

Assistant Chief Education Program – Election Day Closeout

04-Jul-2025

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Election Day Closeout

- It is 7 p.m., you announced the polls were closing, the last voter has voted, and you have closed the polling place door – the polls are closed.
- What happens next can be chaos spread over hours or can occur expediently according to a plan – it is all up to the Chief.
- A plan at the end of the day is even more important than a plan early in the day because everyone is exhausted – having a plan to follow conserves the brain power you have left.



Who is in the Room?

- Closeout does not happen while voters are in the room.
- Poll watchers may be present for closeout (or they may leave) but if they choose to stay they are instructed to not depart until the results have been called in to the Registrar.
- Folks giving your EOs rides and significant others are not in the room – this is still a polling place until it is all secured and put away.
- The entrance(s) should be secured if possible to ensure unauthorized people are not present.
- The location custodian or agent may be present.



Closeout Teams

- Election officials should be pre-assigned to closeout teams so they already know what they are supposed to do. These assignments may mirror the startup team assignments.
- These are the closeout teams you might consider assigning:
 - Poll Pads, Scanner/ExpressVote, Greeter, Ballots, Marking, Booths, Signs, Provisional/SDR, Statement of Results (SOR), Cage packing
 - Some EO's may have a first assignment then a second assignment, e.g., close the Poll Pads then report to the SOR table.



Advance Preparation

- Before 7:00 p.m. make sure everyone knows their closeout assignment.
- The Chief or an Assistant can number, date, and make signature lines on the labels that will be needed to seal various boxes and envelopes. These are found in the Election Day Binder.
- Ensure every EO has completed the payroll sheet.
- The Provisional/SDR officer(s) can review the provisional envelopes and logs to make sure they are signed by the EO, complete and that the envelopes are reflected accurately on the log and the log summary is correct.
- The Ballot Officer can use their best judgment about whether they need to count one more pack of ballots or leave it sealed.
- The Cage can be unlocked if it was locked.
- The poll watchers can be informed of their stay-or-leave choices and a plan established for them.



The Chief at Closeout

- As has been the case for the whole day, if the Chief is actively doing something during closeout, they are not making sure everyone else is doing what they are supposed to do. Try very hard not to give yourself an assignment.
- Provide oversight to every activity and guard your envelopes.
- It is NOT the Chief's job to take all the results tapes and forms into an unobserved corner and come back with both of the SORs and the Printed Results Sheet ready to go – this is done by two or more EOs from different parties. The Chief or better an Assistant may oversee this process, but two EOs are the do-ers.
- There is a LOT of signing to do – results tapes, SORs/Printed Return Sheet, box and envelope labels. The Chief does need to make sure that every signature is where it needs to be.
- Getting everything in the right envelope can take time and should be double checked. The Chief and the Assistant(s) should check each other on this.



Releasing EOs

- Most EOs can be released when:
 - All of the teams have finished their work.
 - The results have been called in.
 - The Cage is packed.
 - All of the labels and documents requiring everyone's signature have been signed and sealed.
 - The furniture in the location has been put in its final configuration (folded, stacked, returned to where it was, left as is – whatever is appropriate).
 - Any trash has been cleaned up.



Final polling place Activities

- Make sure every envelope and box is filled and sealed as directed by the Election Day Binder and the Chief's Manual. The items remaining after the EOs were released should only require 2 signatures which can be provided by the Chief and an Assistant who remain.
- Put everything in the car for transport back to the Stagecoach Road office. While loading the car, ensure it is either locked or attended the entire time. We have a duty to protect the voted ballots and results of the election.
- Check the polling place for any left items.
- Check the cage to make sure it is locked and **place the key in Envelope 7.**



Before the Polling Place Door Locks

- Before you depart the polling place or let the polling place door lock behind you, you will want to double check that you have all of the items in your car you are supposed to have (which will generally include everything you brought in in the morning as well as the ballot drop box), and that there is nothing locked in the cage that should not be there.
- It may be days before the cage contents are back with the Registrar, and we don't want ballots, or provisionals, or envelopes packed in the cage all of that time.
- Make sure the custodian or polling place agent is in charge when you go and that you have left things as they instructed you to.




Timing

- If you have encountered a difficulty in the closeout process that delays your process beyond normal, please call the Registrar's office to apprise them of the situation. In any event, if you have not called in your results by 8:00 p.m. call the Registrar. Otherwise, they will worry about you.
- This is not a race. Quality is more important than time. On the other hand, no one likes wasted time at the end of a long day, so plan ahead.



Return to Stagecoach Road

- ...sounds like a movie title.
- Materials are returned to the same Stagecoach Road location where they were picked up.
- If you have far to go or are feeling tired, consider having someone ride with you from the polling place.
- There will be assistance provided to move things into the building when you get there.
- There will be forms to sign and steps in the process where you hand over specific materials.
- And then you can go home for a well-deserved rest. 

Afterword

- No matter how many voters voted in a particular election, the closeout procedures are just about the same.
- Successful closing depends on planning.
- The Chief is a supervisor and a font of wisdom, they should not be a do-er.
- You will be tired, take extra care packing and sealing, loading materials, and driving.
- Always make sure you thank your EOs for their work! 