



City of Takoma Park
Board of Elections

Training Manual 2

**Election Worker
INTAKE GUIDE**



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Takomaparkmd.gov/elections

TAKOMA PARK BOARD OF ELECTIONS

ELECTION WORKER INTAKE GUIDE

Introduction

Thank you for volunteering to be a canvasser with the Takoma Park Board of Election (hereinafter “BOE”) during the 2020 election cycle. It is the mission of the Board of Elections to ensure a fair, transparent, and accessible City election for all voters and to protect the integrity of the City election (Takoma Park Municipal Code Title 5 Chapter 24 Section 040.)

As an intake volunteer, you will provide crucial support to the Takoma Park Board of Elections in the administration of the City election. You will be asked to perform the duties described herein, and otherwise assigned by the BOE, and to do so faithfully, diligently, and without partiality or prejudice.

This guide will explain how to perform mail-in and absentee ballot **intake**, which is the process of receiving ballots, opening envelopes, and checking the contents.

Your service is essential to the administration of a fair and open City election. Thank you.

Election Worker Objectives

Your goals as an election worker are to:

- Keep yourself and others safe,
- Assist the Board of Elections to ensure that every valid vote is counted,
- Maintain the secrecy of voters’ ballots,
- Maintain the integrity of voters’ ballots,
- Ensure that ballots are handled consistently, and
- Guard against election fraud.

Code of Conduct for Election Workers

For the sake of secrecy and to help guard against fraud and maintain integrity:

- Do not bring electronic devices into the canvass room. Yes, this means phones. There will be a safe and secure location to store your phones and other electronic devices on site.
- Do not bring pens, pencils, or other writing implements into the canvass room.
- Do not bring food or drink into the canvass room. (They might be spilled on ballots).

- If you have ballots at your workstation, do not leave your workstation unattended. If you need to go to the bathroom or otherwise leave your workstation, call over a member of the Board of Elections or city staff.
- Under no circumstances are you allowed to remove the batch of envelopes, or any individual envelope, from your assigned workspace. If there is an issue with a batch, or with an individual envelope or ballot, please call over the attending city staff or BOE member for assistance.
- Under no circumstances are you allowed to mark, adjust, alter, or in any way modify the ballots or the envelopes beyond what is asked of you in these instructions.

Please review and follow the *Election Worker Code of Conduct* and the *Election Worker Safety Guide*.

Intake Procedures

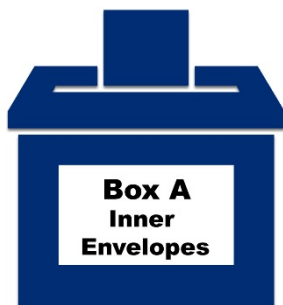
If anything arises that is not covered by this guide, or if you're unsure about what to do, ask for help from a city staff or BOE member.

If you are volunteering for the first time as an intake volunteer, you will be asked to sign and date a copy of this set of instructions, certifying that you read and understand your responsibilities as an intake volunteer.

Upon your arrival at the Takoma Park Recreation Center (7315 New Hampshire Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912), you will be seated by yourself at a table (please observe social distancing rules as described in the Election Worker Safety Guide). There should be 3 empty boxes in front of you, as well as a pollbook and scanner.

A member of the BOE or city staff will deliver a box of unopened envelopes containing ballots. At this stage of the process, each ballot should consist of three parts: an **outer envelope**, an **inner envelope**, and the **ballot** itself.

- The **outer envelope** (or the “*return envelope*”): The outer envelope is the envelope that was mailed. It should have postage and a barcode on it.
- The **inner envelope** (or also the “*oath envelope*”): The inner envelope should be stored inside the outer envelope. The inner envelope should have a signature of the voter.
- The **ballot**: The ballot should be stored inside the inner envelope. You will not be asked to open the inner envelope.



There should be three boxes at your workstation, a box of inner envelopes that have successfully gone through the intake process (“**box A**”), a box of empty outer envelopes for those inner envelopes that have successfully gone through the intake process (“**box B**”), and a box of outer envelopes, with the inner envelopes and ballots still inside, which have issues that need to be escalated to the BOE (“**box C**”).

For the sake of record-keeping, please print your name and the date and time on the sign-in sheet that is attached to **box A** under the “Intake” columns.

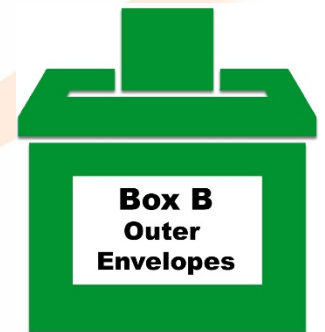
Open the box that was provided to you by the BOE or city staff. Starting from one end of the box, and ending at the back of the box, remove a ballot and scan the barcode on the outer envelope using the pollbook.

Scanning with the Pollbook

[placeholder until we have more information about how to use the pollbook]

After you have successfully scanned the barcode on the outer envelope using the pollbook, open the outer envelope and remove the inside envelope. Put the outer envelope aside (do not place it in Box B or otherwise mix it up with other outer envelopes yet!)

Review the oath envelope to ensure that it is signed and that the signature appears to match the printed name. If the signature appears to be a different name than the printed name, immediately put the oath envelope back inside the return envelope and place it in Box C, containing the ballots that need to be reviewed by the BOE and city staff. The signature does not need to perfectly match the printed name, as voters often have poor handwriting that sometimes makes it difficult to read the signature.



If the signature and printed name appear to match, and there are no other apparent issues with oath envelope, place the oath envelope in Box A (the box of inner envelopes that have successfully gone through the intake process) and place the return envelope in Box B (the box of empty outer envelopes). If there are any issues with the oath envelope or the ballot in general, place the oath envelope back in the return envelope and put it in Box C.

All three boxes will be collected by a member of the BOE or city staff when you have completed the box that was provided to you.

Potential Issues to Watch For

If any of the following issues arise, please put the oath envelope and ballot back in the return envelope and place it in Box C so that the ballot can be reviewed by the BOE.

- If you are performing intake after Election day, if the postage is dated after the date of the election,
- If the return envelope contains the ballot but no oath envelope,

- If the return envelope contains a ballot which has already been removed from the oath envelope,
- If the return envelope, oath envelope, or ballot appear to be tampered or damaged,
- If the return envelope contains multiple oath envelopes or ballots,
- If the printed name is unambiguously different than the name of the signature,
- If the oath envelope is not signed,
- If the barcode of the return envelope is not being scanned in correctly by the pollbook,
- If, upon scanning the outer envelope with the pollbook, it appears that the voter has already voted,
- If, upon scanning the outer envelope with the pollbook, it appears that the voter is not registered to vote, or if some other issue arises, or,
- If there appear to be any other issues with the return envelope, oath envelope, or ballot that is out of the ordinary.



Returning the Results of Your Work

After completing all of the ballots contained in the box that was provided for you, or, if you have not yet completed but otherwise need to finish your volunteer time, call over a member of the BOE or city staff. That person will remove all of the materials from your work station. If you would like to continue to process more ballots through the intake procedure, please notify the BOE member or city staff; otherwise, thank you for your service.

After completing your work, please follow the safety guidelines by washing and sanitizing your hands.

Your City...Your Vote!

