

**WEST VIRGINIA
SECRETARY OF STATE
NATALIE E. TENNANT
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW DIVISION**

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OFFICE WEST VIRGINIA
SECRETARY OF STATE

Form #6

**NOTICE OF FINAL FILING AND ADOPTION OF A LEGISLATIVE RULE AUTHORIZED
BY THE WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

AGENCY: WEST VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF STATE TITLE NUMBER: 153

AMENDMENT TO AN EXISTING RULE: YES NO

IF YES, SERIES NUMBER OF RULE BEING AMENDED: 20

TITLE OF RULE BEING AMENDED: PROCEDURES FOR RECOUNT OF ELECTON

RESULTS

IF NO, SERIES NUMBER OF RULE BEING PROPOSED: _____

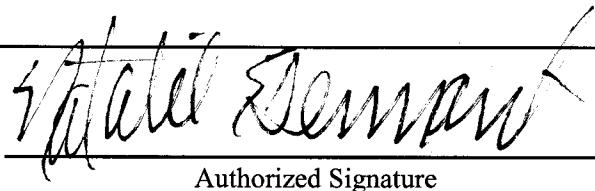
TITLE OF RULE BEING PROPOSED: _____

THE ABOVE RULE HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED BY THE WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE.

AUTHORIZATION IS CITED IN (house or senate bill number) SB 199

SECTION §64-9-11(a), PASSED ON 3-14-2015

THIS RULE IS FILED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE. THIS RULE BECOMES EFFECTIVE ON THE
FOLLOWING DATE: JUNE 1, 2015



Authorized Signature

TITLE 153
LEGISLATIVE RULE
SECRETARY OF STATE

SERIES 20

PROCEDURES FOR RECOUNT OF ELECTION RESULTS

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OFFICE WEST VIRGINIA
SECRETARY OF STATE

§153-20-1. General.

1.1. Scope -- This rule details procedures for the board of canvassers for completing a recount of results of elections conducted with paper ballots or electronically tabulated ballots, including optical scan ballots.

1.2. Authority. -- W. Va. Code §3-1A-6.

1.3. Filing Date. -- April 10, 2015.

1.4. Effective Date. -- June 1, 2015.

§153-20-2. Definitions.

2.1. "Board of canvassers" or "board" means:

2.1.a. The county commission of each county for any statewide primary, general or special election held throughout the county, and for any other election conducted in conjunction with a statewide election using the same precincts and election officials;

2.1.b. The county commission of the affected county for any special election ordered by the Commission and held throughout all or part of that county, and for any other election conducted in conjunction with that county election using the same precincts and election officials and for any special levy or bond election ordered by the county board of education or other governing board or a special election ordered by the county board of education or other governing board and not held in conjunction with any other election conducted by the county commission; or

2.1.c. The municipal governing body for any primary, general or special election conducted by the municipal governing body entirely within the city and not held in conjunction with any county or state election.

2.2. "Recount" means the proceeding required by W. Va. Code §3-6-9 in which the tally of votes recorded for a specific elected office or on a specific issue in an election is reviewed by counting a second time the ballots containing votes for that office or issue, correcting and officially recording the results.

2.3. "Election" means any primary, general or special election held under the provisions of the West Virginia Code throughout the state or any of its political subdivisions.

2.4. "Electronically tabulated ballots" means ballots authorized under the provisions of W. Va. Code §3-4A-1 et seq., including those ballots referred to as optical scan ballots, which are counted by means of electronic scanners or readers.

2.5. "Paper ballots" means ballots authorized under the provisions of W. Va. Code §3-1-1 et seq. which are counted by hand.

2.6. "Hand-count" means a manual review and tabulation of ballots, electronically tabulated ballots, or voter-verified paper ballots, by deputized counting and recording teams.

2.7. "Voter-verified paper ballot" means a physical printout on which the voter's ballot choices, as registered by a direct recording device, are recorded, and has the same definition as "voter verified paper audit trail" in W.Va. State Code §3-4A-2(8).

2.8. "Immediate family" means parent, child, sibling, or spouse.

§153-20-3. Requesting a Recount.

3.1. The person requesting a recount for an elected office must be a candidate for the elected office in which the recount is requested. The person requesting a recount for a special issue election must be a voter of the jurisdiction of the election.

