



# A Limited Review of Clarendon County Voter Registration and Elections

May 2026

# MISSION STATEMENT

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.

# AUDIT AUTHORITY

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**  
ELECTION COMMISSION

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# Chapter 1: Background

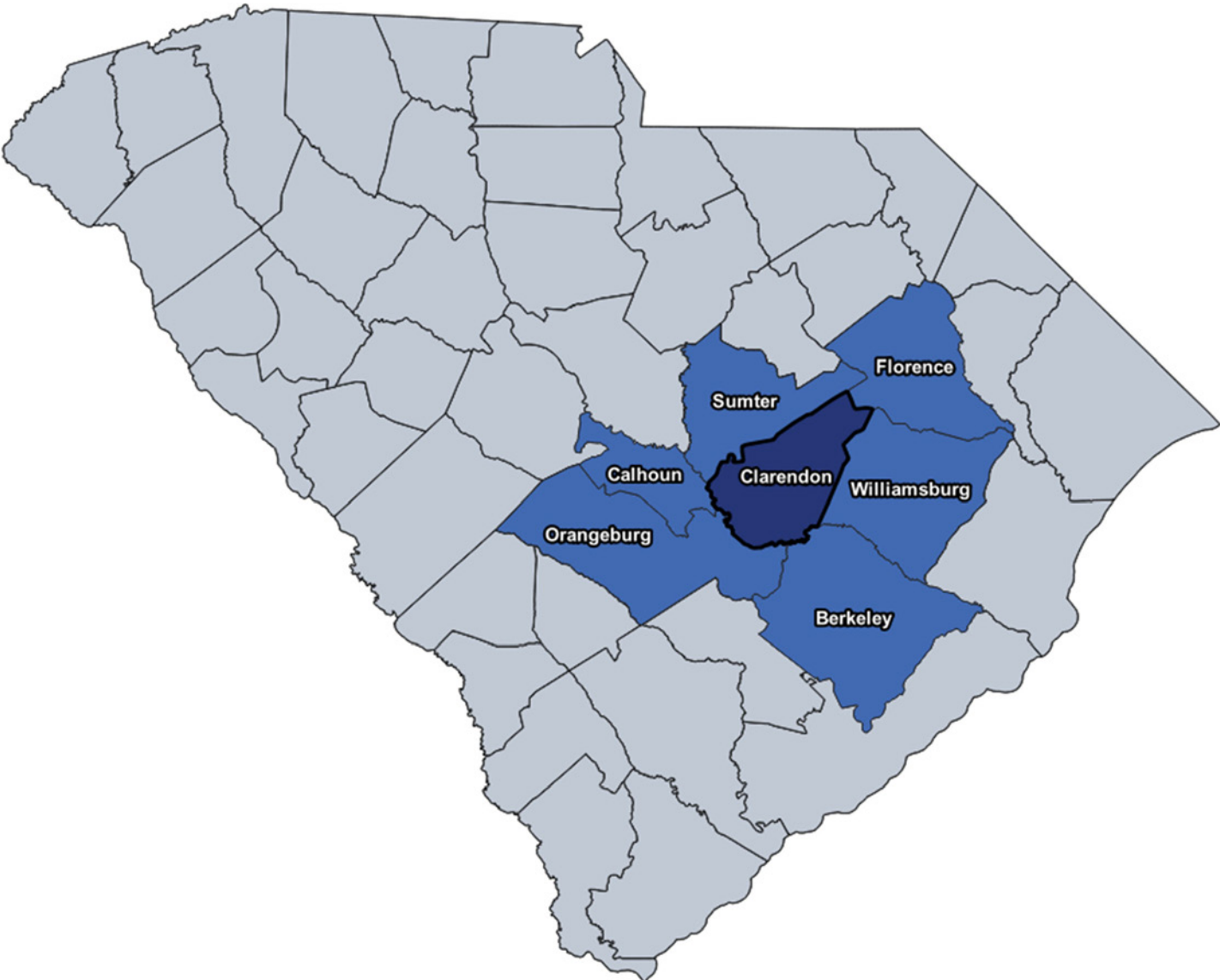
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## Background

Clarendon County is in east-central South Carolina bordered by Sumter, Florence, Williamsburg, Berkeley, Orangeburg, and Calhoun counties. Major municipalities are Manning (county seat), Paxville, Summerton, and Turbeville. The county has 25 precincts, which are the geographical divisions into which voters are grouped. For the 2024 General Election, the county office consolidated precincts into 24 polling places, the physical sites where ballots are cast. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 are maps showing the geographical location of the county within the state and the precincts within the county.

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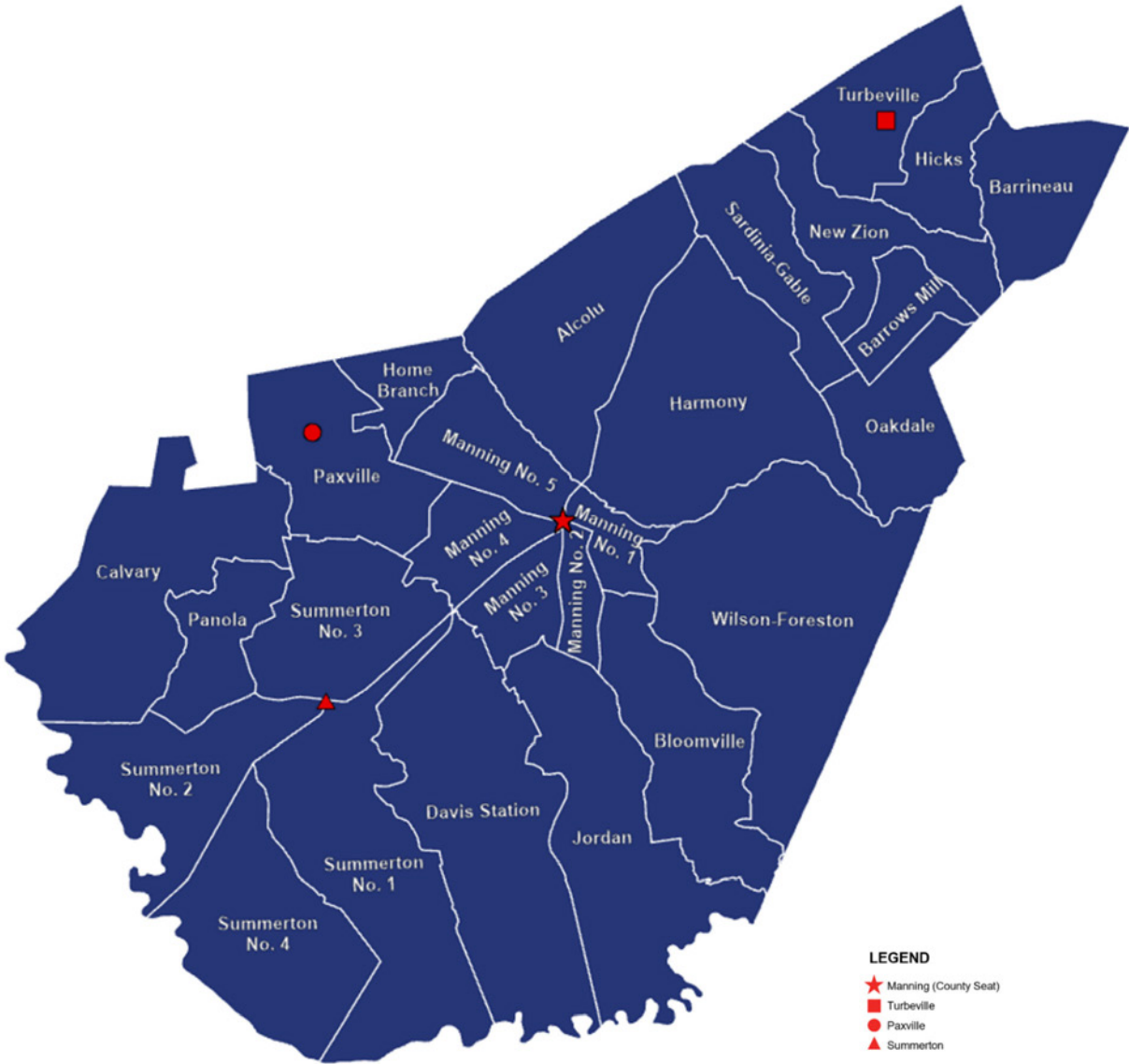
Figure 1.1: Clarendon County, South Carolina Map



Source: State Election Commission

# Chapter 1: Background

Figure 1.2: Clarendon County, South Carolina Precincts Map, 2024



Source: State Election Commission

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# Chapter 1: Background

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According to data from the 2024 November General, there were 21,665 registered voters in the county. In 2023, 2024, and January 2025, the county office oversaw 13 elections, which are shown in Figure 1.3 below:

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**Figure 1.3 Clarendon County Elections, 2023–2025**

ELECTION DATE	ELECTION NAME
November 7, 2023	Town of Turbeville General Election
February 3, 2024	Democratic Preferential Presidential Primary
February 24, 2024	Republican Preferential Presidential Primary
April 2, 2024	City of Manning General Election
April 2, 2024	Town of Summerton General Election
May 14, 2024	Paxville Town Council Special Election
May 14, 2024	Summerton Town Council Special Election
June 11, 2024	June Primary
September 24, 2024	Town of Summerton Mayor Special Election
November 5, 2024	November General
December 3, 2024	Town of Paxville General Election
January 7, 2025	Town of Summerton Special Election
January 14, 2025	Town of Paxville Special Election

Source: SEC's Voter Registration and Election Management System

The 2024 June Primary and November General elections were statewide elections.

For the 2024 November General, voters cast 37% of ballots on election day, 59% in the early voting period, and 4% through absentee voting. For the

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# Chapter 1: Background

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same election, 127 total workers were employed: 125 poll clerks and managers and 5 polling location technicians (3 also served in other roles).

As of January 2026, the office had one full-time and one part-time employee. From January 2023 until December 2025, three individuals served as director and two individuals served as interim director. According to the 2024 State Election Commission annual report, Clarendon County is tied for highest director turnover in the state since January 2021. Furthermore, the county office's budget for fiscal year 2025–2026 is \$400,960.

The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County is a nine-member body with seven seats currently filled. Six new board members were appointed from March 2025 through August 2025, and none of the board members from 2024 remain on the board. The body also serves as the county's Board of Canvassers to certify elections. In 2024, the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County convened 13 times and, as the Board of Canvassers, 8 times.

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# Chapter 2: Contracts and Voting Machine Custodian

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In this chapter, we reviewed the board and county office’s use of voting machine custodians—individuals whose duties include programming, testing, adjusting, or delivering voting machines—for elections in 2023–2024 and found:

- The county used a contractor—an uncommon practice—as a voting machine custodian.
- Not all voting machine custodians signed the proper oath.

Sound approaches to performing voting machine custodian duties and signing the proper oaths for such duties will promote greater public confidence that elections are conducted with efficiency and transparency.

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## Use of a Voting Machine Custodian

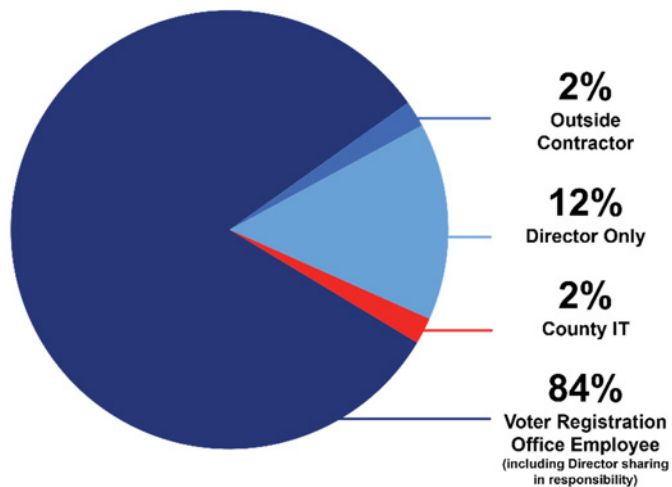
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The county office implemented an uncommon practice of using one of its voting machine custodians—individuals whose duties include programming, testing, adjusting, or delivering voting machines—for the 2024 November General.

Per S.C. Code §7-13-1690, voting machine custodians may be used by counties to prepare and test voting machines for an election and are to be competent and instructed in performing these duties. State law does not specify in what manner such custodians are to be used. Therefore, we conducted a survey of South Carolina county voter registration and election offices to determine common practices for using voting machine custodians and for fulfilling their duties. Respondent results showed that voting machine custodian responsibilities most often belong to a voter registration and election office employee, including the director sharing in these responsibilities. County IT specialists or outside contractors rarely were assigned these duties. Full results are depicted in Figure 2.1 below.

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**Figure 2.1: South Carolina County Voting Machine Custodian Usage**



Source: Analysis of County Voter Registration and Elections Offices’ Survey Responses

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## Chapter 2: Contracts and Voting Machine Custodian

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As indicated in the figure above, the most common practice was to use a voter registration and elections office employee, including the director, to fulfill this role. In some cases, the director took on this role exclusively. The rarest practice was to use an outside contractor or county IT employee for this role.

Despite the lack of requirement in state law to follow a specific employment procedure, the most common approach, using a voter registration and election office employee, is prudent. Learning how to program and test voting machines can be performed by an average computer user, per a state election official. Furthermore, the State Election Commission (SEC) publishes a step-by-step guide to the process and offers training courses related to these custodial duties.

In the 2024 November General, along with other local elections in late 2024, the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County used an outside contractor to perform voting machine custodian duties. Meeting minutes in August 2024 indicated questioning from the public on this decision, specifically regarding expending funds for services that county IT could perform. As noted above, county IT is rarely used for this service, and a more typical approach involves using an in-office employee. Rarity alone, however, does not settle the issue, as other drawbacks to using county IT may also exist, such as potential unavailability during crucial periods, as noted below.

Based on board meeting minutes and according to county election officials, the decision to use an outside contractor in November 2024 was made due to time constraints, bid rate, and minimal training needs given the chosen contractor's prior experience in elections. However, as noted above, in-office staff may be able to complete the same tasks more efficiently. Finally, although board and office actions after January 2025 are outside of the scope of this audit, in April 2025 the board sought to use county IT as voting machine custodians going forward.

Employing in-house staff to perform these duties may be more efficient since county IT may have other countywide responsibilities, rendering them unavailable at crucial times. Dedicating staff, even part-time, to voting machine custodial duties can build expertise, reduce errors, and may free up other staff, including directors, for their specific duties.

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### Voting Machine Custodian Oaths

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The county office did not have all voting machine custodians sign the proper oaths.

According to S.C. Code §7-13-1690, voting machine custodians are responsible for preparing and managing voting machines and are to be “fully competent, thoroughly instructed, and sworn to perform their duties honestly and faithfully.” Likewise, S.C. Code §7-13-1500 requires “any person who

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## Chapter 2: Contracts and Voting Machine Custodian

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prepares or operates the tabulating devices in any election or preparatory thereto” to take an oath as a custodian. While the above statutes require voting machine custodians to swear an oath, they do not specify the wording of this oath. However, the SEC’s policy on election official oaths also requires that voting machine custodians swear this oath and provides its wording:

I do solemnly swear that I will prepare and operate the voting system according to law and will allow no person access to the system who is not entitled by law to do so, and I will release no information or data relating to the voting system unless authorized by law to do so.

The SEC’s oath policy also provides further specification on the individuals who are considered voting machine custodians. These include:

- Any person who works on ballot-marking devices (BMDs) or ballot scanners before and after an election.
- Any person who prepares BMDs or scanners for an election.
- Polling location technicians—those who provide technical support for election equipment at polling places.
- Any person who has access to the central workstation computer.

The SEC has also created a form for counties for the purpose of recording voting machine custodian signatures. An excerpt of this form is shown in Figure 2.2 below.

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**Figure: 2.2 Excerpt of SEC Voting Machine Custodian Oath Form**

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**COUNTY**

**BOARD OF VOTER REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS**

**Voting System Custodian Oath**

"I do solemnly swear that I will prepare and operate the voting system according to law and will allow no person access to the system who is not entitled by law to do so, and I will release no information or data relating to the voting system unless authorized by law to do so."

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: State Election Commission

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## Chapter 2: Contracts and Voting Machine Custodian

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After reviewing voting machine custodian signatures for 2023 and 2024 elections in Clarendon County—a total of 11 elections—we found missing signatures. In particular:

- Signatures for those who delivered voting machines to polling places were missing for 9 elections in 2023 and 2024.
- Signatures for programmers of voting machines were missing for the Town of Turbeville General Election in November 2023.
- No signatures for polling location technicians for any election in 2024 were provided, even though at least 18 polling location technicians worked 2024 elections.
- Not all signatures for users who had access to the county’s central workstation computer were provided.

We requested further information on these issues from county election officials; however, no responses were received. Based on analysis of available information, it is unclear why signatures were missing; however, this may be due, in part, to county confusion regarding the individuals who qualify as voting machine custodians. The county did understand in 2024 that movers and programmers were to sign these oaths—as indicated by the presence of those signatures—but may not have understood that polling location technicians, maintenance technicians, or users of the central vote-tabulating computer were considered voting machine custodians, as specified by the SEC policy that defines the term.

This lack of understanding may be due to the SEC’s inadequate notifications to counties of the key policy. While the policy was initially provided to counties via intranet in September 2022, the SEC switched to a new intranet system in December 2023. During this transition, the oaths form—a form that included the oath’s text and lines for recording a signer’s name and date—was posted on the new intranet system, but the policy itself has never been similarly publicized to county users. This would account for the fact that some voting machine custodians’ signatures were received for 2024 elections in the county while others were not, since, without access to the policy’s definitions, county election officials—especially those officials who began in their role after December 2023—may not have understood the full scope of the term. Likewise, SEC training classes on county election duties do not provide clear instructions to counties on voting machine custodian oaths or the definition of a voting machine custodian.

However, this explanation does not account for the lack of all signatures for the Town of Turbeville General in November 2023—which occurred prior to the shift to the new intranet system and during which time the policy’s details would have been available—or for inconsistent signing by those who delivered voting machines in 2024. The cause of these issues remains unknown.

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## Chapter 2: Contracts and Voting Machine Custodian

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Ensuring all voting machine custodians sign the proper oaths will bind such custodians more fully to their duties and provide greater assurance to the public that voting machine custodians are faithful and honest stewards of the election.

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### Recommendations

1. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should ensure that the proper oaths are signed by all voting machine custodians, including:
  - Anyone who performs maintenance on voting machines.
  - Anyone who prepares voting machines.
  - Anyone with access to the central workstation computer.
  - Anyone who delivers voting machines.
  - Polling location technicians.
2. The State Election Commission should ensure county offices are notified of the election official oaths policy, which includes definitions and requirements for individuals who must take the oath as voting machine custodians.

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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In this chapter, we reviewed the county office's approach to the absentee voting process—a method of voting by mail—for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections and found:

- The county office indicated that 1 voter's authorized representative—a person that a qualifying voter authorizes to complete parts of the absentee process on the voter's behalf—requested a voter's application for absentee ballot by phone in June 2024 and 12 authorized representatives did so in November 2024, contrary to state law.
- No individual requested more than 5 absentee ballot applications for other voters, in accordance with state law.
- The county office was missing authorized representative forms for 2 instances in the 2024 June Primary Election and 21 instances in the 2024 November General Election, contrary to state law.
- The county office indicated that 1 absentee ballot was issued in person in June 2024 and 5 were issued in person in November 2024, contrary to the SEC's absentee procedures.
- The county office indicated that 3 non-UOCAVA ballots—Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) is the legal basis that specifies certain absentee requirements and privileges for citizens covered by the Act—were received from voters via email in November 2024, contrary to state law.
- The county office indicated that 1 ballot was returned by an authorized representative via mail in November 2024, contrary to state law.
- The county office was missing authorization to return absentee ballot forms in 5 instances in June 2024 and 6 instances in November 2024, contrary to state law.
- The county office wrongly accepted all ballots for voters while authorization to return absentee ballot forms were incomplete for 65% of cases in June 2024 and 50% of cases in November 2024.
- The county office accepted incomplete return-addressed absentee ballot envelopes 13 times in June 2024 and 17 times in November 2024.
- The county office rejected 1 return-addressed absentee envelope for the wrong attention reason in June 2024 and, in November 2024, 1 envelope was wrongly rejected while another involved a transcription error.
- No individual returned more than 5 return-addressed absentee ballot envelopes in addition to his own, in accordance with state law.
- The county office did not provide data relating to UOCAVA ballots despite multiple requests.

# Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

Consistently following absentee voting laws and State Election Commission (SEC) absentee voting procedures will ensure that absentee voter participation is transparent and promote public confidence in reported election results.

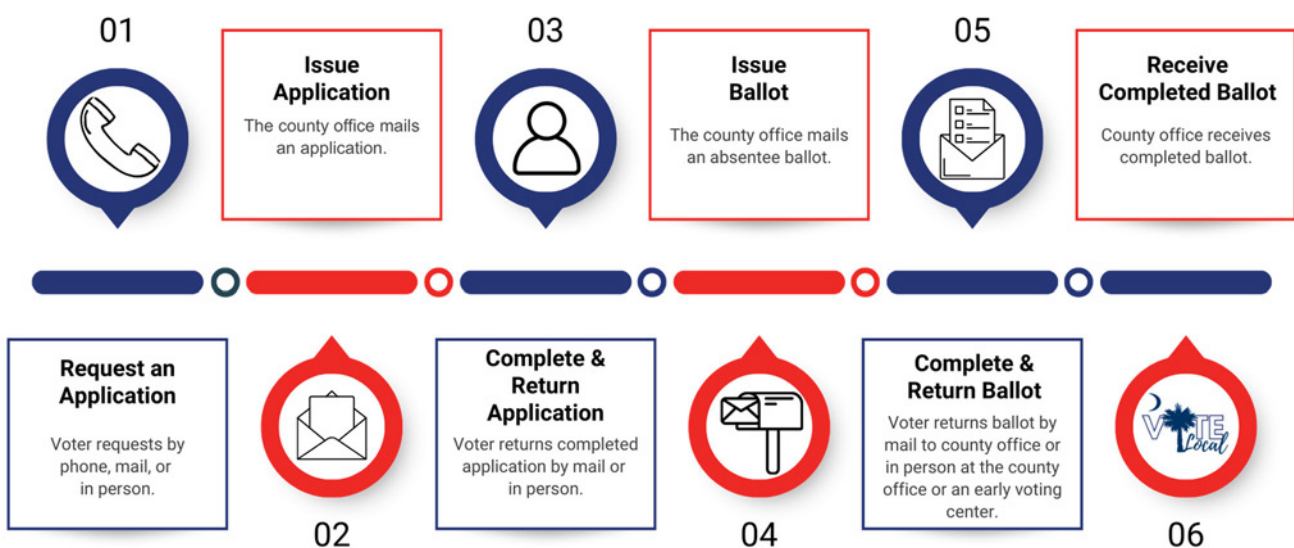
## Overview of Absentee Voting Process

S.C. Code §7-15-10 *et seq.* establish the absentee process, which enables certain categories of voters to participate in elections when impediments to voting on election day or early voting arise. The legally permissible reasons for voting absentee are the following:

- Persons with certified employment obligations.
- Persons who will be attending sick or physically disabled persons.
- Persons confined to a jail or pretrial facility pending disposition or arrest or trial.
- Persons who are going to be absent from their county of residence.
- Physically disabled persons.
- Persons sixty-five years of age or older.
- Members of the U.S. Armed Forces and Merchant Marines, their spouses, and dependents residing with them.
- Persons admitted to hospitals as emergency patients on the day of an election or four days prior to the election.

