

# **SOUTH CAROLINA**

## ELECTION COMMISSION

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October 2025

### AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF LEXINGTON 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, 78% of the county's ballot reconciliation worksheets were completed, and 33% were reconciled. On most of the worksheets considered 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 67% of the county's worksheets that were not reconciled, this was due to several different factors, including the ballot packaging process, inaccurately accounting for checked in voters and various ballot types, addition and data entry issues, 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, used and unused ballots, and voters who check in on the paper poll lists.
- 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 these worksheets for each polling location may give greater assurance that all valid ballots were included in the election results.

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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 precinct. Per S.C. Code §7-13-1150, ballot reconciliation worksheets are to be completed by precinct. 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 93 polling locations. The sample included 60 of the 93 polling locations, and the results were calculated at a 99% confidence level with a margin of error of  $\pm 10$  percentage points. After including these 60 polling locations, there was one location that contained two worksheets—one for each precinct in the polling location; in this instance, one of the worksheets was randomly selected and included in the analysis. Therefore, these results can be generalized about all of 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 \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Ballots Supplied</b>		
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>		
<b>Ballots Used</b>		
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>		
<b>Ballots Not Used</b>		
H	Ballot Cards	
I	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
<b>Total 3</b>		
<b>Voters Checked In</b>		
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: \_\_\_\_\_

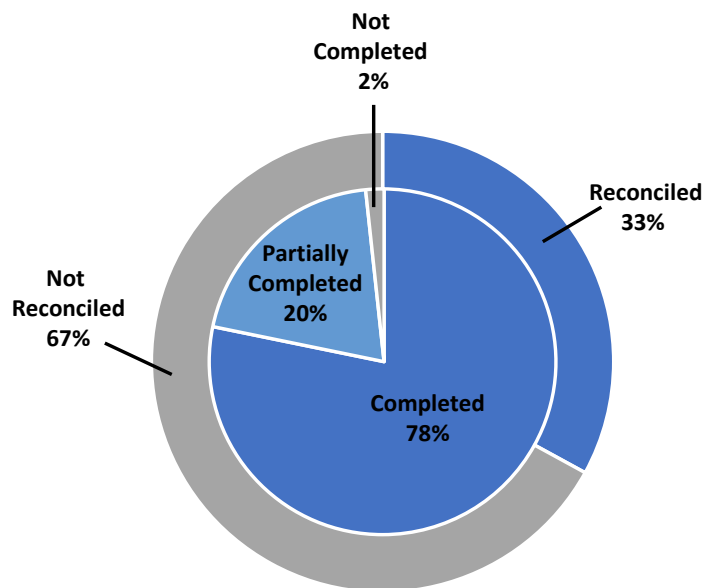
SEC FRM 1150-202208

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

Source: South Carolina Election Commission

All sampled worksheets were available for review, and most were completed to an extent, with 78% (47/60) completed, 20% (12/60) partially completed, and 2% (1/60) not completed. Overall, the worksheets did not reconcile, with 33% (20/60) reconciled and 67% (40/60) 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 Lexington County's Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets, 2022 General Election

### Completion of Worksheets

On most of the worksheets that were partially completed, 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), D (Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots), and K (Paper Poll List). If the user had filled in zeros in these rows, then 97% (58/60) 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 fields.

One worksheet was partially completed because it was missing two values. While other fields on the same sheet contained zeros, a note stated that the values required for rows J (Electronic Pollbook/Voters Checked In) and K (Paper Poll List/Voters Checked In) had not been recorded. According to a county election official, the county has a process in place to ensure completion and reconciliation, which involves auditing the ballot reconciliation worksheets prior to certification. Ensuring completion of the worksheets during this audit process could prevent these issues.

