03/2018	Cancelled Deceased	WIMMER	WINFORD		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	2024 FOREST DR FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214- 1026	04033702

## GEORGIA SECRETARY OF STATE VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM

### CANCELLED VOTERS

Cancelled Date	Status with Reason	Last Name	First Name	Suffix	Race	Gender	Residence Address	Voter Registration #
07/16/2018	Cancelled Deceased	BRANNEN	MILLARD		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	534 FORREST AVE FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214	01736031
07/16/2018	Cancelled Deceased	EDWARDS	GEORGE	SR	White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	148 ROCKSPRAY RDG PEACHTREE CITY GA 30269-2488	00087561
07/16/2018	Cancelled Deceased	EVERS	BOBBI		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	409 HIGHWAY 314 FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214- 4002	04487794
07/16/2018	Cancelled Deceased	FLETCHER	MARILYNN		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	300 ROCKAWAY RD 232 PEACHTREE CITY GA 30269	00107244
07/16/2018	Cancelled Deceased	PHARR	DENNIS		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	300 EMILY PARK FAYETTEVILLE GA 30215	00504049
07/16/2018	Cancelled Deceased	SEAY	OWEEDA		White not of Hispanic Origin	FEMALE	140 LAKE DR FAYETTEVILLE GA 30215- 2143	00093892
07/16/2018	Cancelled Deceased	JENNINGS	JACK		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	172 PALMETTO RD TYRONE GA 30290-2000	07922180
07/16/2018	Cancelled Deceased	LAWRENCE	BOBBY		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	110 HILLSDALE CT FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214- 1748	00105500

# BOARD OF ELECTIONS AGENDA REQUEST FORM

**MEETING DATE**  **AGENDA ITEM #**

**PRESENTER(S)**

**TYPE OF REQUEST**

## WORDING FOR THE AGENDA

Public Hearing of staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as felons.

## BACKGROUND / HISTORY / DETAILS

O.C.G.A. 21-2-228(d) and 21-2-231 provide instructions pertaining to the removal of registered voters from an Electors List.

The Secretary of State's Office provides monthly reports to county offices detailing registered felons. This request is based the information provided from the Secretary of State's Office. Families are notified by an official letter informing them of the removal of these electors.

Each person in question has been notified of this meeting via first-class mail as required by law.

## SPECIFIC ACTION / DIRECTION SOUGHT

Conduct Public Hearing on staff's recommendation to remove registered Fayette County voters from the Electors List who are registered in the State of Georgia's Secretary of State Voter Registration System as felons.

**GEORGIA SECRETARY OF STATE VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM****CANCELLED VOTERS FOR MONTH OF JULY**

<b>Cancelled Date</b>	<b>Status with Reason</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Suffix</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Residence Address</b>	<b>Voter Registration #</b>
06/29/2018	Cancelled Felon	BETSILL	BRADLEY		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	1162 HIGHWAY 54 W FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214	08543041
06/29/2018	Cancelled Felon	CARPENTER	BRANDON		White not of Hispanic Origin	MALE	120 MILL WOOD LN FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214	10042110
06/29/2018	Cancelled Felon	RAGLAND	TARIANO		Black not of Hispanic Origin	UNKNOW N	130 LAFAYETTE DR FAYETTEVILLE GA 30214	05726738

# BOARD OF ELECTIONS AGENDA REQUEST FORM

**MEETING DATE**  **AGENDA ITEM #**

**PRESENTER(S)**

**TYPE OF REQUEST**

## WORDING FOR THE AGENDA

Discussion of a potential Legislative Delegation initiative concerning Ethics Filing / Reporting and Vote Centers.

## BACKGROUND / HISTORY / DETAILS

During the 2018 Board of Commissioners Retreat, the Board consented with Commissioner Rousseau calling for the Fayette County Legislative Delegation to consider moving Ethics filing and reporting back to the state level.

Discussion is further request to consider the possibility of changing the current Elections process to a Vote Center process. If agreeable, perhaps this issue can also be requested of the Fayette County Legislative Delegation.

This packet does not have supporting documents for the Ethics question, but it does provide information on Vote Centers.

## SPECIFIC ACTION / DIRECTION SOUGHT

Direction on potential Legislative Delegation initiative concerning Ethics Filing / Reporting and Vote Centers.

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES**

**“VOTE CENTERS COME OF AGE”**



# NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

## THE CANVASS: STATES AND ELECTION REFORM®



A Newsletter for Legislatures  
August 2011  
No. 22

 Full PDF version of [The Canvass August 2011](#)

### In This Issue

[Vote Centers Come of](#)

[Pre-Election Day Voting—More Options, Shorter Time Frames](#)

[Variations in Voter ID Legislation](#)

[Worth Noting](#)

[From NCSL's Elections Team](#)

### Vote Centers Come of Age

Election Day vote centers are an alternative to the traditional, neighborhood -based precinct system. They allow voters to cast their ballots at any polling place in the jurisdiction, regardless of their residential address. Hence, Colorado's slogan, "With Vote Centers, there is no wrong place to vote!"

Election Day vote centers were first tried in 2003; now, less than a decade later, many states are embracing the concept. In the world of election policy, that's lightning-fast acceptance. Why are they suddenly so popular? Because they offer these advantages: "convenience, convenience, convenience," says Senator Ron Alting of Indiana, who sponsored successful legislation this year to permit all Indiana counties to use vote centers. Besides convenience, he adds that "for local government, it's beautiful because it offers them huge savings

Scott Doyle, county clerk in [Larimer County, Colo.](#), came up with the idea, and the term. The inspiration came in 2000, when legally registered voters in his jurisdiction were barred by police at the courthouse door from voting after 7 p.m. These voters had first showed up at the wrong precinct, and were directed to the courthouse as a last recourse. He couldn't make it through the door on time. Doyle thought, "There's got to be a better way."

The better way was to allow registered voters in the county to vote at any designated vote center, not just their precinct's location. The centers would be strategically placed throughout the county near heavily trafficked areas. Doyle, on behalf of the Colorado County Clerks Association, went to the legislature, explained the new concept, and got the innovation passed in 2002. And in 2003 the inaugural 31 vote centers replaced the traditional 143 precincts in Larimer County. Among voters, his idea was met with some skepticism: What could be more beloved American tradition than casting one's vote with neighbors? Initial objections, however, were short-lived.

By most accounts, the new system worked. Voters didn't need to know their precinct location; fewer poll workers (and thus less money) were required; and no one was turned away and sent to the courthouse. That was key for Doyle because his whole motivation was to make it easier for more voters to vote.

After nine years of experience with vote centers under his belt, what are Doyle's impressions now? For Election Day voting, vote centers are still his favorite way to go, and he's ready and willing to advise other states about how to adopt them. But he's also become an advocate for an all-mail system, something Colorado does not permit for general elections. He says that if he could make the change to all mail, he could "return \$1 million to his commissioners."

