

# Alaska Elections

ACCURATE. SECURE. FAIR.



## STATE OF ALASKA DIVISION OF ELECTIONS (DOE) MISSION

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**Our mission is to ensure public confidence in the electoral process by administering voter registration and elections with the highest level of professional standards, integrity, security, accuracy and fairness.**

# THE FOUNDATION OF ELECTION INTEGRITY IS BUILT ON THREE MAIN PILLARS:

SECURITY, ACCURACY, AND FAIRNESS.



## **SECURITY**

The system has the necessary protections and resiliency to protect the democratic process.

## **ACCURACY**

The system has multiple levels of checks and balances for both the voter registration database and tabulation process.

## **FAIRNESS**

The system is free of unnecessary barriers and provides every eligible citizen with a reasonable opportunity to vote.

# ELECTION INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY & INTEGRITY

Election infrastructure includes not only the voter registration and voting systems but all resources, cyber and physical, necessary for registering voters and conducting elections. The DOE's top priority is to take all reasonable measures to improve and protect the security and resilience of our state's election infrastructure.

The DOE has developed security partnerships with state and federal cybersecurity professionals as well as state and federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

## CYBER AND PHYSICAL SECURITY PARTNERS

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**These partnerships provide a multitude of resources and services including:**

- › Network scanning and monitoring
- › Remediation
- › Response support
- › Advice on strengthening our security posture
- › Cyber and physical risk and vulnerability assessments
- › Information sharing
- › Security training

These actions are designed to ensure a strong and resilient election infrastructure that will continue to serve citizens in the face of any adversity. We remain vigilant as the election environment changes and continue working to establish new layers of security to further build the resilience of our state's election infrastructure.

# ACCURATELY MAINTAINING ALASKA'S LIST OF REGISTERED VOTERS

## VOTER REGISTRATION IS PERMANENT

When a person registers to vote, the person remains registered until inactivated for one of the following reasons:

- › Voter initiated registration in another state
- › Being convicted of a felony of moral turpitude
- › Being ruled mentally incompetent by a court
- › Requesting their name be removed from the list
- › Death
- › Being removed as a result of the state's annual list maintenance process

The removal of voters from the voter registration list is regulated by state and federal law. The DOE works in compliance with those laws to remove disqualified voters from the voter registration list at various times based on various sources of information. Removal means the voter's status is changed from "Active" to "Inactive." Inactive records are eventually "Purged."

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## REMOVING VOTERS WHO HAVE DIED

- › On a monthly basis, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services provides the DOE an electronic file of people who have died in Alaska. The DOE compares the data to the statewide voter registration list and makes voters inactive.
- › On an annual basis, the DOE receives Social Security Administration death data through the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC). The DOE compares the data to the statewide voter registration list and makes voters inactive.
- › The DOE regional offices check obituaries from local newspapers. The DOE compares information from the obituary to the statewide voter registration list and makes voters inactive.
- › The DOE also receives information directly from immediate family members of those who have died, and the DOE makes those voters inactive.

While these processes remove most voters who die, the system is not perfect. If an Alaskan voter dies out of state, the DOE is not always notified. Some voters who die are not always included in the data, and sometimes, the provided data cannot be matched definitively to a voter in the system. Furthermore, these processes can take weeks or months to complete. This means there will always be some number of deceased voters who remain active in the system at any given time. It is important to understand that the fact some deceased voters remain on the voter registration list does NOT equate to voter fraud.



## REMOVING VOTERS WHO HAVE MOVED

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- › Every year, the DOE looks at voters who have had no contact or activity with the division for four years. All voters in this category are placed into the list maintenance process. These voters are sent confirmation cards requesting that they confirm their registration status.
- › Voters who return the card indicating they have moved, voters whose cards are returned undeliverable by the U.S. Postal Service, and voters who do not respond to a second notice mailing are made inactive.
- › When any mail from the Division of Elections is returned undeliverable by the U.S. Postal Service, the voter is given an undeliverable status which begins the process of purging a voter record if no contact occurs within 4 calendar years.
- › The DOE receives information from ERIC identifying Alaska voters who have registered in another state. The DOE then sends the voter a postcard to confirm their status.
- › Any undeliverable mail returned to the DOE with a forwarding address is flagged and every month regional offices run a report to contact these voters to confirm their address or provide an opportunity to cancel.
- › This includes information from 31 participating ERIC states and the District of Columbia. (as of 2022)
- › On a regular basis, state and local election jurisdictions throughout the country notify the DOE if a voter indicates on their voter registration application that they were previously registered in Alaska, and the voter is made inactive.
- › The DOE also receives correspondence from voters requesting to cancel voter registration indicating that they have moved out of state.

## REMOVING VOTERS CONVICTED OF DISQUALIFYING OFFENSES

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- › State law does not allow those convicted of certain felonies to vote.
- › The division receives weekly reports from the Alaska court system to identify those who have been convicted of felonies involving moral turpitude.
- › Once a person completes their sentence/probation, they regain their voting rights, and it is their responsibility to register to vote again.



## VOTER LIST MAINTENANCE

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The Division of Elections conducts list maintenance as prescribed by state and federal law. List maintenance ensures our voter list is as accurate and up-to-date as possible.

The annual list maintenance process is described in AS 15.07.130. List maintenance is also required by the federal National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). The state list maintenance statute was enacted in 1998 and the NVRA was enacted in 1993. Voters cannot be removed from the voter list simply because they have not voted or because they appear to have moved to another state.