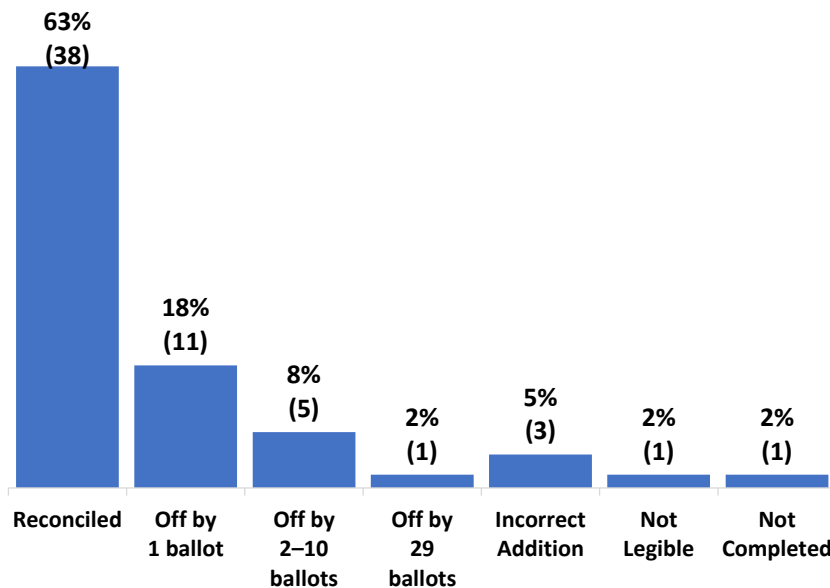
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### Reconciliation of Line 1

As for reconciliation, 63% (38/60) reconciled on Line 1, and 33% (20/60) did not. Furthermore, 2% (1/60) were not legible, and 2% (1/60) were not completed. Of the sample, 18% (11/60) were off by 1 ballot, 8% (5/60) were off by 2–10 ballots, and 2% (1/60) were off by 29 ballots. Additionally, 5% (3/60) did not reconcile due to incorrect addition on Line 1. Figure 4 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status for Line 1.

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



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

For 9 of the 20 worksheets that did not reconcile on Line 1—6 that were off by 1 ballot and 3 that were off by 2–10 ballots—it may be due to the ballot packaging process, which involves weighing rather than counting the ballots, and the result could, therefore, be off by  $\pm 2\%$ ; a package of 250 ballot cards 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.

According to county election officials, the county has a process in place to ensure ballot cards are counted accurately. Prior to election day, two poll workers manually count the ballots in office and sign off on the count. Additionally, the county office is equipped with a DS450—a high-speed tabulation device which counts ballots at a rate of 75 ballot cards per minute—which could be used to count individual ballot cards before sending them out to the polling locations. However, county officials reported that the DS450 was not used for this purpose during the 2022 General Election; instead, an in-office paper counter was employed. Furthermore, the county prefills rows A (Ballot Cards Supplied) and B

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(Hand-Marked Paper Ballots Supplied) before sending out the worksheets. On election day, poll clerks re-count the ballots and sign off on an audit slip, stating an accurate count. Continuing to count individual ballot cards and completing row A and row B in office could help reduce miscounts in the number of ballots supplied.

For one of the worksheets off by one ballot, this was due to an inaccurate count of unused hand-marked paper ballots and the ballot packaging process. Specifically, 30 hand-marked paper ballots were supplied (row B), 18 were used (row F), and 29 were written as unused (row I). By subtracting 18 (row F) from 30 (row B), the value in row I should have been 12. Ensuring its audit process on election night checks for proper accounting of unused ballots could help fix this issue. However, even with the corrected row I, Line 1 still does not reconcile. This could be due to the ballot packaging process. Again, continuing the procedure for counting supplied ballot cards before election day and filling in rows A and B in the office before sending out the worksheets would help reduce miscounts in the number of ballots supplied. Continuing to ensure poll clerks count individual ballot cards may help reduce issues with row A and row B on the worksheet.

For two of the worksheets off by one ballot, this was likely due to not accounting for a used provisional ballot—a type of hand-marked paper ballot. For one of these worksheets, 30 hand-marked paper ballots were supplied (row B) and 29 hand-marked paper ballots were not used (row I). However, zero is written in row F (Used Provisional Ballots). If the poll clerk had written one in row F, the line would have reconciled. For the other worksheet, 30 hand-marked paper ballots were supplied (row B), 4 provisional ballots were recorded as used (row F), and 25 hand-marked paper ballots were written as not used (row I). This suggests that row F was understated by one. Had the correct value of 5 been written in row F, the line would have reconciled. Continuing its audit process of the worksheets and checking against provisional ballot envelopes would solve these issues.