What about the rest of the country? After Colorado, Indiana was the next to try vote centers, with a five-county pilot project, including Senator Alting's Tippecanoe County. "It's been a huge success," Alting says. This year's bill to permit all Indiana counties to use vote centers was supported by both political parties in the five pilot counties. "Vote centers are an absolute no-brainer," he says. "We had unanimous support with Democrats and Republicans in those counties. It was somewhat of a shock to the General Assembly that something could be so good on both sides."

He added that while he sponsored a variety of highly visible bills this year, including one prohibiting the [synthetic drugs](#) known as "Spice" and "Bath Salts," it was center that grabbed his constituents' attention. "No other topic was as popular. Everybody grabbed me, saying, 'don't you let them take our vote centers away.'" In addition to Colorado, [Indiana](#), [South Dakota](#), [North Dakota](#), [Tennessee](#) and [Texas](#) have also run pilot vote center projects.

Six states have enacted legislation this year to permit (but not require) vote centers. [Indiana](#), [Tennessee](#) and [Texas](#) are moving beyond their pilot projects, and [Arizona](#), [New Mexico](#) and [Utah](#) are initiating vote centers. The details vary (how many centers and what voter education are required), but the goals are much the same: Save money and offer voters convenience.

But [Maricopa County](#), Ariz., home to more than half the state's population, has signaled it will not use vote centers. The issue is cost. Maricopa's current voting equipment does not support the numerous kinds of ballots required, and buying new equipment is not an option.

Vote centers may not be workable in every locale. Jurisdictions may want to consider whether they are prepared to provide:

**The appropriate ballot for each voter's address**, either by using print-on-demand systems, electronic voting equipment systems that can re-set for each voter, or at least a sufficient supply of all the different paper ballots required in that county.

**Electronic poll books** that allow poll workers to look up a voter's registration, get the proper ballot, and enter data. Poll books must be networked to prevent voters from casting multiple ballots.

**Voter education** that informs voters thoroughly of all the changes involved with vote centers. Mindy Moretti of the [Pew Center on the States](#) says "it's the educational learning curve for your voters that matters. Without it, the first time can be a disaster." She points to [Colorado's 2006 experience](#), when voters in several counties faced long waits. She says that voters need to know that they won't be voting at the usual school or church, and administrators need to have sufficient voting equipment available to accommodate expected turnout.

In addition to greater convenience, Political Scientist Robert Stein from Rice University says his research has shown that centers [increase voter turnout](#). "Of all the election reforms that have been adopted, this is the only one anybody's been able to find that has an effect on turnout and cost," he says.

This website uses cookies to analyze traffic and for other purposes. You consent to the use of cookies if you use this website.

[Continue](#)

[Our online privacy policy](#)



As for costs, the Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute did a county-by-county [economic analysis](#) of vote centers. Compared with precinct voting, on a per-vote basis, vote centers are expected to be cheaper by 29 percent to 54 percent, depending on the county. The [District of Columbia](#) considered using 16 vote centers for a citywide special election instead of 143 precincts to save what was calculated to be more than \$200,000. The city board, however, opted to continue using precincts, fearing potential disenfranchisement.

Are vote centers right for your state? [Indiana's](#) secretary of state and Colorado's [Larimer County](#) clerk's offices both provide lots of information on their Web pages. From an anti-vote center perspective, try the [North Carolina Coalition for Verified Voting](#). Or, see NCSL's [Vote Center](#) webpage for more information.

**Pre-Election Day Voting—More Options, Shorter Time Frames**

Over the last generation, many states have offered more and more opportunities for citizens to vote *before* Election Day. These include in-person early voting (currently 32 states plus the District of Columbia), no-excuse absentee voting (27 states plus the District of Columbia), and all-mail voting (Oregon and Washington).

This year, however, the trend has gone the other way. Seven states—Florida, Georgia, Maine, Ohio, Tennessee, West Virginia and Wisconsin—have shortened in-person, early voting time frames. The move may be based on administrative concerns (is it really necessary to have six weeks to cast your ballot?), fiscal realities (the longer in-person early voting centers are open, the longer staff need to be paid to run them), or perhaps political motivations, as the New York Times claims in this June [opinion piece](#).

NCSL elections expert Jennie Bowser says "offering voters convenience through an extended early voting period comes at a high cost, and it may well be the continuing poor economy that's driving states to cut back on early voting periods." Current state-by-state information on all early voting options are covered in NCSL's [Absentee and Early Voting](#).

**Variations in Voter ID Legislation**

In January, The Canvass named 2011 "The Year of Voter Identification Legislation." And so it has been. Thirty-four states considered such legislation, leading to seven enacted laws and five vetoes so far. In virtually all this legislation, a strict requirement for a photo ID has been included (instead of lesser requirements that might permit voter verification by non-photo IDs or affidavits), along with a requirement to provide ID cards at no cost to voters who need them. The laws are not all the same, however. Here's a look at some of the differences. For more details, see NCSL's Voter Identification Web page.

**Acceptable ID and Other Provisions of State Laws**

(Acceptable ID in all states includes a driver's license or ID card from that state and a passport; other acceptable IDs are listed here.)

	Other Acceptable ID (must have photo)	Significant Provisions
Alabama (Takes effect after pre-clearance from the Department of Justice.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Military ID</li> <li>· Tribal ID</li> <li>· Student or Employee ID</li> <li>· Driver's licenses from other states.</li> </ul>	Requirement is waived if the voter is identified by two election officials as an eligible voter on the poll list, and both election workers sign a sworn affidavit so stating
Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Concealed carry handgun license</li> <li>· Student ID from a Kansas college or university</li> <li>· Government employee badge</li> <li>· Government public assistance ID</li> <li>· An expired ID for those 65 or older.</li> </ul>	Proof of citizenship will be required beginning in 2013. Applicants must prove registered voter status to receive a free ID. Absentee ballot applications must include a driver's license, ID card number, or a photocopy of any other of the acceptable forms of ID.
Rhode Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Non-photo ID will be accepted until 2014</li> <li>· Photo IDs will be required, including military and college IDs after 2014.</li> </ul>	
South Carolina (Takes effect after pre-clearance from the Department of Justice.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Current military ID</li> <li>· Current SC voter registration card.</li> </ul>	Requirement is waived if: Voter signs an affidavit stating a religious objection to being photographed. There is a "reasonable impediment that prevents elector from obtaining photo ID."
Tennessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Driver's licenses from other states</li> <li>· Photo employee ID card issued by any state or the federal government</li> <li>· Valid U.S. military ID.</li> </ul>	Does not apply to full-time residents of nursing homes, the indigent, those unable to obtain underlying identification without paying a fee or those with a religious objection to being photographed.
Texas (takes effect after pre-clearance from the Department of Justice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· ID that is not more than 60 days past expiration</li> <li>· U.S. citizenship certificate</li> <li>· A concealed carry handgun license.</li> </ul>	Does not apply to people with documented disabilities who do not have appropriate ID

This website uses cookies to analyze traffic and for other purposes. You consent to the use of cookies if you use this website.

