

Chapter 7 – Issuing Ballots

General Information	7-2
Election Set-up	7-2
Prepare Ballots	7-3
During Voting Hours	7-4
<i>Replacement Ballots for Spoiled Ballots</i>	7-6
<i>Replacing Ballots and Ballot Activation Cards</i>	7-7
<i>Replacing Damaged or Torn Ballots and Ballot Activation Cards</i>	7-9
Closing the Polls	7-10

General Information

This chapter explains the proper way to issue regular paper ballots and ballot activation cards to voters. The Montgomery County Board of Elections will decide which election judges will be responsible for issuing ballots and ballot activation cards to voters. Those election judges will be trained to follow the procedures in this chapter.

2026 Gubernatorial Elections

For the *2026 Gubernatorial* Elections, there are some important things to note about the voting process.

- Any voter can use the ballot marking device. The election judge who gives a ballot to a voter will ask each voter:

"Would you prefer to mark your ballot using the ballot marking device, or by hand using a pen?"

- Make sure that at least ten (10) voters use a ballot marking device during the day. If ten voters have not used a ballot marking device (BMD) by 1:00 p.m., direct voters to use a ballot marking device until ten (10) voters have used one. Do not force a voter to use a method of voting that the voter does not wish to use. However, you must ensure that at least ten (10) voters use a ballot marking device during the day.

Election Set-up

All tasks are supervised by chief judges.

Pre-election Meeting:

Arrive at 6:30 p.m.

Make sure you sign the *Payroll Sheet*.

The chief judges will complete the *Ballot and Transfer Cart Security Certificate*.

1. Help set up for the election as assigned by the chief judges, including:
 - Passing out supplies
 - Posting signs
 - Setting up tables and chairs

7-2 Issuing Ballots

2. Set up the individual ballot issue tables so that each ballot issue judge or team has the following:

- Ballots
- Ballot Activation Cards (for replacement when spoiled)
- *Voter Assistance Forms*
- *Spoiled Ballot Tally Sheet*
- *Spoiled Ballot Envelope*



Work together so that your polling place is ready to open by 7:00 a.m.

Prepare Ballots

The *Ballot and Transfer Cart Security Certificate* can be found in the chief judges' binder. Throughout the day, the chiefs will record the number of additional ballots delivered to the polling place in the "Added Ballots After Opening" column. Make sure the *Ballot and Transfer Cart Security Certificate* is completed and signed.



Maryland State Board of Elections
Ballot and Transfer Cart Security Certificate - 2026 Gubernatorial Primary Election

County/City: Montgomery District/Precinct: _____ Date: June 23, 2026

OPENING Cart(s)
Before the polls open: Before removal, verify the tamper tape of ballot cart(s) storing unused ballots, ballot activation cards, and voting equipment by placing a checkmark to confirm where indicated in the table below. If a tamper tape number cannot be verified or shows evidence of tampering, please notify the Board of Elections immediately.

Cart #	Cart Seal Number Left Side	Verify √	Cart Seal Number Right Side	Verify √
1				
2				
3				

Verify the existing tamper tape number before removal. Place all removed tamper tape on the back of this form. Apply new tamper tape over the cart door locks. Record the seal number and reason for removal. If additional ballots are delivered during the day, record the time received.

Cart #	Cart Seal Number Left Side	√	Cart Seal Number Right Side	√	Reason for application or removal	Chief's Initials
	Record		Record		Record	

CLOSING Cart(s)
After the polls close: All unvoted ballots and ballot activation cards were secured in locked and sealed ballot cart(s) at the time of poll closing. Ballot cart(s) are secure as documented in the table below.

Cart #	Cart Seal Number Left Side	Cart Seal Number Right Side	Carts Secure √
	Record	Record	
1			
2			
3			

To the best of our knowledge, the information on this form is true and correct. Sign at closing.