The division's annual list maintenance process has two steps:

### Step 1

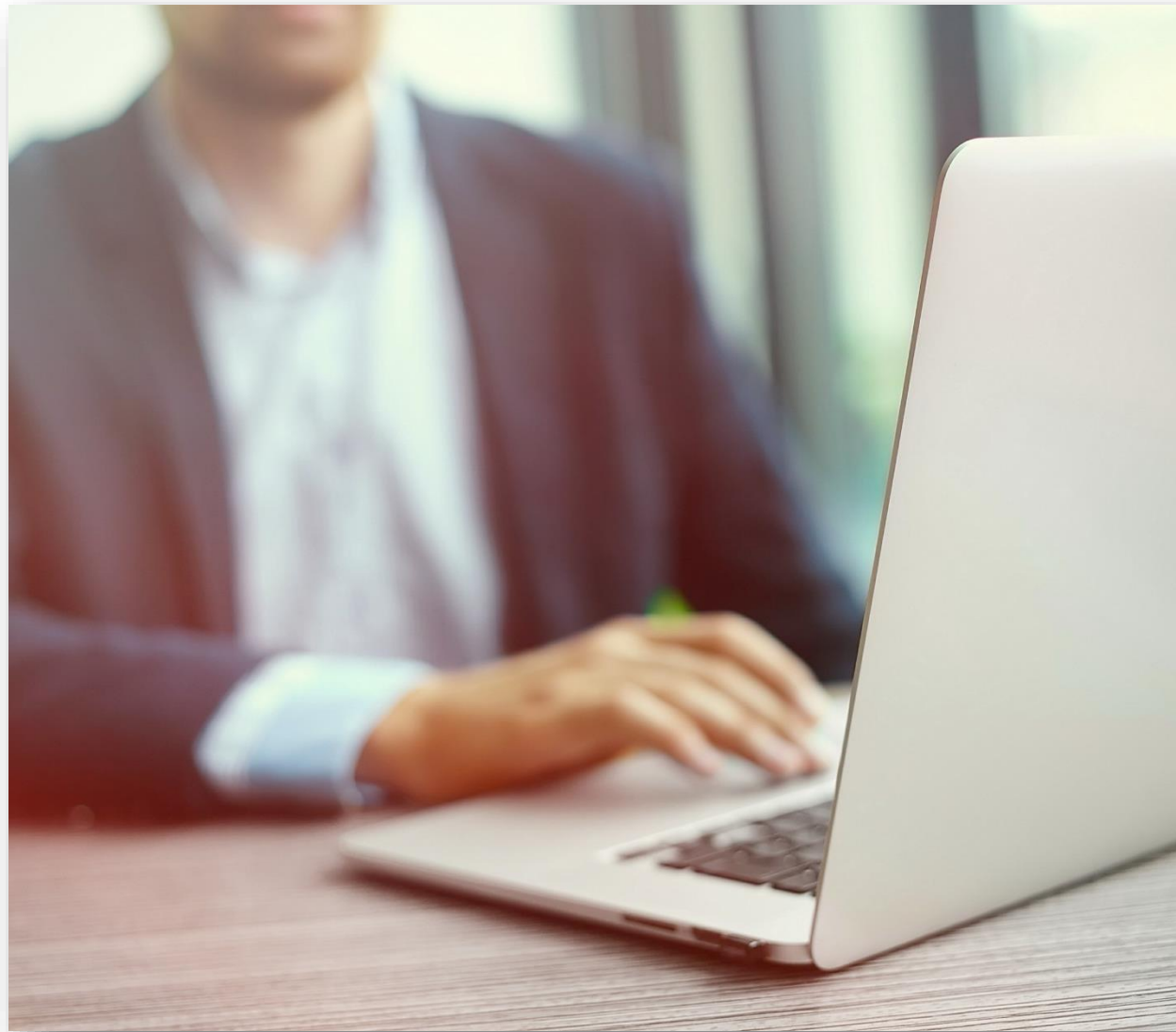
At least once a year, the division reviews the statewide voter registration list and sends notices (by non-forwardable mail) requesting address confirmation or correction to all voters:

- › Whose mail from the division has been returned to the division in the last two years;
- › Who have not contacted the division in the last two years; or
- › Who have not voted or appeared to vote in the last two general elections.

### Step 2

If the first notice is returned as undeliverable and the voter has not, within the preceding four calendar years, contacted the division, voted, or appeared to vote in any election, the division sends a second notice (by forwardable mail) to the voter's last known address. This notice states that the voter's registration will be inactivated unless the voter responds to the notice within 45 days.

- › A voter whose record has been inactivated will be canceled and removed from the voter list after two general elections—four years—if the voter does not contact the division, vote, or appear to vote.
- › Inactive voters may vote, but they must vote a questioned ballot, as their names do not appear on the precinct register. This means they must complete questioned ballot envelopes and the ballot is reviewed, along with all other questioned ballots, by a bipartisan questioned ballot review board. The ballots are then counted to the greatest extent allowed by state law.



## VOTER RESPONSIBILITY

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Each individual voter can do their part to ensure their opportunity to vote by taking responsibility for their own voter registration. Individuals should check their registration at **[myvoterinformation.alaska.gov/](https://myvoterinformation.alaska.gov/)** on a regular basis.

When voters move or change their name, they should update their registration immediately and at least 30 days prior to any upcoming elections.

# PROTECTING OUR VOTING SYSTEM

- › Alaska's ballot tabulation system has always been, and continues to be, paper based. There is a paper trail for every ballot cast. Each bipartisan precinct election board receives paper ballots that are either hand-counted when the polls close or counted using a precinct tabulator. In addition, to comply with the Help America Vote Act, each precinct has a touch screen voting tablet to accommodate voters with disabilities and voters needing required language assistance. These tablets are equipped with a voter-verifiable paper trail that allows the voter to verify the printed version of the ballot prior to casting the ballot. They are used by approximately 1% of voters.
- › Alaska's ballot tabulation system is certified by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission and is thoroughly tested for logic and accuracy prior to each election by the bipartisan state review and regional counting boards and tested and certified by the bipartisan precinct election board.