Wisconsin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Cards issued by federally recognized Indian tribes</li> <li>·Certificates of naturalization issued not more than two years before the election</li> <li>·Student ID with expiration date</li> <li>·Military ID.</li> </ul>	Absentee ballot applicants are also required to show ID, but nursing home residents are exempted. The law allows for future establishment of REAL ID requirements.
-----------	--	--

### One Big Number: 768,211

That's the number of voter registration forms received by states over the Internet in 2010. This is 1.69 percent of all forms received, up from 1.1 percent in 2008, according to the [Voter Registration Report](#) for 2008 through 2010, just released by the [U.S. Election Assistance Commission](#). For more, see [NCSL's Electronic Voter Registration](#) page.

### Worth Noting

[Rock the Vote](#), an advocacy group that supports easier access to the polls for young people, has produced a national [Voting System Scorecard](#) and [r](#) on the ease of voter registration, voter ID requirements, civics class requirements, and more. Legislators might like to see where their states stand in the eyes of this group

MIT political scientist Charles Stewart III has just published a literature review, "[Voting Technologies](#)," in the 2011 Annual Review of Political Science. In it, he ar these questions, among others: How do voting machines affect voter choices? What impact do these technologies have on down-ballot races? Why do jurisdictions have t technologies they have? To that last question, the answer is most commonly based on "a legacy of past decisions." For answers to the others, you must read the review.

This year Maine ended its "same day registration," dropping the number of states that permit voters to register and vote on the same day from eight to seven. But that may the end of the story in Maine; a drive began in July to put a [referendum](#) on the ballot that would restore same day registration.

The U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration held a hearing to fill U.S. Election Assistance Commission seats. Nominees were Tom Hicks, from the House Committee on Administration; Gineen Bresso, currently a commissioner whose term is expiring; and Myrna Perez, senior counsel at the Brennan Center for Justice. Confir votes are not yet scheduled.

South Carolina's newspaper, [The State](#), describes two medical doctors who have spent years helping patients register to vote, and are now helping get birth certificat those who need them so they can get a photo ID to vote under the state's new requirements.

Last month the Heritage Foundation and the Military Voter Protection Project released a report, [A President's Opportunity: Making Military Voters Priority](#). Authors M. Eric Eversole and Hans von Spakovsky analyze the implementation of the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE Act) and make recommendations on what still needs to be done to ensure that citizens in the military are able to vote.

### From NCSL's Elections Team

It's August, and that means it's time for the Legislative Summit in San Antonio, August 8-11. We are hosting sessions on:

- MOVE Act Compliance
- Getting Voter Registration Right
- Can States Stage More Efficient Elections?

There will also be several redistricting sessions to choose from as well. If you are joining us, please let us know. We'd love to meet our *Canvass* readers, and maybe do some qu interviews with you on your state's efforts to run great elections. Please [email](#) or call us at 303-364-7700.

Thank you.

From the *Canvass* Team

Jennie Bowser, Tim Storey and Wendy Underhill

### NCSL Member Toolbox

#### Members Resources

- Get Involved With NCSL
- Jobs Clearinghouse
- Legislative Careers
- NCSL Staff Directories
- Staff Directories
- StateConnect Directory

- Terms and Conditions

#### Policy & Research Resources

- Bill Information Service
- Legislative Websites
- NCSL Bookstore
- State Legislatures Magazine

#### Accessibility Support

- Tel: 1-800-659-2656 or 711
- Accessibility Support
- Accessibility Policy

#### Meeting Resources

- Calendar
- Online Registration

#### Press Room

- Media Contact
- NCSL in the News
- Press Releases

#### Denver

7700 East First Place  
Denver, CO 80230  
Tel: 303-364-7700 | Fax: 303-364-781

#### Washington

444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
Tel: 202-624-5400 | Fax: 202-737-101

This website uses cookies to analyze traffic and for other purposes. You consent to the use of cookies if you use this website.

Continue

Our online privacy policy



# THE CANVASS

States and Election Reform®



Number 22 / August 2011

## Vote Centers Come of Age

**E**lection Day vote centers are an alternative to the traditional, neighborhood-based precinct system. They allow voters to cast their ballots at any polling place in the jurisdiction, regardless of their residential address. Hence, Colorado’s slogan, “With Vote Centers, there is no wrong place to vote!”

Election Day vote centers were first tried in 2003; now, less than a decade later, many states are embracing the concept. In the world of election policy, that’s lightning-fast acceptance. Why are they suddenly so popular? Because they offer these advantages: “convenience, convenience, convenience,” says Senator Ron Alting of Indiana, who sponsored successful legislation this year to permit all Indiana counties to use vote centers. Besides convenience, he adds that “for local government, it’s beautiful because it offers them huge savings.”

Scott Doyle, county clerk in Larimer County, Colo., came up with the idea, and the term. The inspiration came in 2000, when legally registered voters in his jurisdiction were barred by police at the courthouse door from voting after 7 p.m. These voters had first showed up at the wrong precinct, and were directed to the courthouse as a last recourse. But they couldn’t make it through the door on time. Doyle thought, “There’s got to be a better way.”

The better way was to allow registered voters in the county to vote at any designated vote center, not just their precinct’s location. The centers would be strategically placed

throughout the county near heavily trafficked areas. Doyle, on behalf of the Colorado County Clerks Association, went to the legislature, explained the new concept, and got the innovation passed in 2002. And in 2003 the inaugural 31 vote centers replaced the traditional 143 precincts in Larimer County. Among voters, his idea was met with some skepticism: What could be a more beloved American tradition than casting one’s vote with neighbors? Initial objections, however, were short-lived.

By most accounts, the new system worked. Voters didn’t need to know their precinct location; fewer poll workers (and thus fewer dollars) were required; and no one was turned away and sent to the courthouse. That was key for Doyle because his whole motivation was to make it easier for more voters to vote.

After nine years of experience with vote centers under his belt, what are Doyle’s impressions now? For Election Day voting, vote centers are still his favorite way to go, and he’s ready and willing to advise other states about how to adopt them. But he’s also become an advocate for an all-mail system, something Colorado does not permit for general elections. He says that if he could make the change to all mail, he could “return \$1 million to his commissioners.”

What about the rest of the country? After Colorado, Indiana was the next to try vote centers, with a five-county pilot project, including Senator Alting’s Tippecanoe County. “It’s been a huge success,” Alting says. This year’s bill to

*continued on page 2*



**can•vass** (n.)

Compilation of election returns and validation of the outcome that forms the basis of the official results by a political subdivision.

—U.S. Election Assistance Commission:  
*Glossary of Key Election Terminology*

### In This Issue

Vote Centers Come of Age .....	1
Pre-Election Day Voting—More Options, Shorter Time Frames .....	3
Variations in Voter ID Legislation .....	4
Worth Noting .....	4
From NCSL’s Election Team .....	4

## Vote Centers Come of Age

*continued from page 1*

permit all Indiana counties to use vote centers was supported by both political parties in the five pilot counties. “Vote centers are an absolute no-brainer,” he says. “We had unanimous support with Democrats and Republicans in those counties. It was somewhat of a shock to the General Assembly that something could be so good on both sides.”

