



Election Division Dispatch

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NEWS & UPDATES

EI-ISAC Security Toolkit

The Election Infrastructure Information Sharing & Analysis Center (EI-ISAC) recently published a security toolkit for election officials to provide tools that clarify election processes and security. The kit includes materials that:

- Highlight the role of **state and local election officials** and their day-to-day work
- Provide a plain language overview of **how elections are protected at every step**
- Reinforce practical **cybersecurity practices** that support election operations

You can access the full Election Security Kit, including detailed instructions on how to adjust its contents to your needs:

www.cisecurity.org/elections/security-kit

Save the Date! 2027 IED Conference

We are pleased to announce the selection of the Wyndham Indianapolis Airport hotel as the location for this year's Indiana Election Administrators' Conference, which will be held from Dec. 7 to 9, 2026. The registration fee is \$400 as established by state law. Hotel rooms are \$119 per night and free parking is available at the hotel. More details, including registration sign-up and a tentative agenda, will be released later this summer.

School Board Candidate Reminders

Several counties have asked if the D/R party chairs can fill school board ballot vacancies, if no D or R filed to run for a school board seat. The answer is "no." Candidate filing has closed for those seeking to have their name printed on the ballot for school board in the Nov. election. Candidates can file to become a write-in candidate for school board from Aug. 5 to noon, Aug. 21, 2026. This is the only opportunity available for any person who missed the school board filing period.

Also, school board candidates are not required to open a campaign finance committee, until such a time that they raise or spend more than \$500 (that is, \$500.01+) toward running for the office. If that happens then they have until noon, seven days after raising or spending that amount to file a CFA-1 and then they "sync up" to the campaign finance filing schedule.

Reprecincting Survey Due By July 31

Earlier this year, IED sent a memo out to counties to kickstart the 2027 reprecincting process. Counties are NOT required to participate; however, if you believe that your county will want to update precinct boundaries due to annexations or precinct splits, please respond to the [survey](#) to indicate your intent to participate by noon on Friday, July 31. Counties can change their mind and withdraw from the process, but this is the first step in the process to be assigned an IED staffer (Lori or Stephanie).

CALENDAR

July 3, 2026: IED Closed (Independence Day)

July 3, 2026 (NOON): Deadline to fill ballot vacancy where no candidate ran in the D or R primary election OR no candidate was nominated at the L Party convention (The action to fill the vacancy DOES NOT get extended; only the paperwork deadline shifts!)

July 6, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for remaining paperwork to fill a ballot vacancy where no one ran in the D/R primary election or L convention

July 6, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for CAN-3 & statement of economic interests to be filed for declared write-in candidates for federal, state, state legislative, judicial, or local office

July 6, 2026: Deadline to add vote history from the May 5, 2026 primary election, unless a recount is being conducted

July 15, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for D/R state parties to file with IED their nominees for SOS/State Comptroller/State Treasurer

July 15, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for a candidate nominated at the primary election to withdraw for any reason; candidates can still withdraw after this deadline but only for limited reasons (CAN-24)

July 15, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for candidate nominated by petition to file CAN-20 (and certified petitions + statement of economic interests, if applicable)

August 3, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for L candidates running for a "small" town office to file candidacy paperwork (CAN-16, CAN-12)

August 3, 2026 (NOON): Deadline for local public question to be certified to CEB

August 5, 2026: First day to file as a write-in for school board (CAN-26)

August 5, 2026: Deadline to complete VLM work (see VR Corner for details)

August 14, 2026: Deadline to file VRG-21 with IED

August 21, 2026 (NOON): Deadline to file to be a write-in candidate for school board

August 21, 2026 (NOON): Deadline to file a challenge against almost all "summer filer" except for write-in candidates (school board or otherwise). See page 58 of the 2026 *Calendar Guidebook* for details

JULY 2026 WEB TRAINING

July 2 | June Build Placeholder

July 7 & 9 | User Account Management/SVRS Portal

July 14 & 16 | New User Overview

July 21 & 23 | GIS GeoCode (voter Cleanup)

July 23 | GIS GeoCode (Annexations)

July 28 & 30 | Hopper Overview

2026 Calendar is posted to the INSVRS County Portal and subject to change.

IN FOCUS: Candidate Withdrawal Procedures for Nov. Election

Summer candidate filing season is about at its mid-point with many of the candidate filings winding down. Candidate withdrawals are part of this process that are often overlooked and can be confusing to candidates, party officials, and election administrators.