Voters in these categories, or their legal designees, in conjunction with their county elections office, observe the following steps in Figure 3.1 below, as defined by S.C. Code §7-15-200 *et seq.*

Figure 3.1: Absentee Voting Process



Source: Rendering of S.C. Code of Laws

# Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

Completing each stage of the process involves specific legal requirements for who may complete it and by what method that stage may be completed. A voter may ask an immediate family member or authorized representative to complete elements of this process for him. An immediate family member is defined in law as “a person’s spouse, parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, and mothers-in-law, fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, sons-in-law, and daughters-in-law.” An authorized representative is defined in state law as a registered elector who, by the voter’s permission, acts on behalf of a voter who is unable to vote at the polling place due to illness or disability resulting in confinement or who, due to physical handicap, is denied physical access to the polls because of architectural barriers; the authorized representative must also not be a candidate, candidate staff, or candidate volunteer. Stages of this process for which requirements exist are spelled out in more detail in Figure 3.2 below.

**Figure 3.2: Permissible Absentee Request and Return Methods by Entity**

ENTITY	REQUEST ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION	RETURN OF ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION	ISSUANCE OF ABSENTEE BALLOT	ABSENTEE BALLOT RETURN
Voter	In person, Mail, Phone	In person, Mail	N/A	In person, Mail
Immediate Family Member	In person, Mail, Phone	In person	N/A	In person
Authorized Representative	In person, Mail	In person	N/A	In person
County Office	N/A	N/A	Mail	N/A

Source: Analysis and S.C. Code of Laws

## Request for Application for Absentee Ballot Irregularities

Some authorized representatives were indicated as having requested voters’ absentee ballot applications by phone.

According to S.C. Code §7-15-330, requests for applications for absentee ballots can be made by either the voter, a voter’s immediate family member, or the voter’s authorized representative. By state law, a voter or the voter’s immediate family member may request his application in person, by mail, or by phone while the voter’s authorized representative may only request a voter’s application by mail or in person. Phone requests by authorized representatives are not legally permitted. These requirements are also expressed in the SEC’s absentee voting procedures.

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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County entries into the voter registration and election management system showed that some authorized representatives requested applications for absentee ballots for voters by phone. In particular, the system showed the following:

- In the 2024 June Primary, 1 authorized representative requested a voter's application by phone.
- In the 2024 November General, authorized representatives requested 12 voter applications by phone.

While it is possible that the county accurately recorded instances in which, due to misunderstanding legal requirements, an authorized representative requested via phone, some of these 13 instances were likely due to erroneous data entered into the voter registration and election management system. For example, in:

- One case, the same voter-authorized representative pair was elsewhere listed as immediate family members, which suggests a data entry error.
- Three cases, an authorized representative form is on file. The presence of a hard copy form suggests that the request was likely made in person and not via phone and that, therefore, data entry errors occurred in these three instances.
- The remaining cases, the exact cause remains undetermined.

Reviewing training on permissible request methods and implementing a system of two-person data entry review may resolve these issues.

It is important to note that the voter registration and election management system uses a dropdown menu with a variety of request method options listed in close proximity to each other. Also, the system does not have a mechanism for warning users that the request method combination—an authorized representative requesting by phone—is contrary to applicable law. Therefore, data entry issues could easily occur, with no system warning, and the county's own admitted lack of internal data entry review means such errors would remain unnoticed. An expanded dropdown box in the system will render data entry issues less likely, and a warning to users that a selection is contrary to law may also reduce these instances. In fact, an SEC official informed us that this warning system will begin to be implemented in the voter registration and election management system in the next few weeks.

Allowing improper authorized representative request methods may deny identity protections afforded to voters while poorly recording those methods may reduce election transparency.

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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### **Total Requests for Applications for Absentee Ballots Under Legal Limit**

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No individual requested more than five applications for absentee ballots, in addition to his own, in compliance with applicable law.

According to S.C. Code §7-15-330(B)(4), no individual returnee is permitted to request more than five applications for absentee ballots for other voters. Review of the voter registration and election management system revealed that all requestors in the county for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections complied with this statute.

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### **Missing Authorized Representative Forms**

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The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections does not have proper forms in place for all indicated authorized representatives.

According to S.C. Code §7-15-330(A)(2), qualified absentee voters may ask an authorized representative to help the voter complete the absentee voting process. By statute, the absentee process involves a series of steps, and, as depicted previously in Figure 3.1, the first step of the process is the voter's request for an application for an absentee ballot. The voter gives the authorized representative permission to make this request for an application. The voter indicates this permission by completing the authorized representative form, as mandated by S.C. Code §7-15-330(A)(2) and the SEC's absentee voting procedures. Figure 3.3 depicts this form.

# Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

**Figure 3.3: SEC Authorized Representative Form**

**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE FORM**  
**ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION REQUEST/RETURN**

This form must be completed by a person who has been asked by another voter to request an absentee ballot application on their behalf because they are unable to vote in person due to illness or disability.

- Requestors are limited to five requests in addition to their own per election.
- Improperly requesting an application for another voter is a felony punishable by up to a \$5,000 fine and up to five years in prison.
- Complete and return this form to the voter's county voter registration office either in person or by mail.

County		Election Date	
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REQUESTOR INFORMATION			
<input type="checkbox"/> I am <b>requesting</b> an absentee application. <input type="checkbox"/> I am <b>returning</b> an absentee application.			
Name of Authorized Representative			
Address			
Date of Birth	Voter Registration #	Phone	

VOTER INFORMATION		
Name of Voter	Date of Birth	Last 4 of Social Security Number

To be an authorized representative, you must check each box to confirm the condition applies to you and sign the affirmation below.

- I am a registered voter.
- I have been asked by a registered voter to request or return an absentee application on their behalf.
- I am not a candidate, a member of a candidate's paid campaign staff, or a campaign volunteer.
- The voter for whom I am requesting an application is unable to go to the polls due to either:
  - An illness or disability and is confined in a hospital, sanatorium, nursing home or place of residence; or
  - A physical handicap prevents the voter from going to his polling place due to existing architectural barriers which deny him physical access to the polling place, voting booth or voting apparatus or machinery.

I swear, or affirm, that I meet the requirements to be an Authorized Representative as indicated above. I understand I am limited to no more than five requests for absentee applications per election in addition to myself.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

SEC FRM 1055-202205



Source: State Election Commission

According to the voter registration and election management system, for voters who used authorized representatives to request their application for absentee ballot in the 2024 June Primary and November General elections, not all authorized representative forms existed:

- For the 2024 June Primary Election, the system indicated that 7 voters used authorized representatives, and 71% (5/7) had proper forms in place.
- For the 2024 November General Election, the system indicated that 48 voters used authorized representatives, and 56% (27/48) had proper forms in place.

It is likely that some cases were due to data entry errors or clerical oversights. Furthermore, according to a county official, as stated above, the

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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office did not have a procedure in place to verify system entries of a primary user or prevent erroneous entries. In fact, a county election official acknowledged the need for improved internal auditing of the absentee process. Ensuring that such internal reviews address authorized representative forms may resolve these discrepancies.

Missing authorized representative forms may weaken public confidence that all voters properly participated in the election.

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### Absentee Ballot Issuance and Return Irregularities

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The issuance and return of absentee ballots were recorded in the voter registration and election management system using methods contrary to applicable law.

According to S.C. Code §7-15-370 and the SEC's absentee voting procedures, absentee ballots are to be issued by the county office only via mail; they cannot be issued in-person at the county office. Likewise, state law requires specific return methods for absentee ballots by the voter or the voter's designated returnee:

- Voters may return their absentee ballots in person or via mail.
- Immediate family members or authorized representatives must return ballots in person.
- Returns via email are not permitted, unless the voter is protected by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)—legislation that establishes requirements and privileges for U.S. citizens covered by the Act, including the ability to return a ballot electronically.

For the 2024 June Primary and November General elections, according to the voter registration and election management system, ballot issuance and return method violations were found:

- One instance of a ballot issued in person for June and five for November.
- Three instances (non-UOCAVA) of emailed ballot returns for November.
- One instance of an authorized representative returning a ballot by mail for November.

For the cases of ballots issued in person, the county may not have properly understood the legal rules for the ballot issuance process since, according to a county election official, in-person issuance is permissible. Reviewing training on absentee process rules may resolve this issue, since this same official most recently attended SEC training in August 2022 on absentee requirements.

For the three cases of allegedly emailed ballot returns, we found the physical envelopes for these voters, indicating that these voters did not, in fact, return

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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their ballots via email. These cases were likely due to data entry issues. Implementing a two-person data review system may prevent such issues.

Finally, in the instance where the authorized representative returned a ballot via mail, the exact cause remains unknown. Again, since the county does not implement a system for ensuring data accuracy, a data entry error is possible. A thorough clerical review procedure may resolve the issue.

Using or allowing impermissible methods of issuing and returning absentee ballots reduces protections afforded to voters in the absentee process.

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### **Missing and Incomplete Authorization to Return Absentee Ballot Forms**

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Not all authorization to return absentee ballot forms—forms used to confirm the voter’s intention to have an immediate family member or authorized representative return his ballot—were available for review and complete in the 2024 June Primary and November General elections.

According to S.C. Code §§7-15-385(B) and (C), voters who request an authorized representative or an immediate family member to return their ballot use the authorization to return absentee ballot form to certify the voter’s intention to have the ballot returned in this manner, and ballots should not be received by the office unless the form is completed. As required by law, the form includes a section in which the voter completes a signed authorization statement and a distinct section in which the returnee indicates his name, address, date of birth, declares his status as an authorized representative or immediate family member, and swears or affirms his status as a valid returnee with a signature and date. A final portion of the form is reserved for office use, in which the type of identification provided and the date and time of reception are recorded. The SEC’s procedures that outline proper steps for the absentee voting process likewise mandate these requirements, and the SEC’s training in August 2022—attended by county officials—covered these requirements as well. Figure 3.4 depicts this form below.

# Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

**Figure 3.4: SEC Authorization to Return Absentee Ballot Form**

## Authorization to Return Absentee Ballot

A voter can use this form to allow an immediate family member or an Authorized Representative to return their ballot.

- Voter completes and signs Section 1. Returnee completes and signs Section 2.
- Returnee must return this form and ballot envelope in person at voter's county elections office or early voting center.
- Returnee must present an acceptable Photo ID (see list below).
- Returnees are limited to five returns in addition to their own per election. Returning more than five is a felony punishable by up to a \$1,000 fine and/or up to five years in prison.
- **Do not place this form in the envelope containing your ballot.**

Section 1 – Voter			
Name			
I hereby authorize _____ to return my absentee ballot(s) (Name of Returnee)			
to the _____ County Board of Voter Registration.			
Signature of Voter			Date
If voter cannot write because of disability or illiteracy, voter must make mark and have mark witnessed by person designated by voter.			
Witness (only if voter is using a mark) _____ Date _____			
Section 2 – Returnee (complete either Immediate Family Member or Authorized Representative section)			
Name			Date of Birth
Address			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>I am an Immediate Family Member of Voter (circle one):</b> Spouse, parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, or daughter-in-law.			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>I am an Authorized Representative (check each box to confirm the condition applies to you and sign the affirmation below)</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a registered voter.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I have been asked by a registered voter to return an absentee ballot on their behalf.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not a candidate, a member of a candidate's paid campaign staff, or a campaign volunteer.			
<input type="checkbox"/> The voter for whom I am returning a ballot is unable to go to the polls due to either:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An illness or disability and is confined in a hospital, sanatorium, nursing home or place of residence; or</li> <li>• A physical handicap prevents the voter from going to his polling place due to existing architectural barriers which deny him physical access to the polling place, voting booth or voting apparatus or machinery.</li> </ul>			
I swear, or affirm, that I meet the requirements to return this ballot either as an Immediate Family Member or an Authorized Representative as indicated above. I understand I am limited to no more than five absentee ballot returns per election in addition to myself.			
Signature of Returnee			Date
OFFICE USE ONLY – Check Type of Photo ID Provided by Returnee			
<input type="checkbox"/> Driver's license (SC)		<input type="checkbox"/> Other ID with photo issued by DMV (other state)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Driver's license (other state)		<input type="checkbox"/> Passport	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other ID with photo issued by DMV (SC)		<input type="checkbox"/> Federal military ID with photo	
		<input type="checkbox"/> SC voter registration card with photo	
Date Received			Time Received

SEC FRM 1050-202205

**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
ELECTION COMMISSION

Source: State Election Commission

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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Using the voter registration and election management system to identify voters who used an authorized representative or immediate family member to return the voter's ballot, results for the existence of the form were as follows:

- In the 2024 June Primary, 14% (5/36) of forms were missing.
- In the 2024 November General, 5% (6/115) of forms were missing.

The rate of form completion—whether fields on forms were filled in by voters and returnees—of available forms was also analyzed. In the 2024 June Primary, 65% (20/31) of forms were incomplete, with the declaration of status as an authorized representative or immediate family member missing in 15 instances. Also:

- Two cases involved an incomplete returnee signature.
- One case involved an incomplete voter signature.
- In one case, the form is missing a complete time and date for when the office received the form.
- Three instances involved an incomplete returnee address.

In the 2024 November General, 50% (55/109) were incomplete, with the declaration of status as an authorized representative or immediate family member missing in 26 instances. Also:

- 6 cases involved an incomplete voter signature.
- 1 case involved an incomplete returnee signature.
- In 13 cases, the form is missing a complete time and date for the office's reception of the form.
- 4 instances involved an incomplete returnee address.

Furthermore, for all voters in both elections for whom a completed authorization to return absentee ballot form should exist, ballots were received and counted by the office regardless of the form's existence or completion.

According to a county official, the office reviews the authorization to return absentee ballot forms for completion, and, if a form is not complete, it is flagged for further review. In such a case, the ballot is not accepted, and staff attempt to contact the voter to correct the error, if time permits; however, no adequately corrected versions of the above incomplete forms were found even though these ballots were accepted. There is no explicit permission in state law to bypass form completion, even if voters are contacted for further information on the form; rather, completed forms must be preserved as part of the election record. Developing a detail-oriented review process that attends to the form's completion and ensures ballots are only accepted upon form completion may resolve this issue.

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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For the instances of form incompleteness that involved incomplete returnee addresses, this may be due to limited instructions from the SEC to counties on the definition of “address” in the form’s instructions. Updating the authorization to return absentee ballot form’s instructions to include the required elements—for example, street number, street name, etc.—of a returnee’s address may improve the form’s completion rate.

Missing and incomplete authorization to return absentee ballot forms may reduce protections afforded to voters to prevent voter impersonation.

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### **Ballots Erroneously Accepted**

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The county office accepted returned ballot envelopes and ballots that should have been rejected.

According to S.C. Code §7-15-420 and the SEC’s absentee voting procedures, after an absentee voter returns his ballot envelope, the county is to evaluate the envelope to determine if it includes all required elements. Specifically, in the 2024 June Primary and November General elections, ballot envelopes included the following components that a voter or witness must have completed:

- Voter signature.
- Date (day, month, and year).
- Witness signature.
- Printed name of witness.
- Witness address.

The SEC’s instructions provided to voters do not explicitly define “complete address.” However, after the 2024 June Primary and prior to the 2024 November General, the SEC’s ballot envelope was updated to include a parenthetical note under the witness address component of the envelope; the June 2024 version did not include this information. This note clarified that “complete address” must include street number, street name, city, state, zip code. This is to be written on the “Witness Address” portion of the envelope. Figure 3.5 below shows the SEC’s absentee ballot envelope for November 2024.

## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

Figure 3.5: SEC's November 2024 Absentee Ballot Envelope

SIGN IN FRONT OF A WITNESS. A WITNESS CAN BE ANY OTHER PERSON WHO IS AGE 18 OR OLDER. THE WITNESS MUST SIGN, PRINT NAME, AND PROVIDE AN ADDRESS.

Voter Signature ▲

Dated on this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_ 20\_\_\_  
(day) (month) (year)

Witness Signature ▲

Printed Name of Witness ▲

Witness Address ▲ (street number, street name, city, state, zip)

ALL FIELDS ABOVE ARE REQUIRED FOR YOUR VOTE TO COUNT.

Source: State Election Commission

Per S.C. Code §7-15-420(B) and the SEC's absentee voting procedures, the county office is required to reject ballot envelopes that are missing any of the elements on the ballot envelope, including cases where any elements of a complete address, as defined above, are missing.

For the 2024 June Primary, we randomly sampled from the 185 accepted ballots at a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of  $\pm 8\%$ , which yielded a sample size of 84. Therefore, these results can be generalized to all accepted ballots in this election. Of these 84 accepted ballots, 15% (13/84) were wrongly accepted. All 13 were missing at least 1 element of a complete address. Also, one accepted ballot envelope was not found; instead, during our onsite review, it was discovered to have been placed in an attention envelope by the county office, a process described more below. These ballot acceptance issues would not have altered the overall outcome of any contests in the 2024 June Primary.

For the 2024 November General, we randomly sampled the 673 accepted ballots for this election at a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of  $\pm 8\%$ , which yielded a sample size of 123. Therefore, these results can be generalized to all accepted ballots in this election. Of these 123 accepted ballots, 14% (17/123) were wrongly accepted. Specifically:

- On 1 of the 17 improperly accepted ballots, the ballot envelope was missing the voter's signature. The ballot envelope included a signature that was not the voter's signature and a hand-written note that this other signature was meant to replace that of the voter.

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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- The 16 remaining cases involved an incomplete witness address, missing at least one of the components of a complete address described above.

These improperly accepted ballots would not have altered the overall outcome of any contests in the 2024 November General.

For the wrongly accepted ballots in the 2024 June Primary and November General elections, this may have been due to the county's misunderstanding of the requirements surrounding complete addresses. According to a county election official, return-addressed envelopes were accepted with incomplete addresses—provided that the office could research and verify the voter's address. There is no provision in state law permitting this practice of verification, and state law appears to limit review of return-addressed absentee ballots to the completion status of the address as written on the return envelope. Furthermore, neither SEC procedures on absentee ballots nor the SEC's training attended by county elections officials in August 2022 or June 2023 explicitly allow for correcting return envelopes once received.

However, verification of witness addresses, even if legally allowed, could only apply to South Carolina voters listed in the voter registration and election management system, since there is no legal requirement that witnesses be registered voters in South Carolina. Further training for county staff on the absentee process—specifically, that the presence of elements of a complete address on the return-addressed envelope must be taken at face value—may resolve this issue.

For the one ballot that was accepted despite a missing voter signature, since it included a non-voter signature, the issue may have been a clerical mistake. Implementing a two-person review or comparable procedures for all return-addressed envelopes to prevent clerical oversights would likely enhance the accuracy of the process.

Accepting ballot envelopes only if completed will ensure that election results include only valid ballots cast.

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### **Ballot Erroneously Rejected**

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The county office rejected ballot envelopes that should have been accepted in the 2024 June Primary and November General elections and did not account for all such ballot envelopes in the voter registration and election management system.

According to the S.C. Code §7-15-420 and the SEC's absentee voting procedures, a voter's ballot envelope may be rejected if it is missing any required elements. The rejection reasons include the following:

- Voter's failure to sign the oath.
- Lack of witnessing.
- Reception of the ballot after the election.

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# Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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- Voter’s death.
- “Other,” with a fillable blank for an unusual scenario, such as if the ballot were to be rejected following a successful challenge of the voter.

If a voter’s ballot envelope satisfies one of these requirements, the county is to place the envelope in an “Attention” envelope, and the rejected ballot is not counted as part of the official election results. Figure 3.6 below depicts the “Attention” envelope.

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**Figure 3.6: SEC “Attention” Envelope**

**Attention**

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Name of Voter: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Election: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Election: \_\_\_\_\_

Pursuant to South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended,  
the enclosed absentee ballot **should not be counted** because:

the voter failed to sign the voter’s oath.       voter deceased.  
 the ballots were not witnessed.               Other:   
 the ballots were received after the election.

Source: State Election Commission

Furthermore, per the SEC’s absentee voting procedures, all returned ballot envelopes should be accounted for in the voter registration and election management system. The following sections analyze “Attention” envelopes for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections.

## 2024 June Primary

Upon reviewing the ballot envelopes placed inside the attention envelopes in the 2024 June Primary, of the 22 rejected ballot envelopes expected per the voter registration and election management system, we found that all were rightly rejected. However, we discovered four ballot envelopes onsite that were not present in the voter registration and election system; of these four, the county office rejected one ballot envelope for the wrong attention reason, even though it would not have counted otherwise due to another missing element.

According to a county election official, the envelopes that were missing from the system may have been due to data entry errors or administrative and processing delays. Furthermore, per the official, the county office has since conducted its own internal review of its absentee ballot evaluation process to improve ballot tracking.

Additionally, regarding the wrong rejection reasons, this may have been due to a clerical oversight; however, according to a county election official, for

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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rejected ballot envelopes, the county currently implements a second-level review, standardized rejection procedures, and training. Continuing to adhere to such processes would likely resolve such issues. Failing to account accurately for all ballots in the voter registration and election management system may reduce voter confidence that all and only valid ballots were properly counted.