He added that while he sponsored a variety of highly visible bills this year, including one prohibiting the synthetic drugs known as “Spice” and “Bath Salts,” it was vote centers that grabbed his constituents’ attention. “No other topic was as popular. Everybody grabbed me, saying, ‘don’t you let them take our vote centers away.’” In addition to Colorado and Indiana, South Dakota, North Dakota, Tennessee and Texas have also run pilot vote center projects.

Six states have enacted legislation this year to permit (but not require) vote centers. Indiana, Tennessee and Texas are moving beyond their pilot projects, and Arizona, New Mexico and Utah are initiating vote centers. The details vary (how many centers and what voter education are required), but the goals are much the same: Save money and offer voters convenience.


But Maricopa County, Ariz., home to more than half the state’s population, has signaled it will not use vote centers. The issue is cost. Maricopa’s current voting equipment does not support the numerous kinds of ballots required, and buying new equipment is not an option.

Vote centers may not be workable in every locale. For them to work, jurisdictions may want to consider whether they are prepared to provide:

- The appropriate ballot for each voter’s address, either by using print-on-demand systems, electronic voting equipment that can be re-set for each voter, or a sufficient supply all the different paper ballots that may be required.
- Electronic poll books that allow poll workers to look up a voter’s registration, get the proper ballot, and enter data. Poll books must be networked to prevent voters from casting multiple ballots.
- Voter education that informs voters thoroughly of all the changes involved with vote centers. Mindy Moretti of the Pew Center on the States says “it’s the educational learning curve for your voters that matters. Without it, the first time can be a disaster.” She points to Colorado’s 2006 experience, when voters in some counties faced long waits. She says that voters need to know that they won’t be voting at the usual school or church, and administrators need to have sufficient voting equipment available to accommodate expected turnout.

In addition to greater convenience, political scientist Robert Stein from Rice University says his research has shown that centers increase voter turnout. “Of all the election reforms that have been adopted, this is the only one anybody’s been able to find that has an effect on turnout and cost,” he says.

As for costs, the Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute did a county-by-county economic analysis of vote centers. Compared with precinct voting, on a per-vote basis, vote centers are expected to be cheaper by 29 percent to 54 percent, depending on the county. The District of Columbia considered using 16 vote centers for a citywide special election in April instead of 143 precincts to save what was calculated to be more than \$200,000. The city board, however, opted to continue using precincts, fearing potential disenfranchisement.

Are vote centers right for your state? The offices of the Indiana secretary of state and Larimer County clerk both provide lots of information on their Web pages. For an anti-vote center perspective, try the North Carolina Coalition for Verified Voting. See NCSL’s Vote Center webpage for more information. 

### States That Permit the Use of Vote Centers

Arizona  
Colorado  
Indiana  
New Mexico  
North Dakota  
South Dakota  
Tennessee  
Texas  
Utah

Note: In these states, local election officials are permitted by state law to use vote centers in place of precinct polling places.

### One Big Number: 768,211

That’s the number of voter registration forms received by states over the Internet in 2010. This is 1.69 percent of all forms received, up from 1.1 percent in 2008, according to the Voter Registration Report for 2008 through 2010, just released by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. For more, see NCSL’s Electronic Voter Registration page.

## Variations in Voter ID Legislation

In January, The Canvass named 2011 “The Year of Voter Identification Legislation.” And so it has been. Thirty-four states considered such legislation, leading to seven enactments and five vetoes so far. In virtually all this legislation, a strict requirement for a photo ID has been included (instead of lesser requirements that might permit voter verification by non-photo IDs or affidavits), along with a requirement to provide ID cards at no cost to voters who need them. The laws are not all the same, however. Here’s a look at some of the differences. For more details, see NCSL’s Voter Identification Web page. [🔗](#)

### Acceptable ID and Other Provisions of State Laws

(Acceptable ID in all states includes a driver’s license or ID card from that state and a passport; other acceptable IDs are listed here.)


State	Other Acceptable ID (must have photo)	Significant Provisions
Alabama (Takes effect after pre-clearance from the Department of Justice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Military ID</li> <li>• Tribal ID</li> <li>• Student or Employee ID</li> <li>• Driver’s licenses from other states</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirement is waived if the voter is identified by two election officials as an eligible voter on the poll list, and both election workers sign a sworn affidavit so stating</li> </ul>
Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concealed carry handgun license</li> <li>• Student ID from a Kansas college or university</li> <li>• Government employee badge</li> <li>• Government public assistance ID</li> <li>• An expired ID for those 65 or older</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of citizenship will be required beginning in 2013</li> <li>• Applicants must prove registered voter status to receive a free ID</li> <li>• Absentee ballot applications must include a driver’s license, ID card number, or a photocopy of any other of the acceptable forms of ID</li> </ul>
Rhode Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Military ID</li> <li>• IDs issued by a U.S. educational institution</li> <li>• Government-issued medical card with photo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Until 2014 non-photo ID will be accepted, such as birth certificates and Social Security cards</li> </ul>
South Carolina (Takes effect after pre-clearance from the Department of Justice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current military ID</li> <li>• Current SC voter registration card</li> </ul>	<p>Requirement is waived if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voter signs an affidavit stating a religious objection to being photographed</li> <li>• There is a “reasonable impediment that prevents elector from obtaining photo ID”</li> </ul>
Tennessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driver’s licenses from other states</li> <li>• Photo employee ID card issued by any state or the federal government</li> <li>• Valid U.S. military ID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not apply to full-time residents of nursing homes, the indigent, those unable to obtain underlying identification without paying a fee or those with a religious objection to being photographed</li> </ul>
Texas (takes effect after pre-clearance from the Department of Justice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ID that is not more than 60 days past expiration</li> <li>• U.S. citizenship certificate</li> <li>• A concealed carry handgun license</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not apply to people with documented disabilities who do not have appropriate ID</li> </ul>
Wisconsin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cards issued by federally recognized Indian tribes</li> <li>• Certificates of naturalization issued not more than two years before the election</li> <li>• Student ID with expiration date</li> <li>• Military ID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absentee ballot applicants are also required to show ID, but nursing home residents are exempted; the law allows for future establishment of REAL ID requirements</li> </ul>

## Pre-Election Day Voting—More Options, Shorter Time Frames

Over the last generation, many states have offered more and more opportunities for citizens to vote before Election Day. These include in-person early voting (currently 32 states plus the District of Columbia), no-excuse absentee voting (27 states plus the District of Columbia), and all-mail voting (Oregon and Washington).

This year, however, the trend has gone the other way. Seven states—Florida, Georgia, Maine, Ohio, Tennessee, West Virginia and Wisconsin—have shortened in-person, early voting time frames. The move may be based on administrative concerns (is it really necessary to have six weeks to


cast your ballot?), fiscal realities (the longer in-person early voting centers are open, the longer staff need to be paid to run them), or perhaps political motivations.

NCSL elections expert Jennie Bowser says “offering voters convenience through an extended early voting period comes at a high cost, and it may well be the continuing poor economy that’s driving states to cut back on early voting periods.” Current state-by-state information on all early voting options are covered in NCSL’s Absentee and Early Voting. 