## SYSTEM FEATURES

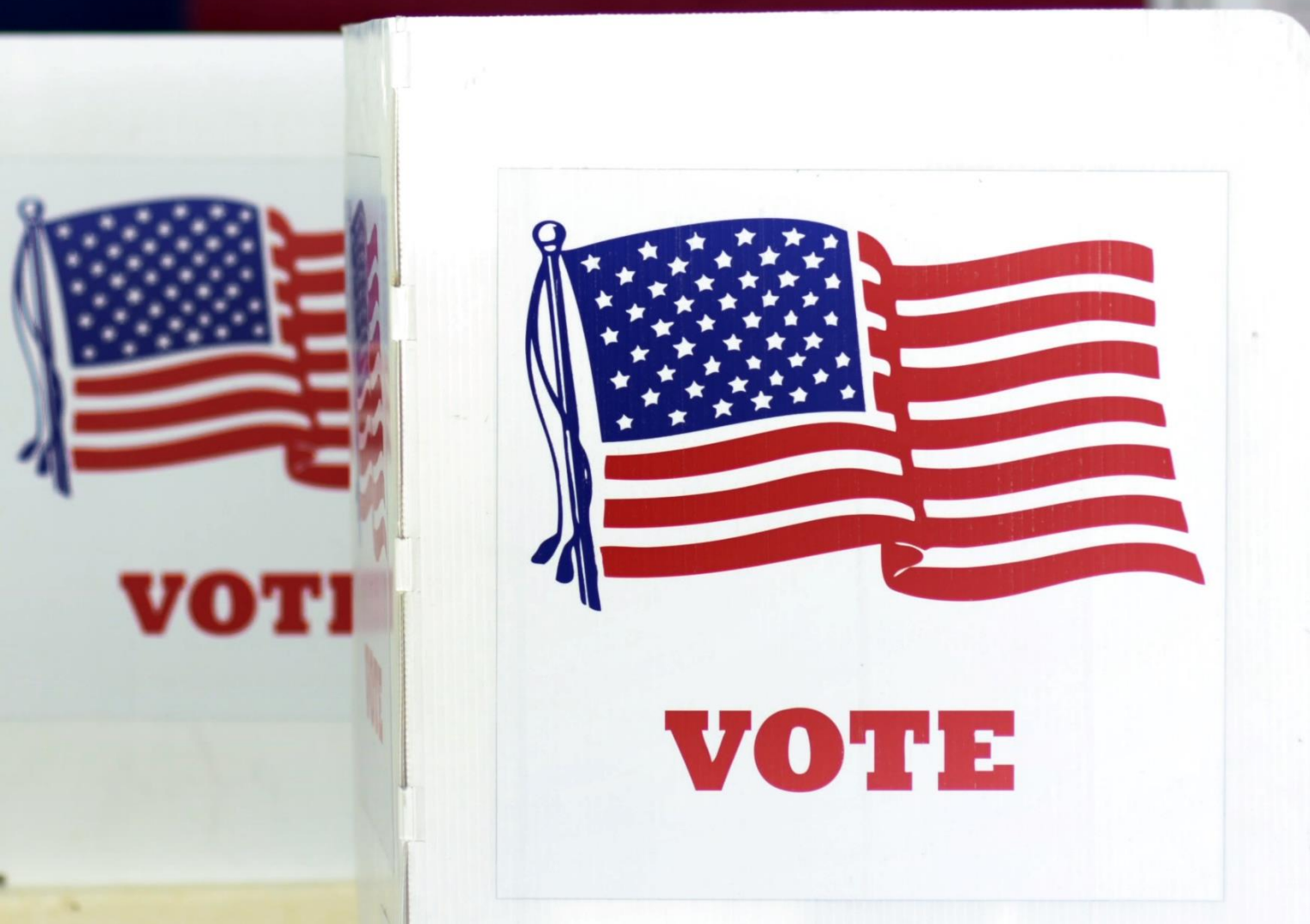
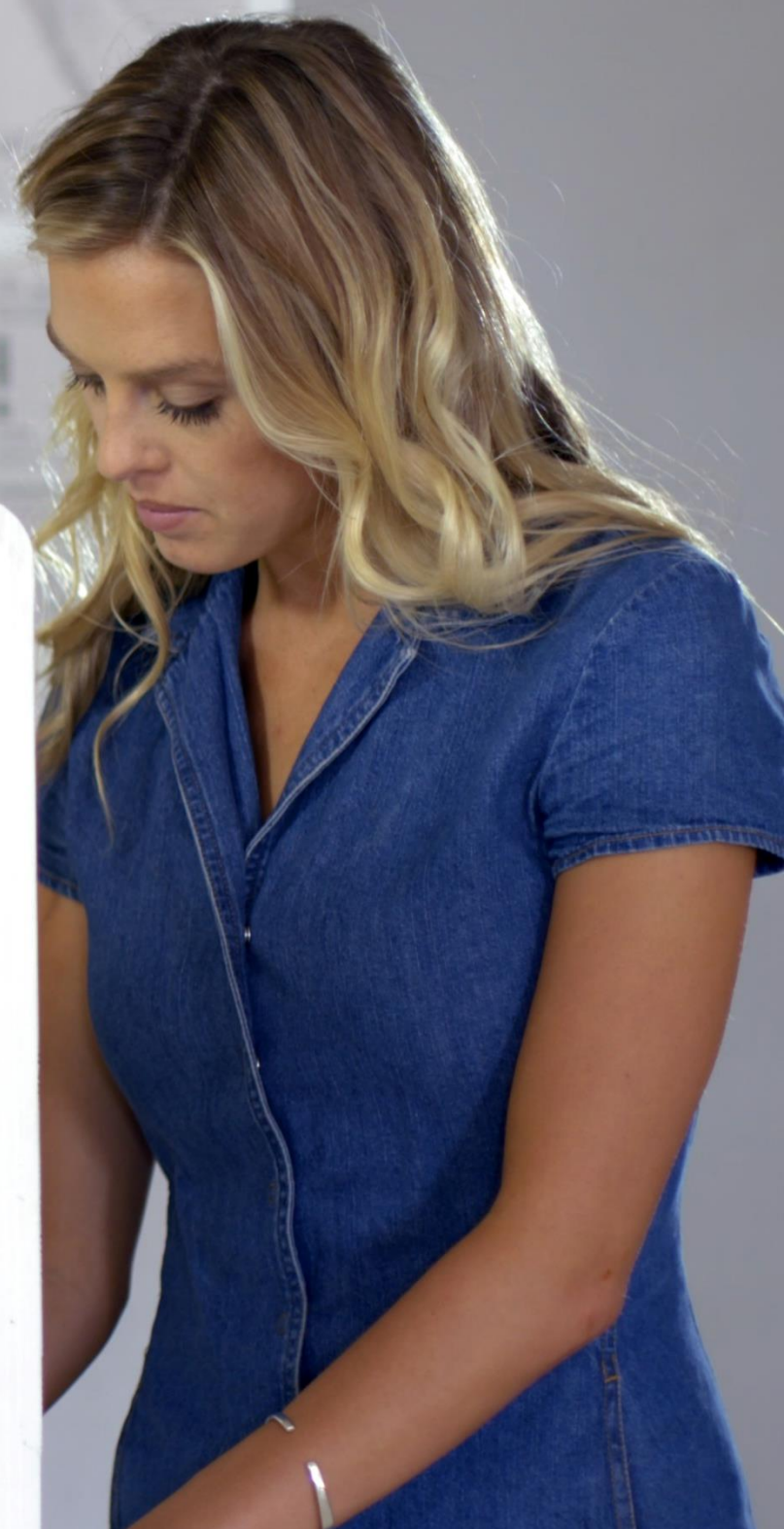
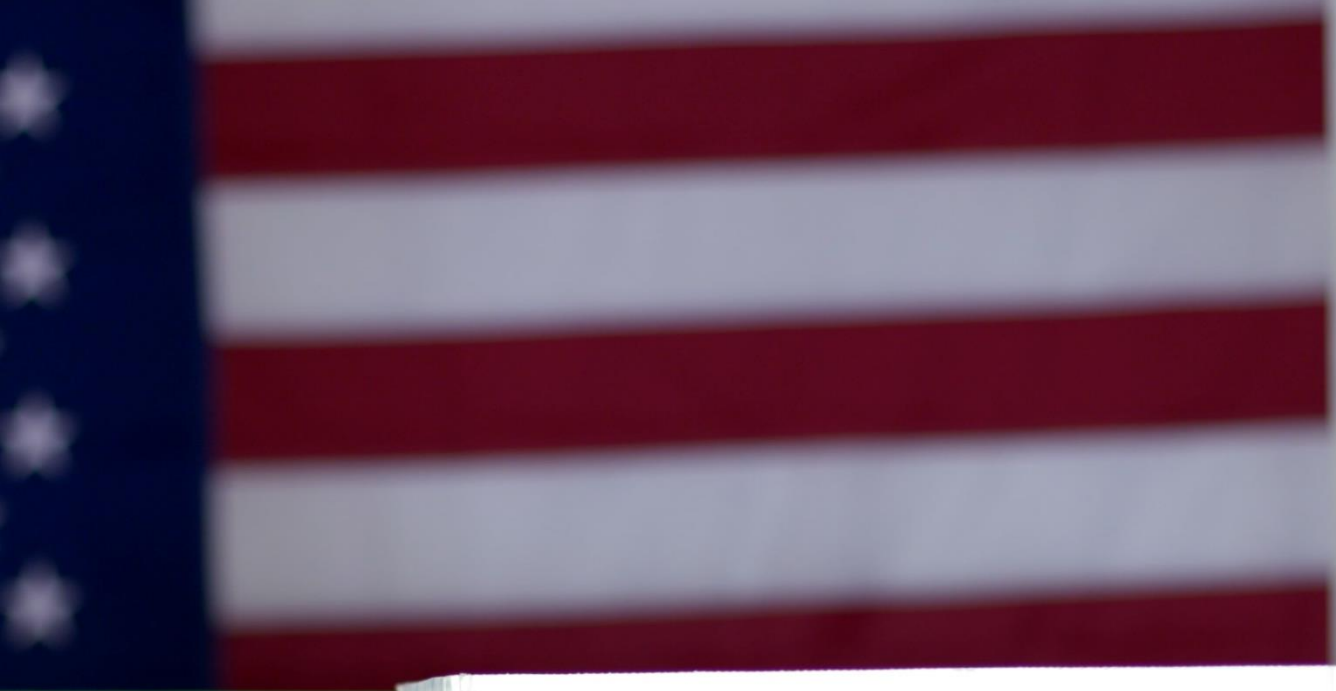
- › Voting tablet prevents overvotes (voters can't select more candidates than allowed).
- › The voting tablet will warn voters if an office is missed or if they voted for fewer candidates than allowed.
- › Voting tablet prevents hand-marking errors that can cause votes not to count.
- › Makes voting accessible for all voters. Every voter can vote independently using the same equipment. Every voting tablet features an audio ballot and headphones, a braille-embossed controller, and an input for other assistive switches.
- › The voting tablet requires that voters review their ballot multiple times before it is cast:
  - While making selections for each office or question
  - On the review screen before printing the ballot card

## ACCESS CONTROL

- › Only the authorized, designated division staff person designs the election database and ballots using the certified software. Ballot images are sent to the contracted in-state ballot printer. Each printed ballot has a sequentially numbered stub, and the division maintains a record of the ballot stub numbers sent to each voting location. This is critical as it is part of the ballot tracking and accountability process.
- › At no time during the programming or testing of the tabulation equipment is any of the equipment connected to the internet or a network.

