



# Election Division Dispatch

Brad King & Angie Nussmeyer, Co-Directors | March 2018

## NEWS & UPDATES

### INSVRS March Build

At the end of March, Quest/GCR will be pushing several updates to INSVRS. These updates will be covered in the March 27 and 28 web training, but a few county requests are highlighted below:

- 1) Counties will be able to generate walk lists based on election districts. The individual precinct reporting option remains, but the reports can also be generated by election districts.
- 2) A new absentee data extract will soon be available to include ABS ballots received by election, precinct, ABS application type.
- 3) When processing records in the death hopper, a county user will be alerted if the county has received an ABS ballot for the deceased person.

### ElectionMail.Org

Two private not-for profits (Democracy Works and the BiPartisan Policy Center) created this website for local election officials and voters to report issues with their election mail. While this does not replace communication with local postal contacts, the data is collected and shared with federal USPS staff to investigate and improve operations. Many election officials across the country have reported success in using this site to resolve problems.

### USPS Political/Election Mail Coordinator

The USPS shared contact information for political and election mail coordinators across the country. The Indiana contact is Lorica Pierce, who can be reached at (317) 870-8243. You can access more info about election mail services at [about.usps.com/gov-services/election-mail/](http://about.usps.com/gov-services/election-mail/)

### 2018 Election Administrator's Manual

Our print shop is processing our order now, and copies will be sent to counties soon. For now, the manual can be found online at [in.gov/sos/elections](http://in.gov/sos/elections).

## MARCH WEB TRAINING

**Mar. 13 & 20** | ePollbook

**Mar. 15 & 22** | Absentee Overview

**Mar. 27 & 28** | March Build Overview

Dates are subject to change; check the 2018 INSVRS Training Schedule on the county portal to confirm.

## CALENDAR

### March 9, 2018:

Deadline to estimate number of absentee and provisional ballots to place an order for printing

### March 9, 2018:

Deadline to adopt a resolution for the central count of absentee ballots (counties that have previously adopted one do not need to adopt)

### March 19, 2018:

Deadline for delivery of absentee ballots to CEB

### March 19, 2018 (NOON):

Deadline for CEB to notify party chairs of the number of ABS voter boards, counters, and couriers needed for the primary election

### March 23, 2018 (NOON):

Deadline for county chair to nominate persons to serve as ABS voter boards, counters, and couriers for the primary election.

### March 24, 2018:

Deadline to mail absentee ballots to those with approved applications on file

### April 7, 2018:

Deadline to publish notice of public test in newspaper, if public test held on April 9.

### April 9, 2018:

Deadline to hold public test of voting equipment

### April 9, 2018:

Statewide voter registration deadline

### April 10, 2018:

In-person Early Voting at the Clerk's office begins

# IN FOCUS: ABSENTEE BALLOTS

In the world of election administrators, March Madness is a basketball game; it's the maddening rush to finish building ballots, coding elections, printing ballots, and processing absentee ballot applications before the next wave of deadlines to manage campaign finance filings, update voter registrations records, perform a public test of voting equipment, and open your doors to early voters.

Absentee ballot operations will consume much of your time this month. Here are a few operational reminders to keep you focused on the task at hand:

1) Counties must receive their absentee ballots from the vendor no later than 50-days before the date of the election (March 19, 2018). After receiving the absentee ballots, the county must mail absentee ballots out to those individuals with an approved

absentee ballot application for the election no later than five days after receiving the printed ballots. The deadline to mail the first batch of ABS ballots where applications have been approved is 45-days from the date of the election.

For the primary election, the March 24, 2018, deadline is critical, as it's the deadline the US Department of Justice requires states to meet to comply with the Military and Overseas Voters Empowerment (MOVE Act). Counties that do not comply with the deadline must be reported to the US DOJ, who will have questions for both IED and the county about the delayed mailing.

2) Got the first big push of absentee ballots to the post office? Terrific! Moving forward, state law requires you to mail absentee ballots out the same day you receive and approve the absentee application.

3) Don't forget to communicate to your Democratic and Republican Party chairs the number of absentee voter boards, counters, and couriers you'll need in the weeks leading up to and on Election Day. The county chairs then nominate individuals to serve for the CEB to appoint. If the chair fails to fill an absentee position, the CEB may appoint a voter of the county to serve.

4) Absentee applications that arrive at IED will be forwarded to counties; however, our office will scan and upload applications to the county portal. Stay tuned for those details.

5) The *2018 Election Administrator's Manual* is a terrific resource for help with absentee processes, including reminders on the materials that must be included with an absentee ballot like the absentee voter's bill of rights and the postage pre-paid absentee security envelope. Please refer to pages 81-109 for those details.

## VR CORNER

### BMV Improvements to VRG-6

While this will not have significant impact on county operations, the BMV and Election Division have worked together to improve the BMV's registration form used during credential transactions (VRG-6). As a result, the "paper chaser" forms that are sent to your office will look different later this year. Stay tuned for an update when those changes are expected to go live.

### Indianavoters.com Updates

Quest/GCR hosted online training on the new voter registration features of indianavoters.com. Updating county contact information within SVRS is an important part of the site. To ensure voters are receiving the best information possible, please make any updates to your county's contact information no later than Friday, March 16, 2018.

### Text2Vote

Hoosiers can text "Indiana" to 2VOTE (28683) to receive a link to indianavoters.com to register to vote through the online system.

## QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

**Q. Do the candidate names on the ballot have to be capitalized?**

A. Yes. IC 3-10-1-14.1 requires the names on the ballot to be printed in uniform capital letters.

**Q. Do uncontested candidates go on the primary election ballot?**

A. For elected offices in 2018, yes. Because there is at least one contested election in any party's primary election this year, all candidates and offices, even those that are uncontested, must appear on the ballot. (IC 3-10-1-5) BUT, uncontested candidates for party offices—precinct committeeman or state convention delegate—do not appear on the ballot unless the Democratic or Republican Election Board member files a request for uncontested party candidates to appear on the ballot. The deadline to submit such a request has passed, however.

**Q. I have an office where no candidate has filed. Am I required to print "No Candidate Filed" as the candidate name?**

A. No, but you may do so if you choose.