### **2024 November General**

In the 2024 November General, of the 30 rejected ballot envelopes expected, all were rightly rejected. However, we discovered further issues including:

- One “Attention” envelope’s reason did not match that of the ballot envelope, even though the correct reason was recorded in the voter registration and election management system.
- Eight attention envelopes were found onsite not accounted for in the voter registration and election management system.
- One of these eight envelopes was rejected due to a missing signature even though the envelope did, in fact, contain a signature. The ballot envelope included a “mark” in the signature area, which is a generally accepted substitute for a signature in cases where a voter may be unable to sign due to incapacity. The ballot envelope did not contain other errors and was wrongly excluded from official election results.

For the attention envelope that did not match the rejected ballot envelope, a transcription issue—erroneously copying information from the ballot envelope onto the “Attention” envelope—is the likely cause.

For the ballot envelopes not entered into the voter registration and election management system, according to a county election official, as noted above, this may have been due to data entry errors or administrative and processing delays, causing the envelope to remain outside the system.

Finally, for the one ballot that was wrongly rejected, since a county election official showed the correct understanding of a mark, it is likely a clerical failure to notice during envelope review that the voter intended for the mark to replace the voter’s signature.

Again, as stated above, the county office conducted its own internal review of its absentee ballot evaluation process, which determined a need to include second-level review, further standardization, and more training. Continuing to adhere to such improvements would likely resolve these issues.

Ensuring that all rejected ballots are documented in the voter registration and election management system, that attention reasons are accurately transcribed onto the attention envelopes, and that voter’s signature marks are noticed will enhance voter confidence that every valid vote counts towards election results.

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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### All Return-Addressed Absentee Ballot Envelope Totals Were Under Legal Limit

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No individual returnee returned more than five return-addressed absentee ballot envelopes, in addition to his own, in compliance with applicable law.

According to S.C. Code §7-15-385(G), no individual returnee is permitted to return more than five return-addressed absentee ballot envelopes for other voters. Our review of the voter registration and election management system revealed that all returnees in the county for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections complied with this statute.

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### UOCAVA Information Not Provided

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The county office did not provide us with data related to UOCAVA ballots—ballots of U.S. citizens covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

Despite multiple requests to the county office to review UOCAVA signatures and related information, the county office did not provide this information. Therefore, we could not assess county compliance with statutes governing UOCAVA ballots. S.C. Code §7-3-20(D)(3) grants the SEC oversight authority over the conduct of elections; therefore, it was legally required for the county office to comply with this request. It is unclear why such documents were not provided. Ensuring that all such documents are provided upon request enables us, as authorized by law, to audit county compliance with applicable laws, policies, and procedures and to issue recommendations as needed.

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### Recommendations

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3. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should review applicable State Election Commission trainings to ensure they reflect absentee process rules, including:
  - Appropriate request methods for applications for absentee ballots.
  - Proper methods of issuing and receiving absentee ballots.
4. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should implement a data integrity system, such as two-person review and verification, for each stage of the absentee process to ensure that data entry is accurate.
5. The State Election Commission should enlarge selection areas for entering absentee ballot request methods in the voter registration and election management system to avoid inaccurate selections by users. The system should also warn users of impermissible selections in its voter registration and election management system.
6. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should ensure with an internal review process that all authorized

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## Chapter 3: Absentee Voting

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representative forms are present for every voter who requests his application using an authorized representative.

7. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should implement a two-person data review system to ensure it only issues and accepts ballots via methods that are in accordance with state law.
8. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should ensure that all authorization to return absentee ballot forms are present and complete.
9. The State Election Commission should update the authorization to return absentee ballot form's instructions to include the required elements of a complete address.
10. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should only accept completed ballot envelopes and, in particular, only those that contain complete addresses.
11. The State Election Commission should update its return-addressed absentee ballot envelope *instructions* to define "complete address" clearly.
12. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should:
  - Record all rejected ballots in the voter registration and election management system.
  - Reject only ballots that are missing required elements.
  - Document such rejection reasons accurately on "Attention" envelopes and in the voter registration and election management system.
13. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should provide all requested materials to the State Election Commission upon request.

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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In this chapter, we reviewed poll managers’—managers of election who take direction from poll clerks—requirements, applications, and payments as well as the curbside voting process. We found that the county:

- Generally did not have enough poll managers at its polling locations for its elections in 2023–2024.
- Had a robust if informal poll manager recruitment program, including recruitment events, feeding managers on election day, and a \$25 county supplement added to the State Election Commission’s (SEC) reimbursement.
- Requested and received payment from the SEC for poll clerks’—lead poll managers overseeing polling locations and supervising poll managers—training that was missing documented attendance by its poll clerks for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections. For both elections, approximately \$7,000 was reimbursed by the SEC for training that lacked documented attendance by poll clerks in the county.

Having insufficient numbers of poll managers at polling locations can result in longer voting wait times for individuals, while SEC funds reimbursed without documentation to the county could have been used to address other SEC priorities.

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### **Required Minimum Number of Poll Managers Not Met**

Generally, the county did not use the required minimum number of poll managers—which varies depending on election type and registered voter totals—for its elections in 2023 and 2024. (Required minimums are shown on the following page.) The average rate at which county polling locations across all elections met poll manager requirements was 39%. Specifically:

- County polling locations in the 7 municipal elections in which the county met the required poll manager minimum requirements ranged from 0% (no county polling locations met the requirement) to 100% (all county polling locations met the requirement).
- County polling locations in the 4 statewide elections in which the county met the required poll manager minimum requirements ranged from a 4% average for both presidential preference primaries (PPPs) to 88% and 71% averages for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections, respectively.
- 3 county polling locations repeatedly did not meet the minimum required number of poll managers by a wide margin, while 2 regularly met or exceeded the required minimum.

This suggests that the county assigned poll managers to polling locations based on some factors other than need that may have resulted throughout our analysis period in an inequitable voter experience dependent upon where voters lived.

# Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

## State Law

S.C. Code §7-13-72 requires a county board and the authorities responsible by law for conducting elections to appoint 3 poll managers for the first 500 electors registered to vote in each precinct regardless of the type of election. The number of poll managers required after the first three managers depends upon the type of election, as follows:

- November general elections held in even-numbered years must have 3 additional poll managers for each 500 electors, or portion of 500 electors, registered to vote at the polling location.
- June primary elections may have 3 additional poll managers for each 500 electors, or portion of 500 electors, registered to vote in the precinct.
- All other elections (other primaries, specials, municipals) must have 1 additional poll manager for each 500 electors, or portion of 500 electors, registered to vote in the precinct.

Figure 4.1 below shows the minimum poll managers required for each type of election.

**Figure 4.1: Required Minimum Number of Poll Managers by Election Type**

ELECTION TYPE	FIRST 500 REGISTERED VOTERS PER PRECINCT*	NEXT 500 REGISTERED VOTERS PER PRECINCT*
<b>General Elections</b>	3 Managers Required	3 Managers Required
<b>June Primary Election</b>	3 Managers Required	3 Managers <i>Optional</i>
<b>All Other Elections</b> (primary, special, municipal)	3 Managers Required	1 Manager Required

Source: S.C. Code of Laws

\*Note: Per polling location for general elections.

Poll clerks are included in the count toward the legal poll manager minimum requirement, as they are selected from among the pool of managers. Also counted toward the minimum requirement are 16- and 17-year-olds, which the county used in 2024 elections beginning with the presidential preference primaries (PPPs) in February. The SEC’s poll managers handbook—which defines roles and responsibilities during elections—refers to these

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# Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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individuals as poll manager assistants; however, SEC training and reimbursement practices treat them as poll managers.

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## Methodology for Poll Manager Turnout Analysis

We reviewed the number of poll managers who worked for the county's elections in calendar years 2023–2024 to determine if the county met the minimum counts established in state law. Ten elections in the county during this time were covered in this analysis, excluding the Summerton General Election for which the county provided no documentation. The elections included in the poll manager analysis are shown below:

- Town of Turbeville General Election.
- Democratic Presidential Preference Primary.
- Republican Presidential Preference Primary.
- City of Manning General Election.
- Summerton Town Council Special Election.
- Paxville Town Council Special Election.
- June Primary.
- Town of Summerton Mayor Special Election.
- November General Election.
- Town of Paxville General.

For each election, the number of registered voters in each precinct is determined based on those in the voter registration and election management system approximately six weeks prior to an election due to ballot production deadlines. The number of registered voters is the basis for the required number of poll managers. Minimum required poll manager counts were then determined based on the formula established in state law with 3 poll managers for the first 500 electors and the additional number of managers based upon the type of election, as seen in Figure 4.1 above.

Sometimes, however, precincts were combined. The county combined two precincts in three of its elections:

- For the 2024 Democratic and Republican PPPs, the Summerton 3 precinct was combined with the Summerton 2 precinct.
- For the 2024 June Primary and November General elections, the Oakdale precinct was combined with the Barrows Mill precinct.

While S.C. Code §7-11-20(B)(2)(a) requires cost-saving measures, such as combining polling locations in *PPP elections*, combining multiple precincts into a single polling location in *all other elections* is not specifically authorized by the state law.

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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In any case, it is unclear how many poll managers are required at a polling location where two or more precincts are combined. Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, when two precincts were combined, we based the requirement on the sum of the two precincts' combined registered voters.

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### County Polling Location Poll Manager Results by Election

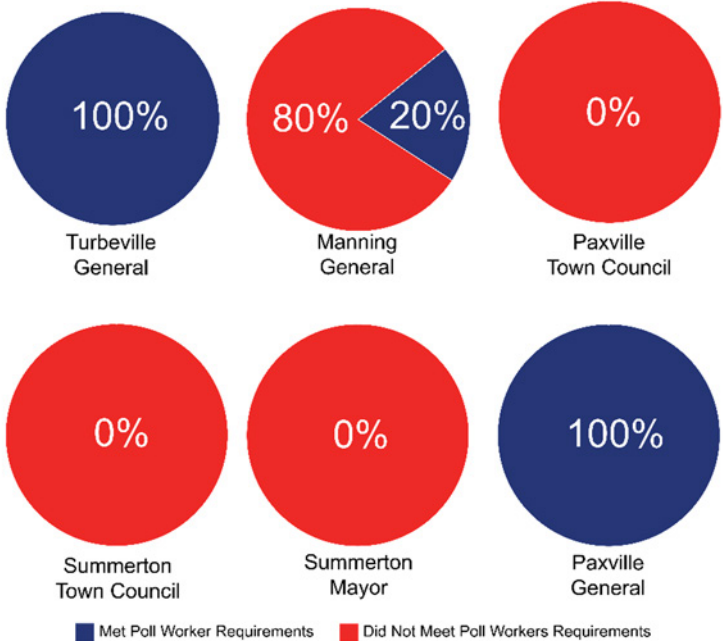
The ten elections varied widely in the percentage of county polling locations that met the minimum required number of poll managers for each. Specifically:

- 0% of the county's polling locations for the Paxville Town Council (0/1), the Summerton Town Council (0/3), and Summerton Mayoral Special (0/3) elections met the minimum.
- 4% (1/24) of the county's polling locations for the 2 PPPs met the minimum.
- 20% (1/5) of the county's polling locations for the Manning General met the minimum.
- 88% (21/24) of the county's polling locations for the 2024 June Primary, and 71% (17/24) of the polling locations for the 2024 November General met the minimum.
- 100% (1/1) of the county's polling locations for the Turbeville General and Paxville General elections met the minimum; each had 1 precinct participating.

Figure 4.2 below shows the percentage of the polling locations for each municipal election that met the minimum required number of poll managers. Figure 4.3 below shows the percentage of the polling locations for each statewide election that met the minimum required number of poll managers.

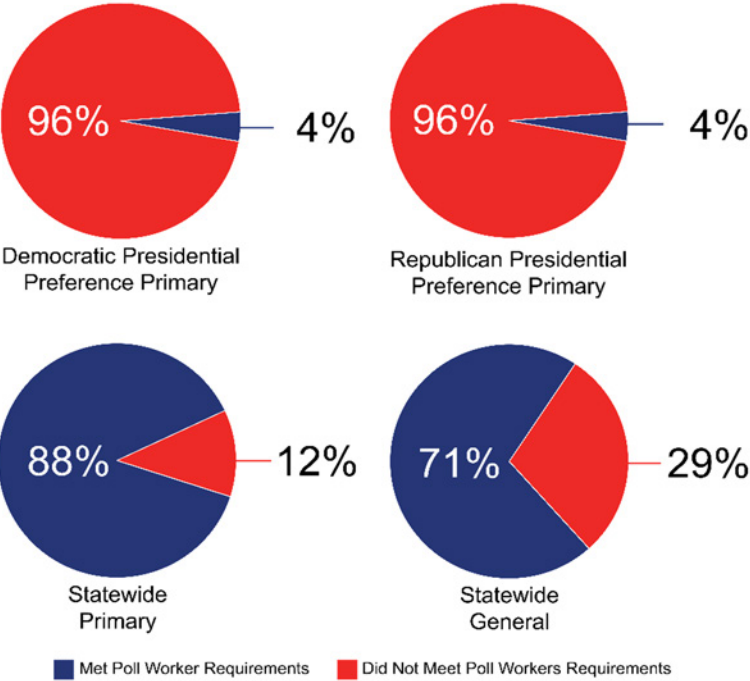
# Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

**Figure 4.2: Percentages of County Polling Locations That Met the Minimum Required Number of Poll Managers in 2023–2024 Municipal Elections**



Source: Analysis of Clarendon County Poll Manager Turnout

**Figure 4.3: Percentages of County Polling Locations That Met the Minimum Required Number of Poll Managers in 2024 Statewide Elections**



Source: Analysis of Clarendon County Poll Manager Turnout

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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An unforeseen circumstance appeared to impact poll manager turnout during the Democratic PPP: the funeral of a former local mayor was held the same day as the election. As a result, according to a county election official, “half of the poll managers didn’t work.” However, if the funeral had impacted the number of poll managers not working the Democratic PPP election, it would be reasonable to expect that the Republican PPP election would have had *more* poll managers working, rather than three *fewer* poll managers, as no funeral impacted that election. It is unclear what accounts for the Republican PPP’s low poll manager numbers.

Across all county polling locations in municipal and statewide elections alike, the average percentage of county polling locations that met the minimum required number of poll managers was 39%. A county election official indicated that one reason for precincts’ low rates of meeting the minimum requirement was due to election day cancellations: five to ten scheduled poll managers call out on election day. Backup poll managers, that is, individuals who train with the expectation of working an election as needed, were prepared for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections. However, training participants are only paid if assigned to work the election, making it a disincentive for backups to train without the certainty of working. Despite this disincentive, there appears to always be enough need for more poll managers so that all backups who train could be used to help meet the need.

The average rates that the county’s polling locations met the minimum requirement for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections were higher than the other statewide elections. In light of the increase in county polling locations’ rates that met the minimum requirement, having more backups prepared and ready to work when needed may help address the low rates of achieving the minimum required number of poll managers.

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### More Poll Managers Required Than Voters

It is worth noting that 86% (6/7) of municipal elections’ voter turnout was so low, at 16% or less, that the required minimum number of poll managers would have been excessive for the number of voters. Specifically, in:

- 1 election, there would have been 3 poll managers for 0 voters.
- 2 elections, there would have been 1 poll manager for every 6 voters.
- 3 elections, there would have been 1 poll manager for every 10, 11, and 13 voters.

While the intent of the minimum requirement appears to be to ensure sufficient poll managers for the number of *potential* voters, that is, registered voters, it seems the requirement does not account for the percentage of registered voters who *actually* vote in elections.

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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### **Recommendation**

14. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should train more individuals to serve as backup poll managers if unforeseen circumstances prevent scheduled poll managers from working.

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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### County Poll Manager Recruitment

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The county had a robust if informal recruitment program, including recruitment events, feeding managers on election day, and a county \$25 supplement. However, the county's poll manager need outpaced its recruitment efforts in 2023–2024. Although 65 new poll manager applications were submitted, 37% (24/65) of applicants did not work, and of the 63% (41/65) who did work an election, 61% (25/41) worked only one day (41%) or two days (20%).

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### County Recruitment Process

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The county celebrates the annual National Poll Worker Recruitment Day each August. This day is an initiative by the Election Assistance Commission, an independent, bipartisan commission. Its mission is to help election officials improve the administration of elections, help Americans participate in the voting process, inspire civic engagement, and encourage people to sign up to become a poll worker. The Commission provides posters and other resources to county election offices to support this event.

Once or twice a year, the office reaches out to four local high schools to recruit students to work the elections as well. Individuals who are 16 or 17 years old may serve as assistant poll managers, while 18-year-olds may serve as poll managers. Every 16- and 17-year-old working an election is required to work in a polling location with at least two poll managers for adequate supervision. Further, 16- and 17-year-olds apply toward the minimum number of required poll managers per precinct.

Individuals interested in serving as poll managers must complete a poll manager application, which can be completed online or in paper form. Training typically occurs within 30 days of an election. Once poll manager applicants are trained, they are scheduled for work at a polling location during the election.

A component of the recruitment process focuses on keeping existing poll managers sufficiently satisfied so that they continue working in future elections. These efforts include feeding poll managers on election days, supporting a family culture among poll managers, and having a post-election survey.

To further attract and retain poll manager applicants, the county council also approved a \$25 per person supplement for poll managers starting in November 2022.

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### Recruitment Analysis

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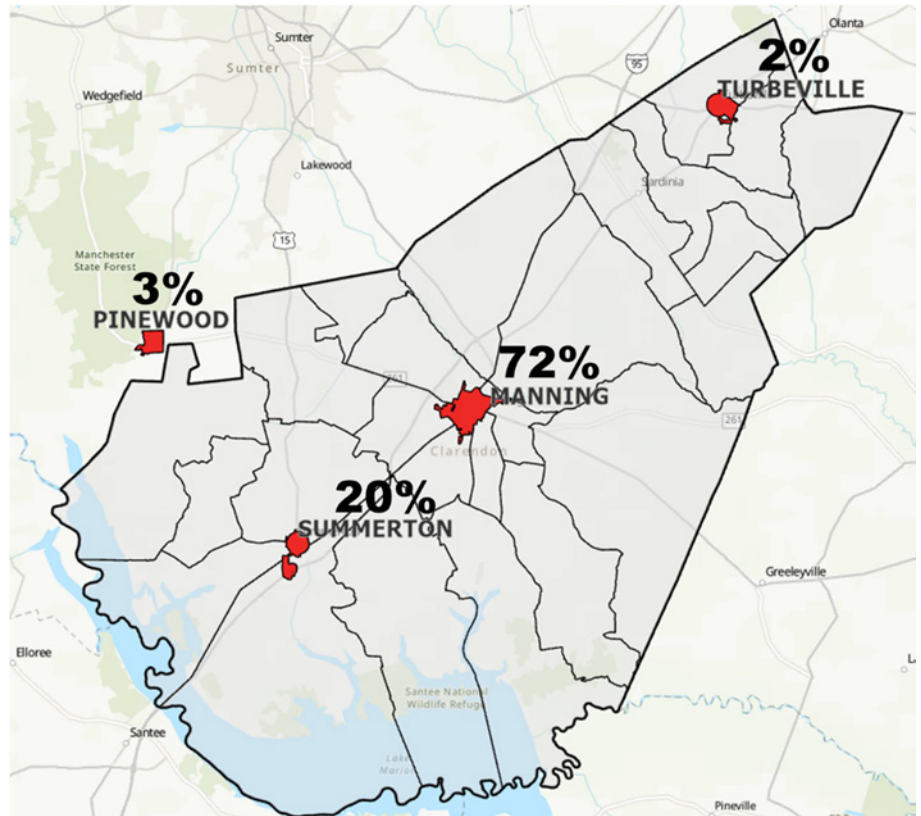
We reviewed poll manager applications received in 2023 and 2024. The documents were initially received undated; upon request, the county resubmitted the applications with handwritten dates indicating when the applications were received. It is a best practice to date-stamp any documents received by an office with the date they are received as documentation.

## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

The county received 23 poll manager applications in 2023, with 13 submitted prior to the only election in 2023 on November 7. In 2024, the county received 42 applications, with 9 submitted in September following the August National Poll Worker Recruitment Day.

Most (60/65) of the applicants resided in the county's two largest cities. Figure 4.4 below provides a visual of applicants' cities of residence.

**Figure 4.4: City of Residence of Poll Manager Applicants, 2023–2024**



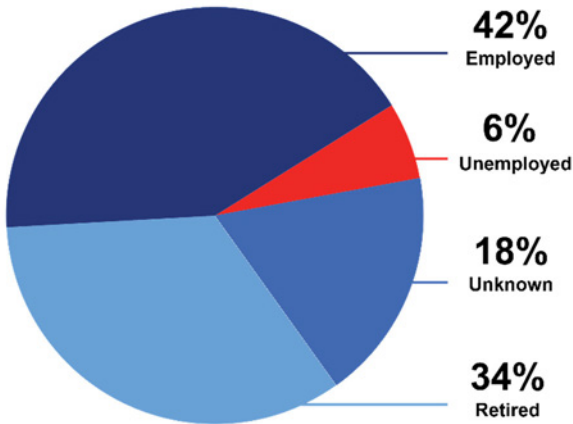
Source: Clarendon County Poll Worker Applications

Notes: Unincorporated, non-city areas in Clarendon County were not included.  
The Town of Pinewood is located entirely outside Clarendon County.

It is notable that 92% (60/65) of applicants came from the county's two primary cities, Manning and Summerton. The majority of self-reported occupations of these applicants, as seen in Figure 4.5 below, included being retired, unemployed, or having other occupations.

# Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

**Figure 4.5: Occupation of Poll Manager Applicants, 2023–2024**

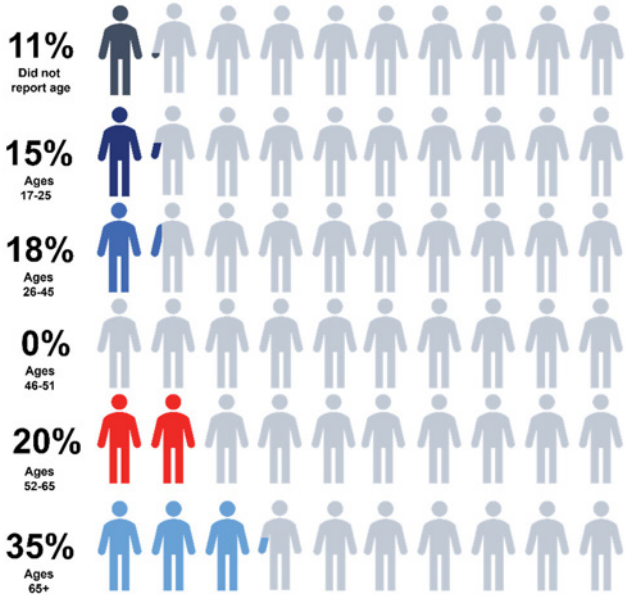


Source: Clarendon County Poll Worker Applications

It is also notable that 40% (26/65) of applicants do not have jobs, that is, unemployed or retired, which is less than the 42% (27/65) who self-reported occupations.

Applicants ranged in age from 17 to 80 years old. Those who identified as having occupations tended to be less than 45 years old, whereas those who identified with an occupation of “retired” tended to be applicants who were over 65 years of age, as seen in Figure 4.6. No individuals between ages 46 and 51 applied.

**Figure 4.6: Age Groups of Poll Manager Applicants, 2023–2024**



Source: Clarendon County Poll Worker Applications

Note: Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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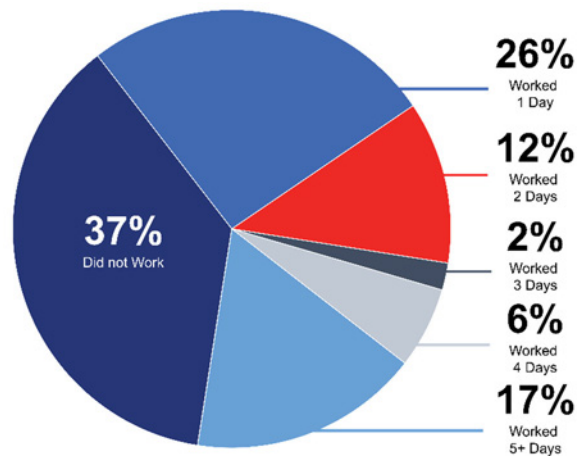
Prior poll manager experience was reported among 42% (27/65) applicants compared to 58% (38/65) of applicants reporting no prior experience. Also, the number of applicants reporting prior experience grew 70% (from 10 to 17) from 2023 to 2024.

Of the 65 total applicants, 63% (41/65) worked during either early voting or election day of the 2023 and 2024 elections. Of the 65 applicants, 37% (24/65) did not work any elections. Of the 41 applicants who worked any day of an election (early voting and/or election day), 41% (17/41) worked only 1 day of the election, while 20% (8/41) worked 2 days of the election.

Figure 4.7, seen below, illustrates the number of days that poll manager applicants worked or did not work at all.

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**Figure 4.7: Poll Manager Applicants Who Worked One or More Election Days, 2023–2024**



Source: Clarendon County Poll Worker Applications

Note: Poll managers could work multiple days due to early voting and election day work

With more than one-third of poll manager applicants not working at all, and more than one-third of applicants working only one or two days, there is greater need for poll manager applicants to meet the poll manager need.

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# Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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## **Poll Manager Reimbursements Received for Training Not Documented**

The county requested and received payment from the SEC for poll clerk—the lead poll manager—training classes that were missing documented attendance by these individuals for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections.

For the 2024 June Primary, 22 poll managers were credited in the voter registration and election management system with training classes that were not documented on training sign-in sheets. In turn, the county was paid an excess of \$1,740 by the SEC for training classes that lacked documented attendance.

For the 2024 November General, 61 poll managers were credited in the voter registration and election management system with training classes that were not documented on training sign-in sheets, and the county was paid an excess of \$5,380 by the SEC for these trainings classes. For both statewide elections in 2024, this totaled \$7,120 that was reimbursed by the SEC for training classes that lacked documented attendance by poll managers in the county.

Requesting training reimbursements for individuals lacking documented attendance at those training classes may result in expenditures of public funds contrary to their assigned purpose.

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## **State Law and SEC Reimbursement Schedules**

S.C. Code §7-13-72 requires poll managers and the lead poll managers—poll clerks—to be trained prior to an election. Furthermore, state budget proviso 102.2 in 2024 prescribed training pay at \$60 for both poll clerks and managers; a budget proviso is an allocation of funds that has conditions attached to its use. The SEC’s 2024 June Primary and November General election reimbursement schedules permitted one additional training class for early voting and election day poll clerks only. If taken, poll clerks could receive an additional \$100 in training pay. If an individual was an early voting clerk, he could receive \$160 for 2 training classes. Further, if that same early voting clerk was also an election day poll clerk, he could receive \$160 for 2 additional trainings. Therefore, this individual could be reimbursed up to \$320 for all training classes for 1 election.

Figure 4.8 below provides a breakdown of the various poll manager roles and role combinations and the maximum number of training classes and dollar amounts a manager may be reimbursed. Despite these maximums, poll managers are only entitled to receive payment for training sessions for which their attendance is documented.

# Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

Figure 4.8: Maximum Number of Reimbursable Poll Manager Training Classes by Role and Dollar Amount

Role Combinations (per individual)	Training Classes Authorized for Reimbursement	Training Amounts	Total Amounts
Early Voting & Election Day Clerk	Early Voting Clerk Training	\$60	\$320
	Additional Early Voting Training	\$100	
	Election Day Clerk Training	\$60	
	Additional Election Day Training	\$100	
Early Voting Clerk & Election Day Manager	Early Voting Clerk Training	\$60	\$220
	Additional Early Voting Training	\$100	
	Election Day Manager Training	\$60	
Early Voting Manager & Election Day Clerk	Early Voting Manager Training	\$60	\$220
	Election Day Clerk Training	\$60	
	Additional Election Day Training	\$100	
Early Voting Clerk	Early Voting Clerk Training	\$60	\$160
	Additional Early Voting Training	\$100	
Election Day Clerk	Election Day Clerk Training	\$60	\$160
	Additional Election Day Training	\$100	
Early Voting & Election Day Manager	Early Voting Manager Training	\$60	\$120
	Election Day Manager Training	\$60	
Early Voting Manager	Early Voting Manager Training	\$60	\$60
Election Day Manager	Election Day Manager Training	\$60	\$60

Source: SEC 2024 June Primary and November General Election Reimbursement Schedules

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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It is important to note that an individual may work as a poll manager in an emergency *without training*; this individual would only be eligible for poll manager pay.

The nature and scope of an additional training class is not defined by the SEC's 2024 reimbursement schedules. However, from 2008–2019, the SEC's now-archived voter registration and elections handbook—reference materials and instructions for use by county staff—indicated that funds were set aside for two managers per precinct to attend county-led additional training class on voting machines in statewide elections. The class was to be three hours and to be attended twice.

Despite the handbooks' criteria, SEC *training* courses provided to counties in 2016 and 2017 did not match the handbooks' definition of additional training; SEC trainings between 2008–2015 and 2018–2020—the years in which the handbooks were in effect—could not be definitively located. SEC training found in 2021–2024 also did not reflect the handbooks' criteria. The content prescribed for these various additional training classes differed from that of the handbook in purpose, and eligibilities for reimbursement also differed. For example, the handbooks' purposes for additional training always focused on the voting equipment, while SEC training classes did not require this focus. Also, eligibility requirements in the handbooks were consistently two *managers*, while SEC training classes specified either one *person*, one *clerk*, or *clerks*, depending on the year.

Without a clear standard for additional training classes, it is ultimately unclear if and how past practices involving additional training affected county implementation of additional training content in the elections under our review.

It should be emphasized, however, that SEC training in 2023–2024 did inform attendees—among whom were former and current Clarendon County election officials who were employed during the scope of this review—that a separate and completed sign-in sheet must exist to receive reimbursement for additional training.

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### Methodology and Results of Training Payment Analysis

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The county requested and received payment from the SEC for poll clerk training that was not documented as attended by its poll clerks for the 2024 June Primary and November General elections.

Training sign-in sheets were reviewed to determine who was trained as poll managers and the number of training classes attended. Also, signed and dated poll manager work records were reviewed to determine who worked and the number of days worked in the 2024 June Primary while information from the voter registration and election management system was used for the 2024 November General; we requested poll manager work records for the latter election from the county but never received the correct documents.

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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Furthermore, voter registration and election management system reports were used to determine each poll manager's role.

Note that poll clerks also received \$60 for administrative duties and that, beginning in November 2024, State Certified Poll Clerks—clerks certified through an SEC-operated training program—received \$200 for early voting and \$100 for election day, all of which was considered in the analysis.

For the 2024 June Primary, 22 poll managers and clerks were credited with 1–2 training classes for which there was no documentation supporting their attendance, with requested reimbursements totaling \$1,740. Specifically:

- 10 poll managers attended 1 training class but were credited with attending 2 training classes, with requested reimbursements totaling \$920.
- 11 poll clerks attended 2 training classes but were credited with 3, with requested reimbursements totaling \$660.
- 1 poll clerk was credited with attending 2 training classes but attended none, with requested reimbursements totaling \$160.

For the 2024 November General, 61 poll managers were credited with 1 or more training classes for which there was no documentation supporting their attendance, totaling \$5,380. Specifically:

- 44 poll managers were credited with attending 1 training class for which there was no documentation supporting their attendance, with requested reimbursements totaling \$3,080.
- 16 poll managers were credited with attending 2 training classes for which there was no documentation supporting their attendance, with requested reimbursements totaling \$2,080.
- 1 poll clerk was credited with attending 3 training classes for which there was no documentation supporting his attendance, with requested reimbursements totaling \$220.

According to a county election official, training records were used to determine poll manager location assignments, and later signed oath statements were matched to those poll managers to verify if an individual worked. However, the training credits that the county entered into the voter registration and election management system generally appear to reflect the maximum training credits allowed per poll manager role and total managers rather than the actual number of training classes attended. For example, several election day poll clerks were credited as having attended two training classes despite attending one or none for the 2024 June Primary; again, Figure 4.8 shows the maximum number of trainings for which a poll manager can receive credit.

As noted above, the SEC's current and past training and support documentation do not consistently define specific requirements for

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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additional training. Providing clarity to counties in the form of an official, written policy that specifies the scope, purpose, and documentation requirements for additional training reimbursements may assist in a more transparent implementation and equitable distribution of state funds.

While the SEC reimbursed the county based on the county's reported poll clerk and manager attendances at these trainings, a review of actual county payments to individual poll managers for both elections showed that, for poll managers considered in June 2024, 69% of poll managers were paid according to actual training and work records, 27% were overpaid, and 4% were underpaid. For poll managers considered in November 2024, 56% of poll managers were paid according to actual training and work records, 38% were overpaid, and 6% were underpaid. Ultimately, for both elections, more total funds were requested by the county and sent from the SEC for poll manager reimbursement and, subsequently, paid to poll managers (accounting for adjustments in county poll manager supplemental pay) than these managers were actually owed. These overpayments appear to be sourced from a combination of state and county funds.

The SEC's current reimbursement practices for additional training classes do not include a detailed verification of submitted training records. Thus, if a county requests reimbursement for individuals who lack documented attendance at additional training classes, the absence of a detailed review of attendance records means that counties may receive state funds to which they are not entitled. Implementing a more detailed review process at the SEC for requests for additional training reimbursements prior to distributing funds may ensure greater consistency between additional training attendance and funds disbursed.

In July 2025, the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County mandated that approvals of expense reimbursements are to be segregated by duty. In other words, if a duty or a task is performed by one individual, then another individual must approve any reimbursements tied to that duty or task. This requirement applies to board members and office staff.

Applying this approval method to poll manager reimbursement requests made to the SEC and evaluating them based on documented training records may ensure that the training classes requested for reimbursement match those actually attended. The amounts in question have ties to both the state and the county. Our authority is limited to auditing election funds, per S.C. Code §7-3-20(D)(3), disbursed to counties from the SEC.

Therefore, a law enforcement investigation may provide a more conclusive end to this matter. As of December 2025, this matter was referred by the board to state law enforcement officials for further investigation.

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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Requesting training reimbursements for individuals lacking documented attendance at those trainings may result in expenditures of public funds contrary to their assigned purpose.

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### **Recommendation**

15. The State Election Commission should provide in writing a clear policy that defines the purpose and scope of additional training classes and the documentation requirements for additional training class reimbursements.
16. The State Election Commission should implement a review process that evaluates requests for additional training class reimbursements and ensures such requests match class attendance records.
17. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should extend its segregation of duties requirement to apply to approving poll manager training reimbursement requests made to the State Election Commission. Approvals should be based on documented training records.

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# Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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## Two Poll Clerks Credited with Working the Same Polling Location

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### State Law and SEC Practice

The county requested and received payment from the SEC for two clerks who worked the same polling location, which served the combined precincts of Barrows Mill and Oakdale in the 2024 November General. This resulted in an overpayment by the SEC to the county in the amount of \$135. Assigning clerks based on polling location rather than precinct can reduce overpayments from the SEC to the county in these instances.

According to S.C. Code §7-13-72, the county board and the authority responsible by law for conducting the election must appoint *a* clerk from among the managers for *each polling place* in primary elections held in June and in all other primary, special, or municipal elections.

The law, however, does not address the process of appointing poll clerks and the number of appointed clerks for November general elections. As such, the SEC's legal interpretation is that the method of clerk appointment for non-general elections applies in the same manner to general elections. Meaning, the number of clerks appointed per polling location in non-general elections applies to general elections: one clerk per polling location.

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### Payments to Poll Clerks

The county requested and received payment from the SEC for two individuals who worked as poll clerks for one polling location that served two combined precincts during the 2024 November General. The county's election worker financial report from the voter registration and election management system showed that, for this election, 25 clerks were credited with working election day at 24 polling locations. Although the county had 25 precincts for this election, it combined precincts Barrows Mill and Oakdale into a single polling location, with a combined 401 registered voters.

A polling location in a November general election requires only one clerk, thus reducing the total number of clerks needed for the election from 25 to 24. Both individuals were credited with payment from the SEC for working as poll clerks on election day for the same polling location at the rate of \$135 each—\$75 for working and \$60 for paperwork duties. The SEC asked the county whether it assigned clerks based on precinct or polling place; however, no response was received. Assigning clerks on the basis of polling location as legally required rather than by precinct can reduce overpayments from the SEC to the county.

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## Recommendation

18. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should ensure that poll clerks are assigned on the basis of polling location rather than precinct.

# Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

## Curbside Ballots and Voters

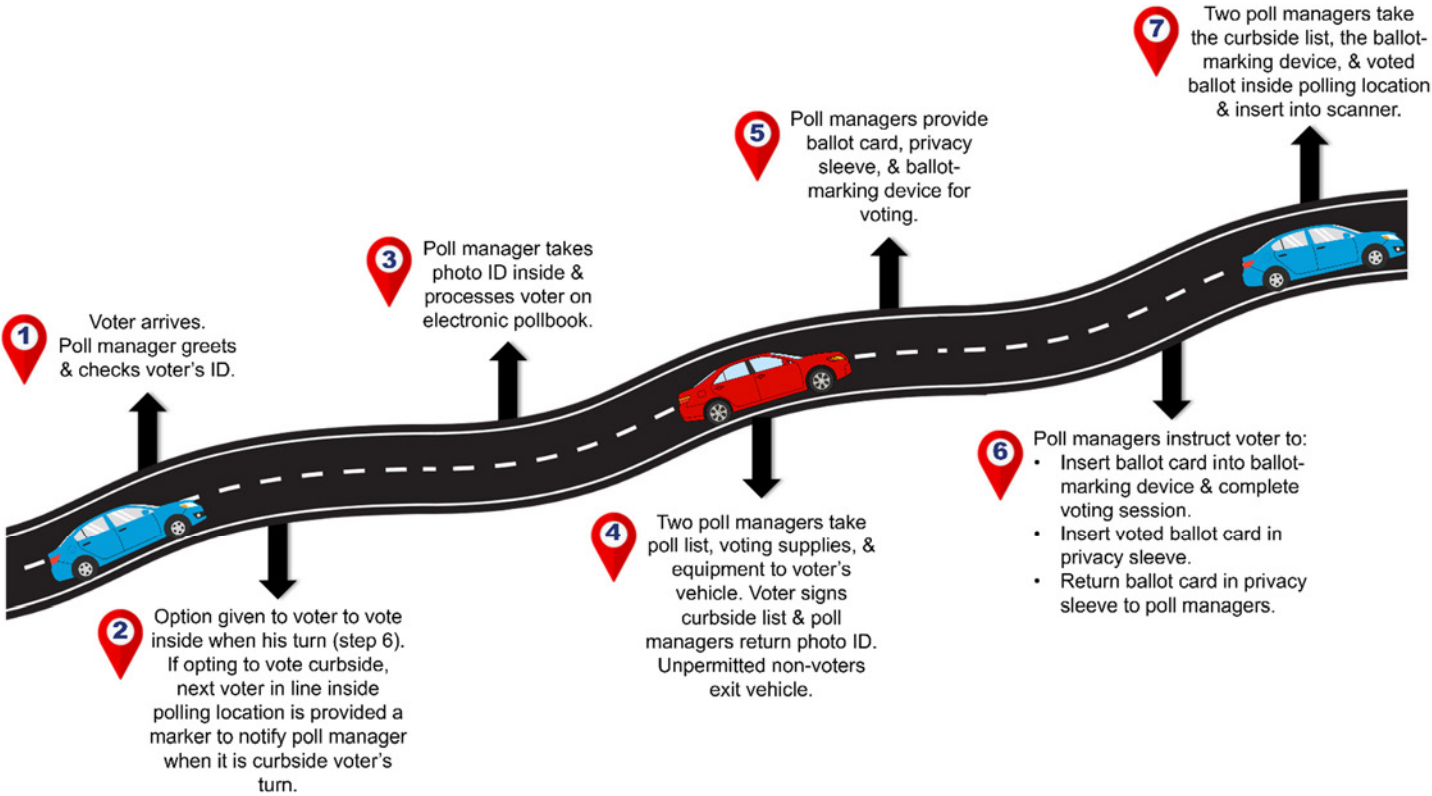
### Legal and Agency Requirements

We reviewed the county’s practices for curbside voting in 2024 and found that the county allows unpermitted non-voters to remain in the vehicle with curbside voters. Ensuring that curbside voters are the only individuals inside the vehicle while voting—unless covered by a legal exception—maintains ballot secrecy and protects voters from undue influence.

U.S. Code §§20101-20102 and S.C. Code §7-13-771(A) allow voters who cannot enter a polling location due to a physical handicap, age, or inability to stand in line to vote in a vehicle in the closest available parking area. A handicap means “a temporary or permanent physical disability,” and the applicable age is 65 years or older. Like other voters, these voters must show identification, proving their eligibility to vote. Furthermore, state law requires two poll managers attend to these voters in their vehicles and then return their voted ballots inside.

The SEC’s poll managers handbook refers to this process as “curbside voting” and provides step-by-step instructions for poll managers to implement this process. Figure 4.9 below is a flowchart showing the curbside voting process.

Figure 4.9: Curbside Voting Process



Source: State Election Commission's Poll Managers Handbook (2024)

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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In addition to the process, the SEC’s poll managers handbook lists the following provisions for curbside voting:

- Poll managers must monitor the parking area every 15 minutes for potential curbside voters.
- Only voters who meet qualifications may vote curbside. A driver or caregiver of a curbside voter may not vote curbside unless he also meets curbside voting qualifications.
- Curbside voters are not permitted to jump to the front of the line.
- Voters voting curbside due to the inability to stand for long periods may opt to vote inside rather than curbside when it is their turn.
- Only the curbside voter is permitted in the vehicle during voting unless the voter is entitled to assistance.

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### Proper Ballot Scanning

As stated above, the SEC’s poll managers handbook directs poll managers to scan the curbside voter’s ballot upon leaving the voter’s vehicle with the ballot. According to a county election official, curbside ballots were, for a time, stored in a locked bin after voters marked their ballots and then scanned at the end of the election day; however, this error was corrected, and ballots are now immediately scanned.

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### Unpermitted Non-Voters Inside Curbside Vehicles

The county office permits unentitled individuals to remain in the vehicle with curbside voters.

According to S.C. Code §7-13-771(C), only the voter is permitted inside the curbside vehicle in which the voter is casting his ballot. An exception to this rule includes an individual rendering entitled assistance to the voter. Per S.C. Code §7-13-780, assistance may be rendered only for voters who cannot read or write or who are physically incapable of preparing a ballot or voting. This standard of assistance is the same as that which applies to non-curbside voters; in fact, even husband and wife are not permitted to assist each other in preparing and voting a ballot unless each is entitled to the assistance defined above. Another exception is a voter’s minor children: Per S.C. Code §7-13-770(B), a voter’s minor children are permitted to accompany the voter while casting a ballot. Moreover, the SEC’s poll managers handbook permits only the curbside voter in the vehicle during voting unless he is entitled to assistance, as stated above.

However, a county election official stated that non-voters are permitted inside the vehicle while the voter casts his ballot—if the voter does not object. This understanding contradicts state law and the SEC’s poll managers handbook, since only in the exceptions noted above may another person accompany a voter who casts a ballot in the curbside vehicle. Despite our request for further information from the county, none was provided. It is thus unclear why this misunderstanding existed, the extent to which countywide poll managers shared this misunderstanding, and how often

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## Chapter 4: Poll Clerks and Managers

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unpermitted non-voters remained in curbside vehicles. Further training on curbside voting requirements, as found in the SEC's poll managers handbook and state law, may resolve the issue.

Ensuring that only permitted non-voters remain in the curbside vehicle protects ballot secrecy and prevents voter manipulation.

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### **Recommendation**

19. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should ensure that unpermitted non-voters leave the vehicle while a curbside voter completes the voting process.

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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In this chapter, we reviewed the county’s ballot reconciliation worksheets and other supporting election-related data for six elections between June 2024–June 2025 and found the following:

- Issues with processes involving signatures to the paper poll lists.
- Issues with processes involving provisional ballots and spoiled ballots.
- Errors in completing and reconciling ballot reconciliation worksheets.
- Data shown on ballot reconciliation worksheets not agreeing with data from the host server turnout report and results from the voting equipment.
- Failure by the county to hand count the initial number of ballot cards supplied to each precinct for election days.