## BEFORE EVERY ELECTION

- › After sending the ballot images with the ballot stub numbers to the printer, the authorized and designated staff person begins installing the election parameters onto the individual memory devices used to tabulate votes. This process takes place directly from the certified system. Once the memory devices are prepared, two different logic and accuracy tests are conducted by two different bipartisan boards, the state review board and regional counting board. This testing ensures the memory devices are accurately counting ballots.
- › In addition to testing the memory cards, before each election, the division conducts a functionality test on each piece of equipment to ensure the equipment is in proper working order.
- › The final test is completed on election morning by the bipartisan precinct election board. The precinct election workers turn the tabulation equipment on and print a “zero” totals report verifying that no results have been counted on that machine. The election workers sign and secure the zero totals report inside the unit. They also inspect the inside of the ballot box verifying that it is empty before any vote is cast.



**VOTE**

**VOTE**



# ELECTION DAY TRANSPARENCY

From opening the polls in the morning to reporting results at night, the election process is open for public observation.



The public and media can observe the election process at polling places. From opening the polls to closing the polls and vote tabulation.



The public and media can observe the return of ballots and equipment and tabulation of votes on election night.



Candidates and political parties can appoint poll watchers to observe at polling places.



The public and media can observe the review of absentee ballots as well as the opening of absentee ballot envelopes and the tabulation of absentee ballots.



# ELECTION OFFICIALS

Election Officials are regular people – your family, friends and neighbors – who are willing to step up for their community and play a vital role in conducting secure elections.

- › Required to take oaths swearing to defend the Alaska and U.S. Constitutions and to prevent unlawful voting.
- › Must be a registered Alaskan voter.
- › Must be trained on election procedures, rules, security, and best practices before every election.
- › The DOE regularly updates the rules and procedures in the A to Z of Election Day Alaska Election Official Handbook and makes it available to the public through [elections.alaska.gov](https://elections.alaska.gov)

## Precinct Election Boards

Alaska citizens appointed by each Regional Election Supervisor. The board is bipartisan, and depending on the size of the precinct, will have a minimum of three members. However, five members at any one time is typical. Prior to opening the polls, each precinct election board certifies that the tabulation equipment, received from the regional counting board, shows zero results prior to opening the polls. In addition, they verify that all security seals and chain of custody documents are completed.

# ADDITIONAL ELECTION OFFICIALS

## Division of Elections Employees

Appointed by the Lieutenant Governor or hired by division managers. Employees are to remain neutral in the political climate and sign an oath of impartiality. The division has benefited by retaining long-term employees with extensive experience. DOE staff have an average of 15 years of experience and three employees have more than 25 years.

## State Review Board

Alaska citizens appointed by the division's director. The board is bipartisan, and two board members of different political affiliations work together. The board's role is to test election tabulation equipment and conduct a review of election materials prior to the certification of election results. The board reviews the work of the regional counting boards, absentee and questioned boards, and precinct election boards.

## Regional Counting Board

Alaska citizens appointed by each Regional Election Supervisor. The board is bipartisan, and two board members of different political affiliations work together. The board's role is to test the election tabulation equipment following the test conducted by the state review board. This includes testing all precinct tabulators, voting tablets, and central scan equipment used on Election Day and for early, absentee, and questioned ballots. After testing, the board attaches a security seal to the memory card devices on each piece of voting equipment sent to the precinct election boards. The board completes a security log, recording the security seal numbers, which are provided to the precinct election board for verification upon acceptance. The board is also responsible for scanning voted early, absentee, and questioned ballots utilizing the central scanning and tabulating equipment.

## Absentee and Questioned Boards

Alaska citizens appointed by each Regional Election Supervisor. The boards are bipartisan, and two board members of different political affiliations work together. The board's role is to review the ballots logged by division staff when processing voted absentee and questioned ballots to confirm voter eligibility.

# VOTER VERIFICATION

## PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

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When voting in person voters are asked to present one of the following valid photo IDs:

› **Alaska Driver's License**

Includes standard license and REAL ID

› **Alaska Department of Motor Vehicles ID Card**

Includes standard ID card and REAL ID

› **Federal Military ID**

Includes all Department of Defense Photo IDs and Veterans Affairs Benefits Card

› **US Passport**

Includes US Passport ID Card

› **Other Current or Valid Photo ID**

Includes student or tribal ID Cards

If a voter does not have a photo identification, they can present one of the following forms that have their name and current address on them.

- › Birth Certificate
- › Hunting or Fishing License
- › Current Utility Bill
- › Government Check
- › Bank Statement
- › Paycheck
- › Other Government Document

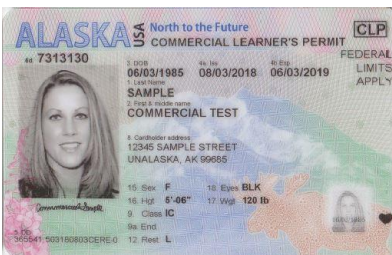
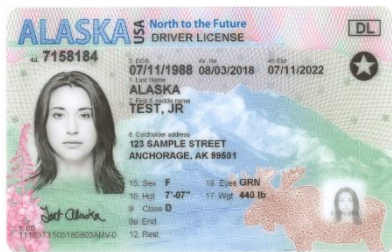
If a voter forgets to bring their Photo ID or other form of acceptable identification, they can vote a question ballot and their ballot will go through a review process where their identity will be confirmed through a separate process.

