

BALLOT PROCESSING

ELECTION SECURITY

The security of the ballot counting process is a critical piece of any election. The Salt Lake County Election Division works hard to make sure elections are secure at every step of the process.

Throughout ballot processing, ballots are always in the custody of more than one election worker. At no time are individual election workers allowed to be alone with ballots. As the ballots move from one step of the process to another, each transfer is logged to enable tracking and maintain a consistent chain of custody.



As ballots are returned to the Election Center their arrival is logged and signature tabs are removed to prepare for scanning.

The Agilis machine scans the return envelopes and performs three functions:

- 1) It verifies the Ballot ID and name against the voter's record in the voter registration database.
- 2) It compares the signature on the envelope to the voter's signature stored in the database.
- 3) It sorts the ballots into batches. Each batch is issued a unique ID number for tracking.



If the Agilis machine can't verify the signature, it is sent to human reviewers for analysis. If they determine that the signatures don't match, a cure letter is sent to the voter asking for additional identifying information. Once the cure letter is returned, that voter's ballot may be opened and counted. If the voter's signature cannot be verified, the ballot must be rejected.

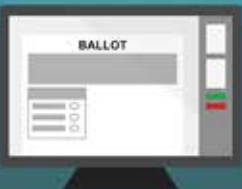


Ballot envelopes are opened and the ballot is removed and separated from the envelope, thus preserving the secrecy of the ballot.



Ballot batches are scanned. Data from the scanned ballots is sent to the election server, where it waits to be tabulated on election night.

Batches of ballots are then placed into boxes and sent for tabulation. All boxes are numbered and the count of ballots within each box is carefully tracked and logged.



Sometimes voters mark their ballot ambiguously instead of filling in the oval next to their choice. These ballots must be adjudicated before they can be counted.

Teams of two poll workers review ballots at a computer workstation. If both workers agree that voter intent can be discerned, they update the ballot and send it to be counted. Those that can't be discerned must be rejected. The original ballot can always be referenced after adjudication.



Flash drives containing ballots from in-person voting machines are returned to the Election Center. The data from those drives is uploaded to the election server and merged with the data from the scanned ballots to await tabulation.

After 8 p.m. on election night, results are tabulated and made available to the public. These unofficial results are updated as more ballots arrive and are processed in the election center.

Eligible ballots may be counted until the Board of Canvassers certify the results – two weeks following election day.

