

# **SOUTH CAROLINA**

## ELECTION COMMISSION

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October 2025

### AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF BEAUFORT COUNTY'S BALLOT RECONCILIATION WORKSHEETS FROM THE NOVEMBER 2022 GENERAL ELECTION

The mission of the South Carolina State Election Commission (SEC) is to ensure every eligible citizen can register to vote and participate in fair and impartial elections, knowing that every vote counts and every vote matters.

Pursuant to S.C. Code §7-3-20(D)(3), the SEC is authorized to conduct audits of county boards of voter registration and elections to ensure those boards' compliance with applicable state or federal laws or SEC policies, procedures, or standardized processes regarding the conduct of elections or the voter registration process by all persons involved. These audits are conducted by the SEC's Audit Division.

Additionally, S.C. Code §7-3-25(A) authorizes the SEC to identify any compliance failures and establish and implement a corrective action to remedy such failures. Recommendations in this report will require implementation of a corrective action plan that is developed by the county and approved by the SEC's Audit Division.

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

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## Summary of Results

For the November 2022 General Election, 79% of Beaufort County's ballot reconciliation worksheets were completed, and 81% were reconciled. On the worksheets that were partially completed, this was due to the lack of a requirement from the State Election Commission (SEC) to fill every field, even if zero.

For the 19% of the county's worksheets that were not reconciled, this was due to a number of different factors, including the ballot packaging process, addition and data entry errors, and technical issues. Imbalances may be corrected by:

- Counting blank ballot cards and completing rows A and B in the office.
- Training that emphasizes the accounting of hand-marked paper ballots.
- Reviewing and adjusting, where necessary, the worksheets against returned election materials, including results from the voting equipment and the host server turnout report data—data logged by the electronic pollbook host server that shows the count of voters who were issued voting credit.

Adequately completing and reconciling the ballot reconciliation worksheets for each polling location may give greater assurance that the results include all valid ballots cast.

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## Background

As defined by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, ballot reconciliation is the method in which election officials keep track of each ballot that has been printed or issued to a voter. Tracking the number of ballots printed, used, and unused during an election cycle ensures election officials have accounted for every ballot created and the election results include every valid ballot cast.

In South Carolina, printed paper ballots were not common until the state's current voting equipment was implemented in all 46 counties in 2020. Prior to then, the state used a direct recording electronic, or DRE, as part of its voting system. A DRE is a vote capture device in which ballots are displayed, selections are made, and results are stored all via electronic format. The exceptions to this were the ballots printed for voters whose right to vote had been challenged at the precinct or who had moved but were still allowed to vote and the printed ballots used in emergency situations. Since these ballots were the only ballots in paper form, these were the only ballots that could be accounted for at the time.

South Carolina's transition in February 2020 to a paper-based voting system, with 100% printed paper ballots, significantly altered the process of accounting for ballots. In preparation for the change to this new system, the SEC developed a ballot reconciliation worksheet in September 2019 to account for and reconcile ballots supplied, used, not used, and lost as well as the number of voters who voted. Over the last five years, there have been

minor updates to the worksheet, but it remains generally the same as the September 2019 version. Figure 1 below is an image of the ballot reconciliation worksheet used during the 2022 November General Election. It is important to note that a description of the worksheet and the terms used within are included in the analysis that follows.

**Figure 1: S.C. State Election Commission's Election Day Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet**

County \_\_\_\_\_ Precinct \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Ballots Supplied		
A	Ballot Cards (Completed by County Office)	
B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Completed by County Office) (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
C	Additional Ballot Cards	
D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
		<b>Total 1</b>

Ballots Used		
E	Ballots Scanned (Ballot Cards and Emergency Ballots) (Number displayed on the Scanner/DS200)	
F	Provisional Ballots (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots/Envelopes)	
G	Spoiled Ballots (Ballot Cards + Hand-Marked Paper Ballots)	
		<b>Total 2</b>

Ballots Not Used		
H	Ballot Cards	
I	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
		<b>Total 3</b>