Early Ballot Vacancies: ON or BEFORE Noon, July 15, 2026

July 15 is the most important date for purposes of candidate withdrawing for the November election. Any candidate can withdraw for any reason until noon, July 15, 2026. The candidate simply files the CAN-24 form with the county election official (or IED, for federal, state, state legislative, and judicial offices, including prosecuting attorney) by this deadline and their name is removed from the ballot.

It does not matter if this candidate was selected to fill a ballot vacancy, was nominated at the primary election or state or county convention, submitted paperwork to be a school board candidate, or filed a form to be a write-in candidate. Again, a candidate needs no reason to withdraw from the November ballot up to noon, July 15, 2026.

Should a D, R, or L candidate withdraw, then a party chair is able to fill the vacancy not later than 30-days after the CAN-24 was filed. The clerk does not need to give notice to the chair of the vacancy; instead, state law assumes the candidate is

coordinating with the political party.

Independent and write-in candidates are not able to fill a ballot vacancy, but minor party candidates who gain ballot access by petition can.

D/R party leaders follow procedures found in IC 3-13-1, generally, to fill the local office vacancy through direct appointment or caucus and use forms county officials are already familiar with (CAN-29, CAN-30, CAN-31, CAN-12). L party leaders should review IC 3-13-1-20 for specific procedural details. The party chair then has until noon, three days after filling the vacancy to file their paperwork with the county election official.

Early Ballot Vacancies AFTER Noon, July 15, 2026

After noon, July 15, a candidate can only withdraw if they move out of the election district, die, are convicted of a felony, ordered off the ballot by the court, or would be violating the Hatch Act or Judicial Canons by appearing on the ballot.

Should this occur, then a CAN-24 is filed and the ballot vacancy may be filled. For the D/R party, the vacancy is filled by caucus or direct appointment of the chair.

With the exception noted in the coming paragraphs, the D/R parties follow the procedures in IC 3-13-1, generally, and use the CAN-29, CAN-31, CAN-30, and CAN-

12 for a local office vacancy. An L candidate would withdraw using the CAN-24, and their party follow procedures in IC 3-13-1-20. Similarly, it is possible for a minor party who gained ballot access by petition to fill a ballot vacancy, but an independent or write-in candidate cannot.

Late Ballot Vacancies

Lastly, a ballot vacancy in the final 30-days before the election is considered a “late” ballot vacancy. Parties who experience any vacancy occurring on or before Oct. 5 use the “early” ballot vacancy procedures in IC 3-13-1. Ballot vacancies occurring on or after October 4 (that is, within the 30-day window before an election) follow the procedures under IC 3-13-2, generally.

While the party may be able to fill the “late” ballot vacancy, it’s possible that the ballot may not be reprinted, depending on the timing.

IC 3-11-3-29.5 is the guiding principle on whether a ballot is to be re-printed. Further, IC 3-12-1-6 notes how to tabulate results should a late ballot vacancy be filled but the ballot is not re-printed. Please be in touch with our office if you experience a late ballot vacancy, and need direction on next steps.

If you would like to learn more, please review the *Election Administrator’s Manual* and the *Candidate Guide*.

VOTER REGISTRATION CORNER

90-Day VLM Freeze Deadline Approaching!

Counties must complete their voter list maintenance work, specifically moving a voter’s registration status from “active” to “inactive” as permitted in state and federal law, not later than Aug. 5, 2026. Beginning Aug. 6, counties will not be able to access SVRS VLM hopsers and cannot otherwise move a voter’s record to “inactive.”

Additionally, counties are prohibited from sending a SAMC during the freeze. For example, counties cannot process a declination where the voter’s address on it does not conform to their registration record since the end result is the mailing of the SAMC. Counties may resume their VLM activities, including the mailing of the SAMC, after vote history has been applied from the Nov. 3, 2026, election.

However, during the freeze, most VR activities will continue:

- voters can register to vote for the first time or update their registration online or using a paper form;
- voters can request, by signing a written request, that their registration status be moved to “cancelled” (see VRG-14); and
- counties can act on notices related to a death of a voter or if the voter is disfranchised due to imprisonment following conviction to move the voter’s status to “cancelled”.

Please make sure to file the VRG-21 with IED not later than Aug. 14, 2026, which serves as notice that you’ve completed your VLM work and are complying with the 90-day freeze period ahead of the November election.