3.1.a. The request for a recount shall include all precincts covered by that election unless the person filing the request specifies otherwise.

3.1.b. If the candidate filing the request specifies only specific precincts to be recounted, that candidate cannot afterwards add other precincts to the list to be recounted.

3.1.c. The person filing the request, or preserving his or her right to demand a continuation of the recount, may specify precincts which are not to be hand-counted. Any precinct recounted which was not to be hand-counted, will be recounted by processing the votes as required by W.Va. Code §§3-4A-27 and 3-6-9.

3.2. A candidate shall make a request for recount within forty-eight (48) hours after the canvass. The forty-eight-hour (48) period begins when the board of canvassers publicly declares the results of the election. For offices filled by the voters of more than one county, the forty-eight (48) hours begins when the last of the counties voting for the office declares the results. Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays are excluded when computing the forty-eight-hour (48) period.

3.2.a. A candidate shall make the request in writing to the county clerk who shall present the request to the board.

3.2.b. The recount request of an elected office shall state the name of the candidate making the request, the elected office for which the recount is requested, the precincts which the candidate is requesting to be recounted, and which recounted precincts need not be hand-counted.

3.2.c. The recount request for an issue shall state the voter's name and address and the precincts in which the recount is requested.

3.2.d. The person requesting a recount must furnish bond in an amount sufficient to pay for the cost and expenses of the recount if the results do not change. The recount bond shall be set as described in section 4.7 of this rule.

3.3. The board shall give notice of the recount to candidates who filed for the same elected office as the one in which a recount has been requested or the governing board that officially requested the special issues election in which a recount has been requested according to the provisions of section 5 of this rule.

3.4. Candidates who filed for the same elected office as one in which a recount has been requested or the governing board that officially requested the special issues election in which a recount has been requested may preserve their right to demand a recount of precincts not recounted in the original recount request or to have the recount continued and completed should the candidate or voter initiating the recount request stop the recount.

3.4.a. The candidate shall file the request to preserve the right to recount in writing to the county clerk who will present the request to the board. This request must be filed within twenty-four (24) hours from the time the notice of recount is served. Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays are excluded when computing the twenty-four (24) hour period.

3.4.b. The request to preserve the right to recount shall state the name of the candidate(s) or of the governing board filing the request to preserve the right to recount and the intention to preserve the right to request the recount of precincts not originally requested by the initiating candidate or to continue the recount should the initiating candidate or voter stop the recount.

3.4.c. The candidate(s) or the governing board filing the request to preserve the right to recount shall furnish bond in an amount sufficient to pay for any recount cost incurred by request for a continuation of the recount or a recount of additional precincts. The bond must be the same amount as the bond required of the original candidate or voter requesting the recount.

§153-20-4. Preparation.

4.1. If a recount is requested, the governing body constituting the board of canvassers shall certify the results for all offices and issues not subject to the recount at the end of the forty-eight (48) hour period following the declaration.

4.2. The clerk of the county commission for recounts conducted by the county commission or the municipal clerk or recorder for recounts conducted by the municipal governing body, shall assist the board.

4.3. The officers having custody of the materials of the election shall bring before the board at the appropriate time the paper ballots, the electronically tabulated ballots and the record of the tally of votes

for all election precincts.

4.4. For a recount conducted by the county commission, the canvass shall be held at the county courthouse or designated annex.

4.5. For a recount conducted by a municipal governing body, the recount shall be held at city hall.

4.6. Employees of the county commission or county clerk may assist or other persons may be employed to assist in the recount.

4.6.a. No candidate or member of his or her immediate family may assist in the recount.

4.6.b. No member of a governing board which requested a special issue election or any member of a board member's immediate family may assist in the recount.

4.6.c. No voter requesting the recount of a special issue election or member of his or her immediate family may assist in the recount.

4.6.d. All persons participating in the recount proceedings shall work in teams of two (2) persons of opposite political parties, shall be deputized in writing and shall take an oath that they will faithfully perform their duties.

4.6.e. All procedures shall be conducted under the supervision of a quorum of the board.

4.7. The board shall set the amount of bond for a recount "in a reasonable amount with good sufficient surety" but not to exceed three-hundred dollars (\$300.00). The recount bond amount shall be determined during the canvass procedures before any recount request is received.

4.7.a. The bond may be a cash, personal property or other bond.

