

IC 3-11.7-5

Chapter 5. Counting Provisional Ballots

IC 3-11.7-5-1

Requirements and deadlines for counting ballots

Sec. 1. (a) After the close of the polls, provisional ballots shall be counted as provided in this chapter.

(b) Notwithstanding IC 3-5-4-1.5 and any legal holiday observed under IC 1-1-9, all provisional ballots must be counted by not later than 3 p.m. ten (10) days following the election.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87. Amended by P.L.14-2004, SEC.153; P.L.221-2005, SEC.56; P.L.164-2006, SEC.122; P.L.225-2011, SEC.75.

IC 3-11.7-5-1.5

Provisional ballot; counting when ballot made invalid by mistake or inadvertence of election officer; when election board may determine not to count; effect of affidavit evidence

Sec. 1.5. (a) Subsection (c) applies to a provisional ballot that the county election board determines, by a majority vote of its members and in accordance with this title:

(1) has been marked and cast by a voter in compliance with this title; but

(2) may not otherwise be counted solely as the result of the act or failure to act of an election officer.

(b) Subsection (c) does not apply to either of the following:

(1) A provisional ballot cast by an individual who seeks to vote in an election as the result of a court or other order extending the time established for closing the polls under IC 3-11-8-8 if the county election board determines or is directed under a court or other order that all provisional ballots issued after regular poll closing hours are not to be counted.

(2) A provisional ballot that is required to be rejected by a county election board under section 2(b) of this chapter as the result of information or lack of information provided by a voter registration agency.

(c) The sealed envelope containing a provisional ballot described in subsection (a) shall nevertheless be opened under section 4 of this chapter and the provisional ballot counted unless evidence of fraud, tampering, or misconduct affecting the integrity of the ballot is demonstrated. The act or failure to act by an election officer is not by itself evidence of fraud, tampering, or misconduct affecting the integrity of the ballot.

(d) Notwithstanding subsection (c), if the county election board, by a majority vote of its members, determines that there is evidence presented to the board demonstrating that the individual who cast the provisional ballot was ineligible to cast a regular ballot in that precinct, or evidence has been presented to the board demonstrating

any other reason set forth in HAVA or this title not to count a provisional ballot, the provisional ballot may not be counted.

(e) This subsection applies to a provisional ballot cast by a voter after the voter was challenged solely because the voter was unable or declined to provide proof of identification and not for any other reason. If the voter later complies with the requirements of this title for proof of identification, the provisional ballot cast by the voter shall be counted in accordance with sections 2 and 2.5 of this chapter.

(f) This subsection applies to a provisional ballot cast by a voter after the voter was challenged for any reason except the voter's inability or declination to provide proof of identification. If the only evidence before the county election board on the question of counting of the provisional ballot cast by the voter is:

- (1) the affidavit of the voter who cast the provisional ballot; and
- (2) the affidavit of a challenger challenging the voter who cast the provisional ballot;

the provisional ballot shall be counted.

As added by P.L.221-2005, SEC.99. Amended by P.L.164-2006, SEC.123.

IC 3-11.7-5-2

Criteria for determining validity of ballots

Sec. 2. (a) Except as provided in section 5 of this chapter, if the county election board determines that all the following apply, a provisional ballot is valid and shall be counted under this chapter:

- (1) The affidavit executed by the provisional voter under IC 3-11.7-2-1 is properly executed.
- (2) The provisional voter is a qualified voter of the precinct and has provided proof of identification, if required, under IC 3-10-1, IC 3-11-8, or IC 3-11-10-26.
- (3) Based on all the information available to the county election board, including:
 - (A) information provided by the provisional voter;
 - (B) information contained in the county's voter registration records; and
 - (C) information contained in the statewide voter registration file;

the provisional voter registered to vote at a registration agency under this article on a date within the registration period.

(b) If the provisional voter has provided information regarding the registration agency where the provisional voter registered to vote, the board shall promptly make an inquiry to the agency regarding the alleged registration. The agency shall respond to the board not later than noon of the first Friday after the election, indicating whether the agency's records contain any information regarding the registration. If the agency does not respond to the board's inquiry, or if the agency responds that the agency has no record of the alleged registration, the

board shall reject the provisional ballot. The board shall endorse the ballot with the word "Rejected" and document on the ballot the inquiry and response, if any, by the agency.