## Worth

- Rock the Vote, an advocacy group that supports easier access to the polls for young people, has produced a national Voting System Scorecard and report on the ease of voter registration, voter ID requirements, civics class requirements, and more. Legislators might like to see where their states stand in the eyes of this group.

## Noting

- MIT political scientist Charles Stewart III has just published a literature review, “Voting Technologies,” in the 2011 Annual Review of Political Science. In it, he answers these questions, among others: How do voting machines affect voter choices? What impact do these technologies have on down-ballot races? Why do jurisdictions have the technologies they have? To that last question, the answer is most commonly based on “a legacy of past decisions.” For answers to the others, you must read the review.
- This year, Maine ended its “same day registration,” dropping the number of states that permit voters to register and vote on the same day from eight to seven. That may not be the end of the story; a drive began in July to put a referendum on the ballot that would restore same day registration.
- The U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration held a hearing in June to fill U.S. Election Assistance Commission seats. Nominees were Tom Hicks, from the House Committee on Administration; Gineen Bresso, currently a commissioner whose term is expiring; and Myrna Perez, senior counsel at the Brennan Center for Justice. Confirmation votes are not yet scheduled.
- South Carolina’s newspaper, The State, describes two medical doctors who have spent years helping patients register to vote, and are now helping get birth certificates for those who need them so they can get a photo ID to vote under the state’s new requirements.
- Last month the Heritage Foundation and the Military Voter Protection Project released a report, A President’s Opportunity: Making Military Voters A Priority. Authors M. Eric Eversole and Hans von Spakovsky analyze the implementation of the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE Act) and make recommendations on what still needs to be done to ensure that citizens in the military are able to vote. 

## From NCSL’s Election Team

It’s August, and that means it’s time for the Legislative Summit in San Antonio, August 8-11. We are hosting elections sessions on:

- MOVE Act Compliance
- Getting Voter Registration Right
- Can States Stage More Efficient Elections?

There will be several redistricting sessions to choose from as well. If you are joining us, please let us know. We’d love to meet our Canvass readers, and do some quick interviews with you on your state’s efforts to run great elections. Please e-mail us or call us at (303) 364-7700.

*From Jennie Bowser, Tim Storey,  
Wendy Underhill and Susan Frederick*



### THE CANVASS

States and Election Reform  
A Newsletter for Legislatures © 2011



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES  
*The Forum for America's Ideas*

Published by the National Conference of State Legislatures  
William T. Pound, Executive Director  
7700 East First Place  
Denver, Colorado 80230  
(303) 364-7700  
(303) 364-7800  
www.ncsl.org

In conjunction with NCSL, funding support for this publication is provided by the Pew Charitable Trusts through its Pew Center on the States' Election Initiatives project. The Canvass seeks to inform legislators and staff through the sharing of research, analysis and legislative best practices, thereby helping legislatures to achieve voter-focused election reform. Any opinions, findings or conclusions in this publication are those of NCSL and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Pew Center on the States. Links provided do not necessarily indicate NCSL endorsement of these sites.

To subscribe, contact [TheCanvass@ncsl.org](mailto:TheCanvass@ncsl.org)

NCSL Elections Staff  
Jennie Drage Bowser, Susan Parnas Frederick, Tim Storey and Wendy Underhill  
Layout and design: Leann Stelzer

# NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

## VOTE CENTER INTRODUCTION



# NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

## Introduction

Vote centers are an alternative to traditional, neighborhood-based precincts. When a jurisdiction opts to use vote centers, voters may cast their ballots on Election Day at any vot center in the jurisdiction, regardless of their residential address. Colorado was the first state to use vote centers with a pilot program in Larimer County. States either permit jurisd to replace precincts with vote centers, or have required them statewide.

Thirteen states allow jurisdictions to use vote centers on Election Day: Arizona, Arkansas, California (beginning in 2018), Colorado, Indiana, Iowa (for some elections), Nev Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Wyoming.

Additional states may permit the use of vote centers during the early voting period.

### Possible advantages:

Voter convenience — Citizens can vote near home, near work or school, or anywhere that is convenient.

Financial savings — With fewer locations to staff, Election Day expenses are reduced.

Turnout — Because of convenience, turnout may increase.

### Possible drawbacks:

Tradition — The civic experience of voting with neighbors at a local school, church, or other polling place is changed.

Voter education — Vote centers can cause confusion if the switch isn't well publicized and explained to the public.

Equipment — Vote centers must be able to produce the appropriate ballot for each voter; this requires either touchscreen machines that can be reset for each voter or "pri demand" equipment.

Technology — Many jurisdictions first convert to the use of "electronic poll books;" when a voter casts a ballot in one location, it is recorded at all locations via networked computers.

## State Specifics

State	Year Enacted	Location Within Jurisdiction	Number Required	Method of Verifying Voter Identity
Arizona Ariz. Rev. Stat. §16-411(B)(4)	2011 <a href="#">HB 2303</a>	The county board of supervisors and the county recorder establish voting centers at county offices or other locations in the county deemed appropriate.	Not specified.	Not specified.
Arkansas Ark. Stat. Ann. §7-1-113 §7-5-101 (e)(1)(A)	2013 <a href="#">HB 1875</a>	Not specified, but locations must have a secure electronic connection that prevents unauthorized access to the computerized registration book.	A county board of election commissioners may establish 1 or more vote centers.	The vote center shall have a secure electronic connection to prevent an elector from voting more than once.
California West's Ann. Cal. Elec. Code § 4005	2017 <a href="#">SB 117</a>	Equitably distributed across the county so as to afford maximally convenient options for voters and at accessible locations near to public transportation routes. When locating vote centers election officials must also consider a variety of factors outlined in § 4005(10)(B).	1 vote center for every 50,000 registered voters from 10 days before until 4 days before the election. 1 vote center for every 10,000 registered voters in the three days before the election through election day.	Vote centers must have an electronic mechanism for county election officials to immediately access voter registration data and determine whether or not the voter has been issued a vote by mail ballot, and whether or not a ballot has been received by the election officials. The electronic mechanism shall not be connected in any way to the voting system.

This website uses cookies to analyze your usage and for other purposes. You consent to the use of cookies if you use this website.

Continue

[Our online privacy policy](#)



**Colorado** 2004  
 Colo. Rev. Stat. **SB 153**  
 §1-5-102.9

Must consider proximity to public transportation and availability of parking; geographic features that affect access and convenience; equitable distribution across county; existence and location of population centers; access for voters with disabilities; use of existing voting locations that serve a significant number of electors; and use of public buildings.

Counties with 25,000+ active electors: 1 center per 30,000 active electors (at least 1) during early voting; 1 per 15,000 active electors on Election Day (at least 3).

Counties with 10,000 to 25,000 active electors: at least 1 center during early voting and at least 3 centers on Election Day.

Counties with <10,000 active electors: at least 1 center during early voting and on Election Day.

Each voter service and polling center must provide secure computer access and access to the centralized statewide voter registration system.