Democratic/Other Chief Judge

Republican/Other Chief Judge

Ballot/Transfer Cart Certificate-BOE-GP2026 Printed: 1/16/26

1. Remove and open one package of ballots per ballot style. **Only open one** package for each ballot style at a time.
2. Pre-load a limited quantity of ballots into the privacy sleeves.

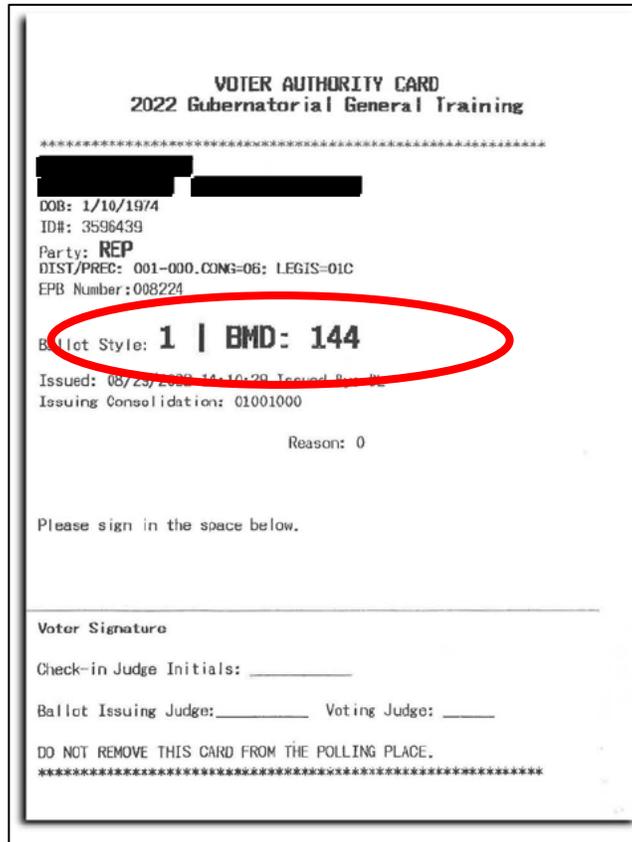
During Voting Hours

The ballot issuance judges must:

1. Make sure the voter is not a provisional voter.
2. Make sure the voter authority card has been initialed by the check-in judge.
3. Make sure the voter signed the voter authority card before issuing a ballot.
4. Ask each voter:

"Would you prefer to mark your ballot using the ballot marking device, or by hand using a pen?"
5. Write your initials on each voter's voter authority card.
 - If a voter was unable to sign their VAC, the voter would have been instructed to mark the signature line with an 'X' or the check-in judge will have written on the VAC that the voter was unable to sign the VAC.
6. Use the voter authority card to issue the correct ballot style.

Figure – “Ballot Style” on a Voter Authority Card



7. Give a regular paper ballot or a ballot activation card to the voter.
 - When you give a regular paper ballot to a voter, show the voter:
 - The ballot style printed on the voter authority card.
 - The ballot style printed on the regular paper ballot to make sure it is the correct ballot style.
 - Both sides of the ballot and all pages of the ballot, if needed.
 - When you give the ballot activation card to a voter, send them to the election judge stationed at the BMD, who will verify that they receive the correct ballot style on the ballot marking device.
8. Send voters to the voting area.
9. Keep the ballots secure at all times.

Figure - Confirming a Voter's Ballot Style

VOTER AUTHORITY CARD
2018 Gubernatorial Training

Party: DEM
DIST/PREC: 001-003, CONG=2, LEGIS=12, COUNCIL=002
EPB Number: 033472
Ballot Style: 3
Issued: 07/18/2018 14:25:30 Issued By: TEST
Issuing Consolidation: 14001003
Reason: 0

Please sign in the space below.

Voter Signature _____
Check-in Judge Initials: _____
Ballot Issuing Judge: _____ Voting Judge: _____
DO NOT REMOVE THIS CARD FROM THE POLLING PLACE.

