

FORM OF THE BALLOT CHECKLIST TO DIRECTIVE 2025-49

To ensure that your ballots are properly programmed, please refer to the checklist below.

I. GENERAL

- ☐ Carefully read [Chapter 5](#) of the Elections Official Manual (EOM) for ballot guidelines and requirements.
- ☐ Verify the accuracy of district relationships in the central tabulating system against the county's voter registration system (VRS).
- ☐ Verify the SOS precinct codes are accurate in the tabulating system, and if appropriate, the county's VRS, no later than **September 12, 2025**.
- ☐ Verify the accuracy of the board's list of multicounty district overlaps.

II. CHECK THE FORMATTING

- ☐ Are ballot headings in a sans-serif font (like Arial or a similar font) in 12-point bold?
- ☐ Are the ballot instructions updated per the sample ballot?
- ☐ Is the same font used throughout the ballot?
- ☐ Is there a one-eighth inch line separating columns from each other?
- ☐ Is the date of the election and the facsimile signatures of the members of the board of elections placed at the end of the ballot?
- ☐ Is the ballot in black ink?
- ☐ Are all the candidates for each office in the same column for paper ballots or same screen for direct-recording electronic (DRE) devices?
- ☐ *In counties where a language in addition to English is required to appear on the ballot, is the additional language version immediately after the English version, **NOT in a separate column by itself**?*
- ☐ Is each page, or screen for DREs, numbered X of Y? (Each side of a sheet of paper is considered a page).
- ☐ Are questions and issues grouped together in the correct order? (state, county, municipal, township, school, and other districts)

III. GENERAL ELECTION BALLOTS

- ☐ Have you verified the order of offices against the directive for:
 - Partisan City Offices?

- Partisan Village Offices?
- Nonpartisan Offices?
- ☐ Is there write-in space for every office that the board of election has received a valid declaration of intent for?
- ☐ Are candidates listed first, ahead of any questions or issues?

IV. PROOFING BALLOTS

Each board must develop and document its process to systematically review the content of the ballot. The recommended best practice is to have one person read aloud what should be printed based on original source material, while another person follows along on the proof provided by the printing vendor or generated by the central tabulating system. This should include a review of the following:

- ☐ Contests and questions and issues appear on correct precinct ballot
- ☐ Ballot title and election date
- ☐ Instructions
- ☐ Office titles
- ☐ Office order
- ☐ Commencing and term-ending date
- ☐ "Vote for" text (number of candidates to nominate or elect)
- ☐ Party affiliation
- ☐ Candidate names
- ☐ Candidate name rotation
- ☐ Heading descriptions
- ☐ Ballot language text for spelling
- ☐ Board member signatures
- ☐ Precinct names

V. POSTING PROOFS

After a board of elections has prepared or receives its ballot proofs, the board must:

- ☐ Notify the following individuals that the ballot proofs are available for inspection and correction:
 - Chairperson of the local executive committee of each political party that is represented on the ballot.
 - A designated representative for each group supporting and/or opposing a question or issue appearing on the ballot. If no such representative has been designated, the board may contact the treasurer whose name appears on the designation of treasurer, if any, filed on behalf of the group or committee.
 - All taxing and bond issuing authorities within the county, as defined by [R.C. 5705.01](#), must ensure that all tax levy or bond issues certified to the board of elections appear on the ballot with the correct language.

- ☐ Post the ballot proofs for at least 24 hours in a publicly accessible place in the board office and on the board website and include instructions for notifying the board of any needed or requested correction(s), after which board personnel must review and correct any error.
- ☐ If a local correction is required at any stage of the proofing process prior to finalization and printing, the board must repeat the above notification and posting requirements and ensure that, in correcting the error, another part of the ballot was not inadvertently changed.

VI. ABSENTEE BALLOTS

- ☐ The absentee ballots are provided to the Secretary of State's office at least 47 days before the election (**Thursday, September 18, 2025**) using SharePoint.
- ☐ Send a copy of each absentee ballot style (including candidate contests and ballot questions and issues) to the Secretary of State's office by 46 days before the election (**Friday, September 19, 2025**).
- ☐ The sample ballot on the board's website is updated by **Friday, September 19, 2025** (at least 46 days before the election).
- ☐ Have absentee ballots printed and ready for use 46 days before the election (**Friday, September 19, 2025**) for Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) voters.
- ☐ The remote ballot marking system is updated to include all eligible candidates.
- ☐ Have on hand at least five percent more ballots for use by absentee voters in the current election than were requested in the previous like election.

VII. OUTSOURCING ABSENTEE BALLOTS

For those counties who outsource the printing and mailing of absentee ballots to vendors or any other third party, boards must:

- ☐ Review "*Outsourcing Absentee Ballot Processing*" in [Chapter 5](#) of the EOM.
- ☐ Vote to outsource the printing and mailing of absentee ballots in a public meeting no later than 70 days before the election (**Tuesday, August 26, 2025**).
- ☐ Receive prior authorization from Ohio Secretary of State's Director of Elections, by **Friday, September 5, 2025** (60 days before the election).
- ☐ Ensure that the ballot file is provided to the ballot printing vendor, if applicable, to produce absentee and Election Day ballots and that all such ballot files are reviewed and approved before production; no later than 46 days before the election (**Friday, September 19, 2025**).
- ☐ No later than the 39th day before the election (**Friday, September 26, 2025**), the board must send all absentee voter data files to the vendor, and the vendor must acknowledge receipt of the data files.
- ☐ No later than the 35th day before the election (**Tuesday, September 30, 2025**), the board must send subsequent absentee voter data files to the vendor, and the vendor must acknowledge receipt of the data file(s).

- ❑ On the first day of absentee voting, **Tuesday, October 7, 2025**, the vendor must complete the printing, insertion, and addressing, and deliver for distribution the absentee ballots for all records contained in any absentee voter data file received from the board of elections by the 39th day before the election (**Friday, September 26, 2025**).
- ❑ Any absentee ballot that is printed and mailed by a vendor is properly proofed and tested.