(c) Except as provided in section 5 of this chapter, a provisional ballot cast by a voter described in IC 3-11.7-2-1(b) is valid and shall be counted if the county election board determines under this article that the voter filed the documentation required under IC 3-7-33-4.5 and 52 U.S.C. 21083 with the county voter registration office not later than the closing of the polls on election day.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87. Amended by P.L.209-2003, SEC.176; P.L.109-2005, SEC.12; P.L.103-2005, SEC.15; P.L.128-2015, SEC.205.

IC 3-11.7-5-2.5

Determining validity of provisional ballot

Sec. 2.5. (a) A voter who:

- (1) was challenged under IC 3-10-1, IC 3-11-8, or IC 3-11-10-26 as a result of the voter's inability or declination to provide proof of identification; and
- (2) cast a provisional ballot;

may personally appear before the circuit court clerk or the county election board not later than noon ten (10) days following the election.

(b) Except as provided in subsection (c) or (e), if the voter:

- (1) provides proof of identification to the circuit court clerk or county election board; and
- (2) executes an affidavit before the clerk or board, in the form prescribed by the election division, affirming under the penalties of perjury that the voter is the same individual who:
 - (A) personally appeared before the precinct election board; and
 - (B) cast the provisional ballot on election day;

the county election board shall find that the voter's provisional ballot is valid and direct that the provisional ballot be opened under section 4 of this chapter and processed in accordance with this chapter.

(c) If the voter executes an affidavit before the circuit court clerk or county election board, in the form prescribed by the election division, affirming under the penalties of perjury that:

- (1) the voter is the same individual who:
 - (A) personally appeared before the precinct election board; and
 - (B) cast the provisional ballot on election day; and
- (2) the voter:
 - (A) is:
 - (i) indigent; and
 - (ii) unable to obtain proof of identification without the payment of a fee; or
 - (B) has a religious objection to being photographed;

the county election board shall determine whether the voter has been challenged for any reason other than the voter's inability or declination to present proof of identification to the precinct election board.

(d) If the county election board determines that the voter described in subsection (c) has been challenged solely for the inability or declination of the voter to provide proof of identification, the county election board shall:

- (1) find that the voter's provisional ballot is valid; and
- (2) direct that the provisional ballot be:
 - (A) opened under section 4 of this chapter; and
 - (B) processed in accordance with this chapter.

(e) If the county election board determines that a voter described in subsection (b) or (c) has been challenged for a cause other than the voter's inability or declination to provide proof of identification, the board shall:

- (1) note on the envelope containing the provisional ballot that the voter has complied with the proof of identification requirement; and
- (2) proceed to determine the validity of the remaining challenges set forth in the challenge affidavit before ruling on the validity of the voter's provisional ballot.

(f) If a voter described by subsection (a) fails by the deadline for counting provisional ballots referenced in subsection (a) to:

- (1) appear before the county election board; and
- (2) execute an affidavit in the manner prescribed by subsection (b) or (c);

the county election board shall find that the voter's provisional ballot is invalid.

As added by P.L.109-2005, SEC.13. Amended by P.L.103-2005, SEC.16; P.L.225-2011, SEC.76; P.L.169-2015, SEC.147.

IC 3-11.7-5-2.7

Determination of validity of provisional ballot; nondisclosure of identifying information

Sec. 2.7. During the county election board's consideration of the validity of a provisional ballot, the board shall not publicly identify the individual who cast the ballot by name or any identifying number, but shall refer to the ballot in terms sufficient to preserve the record regarding the board's determination regarding the validity of the provisional ballot.

As added by P.L.64-2014, SEC.66.

IC 3-11.7-5-3

Consequence for ballots not satisfying criteria

Sec. 3. (a) If the board determines that the affidavit executed by the provisional voter has not been properly executed, that the provisional voter is not a qualified voter of the precinct, that the

voter failed to provide proof of identification when required under IC 3-10-1, IC 3-11-8, or IC 3-11-10-26, or that the provisional voter did not register to vote at a registration agency under this article on a date within the registration period, the board shall make the following findings:

- (1) The provisional ballot is invalid.
- (2) The provisional ballot may not be counted.
- (3) The provisional ballot envelope containing the ballots cast by the provisional voter may not be opened.

