

## **Chapter 13 – Marking a Ballot by Hand**

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## **Overview**

This chapter explains the correct way to mark a regular paper ballot by hand for voters who choose to do so. Montgomery County Board of Elections will decide which election judges will be responsible for issuing ballots to voters. Those election judges will be trained to follow the procedures in this chapter.

## **Important Reminder**

The check-in judge to voters will ask each voter:

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

If the voter responds that they would prefer to mark a ballot by hand, the voter will be directed to the ballot table.

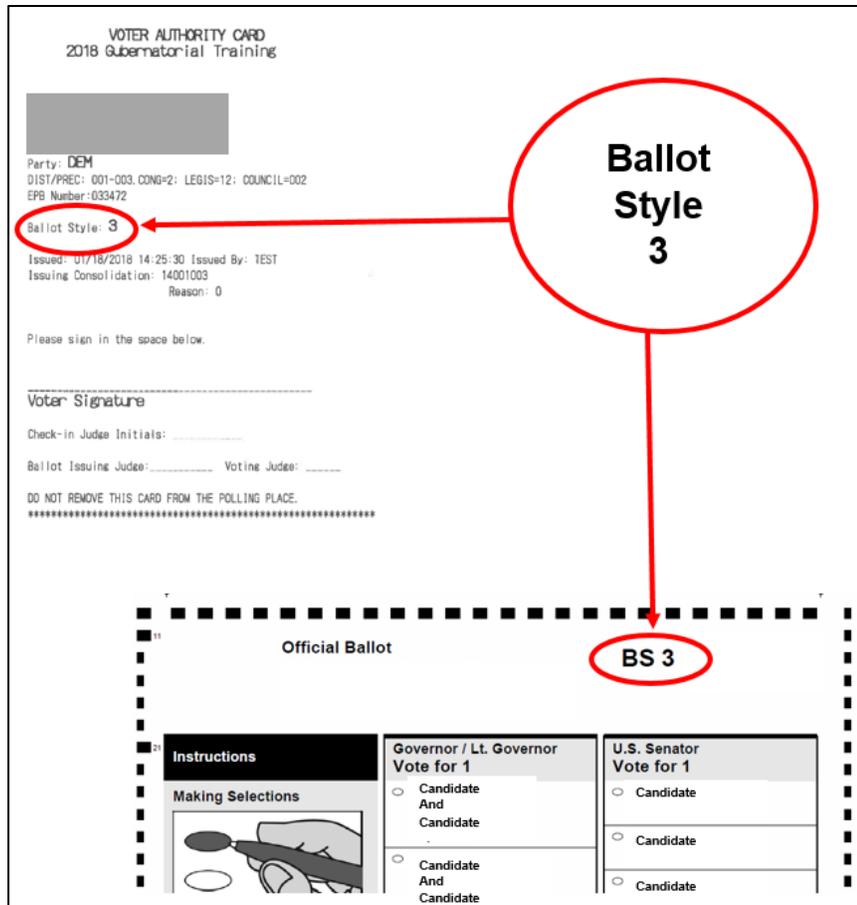
## **Instructions for Marking a Ballot by Hand**

At the ballot table, the ballot issuance judge will:

- 1) Ask the voter for their voter authority card.
- 2) Make sure the voter authority card has been signed by the voter and initialed by a Check-In Judge.
- 3) Make sure the voter does not have a provisional voter authority card or orange privacy sleeve. If the voter has either, direct the voter to the provisional table.
- 4) Give the voter the correct ballot style. Show the voter the following:
  - a) The ballot style printed on the voter authority card.
  - b) The ballot style printed on the ballot to make sure it is the correct ballot style.
  - c) Both sides of the ballot and all pages of the ballot, if applicable.