4.7.b. The costs of the recount shall be paid by the candidate or voter initiating the recount, so long as it continues at his or her request. However, if the outcome of the election is reversed at the conclusion of the recount, the canvassing board shall not assess costs to the candidate or voter requesting the recount.

4.7.c. If the initiating candidate pulls ahead during the recount and stops the recount, the responsibility for costs incurred after that time then shifts to the candidate requesting the continuation, but only if the outcome is not again reversed.

4.7.d. If a recount of a special issue requested by a voter reverses its outcome during the recount and the voter stops the recount, the responsibility for costs incurred after that time then shifts to the governing board requesting the continuation, but only if the outcome is not again reversed.

4.8. The board shall immediately schedule a date for the recount to begin and shall prepare the proper recount notices to be served on each of the other candidates in the elected office in which the recount has been requested or to the governing board that officially requested the special issue election in which the recount has been requested and at the door of the place where the recount is to be held.

§153-20-5. Notification of Recount.

5.1. The recount notice shall be served in the forty-eight (48) hour period beginning at the end of the recount request period.

5.1.a. The recount notice shall state the date, time and place of the recount.

5.1.b. The recount notice shall advise candidates who did not request a recount that, in order to preserve their right to continue the recount when stopped, notice preserving their right must be filed within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of service of the recount notice.

5.1.c. The date may not be sooner than three (3) days after the recount notice is delivered.

5.2. The recount notice shall be delivered by the sheriff of the county or the sheriff's designee.

5.2.a. The recount notice shall be delivered to the candidate in person or to the members of the governing board that officially requested a special issue election in person.

5.2.b. If a candidate or member of the governing board is not found to receive the recount notice in person, the notice may be given to the spouse of the candidate or a governing board member or to some

other family member over the age of sixteen (16) found at the usual place of residence of the candidate or of a governing board member.

5.2.c. If the notice is given to a person other than the candidate or a governing board member, the sheriff or the sheriff's designee shall inform the person receiving the notice of its purpose and meaning.

5.2.d. If the candidate or a governing board member or appropriate family member is not found to receive the notice, it shall be posted on the front door of the usual place of residence of the candidate or governing board member.

5.2.e. The sheriff or the sheriff's designee who delivers the notice shall record how, to whom and the time each notice is delivered.

5.2.f. If the candidate or a governing board member does not have a usual place of residence in the county where the recount notice is being served, the recount notice shall be delivered to the sheriff of the county in which the candidate or governing board member to be served does have a usual place of residence. The sheriff of that county shall serve the recount notice in the same manner as provided in this section.

5.3. For recount requests of a special issue election, the board shall also post a notice of the recount on the door of the office where the recount is to be held.

§153-20-6. Conducting the Recount.

6.1. A quorum of the board of canvassers shall be present at all times during the recount of the ballots and the recount shall be conducted under their supervision.

6.1.a. If a quorum of the board of canvassers is not present, the recount shall stand adjourned until the next business day.

6.1.b. If the recount cannot be completed in one day, the board shall adjourn until the next business day, and so on from day to day until the recount is completed and the results declared.

6.2. The candidate or officially designated representative or voter or officially designated representative initially requesting a recount as well as the candidate(s) or officially designated representative or governing board or a member's officially designated representative who preserve their right to participate in the recount and a reasonable number of the general public shall be freely admitted to the room where the recount is being conducted. The board shall hold the recount in a room of sufficient size and satisfactory arrangement to permit such observation of the recount.

6.2.a. The official representative of a candidate, voter or governing board member shall have a written and signed statement from the candidate, voter or governing board member designating him or her as the official representative. The name of the representative must be included in the statement. Each candidate, member of a governing board, or voter initiating a recount may appoint only one official representative to act for him or her in the candidate's absence.

6.2.b. The official representative shall have the right to observe the recount proceedings including observing each ballot as it is read in a hand count process. They may view and examine the tally sheets and ballots, but may not handle the election material.

6.2.c. The candidate or his or her representative or voter or his or her representative or governing board member or his or her representative has the right to question any ballot during the recount.

6.3. The processing and handling of the ballots in a recount shall be conducted by teams consisting of two (2) persons of opposite political parties who shall be appointed and deputized in writing by the board of canvassers.