Voters Checked In		
J	Electronic Poll Book (EPB)	
K	Paper Poll List (Include Provisionals NOT entered in the EPB) (DO NOT Include Curbside Poll List)	
		<b>Total 4</b>

**Total 2**  + **Total 3**  =  (Should equal Total 1)

**Total 4**  + **G**  =  (Should equal Total 2)

Explain any discrepancies:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Are you returning any Emergency ballots that have not been scanned?** Yes ☐ No ☐  
(Do NOT include Provisional or Failsafe Provisional ballots)

SEC FRM 1150-202208

**every vote matters.**  
**every vote counts.**

Source: S.C. State Election Commission

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## State Law and SEC Requirements

While state law only requires ballot reconciliation for election day, the SEC’s standardized operating procedures mandate this process for absentee and early voting as well. However, the scope of our audit was limited to election day ballot reconciliation, specifically for the 2022 November General Election. Therefore, the following sections provide an overview of the legal requirements for ballot reconciliation and the SEC’s ballot reconciliation worksheet as they pertain to election day.

### Overview

S.C. Code §7-13-1150 requires poll clerks—the lead poll managers—to account for all ballots delivered to them and return the number of ballots supplied, spoiled—ballots that were defaced or marked in error—unused, voted, and lost, if any. S.C. Code §7-13-1410 requires poll managers to count the number of individuals who voted as well as unused and spoiled ballots. Between the two sections of the law, a poll clerk must account for ballots supplied, ballots used—including spoiled and lost ballots—ballots unused, and voters who voted. This accounting of ballots is also referred to as ballot reconciliation.

### By Voting Type and Election Type

In the abovementioned sections of state law, the use of the terms poll clerk and precinct suggest that ballot reconciliation is performed by a clerk at a precinct, which only occurs on election day. As for election type, Title 7 of the S.C. Code of Laws applies to all types of elections—primary, general, special, and runoff. As such, ballot reconciliation is required to be performed for all types of elections. Because these worksheets are intended to ensure all valid ballots in an election have been cast, they are to be completed prior to a county’s certification—a statement by the county’s board of canvassers that election results are a true and accurate accounting of all votes cast in a particular election.

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## Overview of the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

The SEC’s ballot reconciliation worksheet is intended to be used by poll clerks to document, by precinct, the total ballots supplied, used, unused, and voters who voted. This worksheet accounts for these required components and contains two formulas, which are meant to ensure the appropriate values reconcile with each other. The following describes each section of the worksheet and the terms used.

### Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet Top Portion

The top three-fourths of the worksheet contains 11 rows labeled A–K to record ballots supplied, used, and not used and voters checked in. Note, the worksheet accounts for voters who voted in the section “Voters Checked In,” as only voters who voted are checked in at a polling location. Specifically, rows A–K include the following:

ROW	ACCOUNTS FOR	INCLUDES
A	Ballots Supplied	Ballot Cards
B		Hand-Marked Paper Ballots
C		Additional Ballot Cards
D		Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots
E	Ballots Used	Ballots Scanned
F		Provisional Ballots
G		Spoiled Ballots
H	Ballots Not Used	Ballot Cards
I		Hand-Marked Paper Ballots
J	Voters Checked In	Electronic Pollbook
K		Paper Poll List

Rows A–B are completed by county office staff, and rows C–K are completed by the poll clerk after the polls close. The terms used in the worksheet and referenced in the table above are defined below.

#### **BALLOT CARD**

The paper cardstock provided to a voter for the purpose of recording his vote selections using a ballot-marking device (definition below).

#### **BALLOT-MARKING DEVICE**

A piece of voting equipment that allows a voter to electronically select valid contest options and then produces a human-readable paper ballot. Ballots are not cast on this device.

#### **HAND-MARKED PAPER BALLOT**

A paper ballot marked by hand by a voter using a blue or black pen. A hand-marked paper ballot is used at the polling location for emergency voting, via an emergency ballot, and provisional voting, via a provisional or failsafe provisional ballot (definitions below).

#### **EMERGENCY BALLOT**

A hand-marked paper ballot used in the event the ballot-marking device is inoperable or otherwise unavailable. Generally, these ballots are cast at the polling location.

