

# **SOUTH CAROLINA**

## ELECTION COMMISSION

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October 2025

### AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF OCONEE 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.

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## Summary of Results

For the November 2022 General Election, 78% of Oconee County's ballot reconciliation worksheets were completed, and 48% 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 52% of Oconee County's worksheets that were not reconciled, this was due to not counting blank ballot cards, not accounting for unused hand-marked paper ballots, paper poll list issues, and incompleteness. Since this election, the county has implemented several processes to ensure worksheets are properly reconciled. These efforts will likely improve overall reconciliation. 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 for Oconee County to determine whether they were adequately completed and reconciled. For this election, the county completed its worksheets by polling location (see Appendix A). 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 26 polling locations. The random sample included 23 of the 26 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 of Oconee 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>

**Completed**

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)

**Reconciled**

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: \_\_\_\_\_

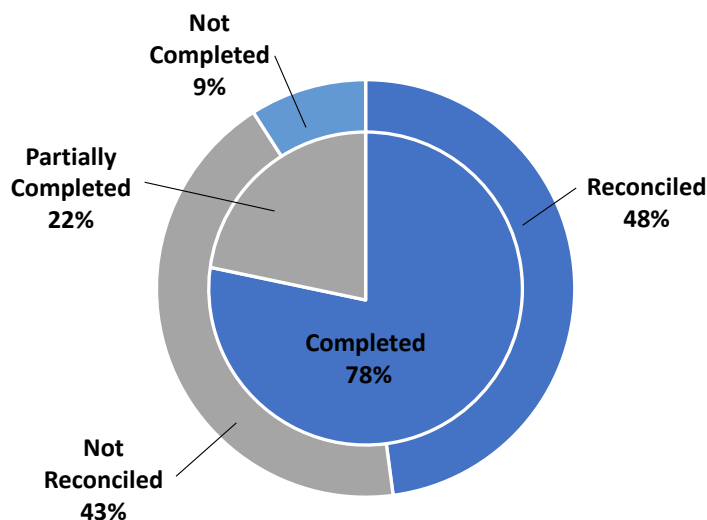
SEC FORM 1150-202208

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

Source: South Carolina Election Commission

For Oconee County, 78% (18/23) of its ballot reconciliation worksheets were completed, and 22% (5/23) were partially completed. As for reconciliation, 48% (11/23) were reconciled, 43% (10/23) were not, and 9% (2/23) were not completed. Figure 3 below provides a breakdown of the county's overall completion and reconciliation status of the worksheets.