(b) If the county election board determines that a provisional ballot is invalid, a notation shall be made on the provisional ballot envelope: "Provisional ballot determined invalid".

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87. Amended by P.L.209-2003, SEC.177; P.L.109-2005, SEC.14; P.L.103-2005, SEC.17.

IC 3-11.7-5-4

Valid ballots; opening and marking

Sec. 4. If the board determines that a provisional ballot is valid under section 2 of this chapter, the provisional ballot envelope shall be opened. The outside of each provisional ballot shall also be marked to identify the precinct and the date of the election of the ballots.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-5

Ballots rejected; absence of poll clerks' initials

Sec. 5. (a) If any ballot cast by a provisional voter does not contain the initials of the poll clerks, the ballot shall, without being unfolded to disclose how the ballot is marked, be endorsed with the word "Rejected".

(b) All rejected provisional ballots shall be enclosed and securely sealed in an envelope on which is written "Rejected provisional ballots."

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-6

Repealed

(As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87. Repealed by P.L.230-2005, SEC.91.)

IC 3-11.7-5-7

Counting ballots by laying on table

Sec. 7. The provisional ballots shall be counted by laying each ballot upon a table in the order in which the ballots were opened.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-8

Reading names of candidates; ballot questions

Sec. 8. (a) During the counting of the ballots, one (1) counter shall read the name of the candidates and ballot questions voted for from the ballots.

(b) A:

(1) member of the county election board who is not a member of the same political party as the counter; or

(2) representative designated by the member;

shall view the ballots as the names and ballot questions are read.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87. Amended by P.L.209-2003, SEC.178.

IC 3-11.7-5-9

Protest counting of ballots

Sec. 9. During the counting of the ballots:

(1) the counter counting the ballots;

(2) a member of the county election board; or

(3) a representative designated by the member;

may protest the counting of any ballot or any part of a ballot.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-10

Referral of protested ballot to county election board

Sec. 10. If the counters cannot agree whether to count a ballot following a protest under section 9 of this chapter, the question shall be referred to the county election board for a decision.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-11

Counters signing protested ballots

Sec. 11. Following a decision by the counters or the county election board, the counters shall sign each protested ballot.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-12

Noting whether protested ballot counted

Sec. 12. If a ballot or any part of a ballot is protested and the protest is resolved, the counter immediately shall write on the back of the protested ballot the word "counted" or "not counted", as appropriate.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-13

Separate counting of ballots from other precincts

Sec. 13. A counter may not count provisional ballots for a precinct under this chapter while counting provisional ballots for any other precinct.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-14

Counting of ballots by more than one set of counters

Sec. 14. (a) This section applies if at least two (2) sets of counters in a county are counting provisional ballots under this chapter.

(b) A set of counters may count provisional ballots from a precinct while another set of counters is counting provisional ballots from another precinct in the county if each set of counters counts the ballots in compliance with section 8 of this chapter.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-15

Counting write-in ballots

Sec. 15. (a) This section applies to the counting of write-in provisional ballots.

(b) If a voter writes an abbreviation, a misspelling, or other minor variation instead of the correct name of a candidate or political party, that vote shall be counted if the intent of the voter can be determined.

(c) If a voter casts a ballot under this section for President or Vice President of the United States and writes in the name of a candidate or political party that has not certified a list of electors under IC 3-10-4-5, the vote for President or Vice President of the United States is void. The remaining votes on the ballot may be counted.

(d) IC 3-12-1-7 applies to write-in provisional ballots.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-16

Certificate of provisional vote count

Sec. 16. When all the votes have been counted, the counters shall prepare a certificate stating the number of votes that each candidate received for each office and the number of votes cast on each public question.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-17

Entry and memorandum of vote count

Sec. 17. The number of votes that each candidate and public question received shall be written in words and numbers. The counters shall prepare a memorandum of the total votes cast for each candidate and on each public question and ensure that each member of the county election board receives a copy of the memorandum.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-18