#### **PROVISIONAL BALLOT**

A hand-marked paper ballot used when a voter's eligibility to vote is challenged, which may occur, for instance, if he has already received a ballot in the mail but insists on voting at a polling location.

#### **FAILSAFE PROVISIONAL BALLOT**

A hand-marked paper ballot used when a voter has moved from one precinct to another within the same county and failed to update his address or has moved from one South Carolina county to another within 30 days of the election.

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Provisional and failsafe provisional ballots are not counted on election day. Instead, they are stored in individual sealed envelopes and kept separate from ballots that have been cast; these are the envelopes referred to in row F on the worksheet. After the polls close but prior to certification, the voter’s eligibility is reviewed, and a determination is made to either accept or reject these ballots based on this review by the county board of canvassers. Accepted ballots are then counted.

**SCANNER/DS200**

A piece of voting equipment used to read the voter selections from a ballot card or a hand-marked paper ballot. Ballots are cast on this device.

**SPOILED BALLOT**

A ballot that has been defaced or marked in error. For example, a voter may make a selection by mistake and then return the ballot to a poll clerk for a second ballot. The term “spoiled” is then written on the back of the ballot and retained for records. State law also refers to a spoiled ballot as a soiled, marred, and defaced ballot.

**ELECTRONIC POLLBOOK**

A piece of election equipment in the form of a tablet that contains the electronic version of the voter registration list, which is used to determine whether a person is eligible to vote in an election and in the precinct. These pollbooks also have the ability to capture a voter’s signature, which is evidence that a voter took the voter’s oath. Ballots are not cast on this device.

**PAPER POLL LIST**

A form containing the voter’s oath and signatures of voters who have taken the voter’s oath. Paper poll lists are used when the electronic pollbooks are not available or when voters must be checked in manually.

**Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet Bottom Portion**

The bottom one-fourth of the worksheet contains the reconciliation portion, which is also to be completed by the poll clerk. Line 1, as follows, is intended to reconcile the number of used and unused ballots with the total ballots supplied.

Line 1:           Total 2                           Total 3                           Total 1  
                  (Ballots Used)           +           (Ballots Not Used)           =           (Ballots Supplied)



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Line 2 below is intended to reconcile the number of voters checked in with the number of ballots used.

$$\text{Line 2:} \quad \begin{array}{c} \text{Total 4} \\ \text{(Voters Checked In)} \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} \text{G} \\ \text{(Spoiled Ballots)} \end{array} = \begin{array}{c} \text{Total 2} \\ \text{(Ballots Used)} \end{array}$$

Beneath the reconciliation formulas, there is a space to address any issues, including ballots that were lost or unscanned.

### Worksheet Color Coding

For ease of completion, ballot reconciliation worksheets are meant to be printed in color. Four different colors are used for Totals 2 through 4 as well as for spoiled ballots:

Color	Corresponds to	
None	Total 1	Ballots Supplied
Yellow	Total 2	Ballots Used
Blue	Total 3	Ballot Not Used
Orange	Total 4	Voters Checked In
Green	Row G	Spoiled Ballots

Each color at the top of the worksheet has a corresponding color at the bottom, where reconciliation is performed. These colors are meant to assist the user in transferring the data from the top to the correct field at the bottom. It is important to note the color yellow for Total 2 and the color orange for Total 4 can often appear similar in appearance when printed.

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## Sample and Results

We reviewed a random sample of ballot reconciliation worksheets from the November 2022 General Election to determine whether they were adequately completed and reconciled. For this election, the county completed its worksheets by polling location. Per S.C. Code §7-13-1150, ballot reconciliation worksheets are to be completed by precinct (see Appendix A). However, since counties, at times, consolidate multiple precincts into a single polling location, we conducted our analysis by polling location. For this election, the county had 56 polling locations. The random sample included 43 of the 56 polling locations, and the results were calculated at a 99% confidence level with a margin of error of  $\pm 10$  percentage points. Therefore, these results can be generalized about all the county's polling locations during the 2022 General Election.