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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## Ballot Reconciliation Background and Purpose

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As defined by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, an independent, bipartisan commission whose mission is to help election officials improve the administration of elections and help Americans participate in the voting process, 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 change in voting system to incorporate paper ballots, which system included new voting equipment and was implemented statewide in 2020. Prior to that, the state used a direct recording electronic device as part of its voting system. A direct recording electronic system incorporates 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 State Election Commission (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

# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

the last several years, there have been minor updates to the worksheet, including the last revision in August 2024, but it remains generally the same as the September 2019 version.

In 2022, S.C. Code §7-13-25 established early voting laws which allowed qualified voters to cast ballots during an early voting period. Currently, state law is silent on a requirement for ballot reconciliations for early voting election. However, SEC early voting procedures require daily ballot reconciliations for this voting period. The early voting ballot reconciliation worksheet prior to August 2024 is displayed in Figure 5.1 below, and the version implemented as of August 2024 is displayed in Figure 5.2 below. The election day ballot reconciliation worksheet prior to August 2024 is displayed in Figure 5.3 below, and the version implemented as of August 2024 is displayed in Figure 5.4 below.

**Figure 5.1: Early Voting Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet, Prior to August 2024**

County \_\_\_\_\_ EVC \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

End of day Public Count from scanner = Previous day Public Count (Opening Day should be zero) = **E**

End of day Voters Checked in EPB = Previous day Voters Checked in EPB = **J**

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

Ballots Used		
E	Ballots Scanned (Ballot Cards and Emergency Ballots) (Enter number from top of worksheet)	
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)	
<b>Total 3</b>		

Voters Checked In		
J	Electronic Poll Book (EPB) (Enter number from top of worksheet)	
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

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

SEC FRM 1065-202210

**Figure 5.2: Early Voting Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet, as of August 2024**

**Early Voting Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet**

County: \_\_\_\_\_ EVC: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ EV Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Sections in gray are completed by the county office. Sections in white are completed by the poll clerk. Verify with check mark (✓). All fields (circles or boxes) must contain a value. If zero, write 0.

End of day Public count from scanner = Previous day public count (day 1 should be zero) = **E**

End of day voters checked in on EPB = Previous day voters checked in on EPB = **J**

Ballots Supplied			✓
A	Ballot Cards		
B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/provisional & failsafe provisional)		
C	Additional Ballot Cards		
D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/provisional & failsafe provisional)		
<b>A + B + C + D = Total 1</b>			

Ballots Used			✓
E	Ballots Scanned (Public count from scanner)		
F	Provisional Ballots (Number of provisional ballot envelopes)		
G	Spoiled Ballots (Number of spoiled ballots in the spoiled ballot envelope)		
<b>E + F + G = Total 2</b>			

Ballots Not Used			✓
H	Ballot Cards (Physical count of remaining unused ballot cards)		
I	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Physical count of remaining unused emergency/provisional & failsafe provisional ballots)		
<b>H + I = Total 3</b>			

Voters Checked In			✓
J	Electronic Pollbook (EPB)		
K	Paper Poll List (Include provisional ballots NOT entered in EPB. Do NOT include the curbside poll list)		
<b>J + K = Total 4</b>			

For the boxes below, fill in the totals from the matching color boxes above. Check the math.

**Total 2**   + **Total 3**   =   Should = Total 1

**Total 4**   + **G**   =   Should = Total 2

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

Are you returning any emergency ballots that have not been scanned? Yes  No

Poll clerk signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

SEC FRM 1065-202408

Source: State Election Commission

# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

**Figure 5.3: Election Day Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet, Prior to August 2024**

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

Ballots Supplied	
A	Ballot Cards (Completed by County Office)
B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Completed by County Office) <i>(Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)</i>
C	Additional Ballot Cards
D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>(Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)</i>
<b>Total 1</b>	
Ballots Used	
E	Ballots Scanned (Ballot Cards and Emergency Ballots) <i>(Number displayed on the Scanner/DS200)</i>
F	Provisional Ballots (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots/ <b>Envelopes</b> )
G	Spoiled Ballots (Ballot Cards + Hand-Marked Paper Ballots)
<b>Total 2</b>	
Ballots Not Used	
H	Ballot Cards
I	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>(Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)</i>
<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: State Election Commission

## State Law and SEC Requirements

The following sections provide an overview of the legal requirements for ballot reconciliation and the SEC’s ballot reconciliation worksheet as they pertain to early voting and election day.

### Overview

S.C. Code §§7-13-1150 and 7-13-72 require 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.

**Figure 5.4: Election Day Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet, as of August 2024**

**Election Day Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet**

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

Sections in gray are completed by the county office. Sections in white are completed by the poll clerk. Verify with check mark (✓). All boxes must contain a value. If zero, write 0.

Ballots Supplied		
A	Ballot Cards	
B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i>	
C	Additional Ballot Cards	
D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i>	
<b>A + B + C + D = Total 1</b>		
Ballots Used		
E	Ballots Scanned <i>Public count from scanner</i>	
F	Provisional Ballots <i>Number of provisional ballot envelopes</i>	
G	Spoiled Ballots <i>Number of spoiled ballots in the spoiled ballot envelope</i>	
<b>E + F + G = Total 2</b>		
Ballots Not Used		
H	Ballot Cards <i>Physical count of remaining unused ballot cards</i>	
I	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Physical count of remaining unused emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional ballots</i>	
<b>H + I = Total 3</b>		
Voters Checked In		
J	Electronic Pollbook (EPB)	
K	Paper Poll List <i>Include provisional ballots NOT entered in EPB Do NOT include the curbside poll list</i>	
<b>J + K = Total 4</b>		

For the boxes below, fill in the totals from the matching color boxes above. Check the math.

**Total 2**  + **Total 3**  =  Should = Total 1

**Total 4**  + **G**  =  Should = Total 2

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

Are you returning any emergency ballots that have not been scanned? Yes  No

Poll clerk signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

SEC FRM 1150-202408

# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

## **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 poll clerk at a precinct, which only occurs after the conclusion of voting on election day. As for election type, Title 7 of the S.C. Code 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. While state law does not speak specifically to the requirement for completion of ballot reconciliation for early voting, SEC early voting standardized operating procedures require completion of the ballot reconciliation worksheets at the end of each early voting day. 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.

## Overview of the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

The SEC’s ballot reconciliation worksheet is intended to assist in the accounting of, by precinct, the total ballots supplied, used, unused, and the number of voters who were checked in to vote. This worksheet accounts for these required components and contains two formulae, 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

With the modification of the ballot reconciliation worksheet in August 2024, rows G1 (Spoiled Ballot Cards) and G2 (Spoiled Hand-Marked Paper Ballots) were added to provide a breakdown of the types of ballots that are

# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

shown on row G (Spoiled Ballots). Rows A–B are completed prior to election day 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 in Figure 5.5 below.

**Figure 5.5: Terms Used in Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet**

- | ROW  | DESCRIPTION  |
|--|--|
| <br><b>A</b>   | <b>BALLOT CARD</b><br>The paper cardstock provided to a voter for the purpose of recording his vote selections using a ballot-marking device.  |
| <br><b>B</b>   | <b>BALLOT-MAKING DEVICE</b><br>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 (not in figure).                                      |
| <br><b>B</b>   | <b>HAND-MARKED PAPER BALLOT</b><br>A hand-marked paper ballot is used at the polling location for emergency voting (definitions below).  |
| <br><b>B</b>   | <b>EMERGENCY BALLOT</b><br>A hand-marked paper ballot used in the event the ballot-marking device is inoperable or otherwise unavailable.  |
| <br><b>B</b>  | <b>PROVISIONAL BALLOT</b><br>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.                               |
| <br><b>B</b> | <b>FAILSAFE PROVISIONAL BALLOT</b><br>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. |
| <br><b>E</b> | <b>SCANNER</b><br>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.   |
| <br><b>G</b> | <b>SPOILED BALLOT</b><br>A ballot that has been defaced or marked in error. 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.                    |
| <br><b>J</b> | <b>ELECTRONIC POLLBOOK</b><br>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.             |
| <br><b>K</b> | <b>PAPER POLL LIST</b><br>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.                             |
| <br>         | <b>CURBSIDE POLL LIST</b><br>A form containing the voter's oath and signatures of voters who have taken the voter's oath and voted via the curbside process (not in graphic).  |

**Election Day Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet**

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

Sections in gray are completed by the county office. Sections in white are completed by the poll clerk. Verify with check mark (✓). All boxes must contain a value. If zero, write 0.

Ballots Supplied					
A	Ballot Cards				
B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i>				
C	Additional Ballot Cards				
D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i>				
<b>A + B + C + D = Total 1</b>					✓

Ballots Used					
E	Ballots Scanned <i>Public count from scanner</i>				
F	Provisional Ballots <i>Number of provisional ballot envelopes</i>				
G	Spoiled Ballots <i>Number of spoiled ballots in the spoiled ballot envelope</i>	Ballot Cards (G1)			
		Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (G2)	+	=	
		<b>E + F + G = Total 2</b>			

Ballots Not Used					
H	Ballot Cards <i>Physical count of remaining unused ballot cards</i>				
I	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Physical count of remaining unused emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional ballots</i>				
<b>H + I = Total 3</b>					

Voters Checked In					
J	Electronic Pollbook (EPB)				
K	Paper Poll List <i>Include provisional ballots NOT entered in EPB Do NOT include the curbside poll list</i>				
<b>J + K = Total 4</b>					

For the boxes below, fill in the totals from the matching color boxes above. Check the math.

**Total 2**   + **Total 3**   =   **Should = Total 1**  

**Total 4**   + **G**   =   **Should = Total 2**  

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

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you returning any emergency ballots that have not been scanned? Yes  No

Poll clerk signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

SEC FRM 1150-202408

Source: State Election Commission

# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

## 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.

$$\text{Line 1: } \begin{array}{c} \text{Total 2} \\ \text{(Ballots Used)} \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} \text{Total 3} \\ \text{(Ballots Not Used)} \end{array} = \begin{array}{c} \text{Total 1} \\ \text{(Ballots Supplied)} \end{array}$$

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

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

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

## Early Voting Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet Top Portion

The early voting ballot reconciliation worksheet has an additional reconciliation section on the top, which is also to be completed by the poll clerk on a daily basis after the polls are closed for the day. The total for field E (Ballots Scanned), as follows, is intended to determine the number of ballots scanned each day during the early voting process.

$$\text{Field E (top): } \begin{array}{c} \text{End of day public} \\ \text{count from scanner} \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} \text{Previous day public} \\ \text{count from scanner} \\ \text{(day 1 should be zero)} \end{array} = \text{Row E}$$

The total for field J (Electronic Pollbook/Voters Checked In) below is intended to determine the number of voters checked in on the electronic pollbook each day during the early voting process.

$$\text{Field J (top): } \begin{array}{c} \text{End of day voters} \\ \text{checked in on EPB*} \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} \text{End of day voters} \\ \text{checked in on EPB*} \end{array} = \text{Row J}$$

\*EPB means electronic pollbook.

## Worksheet Color Coding

For ease of completion, ballot reconciliation worksheets are designed to be printed in color. Different colors are used for Totals 1–4 as well as for row G (Spoiled Ballots):

COLOR	CORRESPONDS TO	
None* & Red†	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

\* Total 1 was not assigned a color until 2024.

†Total 1 was assigned the color red in August 2024.

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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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.

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## Scope and Methodology for Worksheet Analysis

While state law only requires ballot reconciliation for election day, the SEC’s standardized operating procedures mandate this process for absentee voting and early voting. However, the scope of our audit was limited to early voting and election day ballot reconciliations, specifically for the following elections:

- South Carolina Statewide Primary Election on June 11, 2024.
- Town of Summerton Mayor Special Election on September 24, 2024.
- South Carolina Statewide General Election on November 5, 2024.
- Town of Paxville General Election on December 3, 2024.
- Town of Summerton Special Election on January 7, 2025.
- Town of Paxville Special Election on January 14, 2025.

### Definition of Completion and Reconciliation of the Worksheets

For this review, in terms of early voting and election day ballot reconciliation worksheets, the term “completed” meant rows C–K contained values. If a field in rows C–K was blank, zero was assumed for blank rows if the math for the total suggested the blank row was zero. 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.

Furthermore, the term “completed” meant that for rows E, F, G, J, and K, the correct values were those that were based off the hard copy or source data. Meaning, we compared the data as written on the ballot reconciliation worksheets with the original hard copy or other source data.

<b>ROWS</b>	<b>HARD COPY OR SOURCE DATA USED</b>
E (Ballots Scanned)	Results from the voting equipment
F (Provisional Ballots)	Actual provisional ballot envelopes
G (Spoiled Ballots)	Actual spoiled ballots
J (Electronic Pollbook/Voters Checked In)	Turnout report data
K (Paper Poll List/Voters Checked In)	Actual paper poll lists

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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Specifically, for row E (Ballots Scanned), the data source was the results from the voting equipment as reported on the SEC's website, which collects election results from counties and reports results to the public.

For row F (Provisional Ballots), the hard copy data was the actual provisional ballot envelopes. For provisional and failsafe provisional ballots, the envelopes containing the original hard copy of these ballots were obtained. For those that were accepted, the envelope was opened and emptied, as expected, prior to this evaluation. For those that were rejected, the envelope was still sealed and contained the rejected ballot; these were not opened during our evaluation, as that step was not necessary. Rather, the number of these ballots (envelopes) and a review of the information written on the cover of the envelope were used to ensure the proper data was provided.

For row G (Spoiled Ballots), the hard copy data was the actual spoiled ballots. For these, the sealed envelopes containing the original hard copy of spoiled ballots were opened, spoiled ballots counted, and that total was compared to the number shown on the individual worksheets.

For row J (Electronic Pollbook/Voters Checked In), the source data was the turnout report data, which is data logged by the host server as captured by the electronic pollbook that shows the count of voters who were issued voting credit.

Lastly, for row K (Paper Poll List/Voters Checked In), the hard copy data was the actual paper poll lists. For these, hard copy original paper poll lists were obtained and reviewed for total number of signatures and compared to the number of signatures as noted on the individual worksheets. Similar procedures were completed for the spoiled ballots, provisional ballots, and failsafe provisional ballots.

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); see diagram below.

For early voting ballot reconciliation, the definition of completed and reconciled was the same as election day. However, the term "reconciled" also included the top portion of the ballot reconciliation worksheet where field E equaled row E (Ballots Scanned) and field J equaled row J (Electronic Pollbook/Voters Checked In).

Figures 5.6–5.9 below provide diagrams of what was considered completed and reconciled on the ballot reconciliation worksheets for election day voting and early voting. Note, information in red was added to the diagram to distinguish otherwise unidentified fields and sections of the worksheet.

# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

**Figure 5.6: Definition of Completed and Reconciled for Early Voting Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet, Prior to August 2024**

County \_\_\_\_\_ EVC \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Ballots Used		
E	Ballots Scanned (Ballot Cards and Emergency Ballots) (Enter number from top of worksheet)	
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)	
<b>Total 3</b>		

Voters Checked In		
J	Electronic Poll Book (EPB) (Enter number from top of worksheet)	
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   + Total 3   =   (Should equal Total 1)

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

Are you returning any Emergency ballots that have not been scanned? Yes  No

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

SEC FRM 1065-202210

**Figure 5.7: Definition of Completed and Reconciled for Election Day Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet, Prior to August 2024**

**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>		

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

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

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: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: State Election Commission

Note: diagonal lines represent sections included in the definition of completed.

# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

**Figure 5.8: Definition of Completed and Reconciled for Early Voting Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet, as of August 2024**

**Figure 5.9: Definition of Completed and Reconciled for Election Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet, as of August 2024**

**Early Voting Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet**

County: \_\_\_\_\_ EVC: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ EV Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Sections in gray are completed by the county office. Sections in white are completed by the poll clerk. Verify with check mark (✓). All fields (circles or boxes) must contain a value. If zero, write 0.

<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">Ballots Supplied</th> <th style="text-align: right;">✓</th> </tr> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>Ballot Cards</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>Additional Ballot Cards</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;"><b>A + B + C + D = Total 1</b></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> </table>		Ballots Supplied		✓	A	Ballot Cards		B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i>		C	Additional Ballot Cards		D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i>		<b>A + B + C + D = Total 1</b>											
Ballots Supplied		✓																										
A	Ballot Cards																											
B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i>																											
C	Additional Ballot Cards																											
D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots <i>Emergency/provisional &amp; failsafe provisional</i>																											
<b>A + B + C + D = Total 1</b>																												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">Ballots Used</th> <th style="text-align: right;">✓</th> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>Ballots Scanned <i>Public count from scanner</i></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>Provisional Ballots <i>Number of provisional ballot envelopes</i></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Spoiled Ballots</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>G</td> <td>Number of spoiled ballots in the spoiled ballot envelope</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;"> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Ballot Cards (G1)</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (G2)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">+ =</td> </tr> </table> </td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;"><b>E + F + G = Total 2</b></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> </tr> </table>		Ballots Used		✓	E	Ballots Scanned <i>Public count from scanner</i>		F	Provisional Ballots <i>Number of provisional ballot envelopes</i>		Spoiled Ballots			G	Number of spoiled ballots in the spoiled ballot envelope		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Ballot Cards (G1)</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (G2)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">+ =</td> </tr> </table>		Ballot Cards (G1)		Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (G2)		+ =			<b>E + F + G = Total 2</b>		
Ballots Used		✓																										
E	Ballots Scanned <i>Public count from scanner</i>																											
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**Election Day Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet**

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

Sections in gray are completed by the county office. Sections in white are completed by the poll clerk. Verify with check mark (✓). All boxes must contain a value. If zero, write 0.

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Source: State Election Commission

Note: diagonal lines represent sections included in the definition of completed.

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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## Analysis of Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets for 2024–2025 Municipal Elections

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### Summerton Mayoral Analysis

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We reviewed the ballot reconciliation worksheets for the following four municipal elections in Clarendon County:

- Town of Summerton Mayor Special Election on September 24, 2024.
- Town of Paxville General Election on December 3, 2024.
- Town of Summerton Special Election on January 7, 2025.
- Town of Paxville Special Election on January 14, 2025.

Overall, the predominant issue involved signatures on the hard copy paper poll lists, which did not agree with the data shown on the ballot reconciliation worksheets. 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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For the September 24, 2024, Summerton Mayoral Special Election, the county’s early voting was held over ten days, which complied with S.C. Code §7-13-25(F)(2) that requires early voting centers for any election that is not a statewide or runoff election to be opened Monday through Friday for the full two-week early voting period; it also had three polling locations for election day voting. The county completed its ballot reconciliation worksheet for early voting by day and for election day by polling location. It was judgmentally determined to review all worksheets from early voting days and all polling locations for this election, for a total of 13 worksheets.

Of the 13 worksheets, 77% (10/13) were completed and reconciled, and 23% (3/13) were not completed and thereby not reconciled. All of the worksheets that were not completed were due to differences between the number of actual signatures on the paper poll list and what was written on the worksheets for paper poll list signatures.

The county did not correctly use the paper poll list. The SEC’s poll managers handbook requires the use of the paper poll list when the electronic pollbooks (EPB) are not available or when a voter needs to be added manually. However, there were three instances in which the data on the worksheets did not agree with the hard copy election data. All of these instances involved signatures shown on the hard copy paper poll list, but the count of these signatures was not shown on row J (Paper Poll List) of the worksheets. In discussion with county election officials, the curbside poll list—which is to be signed by all curbside voters—was not used at all during the election. Instead, all curbside voters signed the paper poll list.

For explanation, curbside voting, as required by state and federal law, allows voters who are unable to access the polling place or stand in line to vote due to a disability or being age 65 or older to vote in their vehicle. The poll managers assisting the curbside voter first process the voter on the EPB; then, the voter using curbside voting signs the curbside poll list, and the poll

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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managers process the voter. Those voters who sign the paper poll list are not checked in on the EPB data and, therefore, are shown on row K (Paper Poll List) of the worksheet. Incorrect use of the paper poll list can result in inaccurate record keeping.

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## Paxville General Election Analysis

For the December 3, 2024, Paxville General Election, the county's early voting was held over eight days with two days closed for the Thanksgiving holiday, a legal holiday as prescribed by S.C. Code §53-5-10, and the county had one polling location for election day voting. The county completed the ballot reconciliation worksheet for early voting by day and for election day by polling location. It was judgmentally determined to review all worksheet early voting days and all polling locations for this election for a total of nine worksheets.

For completion, 100% (9/9) of the worksheets were completed. For reconciliation, 100% (9/9) of the worksheets reconciled on Line 1 and Line 2.

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## Summerton Special Election Analysis

For the January 7, 2025, Summerton Special Election, the county's early voting was held over five days, with four days closed for legal holidays and one day closed for a non-legal county holiday (see section *Application of Legal Holidays Was Unclear*); it also had three polling locations for election day voting. The county completed its worksheets for early voting by day and for election day by polling location. It was judgmentally determined to review all ballot reconciliation worksheets for early voting days and all polling locations for this election for a total of eight worksheets.

For completion, 75% (6/8) of the worksheets were completed and 25% (2/8) were not completed. For reconciliation, 88% (7/8) of the worksheets reconciled, and 12% (1/8) were not reconciled.

For early voting, there were issues with the actual number of signatures on the paper poll list as compared to the number of signatures as noted on the worksheet. For election day voting, there were issues with ballot packing and checking in voters on the EPB and the paper poll list. These factors contributed to the completion and reconciliation status of these worksheets and are discussed in more detail below.

### Paper Poll List Check Ins

Issues involving signatures on the paper poll list, similar to those noted above in earlier elections, were noted in this election as well. For the early voting paper poll list signatures issue, there was one signature on the paper poll list (the day for which the signature was entered was not indicated), but none were included on any of the early voting worksheets. In election day voting, there were three signatures on the paper poll list, but none were included on the worksheets. As discussed above, this issue is related to the county's incorrect use of the paper poll list instead of the curbside poll list.