The identification requirement can be waived if the election official knows the identity of the voter. The only exception to this is for first time voters.

## REGISTRATION LISTS

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Election officials use voter registration lists at polling places to help verify a voter's eligibility to vote and record which voters were issued a ballot.



Absentee and early voting provides voters with the option of voting before election day. Voters must sign an affidavit swearing they will not vote in any other manner.

## ABSENTEE IN-PERSON & EARLY VOTING

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- › Qualified voters vote in person at the regional election's office or other early vote locations as early as two weeks prior to, and on election day.
- › The same identification rules for voting on election day apply to voting absentee in-person or voting early.

## ABSENTEE BY-MAIL/ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

- › Ballots are only sent to voters at their written request.
- › The State of Alaska is a no-excuse absentee voting state. This means that any Alaska voter can apply for and vote an absentee ballot. In order to receive a ballot, voters must apply to the division between January 1 of the election year and 10 days before the election.
- › The paper application is on the division's website and any division office can provide an application to a voter. Any political party, group, or organization can also send an application to voters. This frequently results in a voter receiving multiple applications and often causes voter confusion. Additionally, the Online Absentee Ballot Application System is available on the division's website. To use the system, a voter must have a valid Alaska driver's license or state ID card. Only the voter may submit an application on the voter's behalf. An absentee ballot application cannot be submitted for someone else unless the person has a valid power of attorney which authorizes them to apply on behalf of the voter.
- › Beginning 15 days prior to Election Day, civilian voters can also request to have their absentee ballot sent to them by electronic transmission, either by fax or online delivery. Military and overseas voters can apply for ballots delivered this way at any time.
- › Upon receipt of an absentee ballot application, division staff process the application in the Voter Registration Elections Management System and schedule the voter to receive a ballot. Staff ensure voters have provided all statutorily required information and are eligible to receive a ballot. The application deadline is no later than 10 days prior to the election for which the voter is requesting an absentee ballot.

The image shows a red "Official Return Ballot Envelope" and a white "Alaska Absentee Ballot Application" form. The envelope has the Alaska State Seal and text: "Official Return Ballot Envelope", "Mail your ballot and have it postmarked by Election Day", and "To be opened only by the Absentee Review Board". The form is titled "Alaska Absentee Ballot Application - For Federal and State Elections" and includes the website "myvoterinformation.alaska.gov". It contains several sections: "Elections" with checkboxes for "All in Calendar Year", "REAA (October)", "Primary (August)", and "Special"; "Eligibility" with a question about citizenship; "Other information" with fields for name, former name, and address; and "Identifiers" with fields for SSN or Last 4 and driver's license or state ID No. There are also checkboxes for "I do not have driver's license" and "I do not have state ID No.".

## ABSENTEE BY-MAIL

- › If a voter makes a mistake when casting their absentee ballot, they can contact the Absentee and Petition Office to request a replacement ballot. Additionally, if a voter decides that they would rather vote in person and no longer want to vote the absentee ballot, they are instructed to destroy and dispose of the absentee ballot.
- › Ballots must be postmarked or dropped off at any voting location on or before Election Day. Primary and Regional Educational Attendance Area election ballots postmarked on or before Election Day must be received no later than 10 days after Election Day. General election ballots must be received 10 days after Election Day when mailed from within the U.S. and from the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. Ballots mailed from outside the U.S. must be received 15 days after the general election.
- › If a voter received their absentee ballot by fax or online delivery, they can only return their voted ballot by fax or by-mail. There is currently no option to return a voted ballot through online delivery. Ballots returned by fax must be received no later than 8:00pm on Election Day. Online delivery and fax ballots returned by-mail must meet the same requirements as the ballots sent by-mail and returned by-mail.
- › Absentee by-mail ballots received at a Regional Elections Office are kept in a secure ballot room in date and district order. Each day a batch sheet is date-stamped and bundled by house district with ballots received that day.



## SPECIAL NEEDS VOTING

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Special needs voting is for voters whose disability, illness, or age prevents them from going to a polling place. It allows them to have a representative pick up and deliver a ballot to them. The representative signs a special needs register and completes one side of the special needs envelope. The voter completes the other side. The representative must provide:

- › their name,
- › residence and mailing address,
- › social security number, voter identification number, or date of birth,
- › the name of the voter, and
- › sign an oath that they are receiving a ballot on behalf of the voter and will not vote the ballot for the voter, will not coerce the voter, will not divulge the vote cast by the voter, and is aware that unlawful interference with voting is punishable by law.

The Precinct Election Board tracks the number of issued and returned special needs ballots as part of the end of night ballot accountability. Returned special needs ballots are placed inside the ballot box, and like the questioned ballots, they are not processed through the precinct scanner. They go through the same review process as absentee and questioned ballots. Special needs ballots can be returned to any polling place before 8:00pm on Election Day.

# CLOSING THE POLLS

Once the polls close at 8:00 p.m. and after the last voter has voted, the same trained staff who opened each polling place, publicly carry out the closing procedure.

- › Voted ballots remain secure and inside the ballot box until after the polls have closed. Once the polls have closed, the precinct election board prints and signs two copies of the election results report. This report prints on a continuous paper roll that includes the morning's zero report.
- › A minimum of two members of the precinct election board sign the report at both the opening and closing of the polls. The state review board uses this report to match the number of ballots used to the number of ballots cast.
- › Two workers from each urban precincts return all the materials to the Regional Election Supervisor, signing the same chain of custody document they signed when the material was picked up.
- › The precincts that received materials via USPS seal the materials in tamper-evident envelopes and locked containers and mail them the following day. By-mail locations ensure chain of custody with signature receipt confirmation, package tracking, and a ballot receipt and return material check in log.