**Indiana** 2006  
 Ind. Code **HB 1011**  
 §3-11-18.1

Among other things, the vote center plan must include the total number of centers to be established, the number of voters within the county, the number of precincts whose polls will be located at the vote center and a certification that the center complies with accessibility requirements.

Counties with 25,000+ active voters: at least 1 center for each 10,000 active voters and a center for any fraction of 10,000 voters.

Vote centers must have electronic poll books that create a secure electronic connection between the county election board and precinct election officials administering a vote center.

**Iowa** 2008  
 Iowa Code **HF 2620**  
 §49.11  
 §49.21  
 Iowa Admin. Code 721-21.75 (49)

Note: Vote centers are authorized only for city, school and special elections in Iowa

Must be in a central location and accessible to persons with disabilities. At least 1 must be located within the boundaries of the political subdivision for which the election is being conducted.

Not specified. Designated by the county commissioner of elections.

Voting centers may have paper or electronic registers, but may not have interactive, direct access to the statewide voter registration database. It is a crime of election misconduct in the first degree if a person knowingly votes or attempts to vote at more than one voting center for the same election.

**New Mexico** 2011  
 N. M. Stat. Ann. **SB 337**  
 §1-3-4

New Mexico permits consolidated precinct polling locations, which serve a number of precincts, but voters still have an assigned location within the county.

Not specified, but consolidated precincts for primary or general elections shall be composed of no more than ten precincts.

Each consolidated precinct polling location shall have a broadband internet connection and real-time access to the statewide voter registration electronic management system.

This website uses cookies to analyze site usage and for other purposes. You consent to the use of cookies if you use this website.

Consolidated precinct polling

Continue

Our online privacy policy

locations must be centrally located, make voting more convenient and accessible to voters, and not result in delays for voters in the voting process.

**North Dakota** 2007 Accessible to the elderly and physically disabled. Must serve as a designated polling place for at least one precinct in the county in addition to serving as the site where any county voter may cast a ballot. Not specified. Not specified.

N.D. Cent. Code [HB 1378](#)

§16.1-04-02

**South Dakota** 2012 Not specified. Not specified. Secure, encrypted electronic poll books shall be used in lieu of paper registration books.

S.D. Codified Laws §12-14-17 [SB 58](#)

**Tennessee** 2008 Locations must consider the density of the county population, the geographic dividers, and all other facts and circumstances that exist within the county. 1 for every 10,000 registered voters, but at least 2 in the county. Each center must have a secure electronic connection to the computerized voter registration system permitting all voting information processed by any computer at a convenient voting center to be immediately accessible to all other computers at all convenient voting centers in the county. The secure electronic connection shall be sufficient to prevent any voter from voting more than once and to prevent unauthorized access to the computerized voter registration system.

Tenn. Code Ann. §2-3-301 to §2-3-308 [HB 3687](#)

(pilot project for some municipalities)

2011 [HB 1268](#)

(pilot project expanded to additional municipalities)

2017 [SB 2101](#)

(pilot project expanded to some counties)

**Texas** 2009 Counties must adopt a methodology for determining where each vote center (known in Texas as a countywide polling place) will be located and solicit input from organizations who represent minority voters during this process. The total number of countywide polling places may not be less than 50% the number of precinct polling places that would otherwise be located in that county; or 65% of the number of total precinct polling places in the first year in which the county participates in the program. The total number of permanent branch Countywide polling places require a computerized voter registration list that allows an election officer at the polling place to verify that a voter has not previously voted in the election.

Tex. Election Code §43.007 [HB 719](#)

This website uses cookies to analyze traffic and for other purposes. You consent to the use of cookies if you use this website.

[Continue](#)

[Our online privacy policy](#)

and temporary branch polling places open for voting in a county commissioners precinct does not exceed more than twice the number of permanent branch and temporary branch polling places in another county commissioners precinct.

<p><b>Utah</b> Utah Code Ann. §20A-3-701 to §20A-3-703</p>	<p>2011 <b>HB 130</b></p>	<p>Must be located in a government building or office (unless there is none available) that can be scheduled for use during election day voter hours, has the physical facilities necessary to accommodate election day voting requirements, has adequate space and has adequate security, public accessibility and parking.</p>	<p>Not specified.</p>	<p>A voting center ballot must be capable of being retrieved by the election official during the canvass if the voter cast a ballot at another location or before election day.</p>
<p><b>Wyoming</b></p>	<p>2015 <b>SF 52</b></p>	<p>Not specified.</p>	<p>Not specified.</p>	<p>Vote centers must be connected through secure internet connections to provide voting information to and receive voting information from the electronic poll book maintained by the county clerk.</p>

**Additional Resources**

Articles from NCSL's elections newsletter, *The Canvass*:

[Vote Centers Come of Age](#)

[Vote Centers—The Big-Box Option](#)

[Use of Vote Centers on the Rise Nationwide](#), from the Pew Charitable Trusts

[Indiana's Office of the Secretary of State](#)

[Larimer County, Colo.'s County Clerk and Recorder website](#)

["Engaging the Unengaged Voter: Vote Centers and Voter Turnout" by Robert Stein and Greg Vonnahme](#)

**For More Information**

For more information on vote centers, email [NCSL's elections staff](#) or call 303-364-7700.

NCSL Member Toolbox

Members Resources

- Get Involved With NCSL
- Jobs Clearinghouse
- Legislative Careers

Policy & Research Resources

- Bill Information Service
- Legislative Websites
- NCSL Bookstore

Meeting Resources

- Calendar
- Online Registration

Denver

7700 East First Place

Denver, CO 80230

Tel: 303-364-7700 | Fax: 303-364-781

This website uses cookies to analyze site usage and for other purposes. You consent to the use of cookies if you use this website.

[Continue](#) [Our online privacy policy](#)

- [NCSL Staff Directories](#)
- [Staff Directories](#)
- [StateConnect Directory](#)

- [Terms and Conditions](#)

- [State Legislatures Magazine](#)

#### Accessibility Support

- [Tel: 1-800-659-2656 or 711](#)
- [Accessibility Support](#)
- [Accessibility Policy](#)

#### Press Room

- [Media Contact](#)
- [NCSL in the News](#)
- [Press Releases](#)

#### Washington

444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
Tel: 202-624-5400 | Fax: 202-737-106

---

This website uses cookies to analyze traffic and for other purposes. You consent to the use of cookies if you use this website.