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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## **Ballot Packaging Issue**

Issues around the initial ballots supplied to the precinct from the county likely occurred because the ballots were not hand-counted before providing those ballot packs to the individual precincts. Regarding ballot packaging, on row A (Ballot Cards Supplied) of the worksheet it was noted by the poll clerk that the initial ballot cards supplied was 251 instead of 250 as indicated. The change was made on the row but not carried down through to the addition for Total 1 (Total Ballots Supplied), which resulted in a difference of -1 for ballots supplied per the worksheet as compared to the actual ballots supplied. A difference between the stated ballots supplied and actual ballots supplied is not unreasonable given the fact that the ballot cards when supplied and provided are in packs, which are packaged based on weight and not number of ballot cards. To mitigate that issue, as of September 2024, the SEC recommended to open ballot card packages and hand count before completing row A to ensure accuracy. Two separate inquiries were made to county election officials to confirm the procedure around the initial supply of ballot cards, but no reply was received. As such, it is unclear if county election officials hand counted ballot cards. Not counting ballot cards could result in an inaccurate number of actual ballot cards provided by the county and, in turn, will impact the accuracy of the worksheet.

## **Electronic Pollbook Check Ins**

Another instance noted on the worksheets was a difference related to row J (Electronic Pollbook (EPB)), voters checked in as shown on the worksheet versus the turnout count data—data logged by the EPB host server that shows the count of voters who were issued voting credit. Specifically, the clerk initially wrote that 33 voters were checked in on the worksheet and then that number was adjusted to 32 during the review of the ballot reconciliation worksheets, as discussed below. The turnout data noted 33 were checked in, so it appears that the initial entry was correct but was changed. In discussion with county staff, it is noted that the worksheets are reviewed the day after the election. The primary focus of that review is the mathematical correctness of the worksheets, and that review does not include review of the election data. By checking the turnout data against what is shown on the ballot reconciliation worksheets, the county can help ensure that the worksheets accurately represent the voting results and prevent imbalances that may affect certification and record-keeping. It should be noted that a recommendation as to this process was made in a previous audit which focused on the ballot reconciliation worksheets as related to the 2022 November General. That audit report was issued in June 2025, which was after the audit period for this current audit. As such, we will not repeat that recommendation here in this audit.

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## Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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polling location for election day voting. The county completed the ballot reconciliation worksheet for early voting by day and for election day by polling location. It was judgmentally determined to sample all worksheets for early voting days and all polling locations for this election for a total of ten worksheets.

For completion, 100% (10/10) of the worksheets were completed. Also, for reconciliation, 100% (10/10) of the worksheets reconciled correctly on Line 1 and Line 2.

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### Recommendations

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20. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should ensure it uses the paper poll list only in circumstances where a voter cannot be checked in on the electronic pollbook or should be added manually.
  21. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should ensure it uses the curbside paper poll list for all curbside voters.

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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## Analysis of the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets for the 2024 Statewide Elections

We reviewed the ballot reconciliation worksheets for the following two statewide elections in the county for completion and reconciliation:

- 2024 June Primary.
- 2024 November General.

Overall, issues included differences between the:

- Number of signatures on the hard copy paper poll lists as compared to the data written on the worksheets.
- Number of hard copy provisional ballots and spoiled ballots as compared to the data written on the worksheets.
- Data from the host server turnout report as compared to the data written on the worksheets.

Adequately completing and reconciling these worksheets for each polling location, as well as verifying that totals shown on the worksheets agree with hard copy and source data, may give greater assurance that all valid ballots were included in the election results.

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## Early Voting June Primary Election Results

For the 2024 June Primary, early voting was held over nine days with the polls closed on the Memorial Day holiday, a legal holiday as prescribed by state statute. The county completed its ballot reconciliation worksheets for early voting by day, and it was judgmentally determined to review all early voting worksheets for this election, for a total of nine worksheets.

Over the nine days of early voting for the 2024 June Primary, the county did not properly use the paper poll list as required by SEC procedures. There was a total of 147 variances between the hard copy data and the data shown on the worksheets—147 signatures were on the paper poll lists but not included on row K (Papers Poll List/Voters Checked In) on the worksheets.

As stated above in the municipal election section, the county confirmed that the paper poll list was used for curbside voters, which is contrary to SEC procedure. The curbside list is a separate list from the paper poll list and includes signatures from all curbside voters. Per S.C. Code §7-3-25(A)(3), if there is a difference in policy between the county and the SEC regarding functions to be performed—for example, checking in voters—the SEC’s policy takes precedence. Ensuring that the county follows the SEC’s poll managers handbook for the processes of checking in all voters, to include curbside voters, may correct this issue. Incorrect use of the paper poll list may result in inaccurate record keeping.

Additionally, signatures on the paper poll lists were not clearly segregated by days, meaning there were several instances in which there was not a clear break between the end of one early voting day and the beginning of the next. The SEC’s poll manager handbook is silent on separating the days on paper

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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poll lists, but it does include this process for the curbside paper poll list. Adding line breaks to separate the days' activity would aid in daily reconciliation of the worksheet. Given the issues above with the paper poll list, it was difficult to discern the completion and reconciliation of the ballot reconciliation worksheets for early voting days.

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## Election Day June Primary Election Results

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For election day voting for the 2024 June Primary, the county had 25 precincts and 24 polling locations, which included 1 combined polling location for 2 precincts. 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, a random sample of worksheets from the county was selected to determine if they were adequately completed and reconciled, as defined in the above introductory section. The random sample included 18 of the 24 polling locations. It should be noted that one of the sampled polling locations was the combined polling location mentioned above, which resulted in 18 polling locations and a total of 19 ballot reconciliation worksheets. The results were calculated at a 90% confidence level and margin of error of  $\pm 10$  percentage points. Therefore, these results can be generalized about all of the county's polling locations for this election.

For completion, 32% (6/19) of the worksheets were completed, and 68% (13/19) were not. The completion of the worksheets was impacted by a variety of reasons, described below.

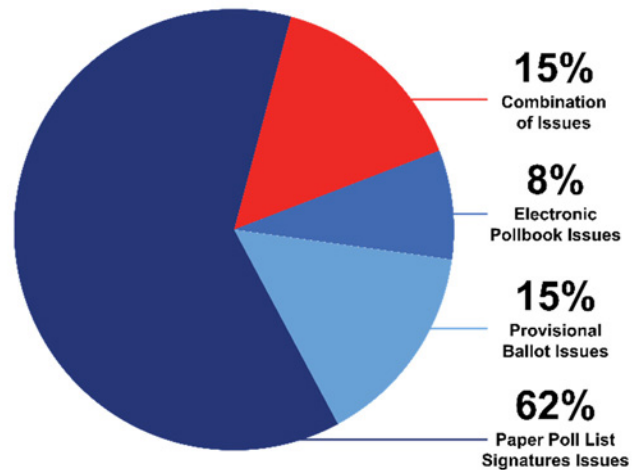
Completion also impacted the reconciliation of Lines 1 and 2. For Lines 1 and 2, the turnout data from the host server and results from voting equipment were compared to the data shown on the sampled worksheets. For Line 1, 100% (19/19) of Line 1 were reconciled. For Line 2, 32% (6/19) reconciled, and 68% (13/19) did not reconcile. Of the worksheets noted with reconciliation issues in Line 2, 62% (8/13) contained paper poll signatures issues, 15% (2/13) contained provisional ballot issues, 8% (1/13) contained EPB-related issues, and the remaining 15% (2/13) were related to a combination of issues. Figure 5.10 below provides a depiction of these issues.

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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**Figure 5.10: Breakdown of Issues with Line 2 Completion**



Source: State Election Commission

Specifically, there were:

- Eight instances in which the individual worksheets indicated that paper poll signatures were collected on election day, but the signatures on the hard copy paper poll lists showed none or a different number than shown on the worksheet, or vice versa.
- One instance in which there was a difference between row E (Ballots Scanned) on the worksheet and the results from voting equipment; the worksheet showed four fewer scanned ballots than the results from voting equipment.
- Two instances in which provisional ballots used on row F (Provisional Ballots) on the worksheets varied from the hard copy data: one worksheet showed one more provisional voted, and one worksheet showed one less provisional than voted.
- Two instances in which there was a combination of issues. On 1 worksheet, the difference was due to 196 voters checked in (row J) plus 1 paper poll list signature in row K on the worksheet, but turnout data showed 197 checked in (row J), and hard copy data showed 4 signatures for row K. For the other worksheet, 120 voters were checked in on the EPB (row J), and 0 paper poll list signatures were reported in row K. However, turnout data showed 121 voters checked in (row J), and hard copy data contained 2 signatures for row K.

As stated above, the county used the paper poll list for both curbside voters and voters who could not be checked in on the EPB. Furthermore, staff checked the worksheets the day after voting. However, it did not include comparing the data on the worksheets to the hard copy or source data. Rather, the process was simply checking the mathematical accuracy of the

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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calculations. The current procedure opens itself to the possibility of incomplete or incorrect ballot reconciliation, which could give less assurance that all ballots are included in the election results.

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## Early Voting November General Election Results

Early voting for the 2024 November General was held over 12 days, as prescribed by state statute. The county completed its ballot reconciliation worksheets for early voting by day, and it was judgmentally determined to review the worksheets for all early voting days for this election, for a total of 12 worksheets. Given issues with the worksheets discussed below, it was difficult to discern for completeness and reconciliation.

For day eight of early voting, the poll clerk included a note that explained the curbside EPB had not been synching properly over the course of the first eight days of early voting, and that the issue was addressed and corrected on that day. After discussions with county staff, we were unable to reconcile the differences between worksheet data and source election data—for example, host server data and results from voting equipment. It appeared that the variance of approximately 256 was directly related to this issue and accumulated over the first 8 days of early voting. This variance was further illustrated by our recalculations based on worksheet data, which indicated a difference of 240.

Again, the county did not use the paper poll list correctly. For the 12 days of early voting for this election, 58% (7/12) of days had issues with the number of paper poll signatures. Overall, there were over 1,800 signatures on the hard copy paper poll list that were not noted on the worksheets. Per county staff, due to the high numbers of early voters, they decided to move a large percentage of voting to curbside voting. Further, the hard copy paper poll list was not clearly segregated by days, as discussed above, making it almost impossible to ascertain where one day's signatures ended and the next day's began. Taken together, this explains the high number of differences between the paper poll signatures as shown on the worksheets and the hard copy paper poll lists in the early voting for this election. Again, incorrect use of the paper poll list can result in inaccurate record keeping.

Lastly, issues were noted due to differences between the hard copy election data and the worksheet data. In viewing of hard copy spoiled ballots, 50% (6/12) of the days had differences with the number of spoiled ballots. For provisional ballots, 42% (5/12) of the days had differences with the number of provisional ballots. As stated earlier, county election officials checked the worksheets the day after voting but only for the math as written on the worksheet. By not checking the hard copy data against that which is written on the worksheets, ballot reconciliation may not be accurate, which could negatively impact record keeping.

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## Election Day November General Election Results

For election day voting for the 2024 November General, the county had 25 precincts and 24 polling locations, which included 1 combined polling

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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location for 2 precincts. 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, a random sample of worksheets from the county was selected to determine if they were adequately completed and reconciled, as defined above in the scope and methodology section. The random sample included 18 of the 24 polling locations. It should be again noted that 1 of the sampled polling locations was the combined polling location mentioned above, which resulted in 18 polling locations and a total of 19 ballot reconciliation worksheets. The results were calculated at a 90% confidence level and margin of error of  $\pm 10$  percentage points. Therefore, these results can be generalized about all of the county's polling locations for this election.

Eleven percent (2/19) of the worksheets were completed and reconciled. The remaining 89% (17/19) were not adequately completed, and therefore were not reconciled as worksheets that are not complete and cannot be reconciled. Like other elections discussed above, the county did not properly use the paper poll list and curbside list. Of the 19 worksheets sampled for election day voting, 74% (14/19) had differences between the number of paper poll list signatures written on the worksheet and signed on the actual paper poll list, which is described earlier. Furthermore, 53% (10/19) had differences with the number of provisional ballots, and 21% (4/19) had differences with the number of spoiled ballots. As stated earlier, county election staff checked the worksheets the day after voting but only for the math as written on the worksheet. Not checking the hard copy data against that data written on the worksheet could result in inaccurate ballot reconciliation worksheets, which could impact the integrity of the election.

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## Recommendation

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22. The State Election Commission should require that the paper poll list indicate daily breakdowns of signatures to provide greater clarity on total signatures for each day. This daily breakdown should also account for days in which no voters sign the paper poll list.

# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

## Incomplete or Erroneous Completion of Provisional Ballots

During our review of hard copy original provisional ballot envelopes, instances of incomplete envelopes were noted, and all such instances resulted in rejected provisional ballots. As stated earlier in this chapter, a provisional ballot is a hand-marked paper ballot that is used when a voter's eligibility to vote is challenged, which may occur, for instance, if the voter has already received a ballot in the mail but insists on voting at a polling location. Pursuant to the SEC's 2024 poll managers handbook, it is the poll manager's responsibility to complete the information on the envelope, which is depicted in Figure 5.11 below.

Figure 5.11: Provisional Ballot Envelope (two-sided)

Front	Back																																																																																																																																																																											
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PROVISIONAL BALLOT ENVELOPE</b> <span style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px;">every vote matters. every vote counts.</span></p> <p><small>Please Print. Complete polling place and voter information and the appropriate section (A, B, C or D) for type of provisional.</small></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;"><b>Precinct/Polling Place</b></td> <td style="width: 20%;"><b>Election</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Poll Manager/Clerk</b></td> <td><b>Date</b></td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td rowspan="5" style="width: 15%;"><b>Voter as Registered</b> <small>Required. Provide as much information as possible.</small></td> <td style="width: 25%;">Full Name</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Voter Registration #</td> <td></td> <td>DOB</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Registration Address</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>City/State/Zip</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phone</td> <td></td> <td>SCDL #</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Email</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td rowspan="4" style="width: 15%;"><b>A</b> <b>Failsafe</b> <small>Complete if voter has moved and is voting a Failsafe Provisional ballot.</small></td> <td style="width: 25%;">Voter's New Address</td> <td>Street</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>City/State/Zip</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mailing Address (if different from above)</td> <td>Street</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>City/State/Zip</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4"><small>I swear (or affirm) that the address provided above is my sole legal residence for voting purposes.</small></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">Signature of Voter _____</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td rowspan="10" style="width: 15%;"><b>B</b> <b>Voter Qualification Challenge</b> <small>Complete if not Failsafe (A) or Photo ID (C or D). Use Emergency/Provisional Ballot.</small></td> <td rowspan="5" style="width: 15%;">Reason for Challenge</td> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Issued an absentee ballot. Did voter receive ballot? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Registered in another precinct or county</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Registered after deadline</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Not found in poll book (voter says registered at DMV or other agency)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Not found in poll book (other reason)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Archived voter</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">Challenge by Poll Manager/Clerk? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">If not poll manager, provide challenger information.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Name</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Voter Registration #</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Address</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">City/State/Zip</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Phone</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Email</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Precinct/Polling Place</b>	<b>Election</b>	<b>Poll Manager/Clerk</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Voter as Registered</b> <small>Required. 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Name				Voter Registration #				Address				City/State/Zip				Phone				Email				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td rowspan="2" style="width: 15%;"><b>C</b> <b>Voter Did Not Bring Photo ID</b> <small>Use Emergency/Provisional Ballot.</small></td> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Check here if voter has a Photo ID but did not bring the Photo ID with them to the polling place.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Remind voter to show Photo ID to county board of voter registration and elections by the time of the provisional ballot hearing.</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td rowspan="5" style="width: 15%;"><b>D</b> <b>Voter Has No Photo ID</b> <small>Complete this section if voter does not have a Photo ID due to some obstacle. Voter must show voter registration card without photo. Use Emergency/Provisional Ballot.</small></td> <td colspan="3"><b>Reasonable Impediment Affidavit</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">I swear (or affirm) under penalty of perjury that I am the same person who appeared at this polling place and cast this provisional ballot on Election Day.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">I suffer from the following reasonable impediment that prevented me from obtaining one of the required Photo IDs (check one):</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Religious objection to being photographed</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Lack of birth certificate</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Lack of transportation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Work schedule</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Disability or Illness</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Family Responsibilities</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Other reasonable impediment (list if disclosure is not protected by state or federal law)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Signature of Voter _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Signature of Poll Manager or Notary _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Date _____ Commission Expiration Date _____</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td rowspan="10" style="width: 15%;"><b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b></td> <td rowspan="2" style="width: 15%;"><b>Office Research</b></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> ACCEPT</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> REJECT</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Failsafe Verified</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible for Election</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility Verified</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Not in VREMS</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Registered Too Late</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> No Absentee Returned</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Live in County</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Moved from Another County</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Photo ID Provided</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Inactive for Cause</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Voted at Wrong Precinct</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> HAVA ID Provided</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Voted Absentee</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorized Return by Another</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Photo ID Not Provided</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Notes:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Notes:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><b>Board Ruling</b> <input type="checkbox"/> ACCEPTED <input type="checkbox"/> REJECTED</td> <td>Notes:</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Record Updated</b></td> <td>Date</td> <td>Initials</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PROVISIONAL BALLOT ENVELOPE</b> <span style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px;">every vote matters. every vote counts.</span></p>	<b>C</b> <b>Voter Did Not Bring Photo ID</b> <small>Use Emergency/Provisional Ballot.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if voter has a Photo ID but did not bring the Photo ID with them to the polling place.			Remind voter to show Photo ID to county board of voter registration and elections by the time of the provisional ballot hearing.			<b>D</b> <b>Voter Has No Photo ID</b> <small>Complete this section if voter does not have a Photo ID due to some obstacle. Voter must show voter registration card without photo. Use Emergency/Provisional Ballot.</small>	<b>Reasonable Impediment Affidavit</b>			I swear (or affirm) under penalty of perjury that I am the same person who appeared at this polling place and cast this provisional ballot on Election Day.			I suffer from the following reasonable impediment that prevented me from obtaining one of the required Photo IDs (check one):			<input type="checkbox"/> Religious objection to being photographed	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of birth certificate		<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Work schedule		<input type="checkbox"/> Disability or Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Responsibilities		<input type="checkbox"/> Other reasonable impediment (list if disclosure is not protected by state or federal law)			Signature of Voter _____			Signature of Poll Manager or Notary _____			Date _____ Commission Expiration Date _____			<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	<b>Office Research</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCEPT	<input type="checkbox"/> REJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> Failsafe Verified	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible for Election	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility Verified	<input type="checkbox"/> Not in VREMS	<input type="checkbox"/> Registered Too Late	<input type="checkbox"/> No Absentee Returned	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Live in County	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved from Another County	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo ID Provided	<input type="checkbox"/> Inactive for Cause	<input type="checkbox"/> Voted at Wrong Precinct	<input type="checkbox"/> HAVA ID Provided	<input type="checkbox"/> Voted Absentee	<input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorized Return by Another	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo ID Not Provided	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	Notes:			Notes:			<b>Board Ruling</b> <input type="checkbox"/> ACCEPTED <input type="checkbox"/> REJECTED		Notes:	<b>Record Updated</b>	Date	Initials
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Source: State Election Commission

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# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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The items missing or completed in error included but were not limited to:

- None or more than one applicable box selected in section B (voter qualification challenge) for the reasoning for the challenge.
- Signatures in wrong places or lacking as needed for sections A (failsafe voter) and D (voter has no ID).
- Some envelopes were completely blank.

While it is possible for a poll clerk or manager to request a voter signature and the voter refuse, it is not clear this was the cause for the lack of signatures. The SEC's 2024 poll clerk and manager PowerPoint training classes included instructions on the completion of the provisional ballot envelope. However, due to the ballots that were incomplete or completed in error during the 2024 November General, enhanced poll clerk and manager training at the county level on this responsibility and how to complete the provisional ballot may be beneficial. Ensuring that the provisional envelopes are properly and fully completed may improve the acceptance of valid ballots.

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## Issue with Voter Paper Poll List Signatures

For one of the county's precincts in the 2024 November General, it appeared that the clerk wrote down the names of voters on the paper poll list rather than have the voter sign said list. S.C. Code §7-13-710(B) requires individual voters to sign either the EPB or mark the paper poll list for affirmation that the voter has read and understands the oath. The voter's oath is shown on the screen of the EPB and on the top of the paper poll list. Based on the print style on the paper poll list for this precinct, it appears that the same person wrote all eight names on the list. While the statute allows for assistance from the poll manager in cases in which the voter is not capable of signing, it is unlikely that voter assistance for all voters was needed at this precinct. The fact that the paper poll list was completed by one poll worker was subsequently confirmed with the county. Adhering to state law as to the use of the paper poll lists can ensure that all qualified voters have read and understood the voter's oath.

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## Application of "Legal Holidays" Was Unclear

Prior to March 2026, the SEC had not provided definite and formal written guidance on the application of the term "legal holiday" as related to early voting. S.C. Code §7-1-20(13) defines "legal holiday" as a holiday recognized by state or federal law. S.C. Code §53-5-10 goes further and details state holidays as described in Figure 5.12 below.

# Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

Figure 5.12: Legal Holidays

LEGAL HOLIDAYS	DAYS OBSERVED
New Year's Day	January 1st
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Third Monday in January
George Washington's Birthday/President's Day	Third Monday in February
Confederate Memorial Day	May 10 <sup>th</sup>
National Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4 <sup>th</sup>
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Veterans Day	November 11 <sup>th</sup>
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Day after Thanksgiving Day	Friday following Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve	December 24 <sup>th</sup>
Christmas Day	December 25 <sup>th</sup>
Day after Christmas	December 26 <sup>th</sup>

Source: S.C. Code of Laws

Note: holiday dates may vary depending on calendar year.

It should be noted that state law varies from federal law on certain holidays. For example, Juneteenth National Independence Day is a federal holiday but is not considered a state holiday. Furthermore, counties may have holidays on days that are not federal or state holidays. This can lead to confusion as to which days the early voting center should be open, and, in turn, impact a voter's ability to cast a ballot during the early voting period. As discussed above, for the 2025 Summerton Special Election, the county's early voting center was closed for a county holiday, which is *not* considered a "legal holiday" under state or federal statute.

In the past, there were discussions within the SEC related to the ambiguity around the use of the term "legal holiday" and its application as related to voting and the closure of polls. However, the guidance was never finalized by the SEC and provided to all the county election offices prior to March 2026—at which time a memorandum clarifying the use of "legal holiday" and its application was sent to counties and posted on the SEC's website. This memorandum may aid county election officials' understanding of the legal requirements for the public's voting access.