## BALLOT ACCOUNTABILITY

- › Ballot accountability helps ensure the principle of one person, one vote is upheld, and that every voter’s vote is being counted.
- › Having sequentially numbered ballot stubs is a crucial component of ballot accountability. The number of signatures on the precinct register must match the number of ballots used.
- › The precinct election board tracks the number of ballots issued to them from the Regional Election Supervisor; how many people voted; the method by which they voted (meaning regular voters signing the precinct register, questioned voters, and special needs voters); how many ballots were used, spoiled, unused; and the number of voter signatures. Only after securing the unused ballots does the precinct election board open the ballot box containing voted ballots. This process guarantees that voted ballots are not commingled with blank/unused ballots.

### Ballot Accountability

District: 01-446  
Precinct: AURORA  
Election: 20PRIM

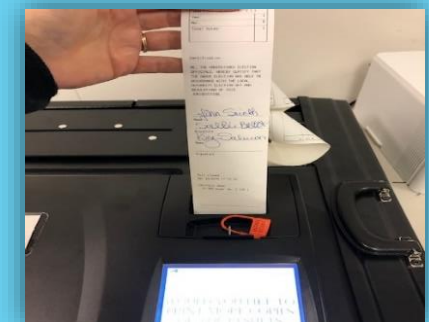
Paper Ballots Received			Paper Ballots Used			Unused Paper Ballots		
<b>Total Ballots Received:</b> <i>Enter this total in line (8) below.</i>	<b>First Ballot Stub Number</b>	<b>Last Ballot Stub Number</b>	<b>First Unused Ballot Stub Number</b>	<b>First Ballot Stub Number</b>	<b>Total Number of Ballots Used</b> <i>Must match line (7) below.</i>	<b>Last Ballot Stub Number</b>	<b>Last Ballot Stub Number Used</b>	<b>Total Number of Unused Ballots</b> <i>Must match line (9) below.</i>
300	001	300	133	- 001 =	132	300	- 132 =	168

Read each question below to complete the ballot accountability		Precinct Chair Enter Numbers Below:	Official Use
(1)	<b>How many people signed the precinct register?</b> DO NOT include any questioned or special needs ballots in this number.	<b>104</b>	
(2)	<b>How many people voted a questioned ballot?</b> Count the number of voted questioned ballot envelopes.	<b>+10</b>	
(3)	<b>How many special needs ballots issued and returned by 8:00pm?</b> The number of envelopes returned with a voted ballot that matches the voters on the special needs register.	<b>+10</b>	
(4)	<b>How many special needs ballots were issued but not returned at the end of the night?</b> The number of special needs ballots not returned according to the special needs register. DO NOT include special needs ballots returned to your location that WERE NOT issued from your location.	<b>+5</b>	
(5)	<b>How many ballots were spoiled or mismarked?</b> The total number of spoiled ballots from the Spoiled Ballot Log.	<b>+5</b>	
(6)	<b>How many ballots were cast using the Voting Tablet?</b> This number is located on the voting tablet in the bottom left-hand corner where it says "Total ballots cast: _"	<b>-2</b>	
(7)	<b>Add lines (1) through (5), then subtract (6) for a total number of <u>stubbed</u> ballots used.</b>	<b>=132</b>	
(8)	<b>Total ballots received from the election office.</b>	<b>300</b>	
(9)	<b>Subtract line (7) from line (8) for the total number of <u>unused stubbed</u> ballots.</b>	<b>=168</b>	

## TABULATION AND RESULTS REPORTING

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- › No results can be produced or reported before 8:00 p.m. on election night.
- › The results from the early voting sites and certain absentee by-mail ballots are the first to be reported since they are on site and are being processed throughout election day.
- › Following the conclusion of ballot accountability, scanner precincts upload results on site and hand count precincts call in their results to their dedicated regional office.
- › The election management computer operates in a locked down, secure and hardened system environment that is not exposed to the internet.
- › Results are taken from the election management computer through a secure process to a separate locked down and hardened system for uploading to the DOE's online election night reporting system.
- › This election night reporting system is not part of the voting system. Even if this system was compromised, the results of the election cannot be changed. Results recorded and reported at the precinct and regional levels, as well as the paper ballots, would be unaffected.
- › Results are ALWAYS unofficial prior to final certification.



# WE DON'T STOP AFTER ELECTION NIGHT

## HAND-COUNT AUDITS

- › Prior to certifying the election, the state review board conducts hand-count verifications of random precincts that utilize precinct scanners. The randomly selected precinct must account for at least 5% of the total votes cast in each of the 40 house districts.
- › If there is a discrepancy of more than 1% in the hand-count verification, the board hand counts of all the ballots cast in the district.
- › Although not statutorily required, the state review board also conducts a hand-count verification of early voted ballots, absentee ballots, and questioned ballots in randomly selected house districts with representation within each of the four regional offices.

From implementation in 1998 to date, there has never been a discrepancy of 1% or greater. In fact, the few minor discrepancies that have been found are related to “marginally” marked ballots – meaning the voter did not completely fill in the oval for their selection and the scanning unit could not detect the mark.

## **QUESTIONED AND ABSENTEE REVIEW**

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For both absentee (including by-mail, in-person, and special needs) and questioned ballots, division staff connect each ballot with a voter registration record and make the initial determination to accept or reject the ballot based on what is required on the envelope, the information in the voter record, and the type of ballot received. After a ballot is logged it is assigned a sequence number.

For example, the statewide accept code “S” allows the division to count statewide races only and would apply to a voter who lives and is registered in Nome but voted a questioned ballot on Election Day in Juneau. Those locations do not share a judicial, house, or senate district so votes for those races on the ballot will not count. But these locations do share all statewide races, which include President and Vice President, US Representative, US Senate, and Governor and Lieutenant Governor, so votes for those races on the ballot will count.