For this review, the term “completed” meant rows C–K contained values. If a field in rows C–K was blank, zero was assumed unless zeros were used elsewhere on the worksheet. The total boxes for each section (Total 1, Total 2, Total 3, and Total 4) were not included within the definition of completed, as they were a separate method of counting ballots and voters to what was presented in rows C–K. Additionally, the term “reconciled” meant the addition in Line 1 and the resulting value in N equaled the value in Total 1 (Total Ballots Supplied), and the addition in Line 2 and the resulting value in Q equaled the value in Total 2 (Total Ballots Used).

Figure 2 below provides a diagram of what was considered completed and reconciled on the worksheet. Note, information in red was added to the diagram to distinguish otherwise unidentified fields and sections of the worksheet.

**Figure 2: Worksheet Diagram for the Definition of Completed and Reconciled**

County \_\_\_\_\_ Precinct \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Ballots Supplied		
A	Ballot Cards (Completed by County Office)	
B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Completed by County Office) (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
C	Additional Ballot Cards	
D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
<b>Total 1</b>		

Ballots Used		
E	Ballots Scanned (Ballot Cards and Emergency Ballots) (Number displayed on the Scanner/DS200)	
F	Provisional Ballots (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots/Envelopes)	
G	Spoiled Ballots (Ballot Cards + Hand-Marked Paper Ballots)	
<b>Total 2</b>		

Ballots Not Used		
H	Ballot Cards	
I	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
<b>Total 3</b>		

Voters Checked In		
J	Electronic Poll Book (EPB)	
K	Paper Poll List (Include Provisionals NOT entered in the EPB) (DO NOT Include Curbside Poll List)	
<b>Total 4</b>		

**Line 1** Total 2 **L** + Total 3 **M** = **N** (Should equal Total 1)

**Line 2** Total 4 **O** + G **P** = **Q** (Should equal Total 2)

Explain any discrepancies: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you returning any Emergency ballots that have not been scanned? Yes ☐ No ☐  
(Do NOT include Provisional or Failsafe Provisional ballots)

Poll Clerk Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

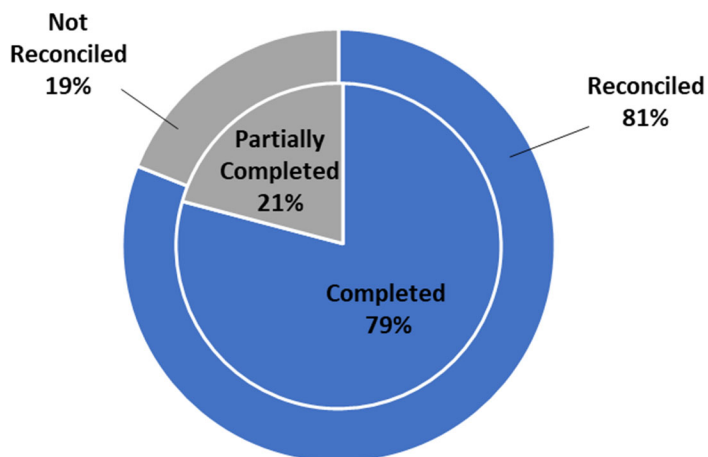
SEC FRM 1150-202208

**every vote matters.  
every vote counts.**

Source: South Carolina State Election Commission

All worksheets were completed to an extent, with 79% (34/43) completed, and 21% (9/43) partially completed. Overall, the worksheets were mostly reconciled with 81% (35/43) reconciled, and 19% (8/43) not reconciled. Figure 3 below provides a breakdown of completed and reconciled worksheets for the county.