For three of the worksheets that did not reconcile on Line 1, two of which were off by one ballot and one of which was off by two ballots, this was due to inaccurately accounting for ballots scanned. After correcting ballots scanned (row E) with results from the voting equipment, these worksheets reconcile on Line 1. The county stated that during the November 2022 General Election, the audit process involved checking against results from the voting equipment. Continuing to check the worksheets against results from the voting equipment during the auditing process would solve this issue.

For one worksheet off by five ballots, this was due to an inaccurate count of used provisional ballots and the ballot packaging process. Specifically, 20 hand-marked paper ballots were supplied (row B), and 10 hand-marked paper ballots were not used (row I). No provisional ballots were listed as being used (row F). Therefore, there were likely 10 used provisional ballots unaccounted for. However, even with the corrected row F value, Line 1 still

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does not reconcile. This could be due to the ballot packaging process. The county continuing to audit its worksheets on election night and checking the number of used provisional ballots would likely fix the issue of inaccurately accounting for used provisional ballots. Furthermore, continuing the procedure for counting supplied ballot cards before election day and filling in rows A and B before sending out the worksheets would help reduce miscounts in the number of ballots supplied. Continuing to ensure poll clerks count individual ballot cards may help reduce issues with row A and row B on the worksheet.

For the worksheet off by 29 ballots, this was due to inaccurately accounting for unused hand-marked paper ballots (row I). Zero was written in row I. However, 30 hand-marked paper ballots were supplied (row B) and 1 provisional ballot was used (row F). Had the 29 unused hand-marked paper ballots been written in row I, Line 1 would have reconciled. Again, continuing to audit its worksheets on election night and checking the unused hand-marked paper ballot count could help catch these issues. As stated by a county election official, the poll clerks took a hands-on training to practice reconciliation and troubleshooting with the worksheets. Continuing this training and emphasizing how to account for hand-marked and unused ballots could help prevent issues in accounting for unused hand-marked paper ballots.

For the three worksheets that did not reconcile due to incorrect addition, one had the correct total of Line 1, one was off by 1 ballot, and one was off by two ballots. For the worksheet with the correct total, 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. If the addition had been correct on Line 1, the worksheet would have been off by one ballot. Again, this could be due to the ballot packaging process, as mentioned above. For one of the worksheets that was off by one ballot, rows E–G were added incorrectly, causing the value of Total 2 to be incorrect. Had Total 2 been added correctly, Line 1 would have reconciled. For one of the worksheets that was off by two ballots, there was incorrect addition on Line 1. The correct values were transcribed to Total 2 and Total 3 on Line 1. Had the addition been correct on Line 1, the worksheet would have reconciled. The office conducts poll clerk training, where clerks are trained using the SEC poll clerk training presentation. In this training, the county incorporates a hands-on training to practice reconciliation and troubleshooting of the worksheets. Continuing to incorporate this hands-on exercise during poll clerk trainings could help with addition issues.

