Planning 2020
Workload and Resource Allocation

COVID-19 and Election Administration:
Approaches for Election Officials
May 26, 2020
Housekeeping

● Be gracious about **work-from-home setups**
● **Restart Zoom** if needed
● **Slides and captioned recordings** will be available on the registration page
● Use the **chat panel** to say hello, chat with other attendees, and ask questions
Today’s objectives

● Estimate the number of voters requesting mail ballots in your community
● Understand how shifts in voting methods impact your resource allocation plans
● Use new tools to update plans as pandemic conditions change
Today’s agenda

- Introduction (5 mins.)
- Preparing to serve more voters by mail (10 mins.)
- Preparing for shifts in in-person voting (10 mins.)
- Resource and planning capacity tools (10 mins.)
- Q&A (20 mins.)
- Wrapping up and course survey (5 mins.)
Hello, there!

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Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL)

Harnessing the promise of technology to modernize the American voting experience

@helloCTCL
www.techandciviclife.org
Federal resources

- Set of 10 documents (with more coming) provide guidance for state, local, tribal, and territorial election officials

- Written by the Joint COVID-19 Working Group
  - Cyber Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
  - Elections Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council (GCC)
  - Elections Infrastructure Sector Coordinating Council (SCC)

https://www.cisa.gov/publication/covid-19-election-resources
Keep in mind

1. This is tough!
2. One size doesn’t fit all
3. Things will change
4. Preparation and flexibility > certainty
5. A supportive team > a solo mission
6. Your work *matters*, and it’s hugely appreciated
It’s crazy. Essentially we were running two elections. We were dealing with a massive quantity of mail-out ballots, and then, of course, having to have everything ready for Election Day.”

--Ramona Thomas, Adams County, Nebraska
What to expect and how to plan for it

PREPARING TO SERVE MORE VOTERS BY MAIL
Three VBM scenarios

1. **All-mail** election

   Nevada to conduct its June primaries via mail-in ballots due to coronavirus

2. **Promoted** voting by mail

   Pennsylvania boosting efforts to promote voting by mail

3. **No vote-by-mail** promotion

   Across the board Mail-in Voting in Mississippi unlikely for November election
## Getting started: inputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction data</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voters who would be eligible to receive a ballot by mail if requested</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballot request deadline, in days before Election Day</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of days available for canvassing</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Scenario: All-mail election

- Estimated ballots mailed: 35,000

### Scenario: Promoted voting-by-mail

- Estimated ballots mailed: 16,065

### Scenario: No vote-by-mail promotion

- Estimated ballots mailed: 11,095
VBM Resource Planning Tool demonstration!

ElectionResourcePlans.org
electionline.org/resources/vote-by-mail-planning-calculator/
PREPARING FOR SHIFTS IN IN-PERSON VOTING

What to expect and how to plan for it
First, what magnitude of change do you expect this year?

Adjusting your in-person voting footprint will only be possible if other voting options are significantly expanded.
Maintaining your footprint?

Even if you aren’t changing the scale of Election Day voting, you’ll need to consider how health guidelines will change infrastructure and staffing needs.
Same footprint

- For social distancing, can you be sure your **small facilities** can handle the changes, or do you need larger ones?
- Can you increase **financial inducements**?
- What extra effort will be needed to find **poll workers**? With a new workforce, will **training** needs increase?
- How can you prepare for possible **longer wait times** and physically longer lines?
Fewer precinct voting locations but larger facilities?

If you expect decreased demand for in-person voting, you may combine locations into larger facilities.
Fewer locations but larger facilities

- Can you reduce staffing needs by **programming equipment to include all precincts**?
- How can you **involve stakeholders** in the decision-making progress?
- Can you meet the **legal notice requirements** for changing voting location?
- How will you **use outreach** to inform voters of the change?
- Are **lines** more likely at combined locations?
Shifting from precinct voting to vote centers?

Vote centers may be another option if you face decreased demand and difficulty obtaining facilities and staff.
Vote centers

- What changes to pollbook and voting technology are needed to accommodate all voters and ballots?
- Can you prepare enough ballot marking devices? Enough paper ballots? Ballot-on-demand technology?
- Will you be able to find facilities that are big enough and available?
- What voter education will you need to get voters up to speed on this new voting method?
Moving to extra-large “super centers”?

If you need to serve voters with few facilities and poll workers, consider going big
Super centers

- What will the travel distance be? Is the location near highways and public transit? Is there parking?
- Is it accessible to people of all abilities?
- Does your location have electricity, internet connectivity, and climate control (heat and A/C)?
- Is there acceptable shelter? Could tents or other infrastructure be helpful?
- Is there physical security? Can areas be cordoned off for privacy and security? Can doors be locked?
Managing risk while managing change

• Changes introduce lots of risks – to general operations and to voters’ understanding and acceptance of the process
• Foreign adversaries are *not* likely to cut us a break
• Maintain focus on securing your election systems – particularly your public information systems. Lock down your websites and social media accounts and be sure you’re sharing information through the ISAC.
Which shift(s) are you considering?