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



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

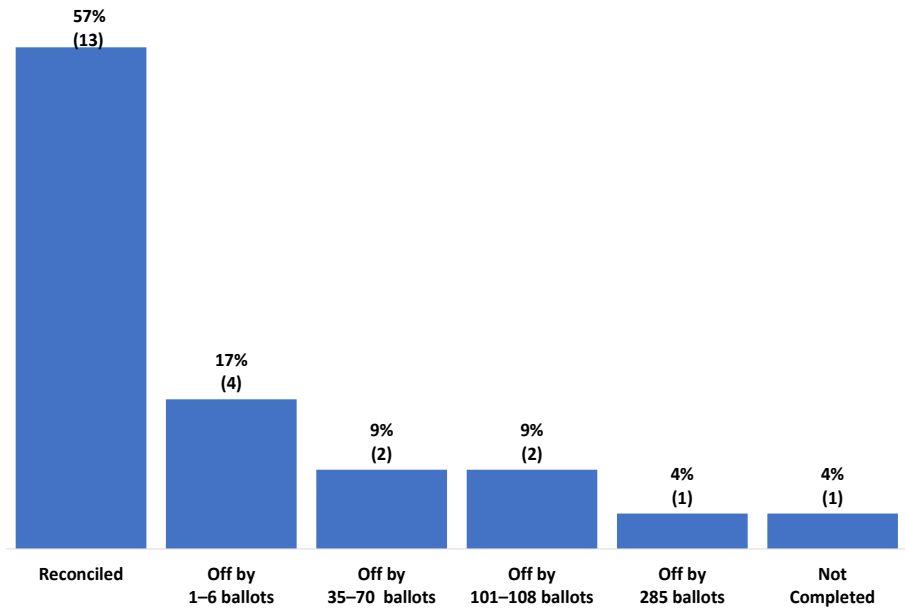
### Completion of the Worksheets

In the cases in which the worksheets were partially completed, one or more fields were left blank, but other fields on the same worksheet contained zeros. If the user had filled in zeros in these worksheets, then 100% (23/23) would have been completed. The State Election Commission's (SEC) instructions for the worksheet did not require a user to fill all rows. 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.

### Reconciliation of Line 1

As for reconciliation, 57% (13/23) of the worksheets reconciled on Line 1, 39% (9/23) did not, and 4% (1/23) were not completed. Specifically, 17% (4/23) were off by 1–6 ballots, 9% (2/23) were off by 35–70 ballots, 9% (2/23) were off by 100–108 ballots, and 4% (1/23) were off by 285 ballots. Figure 4 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status for Line 1.

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



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

For all except one worksheet that did not reconcile, this was likely due, in full or in part, to the ballot packaging process. During this process, the ballots are weighed rather than counted and ballot cards could, therefore, be off by  $\pm 2\%$ ; a package of 250 ballot cards could be over or under by as many 5 ballot cards. If county staff and poll clerks count the ballot packages and not the individual ballot cards, the values in rows A and C could be incorrect and, therefore, cause Total 1 (Total Ballots Supplied) to be incorrect. For the worksheet that was off by 285 ballots, ballot packages were likely not supplied as stated in addition to ballot cards.

Per a county election official, since 2022, staff have counted ballot cards and repackaged them using plastic wrap before sending them out to the polling locations and trained poll clerks to count them and ensure the totals listed in rows A–B were correct. On 17% (4/23) of the worksheets, there was evidence that the poll clerk counted the blank ballot cards and found the values in rows A and B to be incorrect.

Following the June 2024 statewide primaries and runoffs, a new system was introduced: ballot cards are counted in stacks of 50, 100, or 250, placed in sealed bags, labeled with the stack quantity, and then stored in boxes with the total number indicated on the outside. For each election, staff record the number of supplied ballot cards on the ballot reconciliation worksheet. Additionally, poll clerks continue to be trained to count individual ballot cards to verify the supplied amount before use. Poll clerks are instructed to open one stack at a time, record any imbalances on the ballot reconciliation worksheet, and track ballots using two draft copies of the worksheet and two

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copies of the SEC's ballot reconciliation tally sheet. Under the current process, ballot card counting issues are likely to be resolved.

Five of the worksheets with ballot card counting issues also contained an additional issue. Specifically, the clerks did not:

- Account for unused ballots on 1 worksheet off by 35–70 ballots, the 1 worksheet off by 108 ballots, and 1 worksheet off by 285 ballots. On 1 worksheet, for example, 35 hand-marked paper ballots were supplied (row B), but zero was written for both used provisional ballots (row F)—a type of hand-marked paper ballot—and unused hand-marked paper ballots (row I). Failure to account for unused ballots occurred on the other two worksheets as well.
- Account for unused ballots on 1 worksheet off by 35–70 ballots, as described above. Additionally, there was a transcription issue, meaning one of the totals from the top of the worksheet was not transcribed to the bottom of the worksheet.
- Add the line correctly for the worksheet off by 101 ballots.

Per a county election official, for the 2022 General Election, they did not provide any training on the ballot reconciliation worksheets beyond what was provided by the SEC. However, for the 2024 General Election, the county implemented a training that includes a hands-on ballot reconciliation worksheet exercise. The training was based on the one provided by the SEC but used custom election day numbers to facilitate discussion of the various worksheet rows. Poll clerks also watched the SEC's instructional video on completing the worksheet before performing the hands-on exercise. Continuing these training efforts, with a focus on accounting for unused hand-marked paper ballots and ensuring accurate transcription and addition, can correct these issues.