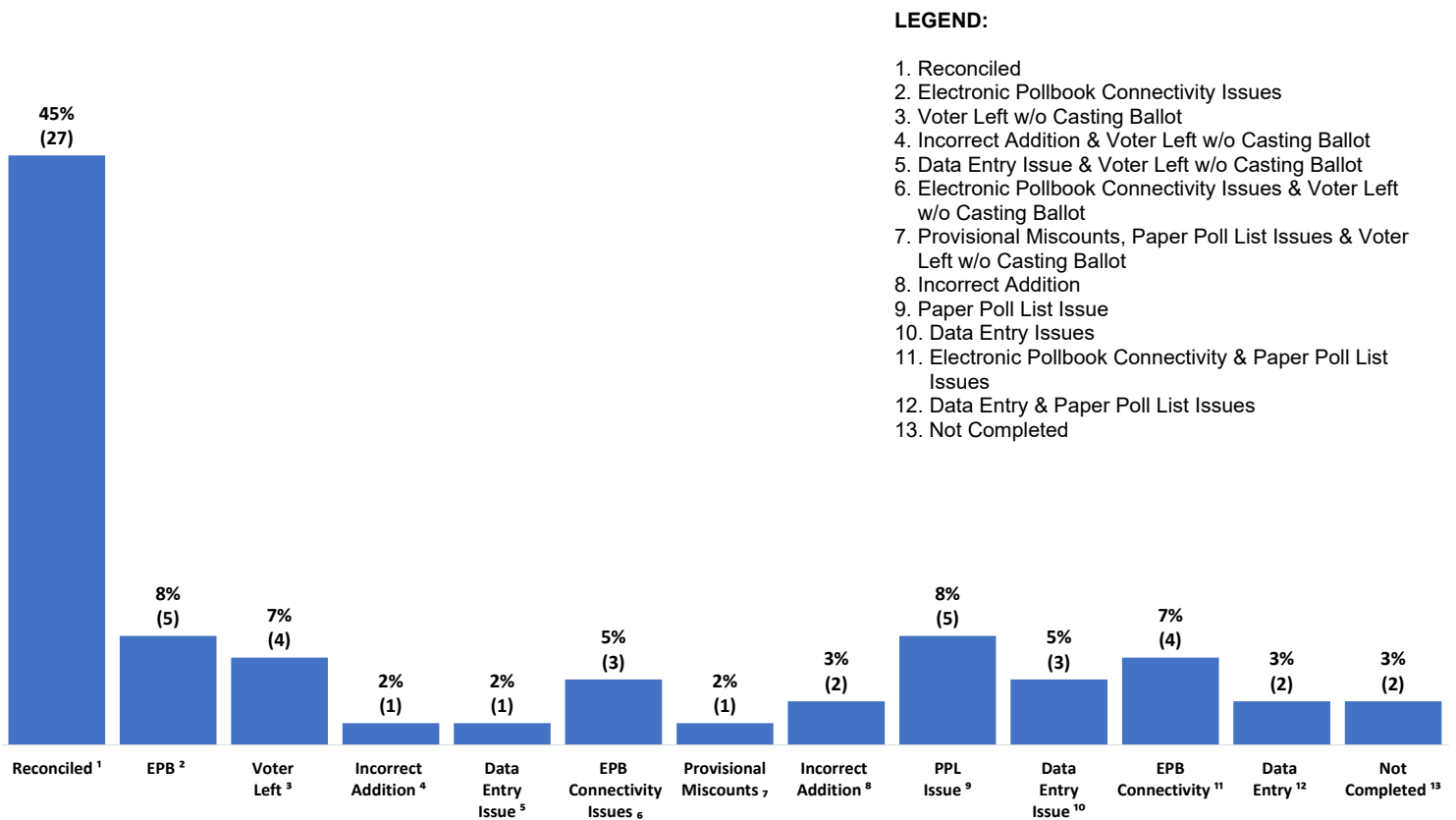
One worksheet did not reconcile on Line 1 because it was deemed not legible. Line 1's total was scratched out in a way that made it difficult to read. Continuing the audit process and checking for legibility may resolve this issue.

Lastly, one worksheet did not reconcile on Line 1 because it was not completed. No fields on Line 1 or in rows C–K had been completed. The county continuing to audit the worksheets on election night and verifying completion may help resolve these issues.

## Reconciliation of Line 2

On Line 2, 45% (27/60) of the worksheets reconciled and 52% (31/60) did not. Another 3% (2/60) were not completed. Figure 5 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status for Line 2.

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



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



The table below describes the main issues that caused the 33 worksheets to not reconcile on Line 2. Note: the 2 worksheets deemed not completed are included in this total of 33 worksheets.