- Same footprint but with new health guidelines
- Fewer precinct locations but larger facilities
- Shifting from precinct voting to vote centers
- Moving to extra-large “super centers”
Tech to help you plan

RESOURCE AND CAPACITY PLANNING TOOLS
Vote-by-mail Resource Planning Tool

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of days available for canvassing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time and effort data</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraction of mail ballots expected to require duplication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of ballot styles in use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter registrations processed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballot requests processed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballot packets processed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ElectionResourcePlans.org
electionline.org/resources/vote-by-mail-planning-calculator/
## Michigan AV processing time calculator

### Time assumptions

Each day prior to and including election day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Receive, date, and time stamp ballot:</td>
<td>10 seconds per ballot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Verify signature and check in:</td>
<td>137 seconds per ballot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2a) Percent of ballots that need extra attention on receipt:</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time required for extra attention:</td>
<td>300 seconds each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Daily balancing count:</td>
<td>45 seconds per ballot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Secure one day's ballots:</td>
<td>5 minutes each day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Projections:

Based on the above estimates, processing 7,500 ballots would take 497 total hours, as described below.

Prior to Election Day:

In each of the 28 work days prior to election day, the process of receiving the ballots should average 13.9 hours.

Based on data collected so far from other jurisdictions about their daily incoming ballots, a majority of days will require less time than the above average. However, some days could require up to 2 times the average (up to 27.8 hours), and occasional extreme cases could require more than 3 times the average (41.7 hours).*

Election Day:

Total time required on election day is projected to be 107,800,000,000,000 hours, broken down as the average 13.9 hours to receive and process that day’s ballots in the mail, plus 93.9 hours with the election day preparation and tabulation procedures.

Note that the above assumes an average number of incoming absentee ballots arrives on election day. However, it may be likely that election day is one of those days with an above-average number of ballots arriving, so the time for receiving ballots this day could be considerably higher.

* Based on data gathered to date, Mondays are the most likely day of week for the quantity of incoming ballots to exceed twice the average, with Wednesdays being the second most likely.
Polling Place Resource planner

A free program to help you estimate resource needs at a polling place
Natalie Adona: “While line management can be data driven, there’s some art to the process, too.”
Voting Time Estimator

An easy tool for estimating the average time needed to vote a ballot

electiontools.org/tool/voting-time-estimator
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Voting Time Estimator</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Contested Races (Choose One Candidate):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Uncontested Races:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiselect Races (Vote for More than One Candidate)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Initiatives, Referendums, Propositions:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Yes/No Retention Votes:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voting Style:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The projected average is 3.2 minutes. Compared with data collected so far, there is 90% confidence that your average ballot completion time will be between 2.4 and 4 minutes (145 to 242 seconds).

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average time to complete ballot (in minutes) is predicted to be in the range shown below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% confidence that the average will fall into the orange to red range, with yellow showing the extremes.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Voting Timer App

A free app to measure the average time voters spend with a ballot

electiontools.org/tool/voting-timer-app
Voting Timer - Recording

- **Menu**
- **Stop**
- **Help**

**Voter Enters**
- 0:08
- Vacant Booth

**Voter Enters**
- Booth 2 empty
- Vacant Booth

**Voter Enters**
- 3:04
- Vacant Booth

**Voter Enters**
- 3:27
- Vacant Booth

**RECORDING**
14 Voters, Average Time 3:05, 5 to Upload

**Pause**
Let’s talk

DISCUSSION
Share your thoughts

- What resonated with you from today’s webinar? (Any “ah-ha” moments?)
- What are your next steps?
- What questions do you have about what we covered today?
- What questions do you have about what we didn’t cover today?
As questions come up for you...

- Reach out to CTCL
  - We’ll help out, or
  - We’ll find someone for you who can

hello@techandciviclife.org
We’ve covered a lot of ground

WRAPPING UP
## Today’s resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Description</th>
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<td>“Nevada County, California Prepares Vote Centers Using Estimator Tools”</td>
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Timeline considerations, 161 days out:

**Receiving and processing mail ballots**
- Analyze space and staffing needs based on expected volume (165 days)

**Planning temporary, indoor drop boxes**
- Make arrangements with facilities where boxes will be placed (158 days)

**Online data capture**
- Write tech specs (w/ existing OVR) (158 days)
What was your experience with today’s webinar?

● A brief survey is linked in the chat box
● Please complete the survey now to provide feedback and improve the course for future participants
Up next

- Supporting election officials (Thursday, May 21)
- Planning 2020 workload and resource allocation (Tuesday, May 26)
- Ensuring access, equity, and inclusion (Thursday, May 28)
- Educating voters about their options (Thursday, June 4)
- Maintaining voter lists (Tuesday, June 9)
- Managing mail ballot request forms (Thursday, June 11)
- Organizing ballot dropoff locations (Tuesday, June 16)
- Streamlining the inbound ballot process (Thursday, June 18)
- Verifying and curing signatures (Tuesday, June 23)
- Recruiting and training election workers (Thursday, June 25)
- Implementing public health guidelines for voting locations (Tuesday, June 30)

techandciviclife.org/covid-19-webinars/
Thanks!

Email: hello@techandciviclife.org
Twitter: @HelloCTCL
Website: www.techandciviclife.org