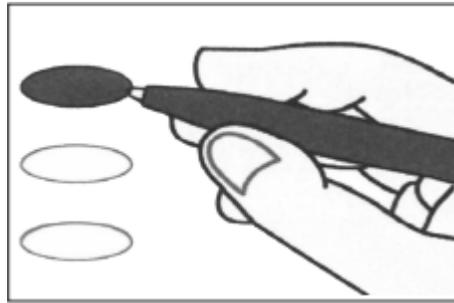
## **13-2 Marking a Ballot by Hand**

**Figure - Ballot Style on Voter Authority Card and Ballot Style on Regular Paper Ballot**



- 5) Initial the voter authority card.
- 6) Put the voter authority card in the clear pouch on the front of a privacy sleeve
- 7) Instruct the voter to read the ballot carefully:
  - All selections for undervoted contests will be counted.
  - No selections for overvoted contests will be counted.
- 8) Instruct the voter how to mark their selections on the ballot:
  - Use the marking pen provided at the voting booth.
  - Completely fill in the oval for each selection.

Figure - Examples of How to Mark a Ballot by Hand



**CORRECT**



**INCORRECT**

- Do not make any marks outside of the oval.
- Do not make any other marks on the ballot.
- Do not sign their name, initial, or make any other identifying marks on the ballot. Ballots with identifying marks may be rejected.



***A voting judge must offer assistance to a voter who has spoiled two ballots. Complete the Voter Assistance form if necessary.***

- Tell the voter to raise their hand or tell a voting judge if they have any questions or make a mistake on the ballot. See the “Replacement Ballots for Spoiled Ballots” section of *Chapter 7 – Issuing Ballots* to replace a ballot.
- Instruct the voter to keep the voter authority card in the clear pouch on the front of the privacy sleeve. The voter will need the voter authority card to cast the ballot at the scanning unit.
- Place the voter’s ballot in the privacy sleeve and give it to the voter.

**Figure - Privacy Sleeve and Voter's Ballot**



- Direct the voter to an available voting booth

### **Casting a Write-in Vote on a Regular Ballot (General Election Only)**

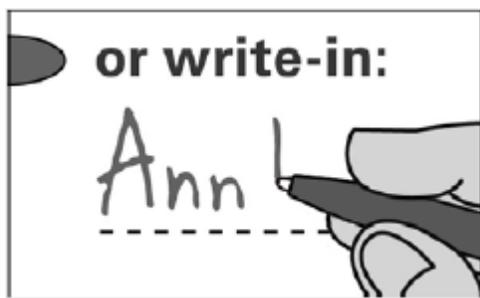


***Do not volunteer information about write-in voting unless the voter asks.***

If a voter asks about write-in voting during a general election:

- Show the voter the posted instructions.
- Answer any questions the voter may ask.
- When you help a voter who asked about write-in voting, do not say the name of any particular candidate or the name of any particular office. The only exception is indicated below. If you need to use a name as an example when you are helping a voter, use a fake name such as “John Smith” or a name other than that of a known candidate.
- When explaining write-in voting to a voter, instruct the voter to:
  - Completely fill in the oval to the left of “or write-in” under that contest heading.
  - Clearly write the full name of the candidate for whom they wish to vote. The candidate must be clearly identified or the vote will not count.

Figure - Writing in a Write-in Candidate



- Refer to the posted list of filed write-in candidates who have filed to become eligible.



***If a voter tells you they know the last name, but not the first name, and gives enough information about the candidate that you know to whom they are referring, you may tell the voter the candidate's first name.***

If a voter asks for help because they are unable to write:

- Complete the *Voter Assistance Form*. See *Chapter 3 – Voters with Disabilities and Cross-Cultural Communication* for more information.
- Assistance should be limited to writing the write-in candidate's name.
- Write the complete name exactly as the voter says.
- Once the voter has completed their write-in voting, the person(s) assisting should then leave the voter so the voter may continue to vote in privacy.

If a voter changes their mind after writing a write-in candidate's name or makes a mistake on the ballot, instruct the voter to overvote every contest. Write "SPOILED" across the ballot and put it in the "Spoiled Ballot Envelope" before issuing the voter a replacement ballot.

### **After the Voter Has Marked the Ballot**

A voting judge will:

- Direct or walk with the voter to the scanning unit.
- Instruct the voter to give the voter authority card to the voting judge at the scanning unit.

## **13-6 Marking a Ballot by Hand**