**Figure 3: Overall Completion and Reconciliation Status of the Worksheets**



Source: Analysis of Beaufort County's Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets, 2022 General Election

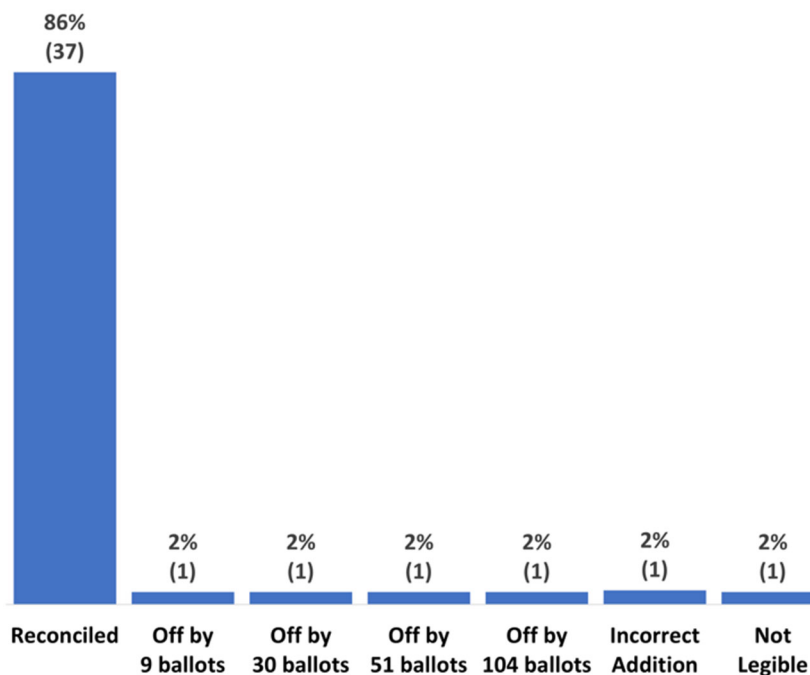
### Completion of Worksheets

For all the partially completed worksheets, one or more fields were left blank, but other fields on the same sheet contained zeros. The most common fields left blank were rows C (Additional Ballot Cards) and D (Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots). If the user had filled in zeros in these rows, then 100% of the worksheets would have been completed. The State Election Commission's (SEC) instructions for the worksheet did not require a user to fill all fields. However, as a third-party reviewer, it was difficult to discern if an empty field was an oversight or intentional. Requiring a value for all fields on the worksheet will likely improve clarity to all users. In December 2024, a recommendation was made to the SEC to require a value, even if zero, be written in each of the worksheet's rows.

### Reconciliation of Line 1

As for reconciliation, 86% (37/43) of the worksheets reconciled on Line 1, and 12% (5/43) did not. Furthermore, 2% (1/43) were not legible. Of the worksheets that did not reconcile, 1 was off by 9 ballots, 1 was off by 30 ballots, 1 was off by 51 ballots, and 1 was off by 104 ballots. The other worksheet did not reconcile due to an incorrectly transcribed value. Figure 4 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status for Line 1.

**Figure 4: Reconciliation Status of Line 1**



Note: Off by 2% due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of Beaufort County's Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets, 2022 General Election

For the worksheet off by 9 ballots, this may be due to the ballot packaging process, which weighs rather than counts the ballots, and could, therefore, be off by  $\pm 2\%$ ; a package of 250 could be over or under by as many as 5 ballot cards. If county staff and poll clerks count the ballot packages and not the individual ballot cards, the values in row A and row C could be incorrect and therefore cause Total 1 (Total Ballots Supplied) to be incorrect.

Per a county election official, the county counts and repackages individual ballot cards before sending them out to polling locations. Staff utilize its two DS450s—high-speed tabulation devices which count ballots at a rate of 75 per minute—when counting individual ballot cards. The hand-marked paper ballots are also counted prior to election day. For the 2022 General Election, staff did not fill out rows A (Ballot Cards Supplied) and B (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots Supplied) on the worksheet before sending them out. Since this election, however, county staff fill out these rows.

The county also trains its poll clerks to count individual ballot cards at the beginning of election day to verify the total ballots supplied in row A and row B. Continuing to count individual ballot cards and completing row A and row B in office, as well as continuing to train poll clerks to count blank ballot cards to verify the total ballots supplied, will likely reduce miscounts in the number of ballots supplied.