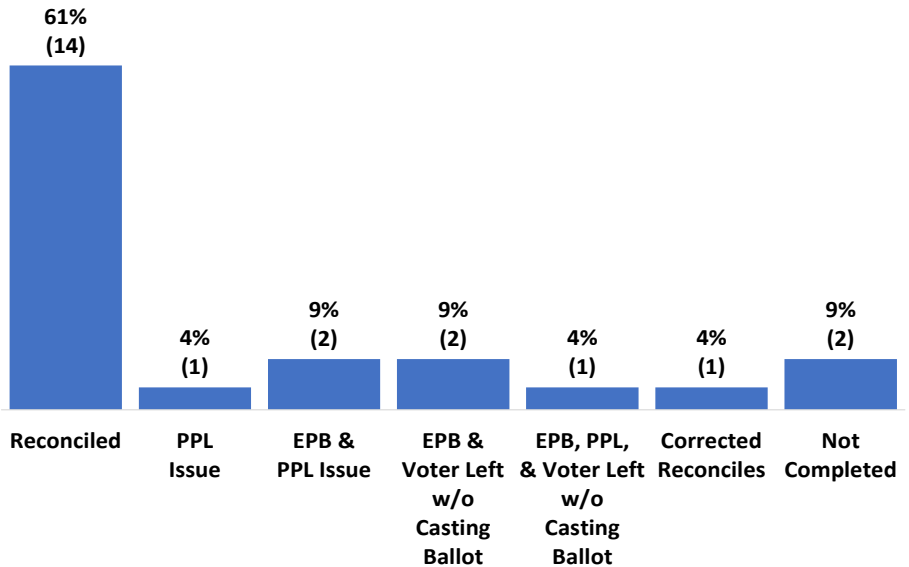
Another worksheet off by one ballot did not reconcile due to a data entry error. The clerk included one less provisional ballot used than actual, according to provisional ballot data; if the worksheet had included the correct number of provisional ballots used, the line would have reconciled. Again, continuing to train poll clerks on how to account for hand-marked paper ballots, including provisionals, can correct this issue.

Lastly, one worksheet did not reconcile on Line 1 because it was not completed. While most rows in the top portion of the worksheet had been completed, nothing on Line 1 was filled in. Had the line been completed, it still would not have reconciled due to hand-marked paper ballots not being accounted for. However, if these ballots had been accounted for and the line completed, it would have reconciled. Ensuring Line 1 is completed and as stated above, continuing to train poll clerks, with a focus on accounting for hand-marked paper ballots can correct this issue.

## Reconciliation of Line 2

As for Line 2, 61% (14/23) of the worksheets reconciled, 30% (7/23) did not, and 9% (2/23) were not completed. Figure 5 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status for Line 2.

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



PPL=Paper Poll List  
EPB=Electronic Pollbook

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

One worksheet contained a paper poll list issue. On this worksheet, there were 594 ballots voted (ballots scanned and provisional ballots voted) but only 593 voters were checked in. With one more ballot voted than voters checked in, it is likely that one voter was not checked in on the paper poll list or the signatures from the paper poll list were not counted on the worksheet. Per a county election official, in 2022, the county did not have a method to check the worksheets for reconciliation. However, as of August 2025, the county plans to implement a new step in the election night return process during which staff will review the worksheets with poll clerks as they return election materials. This review process will include verifying reconciliation and obtaining explanations for any imbalances. Implementing this step, prior to certification, to ensure worksheets are checked and adjusted, as necessary, including verification against returned election materials such as paper poll lists, may resolve this issue.

