

RCW 29A.40.160 Voting centers. (1) Each county auditor shall open a voting center each primary, special election if the county is conducting an election, and general election. The voting center shall be open during business hours during the voting period, which begins eighteen days before, and ends at 8:00 p.m. on the day of, the primary, special election if the county is conducting an election, or general election.

(2) Each county auditor shall open a voting center at each of the following locations in the county:

(a) At the county auditor's office or at the division of elections that is in a separate location from the county auditor's office; and

(b) For each presidential general election, in each city in the county with a population of one hundred thousand or greater which does not have a voting center as required in (a) of this subsection. A voting center opened pursuant to this subsection (2) is not required to be open on the Sunday before the presidential election.

(3) Voting centers shall be located in public buildings or buildings that are leased by a public entity including, but not limited to, libraries.

(4) Each voting center, and at least one of the other locations designated by the county auditor to allow voters to register in person pursuant to RCW 29A.08.140(1)(b), must provide voter registration materials, ballots, provisional ballots, disability access voting units, sample ballots, instructions on how to properly vote the ballot, a ballot drop box, and voters' pamphlets, if a voters' pamphlet has been published.

(5) Each voting center must be accessible to persons with disabilities. Each state agency and entity of local government shall permit the use of any of its accessible facilities as voting centers when requested by a county auditor.

(6) Each voting center must provide at least one voting unit certified by the secretary of state that provides access to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, enabling them to vote with privacy and independence.

(7) No person may interfere with a voter attempting to vote in a voting center. Interfering with a voter attempting to vote is a violation of RCW 29A.84.510. The county auditor shall designate by administrative rule a specific point or points as the entrance to each voting center, taking into account the unique attributes of the voting center, to assure that voters have the ability to arrive and depart unimpeded.

(8) No person may interfere with the operation of a voting center. Interfering with the operation of a voting center is a violation of RCW 29A.84.510. This prohibition includes unauthorized access or handling of ballots, and unauthorized access to any voting equipment or election systems. Unauthorized access includes elected officials and county staff accessing systems in any manner not required by their job function.

(9) Before opening the voting center, the voting equipment shall be inspected to determine if it has been properly prepared for voting. If the voting equipment is capable of direct tabulation of each voter's choices, the county auditor shall verify that no votes have been registered for any issue or office, and that the device has been sealed with a unique numbered seal at the time of final preparation and logic and accuracy testing. A log must be made of all device numbers and seal numbers.

(10) The county auditor shall require any person desiring to vote at a voting center to either sign a ballot declaration or provide identification.

(a) The signature on the declaration must be compared to the signature on the voter registration record before the ballot may be counted. If the voter registered using a mark, or can no longer sign the voter's name, the election officers shall require the voter to be identified by another registered voter.

(b) The identification must be valid photo identification, such as a driver's license, state identification card, student identification card, tribal identification card, or employer identification card. A tribal identification card is not required to include a residential address or an expiration date to be considered valid under this section. Any individual who desires to vote in person but cannot provide identification shall be issued a provisional ballot, which shall be accepted if the signature on the declaration matches the signature on the voter's registration record.

(11) Provisional ballots must be accompanied by a declaration and security envelope, as required by RCW 29A.40.091, and space for the voter's name, date of birth, current and former registered address, reason for the provisional ballot, and disposition of the provisional ballot. The voter shall vote and return the provisional ballot at the voting center. The voter must be provided information on how to ascertain whether the provisional ballot was counted and, if applicable, the reason why the vote was not counted.

(12) Any voter may take printed or written material into the voting device to assist in casting votes. The voter shall not use this material to electioneer and shall remove it when leaving the voting center.

(13) If any voter states that the voter is unable to cast a vote due to a disability, the voter may designate a person of the voter's choice, or two election officers, to enter the voting booth and record the votes as the voter directs.

(14) No voter is entitled to vote more than once at a primary, special election, or general election. If a voter incorrectly marks a ballot, the voter may be issued a replacement ballot.

(15) A voter who has already returned a ballot but requests to vote at a voting center shall be issued a provisional ballot. The canvassing board shall not count the provisional ballot if it finds that the voter has also voted a regular ballot in that primary, special election, or general election.

(16) Any voter who is inside or in line at the voting center at 8:00 p.m. on the day of the primary, special election, or general election must be allowed to vote.

(17) For each primary, special election, and general election, the county auditor may provide election services at locations in addition to the voting center. The county auditor has discretion to establish which services will be provided at the additional locations, and which days and hours the locations will be open. [2024 c 28 s 4; 2022 c 69 s 1; 2019 c 6 s 6; 2018 c 112 s 4; 2017 c 327 s 1; 2011 c 10 s 43.]

Effective date—2018 c 112 ss 1-4: See note following RCW 29A.08.140.

Notice to registered poll voters—Elections by mail—2011 c 10:
See note following RCW 29A.04.008.