Delivery of certificates and tally papers to county election board

Sec. 18. The counters shall deliver the certificates prepared under section 16 of this chapter and the tally papers to the county election board immediately upon the tabulation of the vote in each precinct.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-19

Securing ballots, certificates, and tally papers; delivery

Sec. 19. As soon as the ballots have been counted, the counters shall do the following in the presence of the county election board:

- (1) Place in a strong paper envelope or bag the following:
 - (A) All provisional ballots, voted and spoiled.
 - (B) All provisional ballots:
 - (i) determined invalid under section 3 of this chapter; or
 - (ii) rejected under section 5 of this chapter.
 - (C) All protested and uncounted provisional ballots.
 - (D) All provisional ballot envelopes.
 - (E) All executed affidavits relating to the provisional ballots.
 - (F) The tally papers.
- (2) Securely seal the envelope or bag.
- (3) Have both counters initial the envelope or bag.
- (4) Plainly mark on the outside of the envelope or bag in ink the precinct in which the provisional ballots were cast.
- (5) Deliver the envelope or bag to the circuit court clerk.
- (6) Notify the circuit court clerk of the number of ballots placed in the envelope or bag.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-20

Oath of ballot counters

Sec. 20. Upon delivery of the envelope or bag to the circuit court clerk, each counter shall take and subscribe an oath before the clerk stating that the counter:

- (1) securely kept the ballots and papers in the envelope or bag;
- (2) did not permit any person to open the envelope or bag or to otherwise touch or tamper with the ballots; and
- (3) has no knowledge of any other person opening the envelope or bag.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-21

Filing ballot counters' oaths

Sec. 21. The circuit court clerk shall file the oath taken under section 20 of this chapter with the clerk's other election documents.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-22

Secure storage of ballots and papers

Sec. 22. The circuit court clerk shall place the envelope or bag in a receptacle provided by the county executive with two (2) different locks.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-23

Locks on stored ballots and papers

Sec. 23. The circuit court clerk shall do the following:

- (1) Lock the receptacle provided under section 22 of this chapter.
- (2) Retain one (1) key to one (1) lock of the receptacle.
- (3) Give one (1) key to the other lock of the receptacle to the member of the county election board who is not a member of the same political party as the clerk.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-24**Time for storage of ballots and papers**

Sec. 24. The circuit court clerk shall preserve the receptacle containing the envelope or bag in the clerk's office for the period required under IC 3-10-1-31 or IC 3-10-1-31.1.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87. Amended by P.L.14-2004, SEC.154.

IC 3-11.7-5-25**Time for retention of ballots and papers when election contested**

Sec. 25. If the election is contested, the clerk shall preserve the receptacle containing the envelope or bag as long as the contest is undetermined. During that period, the clerk shall keep the receptacle securely locked, subject only to an order of the court trying a contest.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-26**Destruction of stored ballots and papers**

Sec. 26. When permitted under IC 3-10-1-31 or IC 3-10-1-31.1, the clerk and a county election board member of the opposite political party shall remove the envelope or bag from the receptacle and destroy the envelope or bag.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87. Amended by P.L.14-2004, SEC.155.

IC 3-11.7-5-27**Contract with state educational institution for disposal of ballots**

Sec. 27. A county election board may contract with a state educational institution to dispose of the ballots. The contract must provide that:

- (1) the ballots will be used by the state educational institution to conduct election research; and
- (2) the state educational institution may not receive any ballots under this section until the period for retention under IC 3-10-1-31 or IC 3-10-1-31.1 has expired.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87. Amended by P.L.14-2004, SEC.156; P.L.2-2007, SEC.14.

IC 3-11.7-5-28**News media certificate of provisional ballot totals**

Sec. 28. Immediately upon completion of the vote count, the counters shall make and sign a certificate for the news media showing the total number of provisional ballot votes received by each candidate and on each public question in the precinct.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.

IC 3-11.7-5-29**Delivery of news media certificate**

Sec. 29. The counters shall deliver the certificate to the circuit court clerk as soon as the certificate is completed. The circuit court clerk shall deliver the certificate made for the news media to any person designated to receive the certificate by the editors of the newspapers published in the county or by the managers of the radio and television stations operating in the county immediately upon the completion of the certificate, but not before the closing of the polls.

As added by P.L.126-2002, SEC.87.