6.3.a. If a ballot is questioned, the deputized team shall reexamine that ballot and reach their finding. Any ballot questioned shall be marked to provide for its identification at any future contest of the election.

6.3.b. If a majority of the deputized team cannot agree on the intent of the voter's markings on a ballot, it shall remain questioned and the votes for that ballot shall not be recorded.

6.3.c. Only authorized persons may handle the election materials. These persons include the board of canvassers, the county clerk, the employees of the clerk and persons specifically employed to

process the election materials and who have been deputized in writing and who have taken an oath to perform faithfully their duties.

6.4. The evidence considered at a recount shall be only that obtainable from the viewing of the election material as it exists or from relevant evidence from the election commissioners, poll clerks or other persons present at the election in which the recount is being conducted. The board may not consider extraneous evidence.

6.5. When ballots are being counted by hand, two deputized teams are required. One of the deputized teams shall read the ballots together. The votes shall be read aloud so that the second deputized team that is recording the vote can hear. Each member of the recording team shall mark separate tally sheets. The recording team should compare their vote count on a scheduled basis (as an example, after every twenty (20) ballots) in order to catch marking errors.

6.6. If a recount has been requested in more than one elected office or special issue, one deputized team may handle only one elected office or special issue recount proceeding at a time. The team shall work with its elected office or special issue recount (one precinct at a time) until that recount is completed. After a recount of a particular elected office or special issue is completed, the teams that worked with the completed recount may be assigned to work with a recount of another elected office or special issue.

6.7. Each team shall count or otherwise work with only one precinct at a time. The precinct materials may not be mixed.

6.7.a. The challenged ballots of each precinct shall be handled as they were during the canvass. The same procedures shall be in place to maintain the secrecy of the ballots and to preserve them for any future contest.

6.8. Each precinct may be recounted only one time, regardless of whether recounted electronically or hand-counted. However, if after recounting a precinct, the results do not match the canvass results the ballots and tallies shall be rechecked at that time by one of the deputized teams in order to discover any error in reading the ballots or marking and computing the tally figures.

6.8.a. The candidate or voter who requested the recount has the right to stop the recount at the

conclusion of any precinct by withdrawing his or her request. At this time, the candidate(s) or governing board that has preserved the right to continue may exercise that right, including identifying which precincts need not be hand-counted. Once a person has stopped the recount, he or she may not resume the recount later.

6.9. Before starting the recount, the board shall determine the order in which the precincts will be recounted. The board shall use a logical means of determining the order, either by drawing or using a sequential order, beginning with the lowest number and continuing to the highest number. The determined order should meet with the agreement of the parties to the recount or their designated representatives.

6.10. Before recounting any precincts, the board shall resolve any incorrect recordation or tabulation of votes pursuant to W.Va. Code §3-4A-29 and announce any adjusted vote totals resulting from that resolution.

§153-20-7. Order of Recount Procedures ~~by Voting System.~~

7.1. For all recounts of election conducted with paper ballots, the board shall proceed as outlined in sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 of this rule.

§153-20-8. Recount by Step Procedures.

8.1. The Secretary of State shall provide a step procedures manual for the recount of an election's votes cast in an elected office or special issue. The manual shall be used by each governing body responsible for recount procedures.

8.1.a. The manual shall include detailed descriptions of the steps required to review, correct and officially record the results of a designated election office in an election.

8.1.b. The manual shall include worksheets for the board to record their recount procedures and the findings for each precinct recounted.

8.2. In a recount procedure, the board shall perform the step procedures and complete the worksheets for each precinct recounted.

§153-20-9. Certifying the Results.

9.1. The recount is not complete until the board seals the ballots in a suitable container with their endorsement and delivers them to the care of the county or municipal clerk.

9.2. Upon completion of the recount as described in subsection 9.1. of this rule, the board shall take official action to certify the result of the elected office recounted as it is determined by the recount.

9.3. The board shall prepare duplicate certificates for a primary election for each elected office considered by the recount with total votes for each candidate in the recounted office. The certificates shall be in words and numbers. In a general election, the certificates for federal, statewide, legislative and judicial offices shall be prepared in triplicate originals.

9.4. Each member of the board shall sign each certificate.

9.5. The board of canvassers shall prepare and transmit the certificates for elected offices and special issues involved in the recount as directed in W. Va. Code §§3-6-10 and 3-6-11.