# OF WORKSHEETS	MAIN ISSUE	ISSUE DESCRIPTION
5	Electronic Pollbook Connectivity Issues	<p>These worksheets initially had more voters checked in than ballots voted. Turnout report data—data logged by the electronic pollbook (EPB) host server that shows the count of voters who were issued voting credit—showed that the total number of voters checked in was overstated by the poll clerks on each of these worksheets. This was likely due to EPB connectivity issues. It is important to note that EPBs can have connectivity issues at polling locations, which can, at times, cause devices to display incorrect totals for voters checked in at the polling location. However, the accurate log of checked-in voters is recorded in the turnout data. It is uncertain if the impact of these connectivity issues was known at the time of this election.</p>
4	Voter Left Without Casting Ballot	<p>These worksheets did not reconcile due to voters not casting their ballots. This caused the worksheets to include at least one more voter checked in than ballots voted. When a checked-in voter receives a ballot but does not cast it, there are three scenarios that may occur: a voter may 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
1	Incorrect Addition & Voter Left Without Casting Ballot	<p>This worksheet had incorrect addition of rows J (Electronic Pollbook/Voters Checked In) and K (Paper Poll List/Voters Checked In). Even if these rows had been added correctly, there would be one more voter checked in than ballots voted. This is likely due to a voter not casting his ballot. As described above, poll workers should follow the instructions for the three scenarios in which a checked-in voter receives a ballot but does not cast it.</p>

1	Data Entry Issue & Voter Left Without Casting Ballot	This worksheet had a data entry issue in row E (Ballots Scanned). This was determined using a report from the voting equipment. Using the correct value for row E (Ballots Scanned), there were two more voters checked in than ballots voted. This is likely due to voters not casting their ballots. As described above, poll workers should follow the instructions for the three scenarios in which a checked-in voter receives a ballot but does not cast it.
3	Electronic Pollbook Connectivity Issues & Voter Left Without Casting Ballot	For these worksheets, turnout report data showed that the number of voters checked in was overstated by the poll clerks. As described above, this was likely due to EPB connectivity issues.  Even after correcting the worksheets with turnout report data, there were more voters checked in than ballots voted. This is likely due to voters not casting their ballots. As described above, poll workers should follow the instructions for the three scenarios in which a checked-in voter receives a ballot but does not cast it.
1	Provisional Miscalculations, Paper Poll List Issue, & Voter Left Without Casting Ballot	After correcting the addition of Line 2, this worksheet did not reconcile. This was due to a few issues, the first being a miscalculation of used provisional ballots. In looking at the number of supplied hand-marked paper ballots (row B) and unused hand-marked paper ballots (row I), it is likely that 10 used provisional ballots—a type of hand-marked paper ballot—were missing from row F.  Another issue that caused Line 2 to not reconcile was issues with the paper poll list. It is likely that ten provisional voters were checked in on the paper poll list and either did not sign the list or the paper poll list signatures were not counted on the worksheet.  The last issue that caused Line 2 to not reconcile was that this worksheet had one more voter checked in than ballots voted. This is likely due to a voter not casting his ballot. As described above, poll workers should follow the instructions for the three scenarios in which a checked-in voter receives a ballot but does not cast it.
2	Incorrect Addition	These worksheets did not reconcile due to incorrect addition. On one of these worksheets, the numbers transcribed to Line 2, if summed correctly, add up to Total 2. However, the written value in Q (the resulting value of Line 2) does not equal Total 2. Had the addition in Line 2 been correct, the worksheet would have reconciled. On the other worksheet, rows E-G were incorrectly added, which caused Total 2 to be off by one ballot. Had these rows been added correctly, Total 2 would have been equal to Q, and the worksheet would have reconciled.
5	Paper Poll List Issue	For these worksheets, there were more ballots voted than voters checked in due to not using or counting signatures from the paper poll list, as described above.
3	Data Entry Issue	For these worksheets, data entry issues caused Line 2 to not reconcile. For two of these worksheets, reports from the voting equipment showed that the number of ballots scanned was incorrectly written by the poll clerk. For another worksheet, turnout report data showed that the number of voters checked in was understated by 14 by the poll clerk on the worksheet. Had these values been correctly entered, these worksheets would have reconciled.