Two worksheets contained a similar paper poll list issue, as described above, but also an electronic pollbook (EPB) connectivity issue. Using Scanner/DS200 data, provisional ballot report data, and turnout report data—data logged by the host server that shows the count of voters who were issued voting credit—we adjusted these worksheets to show the correct

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values. 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 at the polling location. However, the accurate log of checked-in voters is recorded in the turnout data. It is uncertain that the impact of these connectivity issues was known at the time of this election.

After adjustments, one worksheet had one more ballot voted than voters checked in, and the other worksheet had two more ballots voted than voters checked in. With one to two more ballots voted than voters checked in on these worksheets, it is likely that voters were not checked in on the paper poll list or the signatures from the paper poll list were not counted on the worksheets, as described above. Reviewing the turnout report data and paper poll lists during the county's worksheet review process can resolve this issue.

Another two worksheets likely had a voter who left without casting his ballot. Again, using Scanner/DS200 data and turnout report data, one had one more voter checked in than ballots voted and the other had two. 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:

- 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 to 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.

One worksheet also had one or more voters who left without casting their ballots but also a likely paper poll list issue. Again, using Scanner/DS200 data and turnout report data, the worksheet had 55 more voters checked in than ballots voted. While some of these voters may have not cast their ballots, it also appears that more signatures may have been included on the paper poll list than needed to be. Including a review of when and how to use the paper poll list during the county's poll clerk training can resolve this issue.

Another worksheet contained an EPB connectivity issue. On it, the clerk overstated the voters checked in by three. The clerk explained in the notes



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section that three ballots were reprinted due to the EPB printer locking up. With the turnout report data, the line reconciled. As stated earlier, EPBs can have connectivity issues. Reviewing the turnout report data during the county's worksheet review process can resolve this issue.

Finally, two worksheets did not reconcile because they were not completed. On one worksheet, nothing on Line 2 was filled in; had it been completed, the line would have reconciled. On the other worksheet, one field was missing on the line. If it had it been completed with the correct turnout data, the line still would not have reconciled, as there would have been two more ballots voted than voters checked in; this suggests a paper poll list issue. Ensuring Line 2 is completed, checking the returned paper poll lists, and reviewing the turnout report data during the county's worksheet review process can resolve these issues.

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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## Recommendation

1. The Oconee County Voter Registration and Elections Office should, during its worksheet review process and prior to certification:
  - Ensure that all lines of the ballot reconciliation worksheet are completed.
  - Check and adjust returned election materials as needed, including the paper poll lists, and the host server turnout report.

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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 Oconee 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: Oconee County Comments

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September 17, 2025

RE: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet Audit

Delivery Method: Email

Dear Mr. Albergaria,

Thank you for providing the November 2022 Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet Audit final report on September 12, 2025. Your feedback is important to the Oconee County Voter Registration and Elections Office. After reviewing the final report, we are providing the following comments.

This Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet Audit is based on data from the November 8, 2022 General Election. The Audit Division collected this data from the Oconee County Voter Registration and Elections Office on September 7, 2023. County election officials had little to no formal training on the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet until the November 2024 General Election Workshop conducted by the State Election Commission. During the Audit Division's breakout session, county election officials were introduced to an updated Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet (SEC FRM 1150 – 202408) and received formal training on how to complete it. The updated Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet includes spaces to 'verify' the numbers provided in each row with a check mark, as well as updated instructions to state "If zero, write 0". The old version of the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet, which was used for numerous years, did not contain spaces to verify provided information nor did the instructions state, "If zero, write 0." Continuing this formal training will better equip county election officials with the necessary skills to train poll clerks on how to complete the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet.

In regard to the recommendation listed in the final report, our office will implement a new step in the election night return process where we will review the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet with poll clerks. This step will ensure all rows are completed on the worksheet, verify reconciliation, and obtain explanations regarding any discrepancies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristie L. Burr". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kristie" and last name "Burr" clearly distinguishable.

Kristie L. Burr, Director  
Oconee County Voter Registration and Elections