[Continue](#)

[Our online privacy policy](#)

ARTICLE

USE OF VOTE CENTERS ON THE RISE NATIONWIDE

# Use of Vote Centers on the Rise Nationwide

ARTICLE January 15, 2015 Projects: [Election Initiatives](#) Tags: [Election administration](#)  
Read time: 1 min

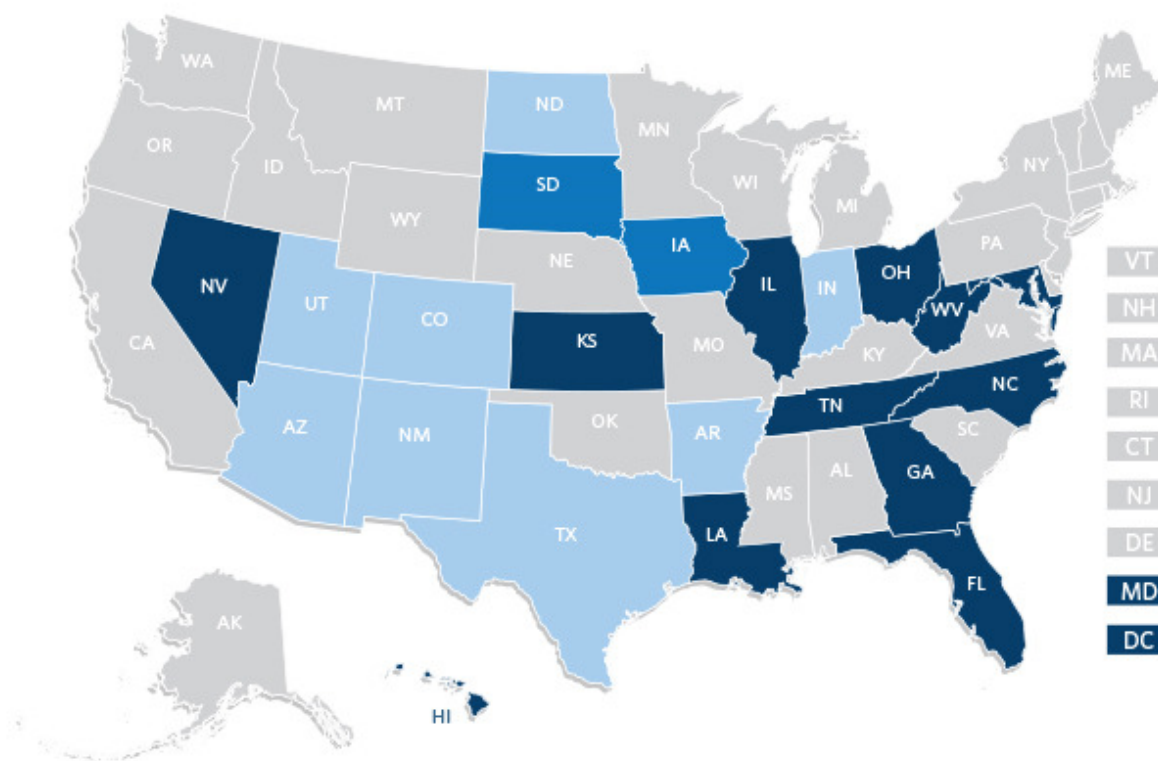
Over the past 10 years, vote centers—central polling locations that allow a voter to cast a ballot anywhere in the county—have become a popular alternative to traditional polling places. Larimer County, Colorado, became the [first jurisdiction](#) to use them in 2003, and by the 2014 general election, they were in use in jurisdictions in 10 states, including Iowa, which allows vote centers only in certain local elections.

Vote centers are even more popular in states that offer early voting. In 2014, jurisdictions in 20 states and the District of Columbia used them during early voting.



## DATAPOINTS

### States Using Vote Centers in 2014



- States with jurisdictions using vote centers only for **Election Day**
- States with jurisdictions using vote centers only for **early voting**
- States with jurisdictions using vote centers for **early and Election Day voting**

Source: State election websites and <http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/states-and-election-reform-the-canvass-november-december-2014.aspx#Vote%20Centers>

© 2015 The Pew Charitable Trusts

Some evidence suggests that vote centers are more **cost-effective** than traditional polling places because they involve fewer locations and need less staff and fewer machines. Because they eliminate the requirement that voters cast ballots at a specific location, vote centers also **reduce the use of provisional ballots**, which are used when a voter goes to the

wrong polling place and which contribute to longer lines and additional [administrative costs](#) for ballot processing.

Vote centers often require an up-front investment in updated technology, particularly voting machines that can produce the correct ballot for each precinct and electronic poll books that update voter records in real time across all locations.

*Follow us on Twitter using [#electiondata](#) and [get the latest data dispatches](#), research, and news by [subscribing today](#).*

#### MEDIA CONTACT

Kelly Hoffman

Officer

[202.540.6968](tel:202.540.6968)



#### RELATED

**Tags**     [Election administration](#)

**Projects**   [Election Initiatives](#)

**Places**     [United States](#)



**INDIANA ELECTION DIVISION**

**VOTE CENTER INFORMATION**

# Indiana Election Division [\(/sos/\)](#)

---

[ELECTION DIVISION \(/SOS/ELECTIONS/INDEX.HTM\)](#) »

[VOTE CENTERS \(/SOS/ELECTIONS/3574.HTM\)](#) »

[DO YOU LIVE IN A VOTE CENTER COUNTY? \(/SOS/ELECTIONS/4493.HTM\)](#) »

VOTE CENTER INFORMATION

---

## VOTE CENTER INFORMATION

---

### What is a Vote Center?

Simply put, a vote center is a polling place where any eligible voter in the county may go to vote. The vote center model gives voters more flexibility on Election Day because they are not constrained to a specific polling location. Vote centers are connected through secure internet connections, and as ballots are cast, an electronic poll book is instantaneously updated.

Here is a [video \(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17bTAhHm8io&feature=player\\_embedded&safety\\_mode=true\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17bTAhHm8io&feature=player_embedded&safety_mode=true) with more vote center information.

In 2011, the Indiana General Assembly passed Senate Enrolled Act 32 and House Enrolled Act 1242. The Governor signed both pieces of legislation, making vote centers an option for any Indiana county.

The purpose of this web page is to provide you with all the available information on vote centers in Indiana in an effort to be transparent and to aid those counties that are considering a switch to vote centers.

Below you will find interviews with county clerks, studies from independent groups regarding vote centers in Indiana, a seven step plan to becoming a vote center county, and much, much more. Keep coming back to get all the latest information, as we will be adding more information as time goes on.

---

## **Vote Center Report**

In 2013, Secretary Lawson traveled the state to discuss vote centers with county clerks and other county officials. She collected feedback from current vote center clerks and those that attended the regional vote center meetings. Secretary Lawson's goal was to provide those interested in vote centers the information necessary to decide whether vote centers were a good idea for their county and also to collect feedback on vote center best practices and concerns from around the state.

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the information we have gathered over the past few months for the benefit of counties that are still investigating, considering and deliberating about the vote center model. To view the report, please [click here](#)  
[/sos/elections/files/IN\\_Secretary\\_of\\_State\\_Vote\\_Center\\_Report.](/sos/elections/files/IN_Secretary_of_State_Vote_Center_Report.)

### **Is the Vote Center Model Economically Feasible?**

Two recent studies have shown vote centers can be a good way to control local government costs. The Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute recently released the study "[Vote Centers and Election Costs: A Study of the Fiscal Impact of Vote Centers in Indiana.](#)" ([/sos/elections/files/Full\\_Report.pdf](/sos/elections/files/Full_Report.pdf)) While it is possible that counties will save money using vote centers, the purpose of the vote centers concept is to increase voter convenience and accessibility.