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## Chapter 5: Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

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### **Recommendations**

23. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should provide enhanced training to its poll clerks and managers on the responsibility to complete the provisional ballot envelope and how to complete said envelope.
24. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should enhance its poll manager training to ensure only the voter signs the voter's oath unless the voter requests assistance.

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# Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

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In this chapter, we reviewed the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County's approach to public meetings in 2023–2024 and found:

- The incorrect board title was used on its agendas, meeting minutes, policy manual, job description for director, and meeting notices provided to local newspapers.
- The board did not post all agendas to its website, nor did it post all agendas to its social media page when used in lieu of its website.
- The board did not always properly note specific purposes for executive sessions on its agendas.
- The board posted agendas that contained inaccuracies.
- The board did not create agendas for all proposed meetings.
- The board did not follow statutory requirements for making changes to an agenda after a meeting commences.
- There were missing minutes and other records.
- The board's meeting minutes were not posted online.
- A board quorum, or present majority, was not always indicated.
- The board had not adopted a procedural process.
- The board's meeting minutes contained insufficient detail on board actions.
- The board's meeting minutes did not always correctly record executive sessions.
- The board's meeting minutes did not indicate compliance with external requestor requirements.
- The board's meeting minutes contained inaccuracies.

The board's use of incorrect titles for itself could have confused the public and created doubt that the proper authorities were carrying out the county's election duties. Agendas and minutes that were unavailable, vague, or incorrect could have reduced public participation in meetings and the transparency of the board's activities.

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## Board of Voter Registrations and Elections Name Requirement

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We reviewed official documents of the Office and Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County and found that the incorrect board title was used on its:

- Agendas and meeting minutes.
- Policy manual.
- Job description for director.
- Meeting notices provided to local newspapers.

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# Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

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The board’s use of an improper title may confuse the public and create doubt that proper authorities are carrying out election duties.

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## Background

According to S.C. Code §7-5-10(A)(1), the persons whom the Governor shall appoint as board members collectively “must be known as the ‘Board of Voter Registration and Elections of \_\_\_\_\_ County’.” This naming requirement reflects a 2014 statutory revision to prior versions of state law; this revision abolished county voter registration boards and county election commissions.

Prior to the 2014 revision, voter registration boards and election commissions were often separate entities. In 2011, per S.C. Code §7-5-10(A), the Governor appointed board members who were collectively “known as the ‘Board of Registration of County’.” At that time, county election commissions also existed along with an assortment of combined boards, which varied in name by county. Thus, depending on the county in 2012, there may have existed an election commission, a board of registration, or a combined board—with little uniformity for naming such combined boards. For example, in 2012, the following entities existed:

- Registration and Election Commission of Chester County.
- Board of Elections and Voter Registration of Colleton County.
- Registration and Elections Commission for Newberry County.
- Orangeburg County Board of Elections and Registration.
- Board of Election and Registration of Union County.

In Clarendon County, Act 214 of 2012 established the combined “Board of Elections and Voter Registration of Clarendon County.” Figure 6.1 below shows the recent history of the names of voter registration and election bodies in Clarendon County.

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**Figure 6.1: Naming History for Clarendon County’s Election and Voter Registration Bodies, 2011–Current**



Source: Analysis of S.C. Code of Laws

Therefore, numerous election bodies with inconsistent names functioned at the county level across the state prior to 2014. However, since the revision in 2014, S.C. Code §7-5-10(C) standardized these functions and names, declaring that “the previous office of county election commissions, voter registration boards, or combined boards are abolished.” The new naming

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# Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

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convention established in 2014 is current law, and, as stated above, reflects the abolition of previous election bodies.

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## Improper Board Name Used

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The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County did not use proper naming conventions for itself, in violation of applicable law.

In its board meeting agendas and meeting minutes, the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County never referred to itself as the “Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County” from 2023–2024; instead, it used invalid variations of the legally required name. It should be noted that the meeting minutes of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County from April 2025–July 2025 used the correct board title.

Likewise, in its policy manual effective as of September 2023, the Board is referred to incorrectly at least once, although some correct instances exist. Further, in the job description for the director hired by the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County, an incorrect name is used. Finally, the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County used an incorrect name in 13 meeting notices provided to local newspapers. Ultimately, we discovered at least five different versions of its own name in use upon review of the various sources noted above.

According to a county election official, this legal naming requirement was not known. Although the requirement is clearly stated in current law, as indicated above, due to a history of naming practices for public bodies in elections—especially in Clarendon County, where names changed three times in as many years—this could have created confusion. Moreover, State Election Commission (SEC) training courses did not provide adequate guidance to counties on this naming issue: first, in September 2023, January 2024, and January 2025, the SEC’s training entitled “Duties of the Board” did not inform board members of their correct title; second, at a statewide conference of election officials in 2023, SEC training used an incorrect title as the standard for counties.

Using obsolete or incorrect titles may confuse the public and diminish public confidence that the proper authorities as defined by law are carrying out election duties.

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## Recommendations

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25. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should use its legally required title in its meeting agendas, policy manual, job descriptions, and meeting notices provided to local newspapers.
  26. The State Election Commission should provide clear and emphatic guidance on using the correct title of the board in training for board members.

# Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

## Overview of the Board

In 2023 and 2024, the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County, at different times over that period, varied in its member composition. At its smallest point, seven members comprised the board; at its largest point, the board had nine members, which, by statute, is the maximum. Over the same period, the board employed two directors, one of whom served in an interim capacity for two months prior.

The board held 35 meetings over this 2-year period. These meetings involve regular monthly meetings, special-called meetings, a challenge hearing—in which the qualifications of several voters were challenged by an outside entity—and meetings as the Board of Canvassers—in which, by statute, the board’s duty is to certify an election under review, render judgment on any provisional ballots, and offer an opportunity for voting challenges to be heard. Analysis of compliance issues related to all such meetings is provided below. Figure 6.2 below provides an overview of the number and types of meetings of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County in 2023–2024.

**Figure 6.2: Number and Types of Meetings of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County, 2023–2024**

35 Board Meetings 2023 - 2024			
Monthly	A scheduled and recurring meeting as specified in the organization’s bylaws.	Canvassers	A meeting to certify an election under review, render judgment on any provisional ballots, and offer an opportunity for voting challenges to be heard.
Special	A session called to handle specific, important business that cannot wait until the next regular meeting.	Challenge Hearing	A meeting in which formal objections to voter qualifications are addressed.

Source: Analysis of Board Agendas and S.C. Code of Laws

It is important to note that, given that the scope of this audit is 2023–2024, the conduct of the board in 2025 is not directly evaluated. Nevertheless, developments in the board’s composition and at the county office are provided for context. After March 2025, the director left the role, and the deputy director was appointed interim director. Several new board members were also appointed; in fact, as of June 30, 2025, four new board members were appointed, and a new chairman, vice chairman, and secretary were chosen by the body. Likewise, in July 2025, a new director was hired, and the interim director from April–July 2025 returned to the deputy director role.

These developments are provided as informational items and to emphasize that the non-compliance issues detailed below reflect the board’s activities only in 2023 and 2024.

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## Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

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### Agendas Not Posted on Website

The board has not posted all meeting agendas on its website, as required by state law.

In the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), in S.C. Code §30-4-80(A), public bodies are required to post their meeting agendas on a bulletin board in a publicly accessible place at their office or meeting place *and* on a public website maintained by the body, if any, at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. The requirement to post on a website applies only if the public body maintains a website. According to county election officials, neither the board nor the county office maintained a website from 2023–2024. However, using an online resource that provides time-stamped captures of websites, a version of the board’s webpage, with a .gov domain, was captured in May 2024 and showed references to meetings from 2023 posted on this website. For the meetings, we were not able to access links to the meeting agendas, as the website capture resource did not provide distinct captures for them.

The board convened 35 meetings from 2023–2024, including regular, special, challenge, and canvass. Despite the *existence* of a webpage, the board posted only one of its meeting agendas in 2024 on this page. Separately, in the website capture version of the board’s webpage, we discovered links to meeting agendas from January 2023–October 2023; however, as noted above, we were unable to inspect the contents of those links. It is unclear who was responsible for either of these websites.

The board, however, posted many of its meeting agendas on the Clarendon County Administration Facebook page, which the county—rather than the Board of Voter Registration and Elections or Office—administers. However, since Facebook is not considered a public website—a user is allowed to access Facebook only briefly before the site prompts the user to create a private, personal account—these Facebook postings do not satisfy the requirement to post on a public website.

Nonetheless, we reviewed the meeting agendas on Facebook and found that not all were posted. In particular, for 2023 and 2024, of 35 total meetings:

- 25 agendas were posted on Facebook.
- For the 25 meetings that were posted on Facebook, all were posted at least 24 hours in advance.
- 10 meeting agendas were never posted on Facebook.
- 9 of the 10 missing agendas were for Board of Canvassers’ meetings, which are convened to assess provisional ballots and certify an election. None of the canvassers’ meetings were ever posted.

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## Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

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According to county election officials, the board utilized Facebook because the board did not maintain a website in 2023 and 2024; however, as noted above, agendas were occasionally posted on a public website associated with the board in the same period. According to a county election official, challenges prevented the board from setting up its own website. It is ultimately not clear why its own public website was inconsistently used. Regarding canvassers' agendas, according to a county election official, the obligation to post agendas for canvassers' meetings was not known, despite county election officials' attendance at the SEC's FOIA trainings in 2021 and 2024 in which the issue was covered.

Posting all agendas on its own public website—rather than a private social media page—in a timely manner promotes access to and participation in meetings, especially in canvassers' meetings, which impact the counting of voters' ballots. Furthermore, a consistent source of online information will ensure voters are informed about elections and board activities.

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### Agenda Issues with Executive Session

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The board's agendas do not always contain specific purposes for planned executive sessions.

Per S.C. Code §30-4-70, public bodies, including boards of voter registration and elections, may only enter executive session—meetings or portions of meetings closed to the public—for one of the following reasons:

- Discussion of employment matters.
- Discussion of contractual arrangements, purchases, sales, or receipt of legal advice.
- Discussion of security matters.
- Investigative proceedings concerning criminal allegations.
- Discussions of proposed business expansions.

The above-noted reasons are considered “generic purposes”; however, the law further states that a public body must announce the “specific purpose” of its executive session. A specific purpose falls under one of the generic purposes noted above, with the additional descriptors that apply the purpose to the situation for the sake of which the public body proposes to enter executive session. For example, “employment matter” as the reason for entering executive session is merely a generic purpose, while “discussion of the merits of an applicant for director” is a specific purpose.

This understanding of specific purpose expresses FOIA's intention to provide the public with comprehensive knowledge of government activity and has been reiterated by the Supreme Court of South Carolina, for example, in Donohue v. City of North Augusta, 412 S.C. 526, 773 S.E.2d 140 (2015). An SEC training class to counties also discusses FOIA's

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requirements for executive session, and the important difference between generic and specific purposes is an element of the offered training class.

The board included an executive session on its agenda 15 times; however, a specific purpose was noted in only 2 instances. There are nine cases of generic purposes, including the two specific purposes already noted. The six remaining cases did not include any purpose statement. This lack of specific purpose suggests that county election officials may not have fully understood the difference between specific and generic purposes of executive session, even though it was discussed at a recent training class in March 2024 attended by six county election officials.

Indicating a specific purpose for each proposed instance of executive session on the meeting agenda will promote public confidence that the board acts with transparency and only closes its meetings for justified reasons.

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### Agendas Contain Inaccuracies

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The board's agendas do not always include correct information.

Since agendas are official documents of a public body by which the body seeks to inform the public—by showing its intentions and plans for meetings, along with other crucial information, such as members of the body or staff and important dates—agendas should be as accurate as possible.

However, the board's agendas often included erroneous or out-of-date information, such as inaccurate board member names, out-of-date staff titles, and prominent errors. For example, considering attendance records:

- A member who resigned was listed on an agenda months after resignation.
- A member is listed on the agenda three months prior to officially joining the board.
- For several meetings, the meeting minutes show the presence or absence of board members not listed on the agenda.

In terms of office personnel, in one case, a staff member's title is not accurately shown on the agenda.

On four agendas for canvassers' meetings, the date and time of the meeting are missing from the agenda; instead, the date of the election to be canvassed and certified is listed. On one of those agendas, the election under review is incorrectly listed.

According to a county election official, board member statuses were updated as they joined and left the board, and agendas were sent to board members for review prior to posting. However, another county election official suggested that there was not a specific process for ensuring accuracy.

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Therefore, this review process, to the extent that it exists, may not be sufficiently thorough or detailed. Implementing a detailed, multi-party review process may prevent errors on agendas.

Inaccurate information on agendas, such as board member names, staff titles, and dates and events, reduces transparency, prevents public participation, and may weaken the public's trust in the board and its activities. Also, because the validity of provisional ballots is judged at the canvassing and certification hearing, as noted above, inaccurate canvassers' agendas may prevent provisional voters from participating in these hearings.

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## Missing Agenda

The board has not provided agendas for all proposed meetings.

S.C. Code §30-4-80, as noted above, requires agendas for all meetings of public bodies, and these agendas are to be posted on a bulletin board and on the public body's website.

For at least one meeting—June 24, 2024—no agenda was provided online or to us, despite the planning and agreement to a future roundtable discussion at a specific time and date in the board's minutes. No further records of this meeting, whether in the form of an agenda or meeting minutes, have been provided. County election officials did not recall this meeting, and the cause of this issue remains undetermined.

Providing an agenda to the public for all proposed meetings and noting any cancellations of meeting minutes will promote access, trust, and participation from the public.

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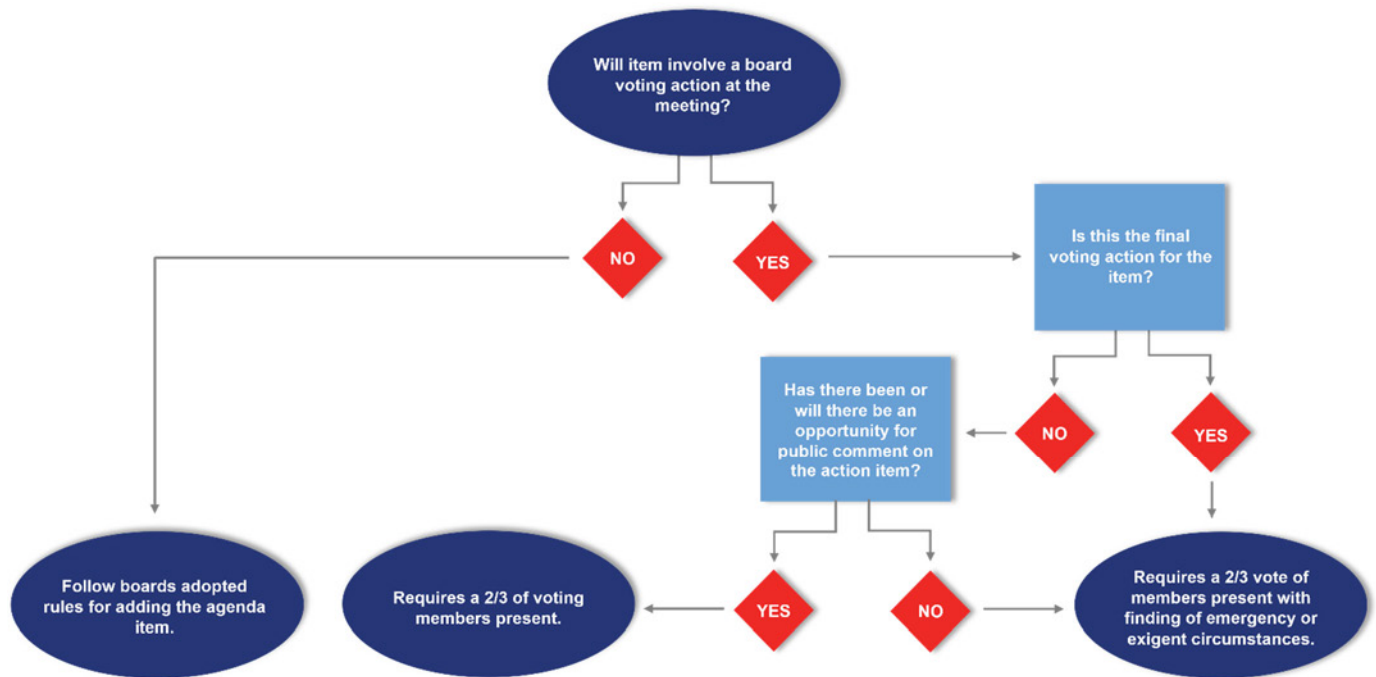
## Prohibited Agenda Changes

The board did not follow its proposed agenda in six instances and did not adhere to the statutorily required process for changing those agendas.

S.C. Code §30-4-80(A), beyond requiring that agendas be posted for the public, also mandates that agendas not be changed sooner than 24 hours prior to the meeting date and time. If, however, a public body seeks to amend its agenda after convening the meeting, it may do so by following the process outlined in statute. That process involves acquiring a 2/3 vote of approval of the members of the public body in favor of the change, and, if final action can be taken on the matter at the meeting *or* if there will not be an opportunity for public comment with prior 24-hour public notice, a 2/3 vote of approval with an emergency finding is required. Figure 6.3 below depicts this process for amending an agenda.

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Figure 6.3: FOIA Requirements for Amending an Agenda



Source: S.C. Code of Laws & Public Official's Guide to Compliance with South Carolina's Freedom of Information Act

Six cases of improper agenda changes existed. In one of the six instances, for the July 24, 2023, meeting, the board's agenda showed an intention to enter executive session; however, the meeting minutes reflect neither the existence of the planned executive session nor a vote to alter the agenda.

The remaining five instances of prohibited agenda changes involved approval of a prior meeting's minutes. In particular:

- At two regular meetings—March 25, 2024 and June 24, 2024—the board did not consider the minutes of all prior meetings indicated on the agenda.
- At two other regular meetings—February 27, 2023 and October 28, 2024—and one special meeting—December 13, 2023—previous meeting minutes were not considered despite their presence on the proposed agendas.

According to county election officials, they were aware, in general, that a motion and vote were required to amend the agenda. County election officials did not recall all of the above instances, but it was suggested that these issues may be due to secretarial oversights. These oversights likely persisted because, according to county election officials, a review process

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for minutes did not consistently exist. Implementing a review process for meeting minutes to ensure accuracy of all minutes—similar to the process suggested above for agendas—may help reduce such errors (see section *Inaccuracies in the Meeting Minutes*). Deviating from proposed agendas without a proper process may reduce accessibility and contributions from the public.

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### Recommendations

27. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should post all of its agendas on its website, according to state law.
28. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should ensure that all executive sessions include a proper specific purpose on agendas, according to state law.
29. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should implement a review process for agendas to ensure accuracy and clarity of agenda materials, according to state law.
30. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should ensure that agendas for all of its proposed meetings, even informal ones, are created, available, and posted, according to state law.
31. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should adhere to statutory requirements for agenda changes after a meeting begins.

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# Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

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## Missing Minutes and Other Records

Some meeting minutes and records of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County were not available for inspection.

Per S.C. Code §§30-4-20(c), 30-4-30(A)(1), and 30-4-30(D)(1)–(4), the past six months of meeting minutes of the boards of voter registrations and elections are public records and should be readily available for public inspection. The same standard applies to copies of director’s reports, which are delivered at meetings by the director of the voter registration and elections office. While only the last six months of meeting minutes and associated documents are to be readily available, records beyond the six-month period should be permanently kept and made available to the public through a formal FOIA request. Furthermore, because meeting minutes serve as an official record of the board’s actions, maintaining complete records may also protect the board in disputed cases.

We requested all meeting minutes and other meeting-related documents of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County between calendar years 2023–2024. Considering 35 total meetings in 2023–2024, meeting minutes for 2 meetings—October 23, 2023 and September 27, 2024—were not available for inspection. The September 27, 2024 meeting minutes were within six months of the request. Furthermore, a copy of a director’s report was not available for one meeting—November 27, 2023.

County election officials were not aware of this issue, and the underlying cause of the missing meeting minutes, per those officials, is unclear. However, in the case of the missing director’s report, this may be due to staff turnover, as the director did not hand out a copy of the report at the meeting and soon thereafter left the role. Implementing a procedure to ensure all meeting minutes and other meeting-related documents are properly retained will likely minimize obstacles the public may have in understanding the board’s actions. Furthermore, since the meeting minutes are official records, properly maintaining minutes may protect the board in a legal proceeding.

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## Issues with Quorum

The meeting minutes of the board did not always indicate that the meeting achieved quorum.

S.C. Code §30-4-90(a)(2) requires that meeting minutes indicate the presence or absence of all members of the public body. Furthermore, according to S.C. Code §30-4-20(e), quorum—the number of members of a public body that must be present for a meeting to occur—is defined as a “simple majority of the constituent membership of a public body.” Simple majority is one more than half of the members; for example, in an eight-member board, quorum would be reached when five members are present. Recording the presence or absence of all members in meeting minutes is essential for determining if a public body has achieved a quorum. Because the achievement of quorum is required for a meeting to occur, it is important to ensure that the meeting minutes reflect that quorum existed.

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For the meeting minutes of the board, only one of its meeting minutes—December 5, 2024—in 2023–2024 indicated that a quorum existed. The board did regularly note the presence or absence of members at meetings, and, therefore, the existence of quorum may be inferred in those instances. However, in the meetings for which minutes are missing, whether a quorum was achieved remains uncertain, and one further instance—a canvassers’ hearing on February 29, 2024—did not indicate that a quorum existed and did not account for all members, thereby leaving in doubt quorum, the existence of a meeting (as defined by law), and the actions taken on this occasion.

Some county election officials were aware that minutes should note the existence of quorum; however, the board’s secretary—whose responsibility included creating the minutes—may have been unaware of the requirement, and the oversight was never corrected due to the board’s inadequate review of its meeting minutes. Ensuring all board members, especially the secretary, are aware of quorum and meeting minutes requirements can correct any knowledge deficiencies, and implementing a detailed review process for meeting minutes will promote the practical application of this knowledge to meet FOIA requirements. Failure to indicate quorum in its meeting minutes may leave the public in doubt as to whether a meeting occurred, especially in cases where the presence or absence of all members is not noted, which may, in turn, create doubts as to the validity of actions taken.