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For the worksheet that was off by 30 ballots, the unused hand-marked paper ballots were not accounted for. Specifically, 30 hand-marked paper ballots were supplied (row B), but zero was written for both used provisional ballots—a type of hand-marked paper ballot (row F)— and unused (row I) hand-marked paper ballots. If the poll clerk had written 30 for the unused hand-marked paper ballots (row I), the line would have reconciled. A county election official reported that training content beyond what the SEC provided for the November 2022 General Election is unknown. An official also reported that, since that election, it has implemented hands-on training for the ballot reconciliation worksheets. While the county’s poll clerk training includes accounting for hand-marked paper ballots along with other types of ballots used and not used, ensuring that the hands-on exercise emphasizes how to account for hand-marked paper ballots could prevent this issue.

For the worksheet off by 51 ballots, the addition was done incorrectly for Line 1; had it been done correctly the line would have reconciled. A county election official stated that during the November 2022 General Election, adjustments on worksheets were done by poll clerks. Since then, the county has implemented a worksheet review process in which county staff review the worksheets with poll clerks and help to resolve issues. If an issue is not resolved, the poll clerk will write an explanation on the worksheet. Ensuring that addition corrections are made to the worksheets could aid in preventing this issue.

For the worksheet off by 104 ballots, the imbalance could be due to a miscount of ballot cards supplied (row A). It is possible that the polling location was given an extra package of 100 ballot cards and that the remaining four ballots were due to the ballot packaging process. Again, continuing to count individual ballot cards and completing rows A and B in office would likely resolve this issue. Additionally, continuing to train poll clerks to count blank ballot cards and verify the values in rows A and B will likely prevent miscount issues.

For the worksheet with a transcription issue, Line 1 had the correct total—that is, its total was equal to Total 1 (Total Ballots Supplied). However, the numbers transcribed to Line 1 did not add up to this total. This was due to an incorrectly transcribed Total 3 value. The value that was transcribed to Total 3 in Line 1 was not a value found in any of the totals above. If Total 3 had been transcribed accurately, the addition would have been correct, and the worksheet would have reconciled. Again, county staff continuing to review the worksheets on election night and working with clerks to correct issues would have the potential to fix this issue.

One worksheet did not reconcile because it was deemed not legible. The value for Total 2 and its subsequent transcription were written in such a way that made it difficult to determine the correct number. Therefore, Line 1 was considered not reconciled for the worksheet. Continuing to review the worksheets on election night and working with clerks to correct issues could solve legibility issues.

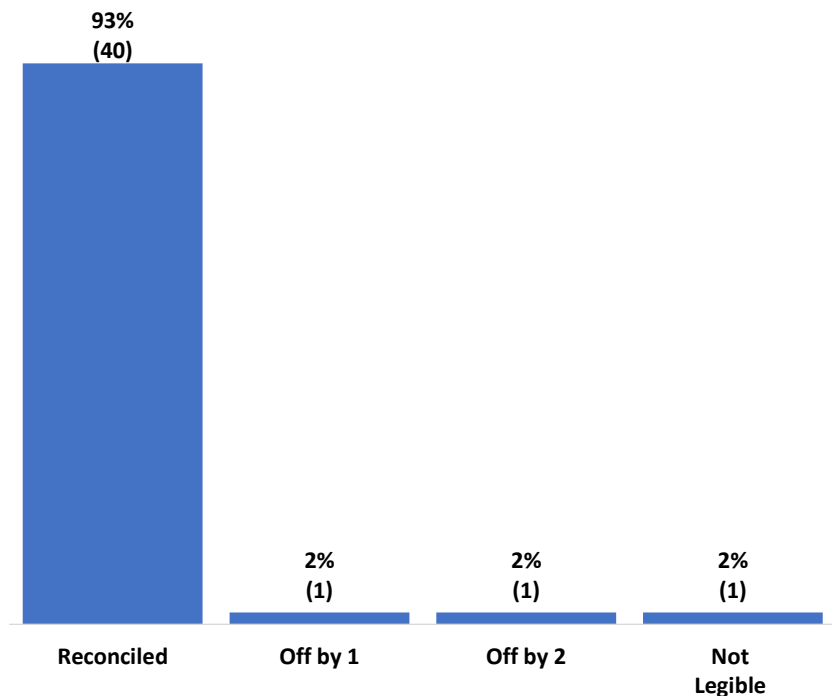
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## Reconciliation of Line 2

On Line 2, 93% (40/43) of the worksheets reconciled, and 5% (2/43) did not. Another 2% (1/43) were not legible. Of the two worksheets that did not reconcile, one was off by one ballot, and one was off by two ballots. Figure 5 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status for Line 2.