Official Ballot

BS 3

Instructions	Governor / Lt. Governor Vote for 1	U.S. Senator Vote for 1
Making Selections 	<input type="radio"/> Candidate And Candidate	<input type="radio"/> Candidate
	<input type="radio"/> Candidate And Candidate	<input type="radio"/> Candidate

Replacement Ballots for Spoiled Ballots

A voter may ask for a replacement paper ballot or ballot activation card when:

- A voter wants to make changes to their ballot after the paper ballot has been marked or after a ballot activation card has been printed, but before it has been scanned into the scanner.



If a voter has already spoiled two ballots, a voting judge must offer to help the voter fill out the third replacement ballot.

- A paper ballot or ballot activation card gets damaged and would not be accepted by the scanning unit.
- A ballot marking device stops working or a ballot activation card does not work.



A voter's ballot activation card may be used again on a ballot marking device that has timed out if it has no ballot selections.

7-6 Issuing Ballots

Voters may ask for help to vote a ballot. The voter can choose a helper or ask an election judge to help. If the voter needs an election judge to help, two (2) judges from different political parties must help the voter together. An election judge must never attempt to influence the voter to vote for or against any particular candidate or ballot issue. Whoever helps the voter must fill out a *Voter Assistance Form*.

Replacing Ballots and Ballot Activation Cards

When a voter asks for a replacement paper ballot or ballot activation card, a voting judge will:

1. Ask for the voter's voter authority card.
2. Ask the voter to return to the ballot table.
3. Give the voter a black marker and tell the voter to spoil the ballot as follows:
 - For a regular paper ballot: Tell the voter to draw a thick line through all the ovals for each contest. (This is called "overvoting" all contests). Tell the voter to write "Spoiled" on the ballot.
 - For a ballot activation card: Tell the voter to use the marking pen to **cover up all selections and printed barcodes**. You can help the voter with this if the voter asks for help.



Printed ballot activation cards will only show the voter's selections. So, all selections and barcodes must be covered to protect the voter's privacy.

4. Draw a line through the first ballot judge's initials on the voter authority card and re-initial the voter authority card.
5. Direct the voter to put the spoiled paper ballot or spoiled ballot activation card into the spoiled ballot envelope.



A voter can only be given two replacement ballots. A voting judge must offer to help the voter after two attempts. If the voter has spoiled two paper ballots encourage them to use the Ballot Marking Device. If the voter has spoiled two ballot activation cards encourage them to

use the paper ballot. You must also tell a chief judge.

6. Make sure that the voter has written “spoiled” across the face of the spoiled paper ballot or spoiled ballot activation card. Make sure that the voter’s original selections are not visible.
7. Give the replacement paper ballot or ballot activation card and the voter authority card to the voter.
8. If a voter is using a ballot marking device, an election judge should check the voter’s voter authority card to select the correct ballot style. Touch the correct ballot style number on the touch screen display.



For voters using a ballot marking device in consolidated precincts, a election judge should check the voter’s voter authority card to choose the correct District and Precinct and ballot style for that voter. Touch the correct District and Precinct and ballot style number on the touch screen display.

9. Use the *Spoiled Ballot Tally Sheet* to keep track of spoiled ballot activation cards and regular ballots.
 - Tally the number of spoiled ballot activation cards in the first row.
 - Write the ballot style numbers in the left column.
 - Tally the number of spoiled ballots for each ballot style.
 - Count the tally marks when the polls close.
 - Write the total number of spoiled ballots and ballot activation cards in the bottom section of the *Spoiled Ballot Tally Sheet*.

3. Put the spoiled ballot or spoiled ballot activation card in the “Spoiled Ballot Envelope.”

Closing the Polls

Pack up any ballot supplies and secure them. Be sure to document seal numbers on the Ballot Security Certificate. Do anything else the chief judges ask you to do to help close the polls.