**The [key findings](/sos/elections/files/Summary.pdf) of the**

**study include:**

- **Vote Centers can produce significant savings for counties** that implemented them. Such savings are particularly noticeable in counties with a low number of registered voters per precinct. Also, counties that already locate more than one precinct in the same location could experience significant cost savings.
- **Vote Centers give local election officials more flexibility.** With precincts, the number of locations and the level of staffing are fixed. County officials can do little to reduce cost per vote. With Vote Centers, election administrators can anticipate turnout and modify the number of locations and the level of staffing to suit their needs.
- **Vote Centers can produce immediate and long-term savings.** This study finds savings could result every election day as well as when time comes to repurchase voting equipment.
- **Vote Centers will significantly reduce the number of voting machines needed** to conduct an efficient election.

In addition, Ball State University's Bowen Center released a study on [the conveniences of vote centers](http://bowencenterforpublicaffairs.org/institutes/policy-research/election-admin/vote-centers).

<http://bowencenterforpublicaffairs.org/institutes/policy-research/election-admin/vote-centers> (Summary)  
</sos/elections/files/BowenCenter.pdf>

---

## **Pilot Vote Center County Clerks: Video Q&A**

County Clerks from Tippecanoe, Cass and Wayne County discuss their experiences with vote centers as a panel:

[Did you form a study committee?](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=WhDoFFzjX4g)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_profilepage&v=WhDoFFzjX4g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=WhDoFFzjX4g)

Was there resistance from community leaders?

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=idqnzddYgZ4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=idqnzddYgZ4))

What was the biggest challenge you faced?

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=hsa8VGXaS8c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=hsa8VGXaS8c))

What was the greatest benefit?

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=FdFHn8LzFqU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=FdFHn8LzFqU))

What types of technology did you need?

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=j82JP8kXAZE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=j82JP8kXAZE))

Were their cost savings? ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=Sk3v5zzEKzY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=Sk3v5zzEKzY))

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=Sk3v5zzEKzY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=Sk3v5zzEKzY))

How has poll worker training changed?

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=V\\_B3X2Npqm4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=V_B3X2Npqm4))

What was the constituent response like?

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=EDQrVS4ysDA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=EDQrVS4ysDA))

Is there a sense of community at vote centers?

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
v=wDGT\\_a-rLXI&feature=player\\_profilepage](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDGT_a-rLXI&feature=player_profilepage))

What outside organizations should you work closely with?

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=b0gVJGLTEmc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=b0gVJGLTEmc))

What is your most beneficial piece of advice?

([http://www.youtube.com/watch?  
feature=player\\_profilepage&v=SAy\\_nwEILIs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=SAy_nwEILIs))

---

## Seven Steps to Becoming a Vote Center County

**Are vote centers right for your county? If your county is considering making the switch to the vote center model, the process can be summarized into seven steps.**

---

### STEP ONE: GAUGE INTEREST

Remember, vote centers are not right for every county. The first step on the road to becoming a vote center county is to gauge the interest of the community by talking to leaders in and out of government. Ultimately, county council members and county commissioners have to, by majority vote, pass resolutions simply approving a county's designation as a vote center county. Unanimity is not required, and since these bodies only have to pass resolutions, the county draft vote center plan does not have to be presented to them at this early stage.

These resolutions are about confirming that the county is open to the potential change, not about actually making the change. Since council members and commissioners represent county citizens directly, their vote on vote centers can serve as a good temperature gauge for whether or not a county is open to the possibility of change.

Of course, only getting resolutions passed is not enough at this early stage. It is also important to discuss this possible change with all members of the county election board and other leaders in the community, even outside of government. After all, county clerks do not want to go through the work of

drafting a county vote center plan and then fail to get unanimous support on their election board because of lack of prior communication.

**Here are sample resolutions for both the county council ([/sos/elections/files/Vote\\_Center\\_Council\\_RESOLUTION.pdf](/sos/elections/files/Vote_Center_Council_RESOLUTION.pdf)) and the county commissioners ([/sos/elections/files/Vote\\_Center\\_Commissioners\\_RESOLUTION.pdf](/sos/elections/files/Vote_Center_Commissioners_RESOLUTION.pdf))**

---

## **STEP TWO: FORM A STUDY COMMITTEE**

We recommend that you form a study committee to evaluate if vote centers are right for your county.

Topics to discuss include:

1. Infrastructure and Technology
2. Electronic Poll Books
3. Training and Procedures of poll workers
4. Early Voting
5. Preparing voters ([sample press release \(/sos/elections/files/mock\\_press\\_release.doc\)](/sos/elections/files/mock_press_release.doc))
6. Cost

You will want your study committee to be as diverse as possible, made up of a wide-variety of people who represent different areas of the election process. (Example: an experienced poll worker, a county commissioner, a county council member, an IT specialist, etc.)

**Here is a sample letter**

**([/sos/elections/files/SAMPLE\\_LETTER\\_FOR\\_STUDY\\_COMMITTEE.pdf](/sos/elections/files/SAMPLE_LETTER_FOR_STUDY_COMMITTEE.pdf)) asking an individual to participate in a study committee.**

---

## STEP THREE: DRAFT YOUR PLAN

Draft a **detailed and thorough** vote center plan. In your plan, include resolutions passed by commissioners and council members. This is the result of the work of your study committee.

[A Sample Vote Center Plan](#)

---

## STEP FOUR: SEEK PUBLIC COMMENT

After your vote center plan is complete, open the draft for public comment for at least 30 days. You may want to amend your plan based on the comments of the public.

---

## STEP FIVE: ELECTION BOARD APPROVAL

Your vote center plan needs to be **unanimously** passed by your county's election board. The election board may also offer amendments to the plan. To amend a vote center plan that has already been unanimously passed by the election board or to abolish vote centers, a unanimous vote of the county election board is required.

---

## STEP SIX: FILE YOUR PLAN

No state approval of your plan is necessary. It just has to be on file, along with any future amendments, at the Indiana Election Division.



**Draft a letter**

(/sos/elections/files/Letter to Election Division.doc) **to the Election Division requesting your county's switch to vote centers and include it with your plan.**

---

**STEP SEVEN: LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE**

Continue to evaluate vote centers in your county with every passing election. Amend your plan where necessary and file amendments with the Indiana Election Division.

**Online Services**

View Election Results  
(/sos/elections/2400.htm)

Review Photo ID  
Requirements  
(/sos/elections/2401.htm)

Register to Vote  
(/sos/elections/2403.htm)

Register for Absentee Ballot  
(/sos/elections/2402.htm)

Forms.IN.gov  
(http://www.in.gov/sos/elections/forms.htm)

INDIANA VOTE CENTER VIDEO

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17bTAhHm8io&feature=player\\_embedded&safety\\_mode=true&persist\\_safety\\_mode=1&safe=active](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17bTAhHm8io&feature=player_embedded&safety_mode=true&persist_safety_mode=1&safe=active)