The Absentee and Questioned Review Boards review all absentee and questioned ballots after they are logged by division staff. These boards review each voted ballot envelope to verify that the voter is qualified to vote in the election and to determine if the ballot was properly cast. Working in teams of two, the review of absentee ballots begins no later than one week before Election Day and the review of questioned ballots begins two days after Election Day. The review of both absentee and questioned ballots continues through the deadline to receive ballots for each election. These boards work directly with each Regional Election Supervisor who sets the days and hours the boards will meet.

These boards use the Absentee or Questioned Review Board Report Details (details report) and review each ballot envelope against the details report. They review the voter’s name and registration status, district ballot issued, residence and mailing address, ballot sequence number, district and precinct registered, registration dates, district/precinct number where voting took place, and accept or reject code assigned.

Each time these boards meet they complete an Absentee or Questioned Ballot Audit Report. This report tracks the number of ballot envelopes provided to them from the Regional Election Supervisor. After they have reviewed all ballot envelopes, they tally the total number of ballot envelopes and the different types of accept or reject codes. The boards cross check their tally against the tally from the Regional Election Supervisor. This cross check ensures that the totals and individual count and reject types processed by division staff are in agreement with the review by the board.

## **CHALLENGES**

During the ballot review period, observers are given a public version of the details report. This report excludes all the confidential information but allows the observers to follow along with the review process. The observers can also use the information on the report to challenge count or no count determinations.

Prior to submitting a written challenge, the Regional Election Supervisor will review the absentee or questioned ballot envelope and the report with the observer and answer any questions. Observer challenges must be in writing. The director is sent all challenges for determination. A challenged ballot is placed in a challenged ballot envelope to easily identify the ballot. The observer has the right to withdraw their challenge at any time. Once the director has made the final decision, the decision may only be appealed during a recount or litigation.

Challenged ballots remain in the challenged ballot envelope, so if there is a recount or litigation, they are easily identifiable and not commingled.

## **CERTIFICATION**

After the state review board completes its review, the election is certified, and the results are official. The process is intentionally methodical so that accuracy is ensured. Additionally, because certain ballots can be counted on the 15th day after the general election, no certification can be done before then.





# THE RISK IS NOT WORTH THE PUNISHMENT

The penalties for offenses against AK voting and election laws can range up to **\$250,000 in fines** and up to **10 years in prison.**

In addition to the DOE's security policies and partnerships, state and federal laws protect the election process by making fraud and other violations of election law a crime.

Some examples of election crimes include:

- › **Vote Buying**

A person seeks to buy the vote of a voter.

- › **Voter Intimidation**

Intimidating, threatening, or coercing someone to vote or not vote for a particular candidate or intimidating, threatening, or coercing someone to vote or not vote at all.

- › **Voter Impersonation**

A person not eligible to vote in an election who does so by voting under the name of an eligible voter, or a person eligible to vote in an election votes more than once by voting under the name of another eligible voter.

# **ELECTION CRIMES AND PENALTIES**

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## **Unlawful Interference With Voting/Election**

Threatening, intimidating, or abusing voters – *CLASS C FELONY*

Allowing ballot to be seen, removing ballot from voting place, improper assistance, and related offenses – *CLASS A MISDEMEANOR*

Solicit, accept or agree to accept money with the intent to vote or refrain from voting for a candidate at an election or for an election proposition or question – *CLASS C FELONY*

## **Voter Misconduct**

Voting more than once at elections – *CLASS C FELONY*

Impersonating a voter – *CLASS C FELONY*

Swearing falsely at elections or taking oath in another's name – *CLASS C FELONY*

False swearing in applying for registration – *CLASS A MISDEMEANOR*

Knowingly votes or solicits a person to vote after the polls are closed with the intent that the vote be counted – *CLASS C FELONY*

## **Election Official Misconduct**

Intentionally fail to perform an election duty – *CLASS C FELONY*

Knowingly permits or makes or attempts to make a false count of election returns – *CLASS C FELONY*

Opens a ballot received from a voter at an election – *CLASS A MISDEMEANOR*

Marks a ballot by folding or otherwise so as to be able to recognize it – *CLASS A MISDEMEANOR*

Attempts to learn how a voter marked a ballot – *CLASS A MISDEMEANOR*

# PROTECTING OUR DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

The American electoral system is being questioned and challenged unlike ever before. That's why, as always, from both within the DOE and outside the DOE, it's so vital to maintain and enhance the safety and integrity of Alaska's voting system – as well as the public's trust and confidence that the system works.

It is important to remember that with any system, the concepts of security and accessibility generally contradict each other. The more secure a system is, the less accessible it is, and vice versa. While a system lacking good security would certainly undermine election integrity, so would a system that presents barriers to full citizen participation. A good election system strikes the right balance between security and accessibility. The DOE will continue to be vigilant in following our state's election laws and rely on the prerogative of the legislature to strike that delicate balance.

It's also important to recognize the dedication of our poll workers. These everyday citizens are the vanguards of democracy, and we as a state owe them a debt of gratitude. At over 3,000 strong, they serve their communities, their state and their country by volunteering their time to train and work on election days to preserve your opportunity to participate in this most fundamental of democratic processes.

The Alaska Division of Elections has a proud and successful history of running elections. The fortified security of checks, balances and redundancies ensure security, accuracy and accessibility in which every citizen and voter in Alaska can have faith and trust.

Considering these significant measures, we hope every Alaska voter can cast their ballot knowing their vote matters and their vote counts.

For more information and to learn more about how the Alaska Division of Elections is protecting your vote, visit [elections.alaska.gov](https://elections.alaska.gov)

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