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**Figure 5: Reconciliation Status of Line 2**



Note: Off by 1% due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of Beaufort County's Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets, 2022 General Election

For the worksheet off by one, there were two more ballots voted than voters checked in. After correcting with results from the voting equipment and turnout data—data logged by the electronic pollbook (EPB) host server that shows the count of voters who were issued voting credit—it may be that two voters did not sign the paper poll list, or the paper poll list signatures were not included on the worksheet (row K). Continuing to correct the ballot reconciliation worksheets against returned election material, including the paper poll list, could resolve this issue.

For the worksheet that was off by two, this was due to a data entry issue and voters checking in without casting their ballots. Firstly, the numbers recorded on the worksheet reflected two more ballots voted than voters checked in. However, after correcting with reports from the voting equipment and turnout data, there were three more voters checked in than ballots voted. While not certain, it is possible that three voters checked in but did not cast their ballots. When a checked in voter receives a ballot but does not cast it, there are three scenarios that may occur: a voter may

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return the ballot to a poll manager, abandon the ballot during the voting process, or leave the precinct with the ballot. Per the 2022 General Election poll manager handbook, when a voter:

- Returns his ballot, the poll manager needs to spoil the ballot and cancel the voter's participation in the EPB; this would not cause a reconciliation imbalance.
- Abandons his ballot during the voting process and does not inform the poll managers, they must assume the voter intended to cast the ballot. Two poll managers must place the ballot in the Scanner/DS200. This would not cause a reconciliation imbalance.
- Leaves with his ballot, the poll manager who is the exit monitor—the poll manager who instructs voters on how to scan their ballots and provides “I Voted” stickers—needs to alert the voter. However, it can be difficult to always know if a checked in voter has left with his ballot or stop a voter from taking his ballot; this would cause a reconciliation imbalance. Under this circumstance, noting such a situation in the notes section on the worksheet is the only option to the poll clerk.

The county checking the worksheets against the reports from the voting equipment and the turnout data during its worksheet review process may solve this data entry issue.

Lastly, one worksheet did not reconcile on Line 2 because it was not legible. At the top of the worksheet, the value of Total 2 was not legible. Furthermore, the resulting value of Line 2, which should equal Total 2, was also written in such a way that made it difficult to determine the value. Therefore, Line 2 was considered not reconciled for the worksheet. Again, a worksheet review process, prior to certification, that checks and corrects legibility issues can solve this issue.

Adequately completing and reconciling the ballot reconciliation worksheets for each polling location may give greater assurance that the results include all valid ballots cast.



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## Recommendations

1. The Beaufort County Voter Registration and Elections Office should ensure its poll clerk training features how to account for hand-marked paper ballots during its hands-on ballot reconciliation worksheet exercise.
2. The Beaufort County Voter Registration and Elections Office should ensure that during its worksheet review process, the worksheets are checked and corrected, where necessary and prior to certification:
  - For correct addition.
  - For correct transcription.
  - For legibility.
  - Against returned election materials, including results from the voting equipment, provisional ballot envelopes, and paper poll lists.
  - Against the host server turnout report data for voters checked in.

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# Appendix A: Objective, Scope, and Methodology

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This report provides the results of our compliance audit of the Beaufort County Voter Registration and Elections Office and its use of the ballot reconciliation worksheet. We conducted this audit under the provision of S.C. Code §7-3-20(D)(3). The review period for the audit was for the November 2022 General Election, and the objective was to determine whether precinct ballot reconciliation worksheets from this election were adequately completed and reconciled. To conduct this audit, we used a variety of sources of evidence, including:

- Federal and state laws.
- S.C. State Election Commission (SEC) policies and procedures.
- SEC training materials.
- Interviews with and surveys of county election officials.
- Information from South Carolina and other state agencies as well as the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.
- Contracts and information from Election Systems & Software and its vendor, Printelect.
- Ballot reconciliation worksheets.