CHALLENGE PERIOD FOR “SUMMER” FILERS

Similar to the process used to challenge D/R candidates who filed to run in the May primary election, state law permits a challenge to be filed against candidates who filled a D/R/L ballot vacancy or filed to run as a minor party, an Independent candidate, school board candidate, or a declared write-in.

A voter or county chair of the election district may file a CAN-1 challenge to dispute the qualifications of a candidate to run or hold office, in most cases, by noon, Aug. 21, 2026.

Of course there are exceptions! Noon, Aug. 7, 2026, is the deadline to file a CAN-1 against a declared write-in candidate (except for school board). Noon, Aug. 28, 2026, is the deadline to file a challenge against a write-in candidate for school board.

Noon, Sept. 4, 2026, is the deadline for the CEB to determine the validity of all challenges but for a challenge filed against a write-in candidate or candidate who fills a late ballot vacancy. The deadline to determine a challenge against a write-in is noon, Aug. 14 for all except school board write-ins. The deadline for school board write-ins is noon, Sept. 10. Noon, Oct. 20, 2026 is the last day to file a challenge against someone who filled a ballot vacancy on or after Oct. 5, 2026, using the procedures in IC 3-13-2.

PUBLIC QUESTION FAQ

As noted in the 2026 Legislative Summary, every county will have two public questions related to amending our state constitution. Those will appear at the top of your ballot. We already know that Allen, DeKalb & Steuben will have a special question authorized by the legislature related to the building of a new casino while Marion County will have one related to changes made with the structure of Indianapolis Public Schools. Those will appear under the statewide public questions and above the straight party device.

It is possible for units of government to have their own public question on the ballot, assuming it is authorized by state law. For example, a controlled project referendum to build a new jail or improve a government building or a tax levy referendum to raise additional funds for school corporations, to name a few. Those questions must be certified to the CEB by noon, August 3, 2026. The CEB must then meet and “make arrangements” for the election. This can be as simple as acknowledging the file documents and making plans for it to appear on the ballot in the proper precincts.

QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

Q. Do we have to open the same satellite early voting sites used in the May primary for the November election?

A. Not any more. The law USED to require the same sites to be used in May and November (though counties could add more sites in November). NOW, counties have more flexibility to make changes between the primary and general elections. IC 3-11-10-26.2(e))

Q. As a vote center county, do all of our early voting locations need to be voting sites that we use on Election Day?

A. The term “vote center” is the equivalent of “polling place”, meaning the location where people vote on Election Day. The term does not include early voting locations. That’s an important distinction for vote center counties, as state law requires at least one vote center (that is, a site used on Election Day) to be used as an early voting (or in-person absentee voting) location for the two Saturdays ahead of Election Day. (IC 3-11-18.1-4) For example, a county could have ten early voting sites, but only one needs to be a site used on Election Day for those two Saturdays. Or, you could have vote center site A open for the first Saturday and vote center site B open the second. What’s important is that you have one Election Day location used for early voting on those two Saturdays along with the office designated by the county clerk’s office.

Q. Can we alter or reduce our early voting hours in 2026?

A. Besides the two Saturdays before election day, early voting must be provided for the 28 work days leading up to Election Day in a location designated by the county clerk. The clerk’s early voting site under IC 3-11-10-26 must be available for the same hours as the clerk’s office. If the clerk’s office is closed on Wednesday, then the clerk would not have to open early voting on Wednesday. If the clerk’s office closes for lunch 12-1P each day, then early voting could close then, too. However, if the clerk’s office is open 8A to 4P each day, then early voting must be available the full 8 hours. Any breaks or lunches would need to be covered. Counties will want to take a close look at their absentee voter board needs for the upcoming November election and schedule enough people to allow for breaks. Lastly, a county clerk or CEB can extend voting hours beyond the time allotted during the work day or required under state law for the two Saturdays. However, it is not possible to offer early voting longer than the 28-days provided for under state law or, in 2026, reduce the dates and hours.

Q. Do we apply the poll worker statutes to early voting?

A. No. Like the term “vote center” or “polling place/polls”, “poll worker” is specific to Election Day workers only. Instead, early voting is before an absentee voter board made up of one D and one R. You can have multiple absentee boards at early voting locations, of course, but the staffing will be uniform across the parties. Any disputes would be handled by the CEB rather than an election day precinct election board. Early voting may look and feel similar to Election Day, but the procedures under state law are different because it is absentee voting. Voters are not officially casting their ballots during the absentee period; instead, think of it as filing their ballots for counting on Election Day unless the voter is determined not to be a qualified voter of the precinct at any point during the extensive review process required by state law.