4	Electronic Pollbook Connectivity & Paper Poll List Issues	For all four of these worksheets, turnout report data showed that the number of voters checked in was overstated by one. As described above, this was likely due to EPB connectivity issues. Furthermore, there were more ballots voted than voters checked in due to not using or counting signatures from the paper poll list, as described above.
2	Data Entry & Paper Poll List Issues	For these worksheets, data entry issues were present. On both worksheets, reports from the voting equipment and turnout report data showed that the number of ballots scanned and the number of voters checked in were incorrectly entered. These worksheets also had more ballots voted than voters checked in due to not using or counting signatures from the paper poll list, as described above.
2	Not Completed	These worksheets were deemed not completed on Line 2. On one worksheet, no values were written in rows C–K or on Lines 1 or 2. On the other worksheet, rows J (Electronic Pollbook/Voters Checked In), K (Paper Poll List/Voters Checked In), and Total 4 (Total Voters Checked In) were not filled out. Also, no values were written in fields O or P in Line 2. Therefore, it was not possible to analyze reconciliation for these worksheets.

The county's audit process involves checking the worksheets against turnout report data and results from the voting equipment. Continuing to review the turnout report data and correcting the total number of voters checked in on the EPB could alleviate miscounts due to connectivity issues. Furthermore, paying special attention to math in the audit process could help prevent addition issues. Reviewing the worksheets against reports from the voting equipment and turnout report data would likely solve data entry issues in accounting for ballots scanned (row E) and voters checked in on the EPB (row J). Incorporating, in its poll clerk training, how to account for voters who check in on the paper poll list would lessen issues in accounting for these voters.

Adequately completing and reconciling these worksheets for each polling location may give greater assurance that all valid ballots were included in the election results.

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## Recommendations

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

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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 Lexington 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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## Appendix B: Lexington County Comments

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**LEXINGTON COUNTY  
REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMISSION**

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Dean Crepes, Chairman  
Constance Flemming, Vice Chm  
James 'Ross' Snell, Secretary  
Freddie Black  
William Bowman  
Wyman 'Buck' Merchant  
Robert Hall  
James 'Whit' Haney  
Stacey Faile



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Director  
Phone (803) 785-8161  
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**605 WEST MAIN STREET, SUITE C  
LEXINGTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, 29072-2503**

State Of South Carolina Election Commission  
Attn: South Carolina Elections Audit Division  
Attn: Jenny Wooten/Hugo Albergaria  
1122 Lady Street  
Suite 500  
Columbia, SC 29201

October 3, 2025

Regarding: Lexington County Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet Audit for November 2022 .

South Carolina Audit Division,

The purpose of this letter is in response to the findings from the Audit of Lexington County Voter Registration and Elections Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets Audit for the November 2022 Election.

Elections are evolving every year. Their evolution moves with the expansion of technology, election laws, categories of elections, influx of Poll Workers and modernizing training of each of these programs stated. In 2020, only days before the Election, New Election Equipment and their process for implementation were introduced to each County of South Carolina. In addition, in June of 2022, the implementation of Early Voting was executed in South Carolina, adding additional 11 days of voting, or more, for each Election that is conducted in the fiscal year. There were layers and layers of new processes for Election Officials to learn, implement, and train in such a short time. The Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets was one of those new processes that needed to be implemented. During this time, Lexington County also upgraded our own policies, procedures, audits and certifications to match the changes. We used Election Night Return to conduct our own Audit on Election Night even before an election audit was mandated. We worked with Clerks to find their errors and explain discrepancies. The Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet itself has changed with each new handbook from the 2020 version to the 2024 version that we know today.

*"The Base of Freedom is your Vote"  
Register and Vote*

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The timing of the audit was beneficial. We discovered valuable lessons, and we were eager to share what changes we were already improving on and how we were implementing additional 'hands-on and security training'. From these improvements, Lexington County was recognized by the Clearinghouse Awards for excellence in Election Administration for exemplary Contingency Planning and Emergency Efforts.

In closing, we acknowledge the results of the November 2022 audit. We can see that during 2022, Clerks were learning this new system of auditing and were not as familiar with these worksheets as we are today. We have updated our training to cover the broad spectrum of the Election process' and one of the main focuses is on the accuracy of the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets. We will continue to uphold the integrity of each Election and advance toward excellence in each process.

We look forward to working with the South Carolina Election Audit Division on future Elections and feel confident in our collaborations.

Respectfully,

Lenice Shoemaker- Director  
Lexington County Voter Registration and Elections

*"The Base of Freedom is your Vote"*  
*Register and Vote*