Criteria used to evaluate compliance was based on federal and state laws and agency policies, procedures, and training material. We reviewed internal controls in several areas, including SEC policies and procedures; county policies, procedures, and practices; and agency training. Our findings are detailed in this report.

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## Issue for Further Review

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During our examination of the ballot reconciliation worksheets, we identified a potential legal compliance issue that requires further review. Specifically, in the November 2022 General Election, several counties consolidated multiple precincts into a single polling location.

Pursuant to S.C. Code §7-7-10, while counties are authorized to establish multiple polling places within a precinct, the statute does not grant authority to consolidate multiple precincts into a single polling location. Additionally, under S.C. Code §7-13-1150, ballot reconciliation worksheets must be completed at the precinct level.

Due to time constraints, we were unable to conduct a comprehensive analysis of this issue. However, it is briefly addressed here and is the reason our analysis was conducted by polling location rather than by individual precinct.

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## Appendix B: Beaufort County Comments

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# BOARD OF VOTER REGISTRATION and ELECTIONS OF BEAUFORT COUNTY



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Naomi Washington  
Audit Manager  
South Carolina State Election Commission

Please find the following responses addressing the recommendations found in your “*In-depth Review of Beaufort County’s Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets from the November 2022 General Election.*”

*The Beaufort County Voter Registration and Elections Office should count individual ballot cards as well as complete rows A and B in the office before supplying them to the precincts or polling locations.*

Over the past three months the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Beaufort County staff has counted and packaged over 200,000 individual ballot cards using our two DS450 scanners to count for accuracy. This will preclude the unpackaging of ballot card packs in the future and ensure accurate counts on line A of the ballot reconciliation form. As paper ballots are printed for the elections those have been counted in the past and listed on line B. Staff has been putting the ballot counts on lines A & B for the past three years.

*The Beaufort County Voter Registration and Elections Office should ensure its poll clerk training features how to account for hand-marked paper ballots.*

The poll clerk training conducted by the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Beaufort County includes instruction on accounting for hand-marked ballots. We use a template ballot reconciliation form to walk through a typical scenario, ensuring clerks understand and can correctly account for all ballots.

*The Beaufort County Voter Registration and Elections Office should, during its worksheet review process, check and correct, where necessary and prior to certification, the worksheets:*

- *For correct addition.*
- *For correct transcription.*
- *For legibility.*
- *Against returned election materials, including results from the voting equipment, provisional ballot envelopes, and paper poll lists.*
- *Against the host server turnout report data for voters checked in.*

The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Beaufort County staff election night processes include a verification of each clerk’s ballot reconciliation forms as they return their supplies. We have several staffers to deal with all the clerks as they check in to ensure accurate counts, return of ballots and reconciliation.



# BOARD OF VOTER REGISTRATION and ELECTIONS OF BEAUFORT COUNTY



15 John Galt Road • Post Office Drawer 1228 • Beaufort, South Carolina 29901-1228

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As many directors have mentioned during this exercise, we are addressing processes and forms that have changed since 2022. Please note that related documentation is in the final stages of disposal, and some of the clerks and staff who previously handled these forms are no longer employed. We request that future reviews and corrective action requests focus on current processes, documentation, and personnel. This approach will allow for a more efficient and effective response to your inquiries.

I want to formally commend the SEC for its innovative approach in fostering collaboration. Specifically, the initiative to provide county offices with the opportunity to review and address any concerns or inaccuracies within reports prior to their public release is truly commendable. This proactive measure not only demonstrates respect for the work of county offices but also significantly contributes to a more positive and productive working relationship between our agencies, ultimately leading to more accurate and reliable information being shared with the public.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wendell V. Roberson Sr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Wendell V. Roberson Sr., CERA  
Deputy Director  
Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Beaufort County