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### Minutes Lack Sufficient Detail on Board Actions

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The board did not always provide sufficient details in its meeting minutes regarding its actions.

S.C. Code §30-4-90 requires public bodies to record meeting minutes for each meeting and to include specific information in those meetings. The required specific information includes:

- Date, time, and place of meeting.
- Members recorded as present or absent.
- The substance of all matters discussed, decided, and, at a member’s request, individual votes taken.
- Any other information a member of the body requests.

The results of motions—board decisions—were not always indicated in the case of each motion. Specifically:

- 73% of motion results—whether a motion passed or not—were indicated in the meeting minutes. This means that no public record exists for the results of over 25% of the board’s actions.

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Furthermore, motions to approve agendas, as board decisions, were sometimes missing from the record; in particular:

- A regular and a special meeting did not include an approval of the agenda.
- Except in one case, all available canvassers' meetings lacked agenda approvals.

Further motions involving board decisions were missing as well. First, for matters related to election certification, the board did not always indicate its decisions of accepting and rejecting provisional ballots—a hand-marked ballot used when a voter's eligibility to vote is challenged and is to be considered by the board at its canvassing hearing—in the meeting minutes. For instance, in the meeting minutes for April 4, 2024, in which elections for the Town of Summerton and the City of Manning were under review, the meeting minutes read as follows: "Certification was completed and approved." No further indications are present as to the existence of provisional ballots or, if any existed, how many were accepted or rejected. In other cases, the meetings minutes contained a note to "see attached," referencing attached reports that present only accepted provisional ballots (and total rejected ballots thus remain unknown) or that provided no insight into certification status.

In two further cases in which elections are under review, no motion existed to indicate which election was certified. For instance, in the same meeting on April 4, 2024 noted above, no motion is recorded in the meeting minutes to certify the elections under review. In another meeting on May 15, 2024—in which elections for the Town of Summerton and Town of Paxville were reviewed—the minutes do not contain any statement about certification. Since two elections were under review in each of these meetings, the meeting minutes should clearly indicate that both elections were certified. Likewise, in the certification hearing for the November 2024 General Election, the minutes only indicated that the "election was certified," but any motions that existed in reaching this result are missing. Finally, in one case, a motion did not exist to establish a planned roundtable discussion.

Due to the SEC's trainings on FOIA and conducting meetings provided to the county's board members in 2021, 2023, and 2024, the board was aware of FOIA requirements. However, given that board members were unsure if the board adopted any parliamentary procedure, this lack of a definitive procedural guide may have contributed to such issues. Adopting and adhering to a specific parliamentary procedure and instituting a detailed review process for meeting minutes may improve the public's knowledge of the board's actions and allow for an official, complete, and accurate account of the board's actions.

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# Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

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## Record of Executive Sessions

The board did not always correctly record executive sessions in its meeting minutes.

As noted above (see section *Agenda Issues with Executive Session*), public bodies may only enter executive sessions for specific purposes, and these specific purposes must be noted in the meeting minutes. Furthermore, S.C. Code §30-4-70 requires the following for executive sessions:

- A vote to enter executive session should be taken in public.
- If the vote passes, the specific purpose(s) should be announced.
- The only action taken in executive session should be to adjourn or return to public session.

Because state law also requires meeting minutes to reflect the “substance of all matters proposed, discussed or decided,” the law requires noting the specific purposes, the successful vote to enter, and the indication of non-action in executive session. SEC training and state Attorney General opinions also advise disclosure in cases of doubt.

The board, according to its minutes, entered executive session 14 times in the 35 meetings considered. Of those 14 instances, the meeting minutes indicate:

- 12 votes taken for entry into executive session.
- 10 results of votes taken for entry into executive session.
- 2 specific purposes for entry into executive session.
- 5 statements of non-action in executive session.

Considering all the elements noted above, only 2 of the 14 executive sessions were fully compliant—that is, only 2 contained an indication of votes taken, results of votes taken, specific purpose, and statement of non-action. Finally, the minutes record the following in one instance: “The legal matter taken into executive session was declined to resolve it as proposed.” This language suggests a violation of the rule that the only permissible action within executive session is the act of adjourning executive session.

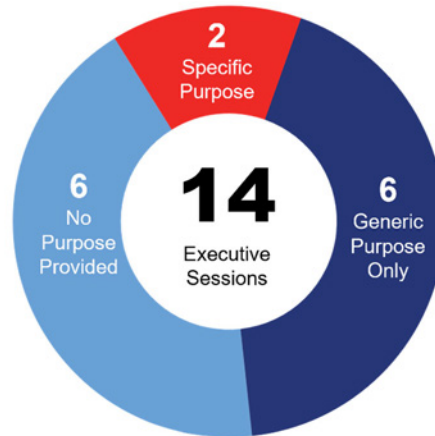
As previously noted (see section *Agenda Issues with Executive Session*), a public body may only enter an executive session for specific purposes rather than a merely generic purpose. Figure 6.4 below provides a breakdown of how many and in what ways executive sessions were noted in meeting minutes.

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**Figure 6.4: Breakdown of Executive Sessions of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County, 2023-2024**



Source: Analysis of Clarendon County Board Meetings

Although 7 board members attended the SEC’s trainings in 2024 on meetings and minutes and 6 attended a similar training in 2024 on FOIA, based on survey responses from several county election officials, it appears that the board did not sufficiently understand the true nature of a specific purpose for executive session. The other procedural issues were likely due to poor recording of minutes and insufficient review of the minutes by the board. By contrast, in a meeting for which the board hired a third-party transcriptionist, the executive session was in full compliance, suggesting that the board may have been adhering to FOIA in practice but not consistently documenting this fact in its minutes. Improperly entering executive sessions and poorly documenting them in meeting minutes may weaken public confidence in the board’s transparency and commitment to open meetings.

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## Compliance with External Requestors Not Noted in Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes of the board did not include indications of compliance with external requestor requirements.

S.C. Code §30-4-80(E) requires public bodies to notify persons and external organizations, including news media, who may request times, dates, places, and agendas of public meetings. The same statute further requires public bodies to indicate the body’s efforts to comply with this requirement in its meeting minutes. FOIA’s requirement is not merely that media should be notified but also that the public should be informed in the meeting minutes that that this notification occurred.

While it is unclear if any external organizations made these requests of the board, none of its meeting minutes indicated its efforts to comply with this requirement.

According to county election officials, the media was made aware of each meeting, but it seems likely that the board, despite recent FOIA trainings,

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were unaware of this requirement to note in meeting minutes that the media had been notified. Indicating its compliance with FOIA requirements for external requestors in its meeting minutes will promote public confidence that news media and other interested parties have access to the board's meetings.

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### Inaccuracies in the Meeting Minutes

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The board's meeting minutes did not always contain accurate information.

According to S.C. Code §30-4-90, meetings minutes are official public records of public bodies and are meant to document the actions of those bodies with sufficient detail and truth. As such, while occasional trivial errors may occur, public bodies should avoid inaccuracies, especially concerning matters of substance.

The board's meeting minutes included several inaccuracies. First, total provisional ballots did not match the totals that county staff manually entered into the voter registration and election management system. At a canvassing hearing, all provisional ballots are considered, and, upon review of evidence, are accepted or rejected. The accepted ballots are then placed into a scanner and officially counted; the total rejected and accepted ballots are later entered into the voter registration and election management system, from which a user can generate a provisional report. While scanner totals for the various elections considered do not differ from the totals indicated in the minutes, the system's totals and totals from meeting minutes sometimes vary.

For example, in the 2024 November General, meeting minutes indicated that the board considered 44 total ballots, accepted 20 ballots, and rejected 24. The scanner count of accepted ballots was 20 ballots, which matched the minutes total. However, the provisional report in the management system, for the same election, showed 23 total ballots: 19 accepted and 4 rejected. In this case, either the meeting minutes, the provisional report, or some element of both is inaccurate. A similar issue occurred for two other elections.

Furthermore, corrections made to prior meeting minutes are not always shown in the minutes that reflect the official record. While some of these details are not significant—such as who delivered the invocation—others are more significant, such as three meeting minutes that provided excuses for members' absences or one set of minutes that addressed training requirements for voting machine programmers.

As for the oaths, in Board of Canvassers' meeting minutes, oaths are not always depicted as delivered to all members. It is not clear if oaths were, in fact, not sworn by all members or merely if records of such oaths were omitted from the minutes.

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## Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

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Regarding the provisionals issue, the underlying cause may be that, since the county immediately scanned accepted provisional ballots during its certification hearing, data entry issues in the voter registration and election management system resulted in discrepancies in the accepted total amount. In fact, according to a county election official, the county office does not have a data verification process in place to ensure accuracy. If data entry issues are the cause of the noted discrepancies—and, therefore, minutes are accurate—then voters are not receiving correct participation records in the management system, which provides records that are searchable online. However, because the board does not have a detailed review process in place, the meeting minutes may also have contained inaccuracies. Instituting a detailed review of meeting minutes, with special attention to provisional totals, may help the board resolve this issue. Likewise, implementation of a two-person data verification system at the county office will improve accuracy of entries into the voter registration and election management system.

Regarding the corrections issue, while the exact cause is not known, these issues may be due to secretarial oversights and insufficient review by the board prior to approving meeting minutes. Ensuring that prior minutes are corrected through a similar review process—involving both board and county staff—will help ensure that prior minutes are updated and accurate.

Regarding the oaths issue, given that oaths are often shown as delivered to all members and thus that all board members habitually follow this protocol, those meeting minutes in which not all board members swear the oaths are likely oversights in the meeting minutes. Implementing a thorough review process of meeting minutes to ensure that appropriate details are included will resolve this issue.

Maintaining accurate meeting minutes will promote the board's transparency and accountability to the public for actions taken.

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## Chapter 6: Board Member Responsibilities

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### Recommendations

32. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should implement a review process for meeting minutes and other public records to ensure proper record retention.
33. The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should include the specified review process for meeting minutes in the office's policy manual to ensure compliance regardless of staff turnover.
34. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should implement a formal review process for meeting minutes to ensure that minutes:
  - Indicate the existence of quorum.
  - Show the results of motions.
  - Adhere to parliamentary procedure for motions.
  - Provide proper specific purposes for executive sessions.
  - Indicate that external requestors were notified.
35. The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should establish a formal review process for its meeting minutes that includes attention to provisional voter counts, corrections to past minutes, and indications of oaths sworn.
36. The Clarendon County Voter Registration and Elections Office should develop procedures, such as two-person validation, to ensure that data entry is complete and accurate for provisional voters.

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# Appendix A: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

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The State Election Commission (SEC) was asked by a member of the South Carolina General Assembly to conduct an audit of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County. The requestor asked us to conduct this audit pursuant to S.C. Code §7-3-20(D)(3).

This audit was requested in order to ensure the county office was compliant with the requirements of applicable state or federal law and SEC policies, procedures, or standardized processes regarding the conduct of elections or the voter registration process by all persons involved in the elections process.

## AUDIT OBJECTIVES

- Determine if absentee ballots for elections in June 2024 and November 2024 were issued and accepted in accordance with state law and SEC policy.
- Determine if ballot reconciliation worksheets for elections between June 2024 through January 2025 were adequately completed and reconciled.
- Review the process for obtaining poll clerks and managers for elections over the past two years.
- Determine if voting equipment contracts over the last two years were in compliance with state law.
- Determine whether the board has adhered to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act as it relates to its meetings.
- Determine whether the board and its members have adhered to Title 7 requirements in the S.C. Code of Laws.

The period of our review was generally calendar years 2023–2024 with consideration of later periods when relevant. To conduct this audit, we used a variety of sources of evidence, including:

- Federal and state laws.
- SEC policies, procedures, and forms.
- County election policies, procedures, and forms.
- Voter Registration and Election Management System data.
- Election results and voter participation data.
- Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County agendas and minutes.
- Clarendon County Board of Canvassers agendas and minutes.
- SEC training materials and records.
- Interviews with current and former Clarendon County staff and board members.

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## Appendix A: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

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- Communication with county election officials across the state.
- Interviews with SEC employees.
- Communication with interested parties.

Criteria were based on federal and state law and SEC policies, procedures, and recommended best practices.

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## Appendix B: Clarendon County Office Comments

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No Comment.

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# Appendix C: Clarendon County Board Comments

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## **BOARD MEMBERS**

EDWARD GAMBLE III (CHAIRMAN)  
BRIAN MAGAW SR (VICE CHAIRMAN)  
MARY J. ARDIS (INTERIM SECRETARY)  
ANDREA KILLMAN  
LANETTE SAMUELS-COOPER  
MICHAEL STREATH  
DELTON MCALLISTER  
JAMES PIERSON JR.

# BOARD OF VOTER REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS OF CLARENDON COUNTY

3 SOUTH CHURCH STREET  
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TELEPHONE (803) 435-8215 / FAX (803) 435-9074

## **STAFF**

ROBERT L. ADAMS  
DIRECTOR

ALFREDA LANGHORNE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

CLAUDIA WHITE  
CLERK

April 24, 2026

South Carolina State Election Commission  
Suite 500  
1122 Lady Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Greetings:

We are in receipt of the April 2026 "A Limited Review of Clarendon County Voter Registration and Elections" audit. The audit period covers 2024 through January 2025. It should be noted that the longest serving of the eight current Board members were appointed in March 2025 with the shortest serving having been appointed within the last month. As requested, after review, these are the final comments from the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County (BVR&ECC) regarding the above-mentioned audit according to the applicable numbers from Appendix E:

17 The BVR&ECC will list in the agenda for its next regularly scheduled meeting a recommendation to be voted upon by the members present to approve a policy that all poll manager, poll clerk, and any other poll worker training reimbursement requests for all elections be made by the BVR&ECC based on the proper, complete, and accurate documented training records for each individual poll worker. If proper, complete, and accurate training records for any poll manager, poll clerk, or any other poll worker for an election are not provided to the BVR&ECC by the staff of the BVR&ECC then said poll worker is not approved for a training reimbursement request until such time as the required training documentation can be provided to the BVR&ECC.

25 The BVR&ECC began to use its legally required title in June 2025 well before this audit was made known to it.

27 The BVR&ECC has a specific link to its webpage for its Agendas and Minutes on the Clarendon County website. The URL for this link is currently <https://www.clarendoncountysc.gov/our-government/bvrecc-agendas-and-minutes/>

28 On May 6, 2025, the current BVR&ECC began to ensure that in accordance with state law all its executive sessions include a proper specific purpose on agendas.

29 Since June 2025 the BVR&ECC Officers (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary or Interim Secretary) have reviewed agendas to ensure the accuracy and clarity of agenda materials before publication in accordance with SC state law. To ensure this practice continues the BVR&ECC will list in the agenda for its next regularly scheduled meeting a recommendation to be voted upon by the members present to approve an official BVR&ECC policy stating that it is the responsibility of all BVR&ECC officers to ensure the accuracy and clarity of agenda materials before publication in accordance with SC state law.

30 See #27 and #29 comments.

31 Since May 6, 2025, and before the BVR&ECC was made privy to this audit the BVR&ECC began adhering to statutory requirements for agenda changes after a meeting begins.

32 The BVR&ECC will list in the agenda for its next regularly scheduled meeting a recommendation to be voted upon by the members present to approve the formation of a standing committee named the Public Records Committee (PRC). The PRC shall be responsible for reviewing all meeting minutes including but not limited to regular meeting minutes, special called meeting minutes, Board of Canvassers meeting minutes, and special called emergency meeting minutes. This standing committee, which will refine the procedures already in place by our current Board, shall be responsible to ensure that all meetings' minutes adhere to the following standards at a minimum:

- Indicate the existence of quorum.
- Show the results of all motions.
- Adhere to parliamentary procedure for motions.
- Provide proper specific purposes for executive sessions.
- Indicate that external requestors were notified.
- Ensure that Board of Canvassers minutes include provisional voter counts.
- Ensure that all necessary oaths sworn are included (member oaths and voter oaths).

The PRC shall also be responsible for recommending to the BVR&ECC any corrections that may need to be made to past minutes. While the Secretary or other officers may be involved in creating any meetings' minutes, the PRC shall be responsible for reviewing all meeting minutes before they are voted on for approval by the BVR&ECC. The PRC will need a copy of the rough draft of any meeting minutes to be voted upon by the Monday preceding the meeting in which the minutes will be recommended for approval by the BVR&ECC.

The PRC shall also be responsible for assisting the BVR&ECC in ensuring that all meetings' minutes and other public records from the BVR&ECC are available according to proper record retention guidelines.

34 See #32.

35 See #32.

South Carolina State Election Commission  
Suite 500  
1122 Lady Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201  
Page 3 of 3

This Board thanks the SEC for the work each of you has done in investigating and completing the audit, and for allowing us the opportunity to submit our comments and thoughts. I can assure you this Board does not take lightly the authority granted to it by law, and we have, since day one, done everything within our power to increase transparency, accountability, and customer service, as we work to regain and increase the confidence of the voters of Clarendon County.

Sincerely,



J. Edward Gamble III as Chairman

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# Appendix D: State Election Commission Comments

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Page 9

- Agree with recommendations in Items 1 and 2.

Page 26

- Agree with recommendations in Items 9 and 11.

Page 43

- Agree with recommendations in Items 15 and 16.

Page 66

- Agree with recommendation 22.

Page 73

- Agree with recommendation 26.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

**COMMISSIONERS**

ROBERT BOLCHOZ  
Chairman

JOANNE DAY

CLIFFORD J. EDLER

SCOTT MOSELEY

ANGELA STRINGER

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Conway Belangia  
Executive Director

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## Appendix E: Recommendations

Rec #	The Clarendon County Office of Voter Registration and Elections should:	Page
1	<p>ensure that the proper oaths are signed by all voting machine custodians, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone who performs maintenance on voting machines.</li> <li>• Anyone who prepares voting machines.</li> <li>• Anyone with access to the central workstation computer.</li> <li>• Anyone who delivers voting machines.</li> <li>• Polling location technicians.</li> </ul>	9
3	<p>review applicable State Election Commission trainings to ensure they reflect absentee process rules, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate request methods for applications for absentee ballots.</li> <li>• Proper methods of issuing and receiving absentee ballots.</li> </ul>	25
4	<p>implement a data integrity system, such as two-person review and verification, for each stage of the absentee process to ensure that data entry is accurate.</p>	25
6	<p>ensure with an internal review process that all authorized representative forms are present for every voter who requests his application using an authorized representative.</p>	25
7	<p>implement a two-person data review system to ensure it only issues and accepts ballots via methods that are in accordance with state law.</p>	26
8	<p>ensure that all authorization to return absentee ballot forms are present and complete.</p>	26
10	<p>only accept completed ballot envelopes and, in particular, only those that contain complete addresses.</p>	26
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record all rejected ballots in the voter registration and election management system.</li> <li>• Reject only ballots that are missing required elements.</li> <li>• Document such rejection reasons accurately on “Attention” envelopes and in the voter registration and election management system.</li> </ul>	26
13	<p>provide all requested materials to the State Election Commission upon request.</p>	26
14	<p>train more individuals to serve as backup poll managers if unforeseen circumstances prevent scheduled poll managers from working.</p>	33
18	<p>ensure that poll clerks are assigned on the basis of polling location rather than precinct.</p>	44
19	<p>ensure that unpermitted non-voters leave the vehicle while a curbside voter completes the voting process.</p>	47
20	<p>ensure it uses the paper poll list only in circumstances where a voter cannot be checked in on the electronic pollbook or should be added manually.</p>	61

## Appendix E: Recommendations

21	ensure it uses the curbside paper poll list for all curbside voters.	61
23	provide enhanced training to its poll clerks and managers on the responsibility to complete the provisional ballot envelope and how to complete said envelope.	70
24	enhance its poll manager training to ensure only the voter signs the voter's oath unless the voter requests assistance.	70
33	include the specified review process for meeting minutes in the office's policy manual to ensure compliance regardless of staff turnover.	88
36	develop procedures, such as two-person validation, to ensure that data entry is complete and accurate for provisional voters.	88

Rec #	The Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Clarendon County should:	Page
17	extend its segregation of duties requirement to apply to approving poll manager training reimbursement requests made to the State Election Commission. Approvals should be based on documented training records.	43
25	use its legally required title in its meeting agendas, policy manual, job descriptions, and meeting notices provided to local newspapers.	73
27	post all of its agendas on its website, according to state law.	80
28	ensure that all executive sessions include a proper specific purpose on agendas, according to state law.	80
29	implement a review process for agendas to ensure accuracy and clarity of agenda materials, according to state law.	80
30	ensure that agendas for all of its proposed meetings, even informal ones, are created, available, and posted, according to state law.	80
31	adhere to statutory requirements for agenda changes after a meeting begins.	80
32	implement a review process for meeting minutes and other public records to ensure proper record retention.	88
34	implement a formal review process for meeting minutes to ensure that minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicate the existence of quorum.</li> <li>• Show the results of motions.</li> <li>• Adhere to parliamentary procedure for motions.</li> <li>• Provide proper specific purposes for executive sessions.</li> <li>• Indicate that external requestors were notified.</li> </ul>	88

## Appendix E: Recommendations

35	establish a formal review process for its meeting minutes that includes attention to provisional voter counts, corrections to past minutes, and indications of oaths sworn.	88
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Rec #	South Carolina Election Commission should:	Page
2	ensure county offices are notified of the election official oaths policy, which includes definitions and requirements for individuals who must take the oath as voting machine custodians.	9
5	enlarge selection areas for entering absentee ballot request methods in the voter registration and election management system to avoid inaccurate selections by users. The system should also warn users of impermissible selections in its voter registration and election management system.	25
9	update the authorization to return absentee ballot form's instructions to include the required elements of a complete address.	26
11	update its return-addressed absentee ballot envelope <i>instructions</i> to define "complete address" clearly.	26
15	provide in writing a clear policy that defines the purpose and scope of additional training classes and the documentation requirements for additional training class reimbursements.	43
16	implement a review process that evaluates requests for additional training class reimbursements and ensures such requests match class attendance records.	43
22	require that the paper poll list indicate daily breakdowns of signatures to provide greater clarity on total signatures for each day. This daily breakdown should also account for days in which no voters sign the paper poll list.	66
26	provide clear and emphatic guidance on using the correct title of the board in training for board members.	73