

BALLOT DUPLICATION

The State of Georgia's optical scan precinct count election system provides a fast and accurate way of processing and tabulating mail ballots. In accordance with the requirements and capabilities of the optical scan system, the Board of Registrations and Elections has developed procedures for the handling, processing and totaling of mail ballots in order to insure the integrity of the electoral process.


The procedures for mail ballot tabulation and the steps to be followed for processing those ballots which are unable to be "read" by the optical scan ballot counter are as follows:

1. The mail ballots shall be opened and the ballots shall be separated from the mail ballot envelopes.
2. The mail ballots will be given to the optical scan ballot teams for scanning into the optical scan unit.
3. Ballots that are torn or otherwise damaged upon opening of the envelopes in addition to ballots that are unable to be processed by the optical scan unit (i.e. improperly marked ballots, damaged ballots) will be given to an Elections Associate, or their designee for consideration by the vote review panel.
4. Upon completion of the processing of the mail ballots, said mail ballots shall be placed in the proper storage container. The storage containers will be sealed and stored as required by state law for a period of twenty-four (24) months.
5. Mail ballots, may be scanned, but shall not be tabulated until 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.
 - A. If it is determined that a ballot needs to be duplicated it shall be executed in the following manner:
 - i. A blank ballot will be retrieved from the blank ballot inventory for the appropriate precinct, district combo and party if applicable.
 - ii. A number will be assigned to the ballot. All duplicated ballots will be numbered sequentially according to Ballot Duplication Procedures.
 - iii. The original ballot will be noted at the top "ORIGINAL" and given the same identifying number as the duplicate ballot.
 - iv. Ballot duplication teams shall consist of three members. Those team members will then recreate the votes marked on the ballot. The duplicated ballot will be paper clipped to the front of the original ballot.

- v. All duplicated ballot sets will be returned to appropriate optical scan ballot team for processing.
6. After the duplicate ballot has been scanned, the assigned Elections Associate, or their designee, will remove the duplicate ballot from the tray and attach it to the corresponding original ballot. Both ballots will be placed into the appropriate storage container as other mail ballots.
 7. If the voter intent is not clear, the original ballot will be taken to the Vote Review Panel who will determine the disposition of any race(s) or issue(s) in question. The Panel will review the rejected ballot to determine voter intent. Voter intent may be determined if the voter circled, checked or made any other distinguishing marks next to a candidate's name. If voter intent can be determined, the ballot shall be duplicated (refer to *Duplicating Ballots*).
 8. If the intent of voter is unclear, the Vote Review Panel will return the ballot to the Elections Associate, or their designee, and the ballot will be processed as an over voted ballot.

APPROVED: GWINNETT COUNTY BOARD OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS

DATE: October 9, 2012



JOAN H. ZELLNER, CHAIR