

# TABULATOR TENDERS' DUTIES



**G. TABULATOR TENDERS' DUTIES**

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- TABULATOR TENDERS**
- Arrive at the polls no later than 5:15 a.m.
  - Be sworn in by Moderator and sign oath
  - Set up table and signage
  - Mark a zone of privacy around the ballot box.
  - Have a privacy folder available to cover ballot.
  - Assist elector if tabulator rejects ballot
  - Explain how to get a new ballot, or
  - That Auxiliary Bin ballots are counted later
  - Call Moderator if tabulator is jammed
  - Check voting privacy booths and cap the pens
  - Sign payroll sheet and all forms
- TABULATOR TENDER'S SUPPLIES**
- At least one privacy folder at all times
  - "I Voted Today" stickers
  - Other privacy folders as electors drop them off

**A. TABULATOR TENDERS DUTIES**

**1. MONITOR TABULATOR AS BALLOTS ARE CAST**

If the tabulator rejects a given ballot more than once, the most likely cause is that the ballot contains an "Overvote". A ballot with no recordable votes will also be rejected. The Tabulator Tender's duty is to make sure the ballot was accepted before the elector leaves the vicinity of the tabulator and to advise the elector on how to review and correct his or her ballot. See below for how to handle these situations.

**2. POSITION FOUR FEET AWAY**

The Tabulator Tender should be stationed three to four feet from the ballot box in order to control access to the tabulator to prevent anyone from tampering with the tabulator. They shall instruct electors in the proper method for inserting the ballot. They must ascertain that the ballot has been accepted by the tabulator before an elector leaves the polling place. (Regs. 9-242a-16)

**3. COLLECT PRIVACY FOLDERS**

During the day, electors will drop off privacy folders. Recycle them back to the Ballot Clerk.



#### 4. I VOTED TODAY STICKERS

If "I Voted Today" stickers are provided by the municipality, do not place them on electors. Electors may not wish to be touched and some fabrics might be damaged by the adhesive.

#### 5. TABULATOR ERROR MESSAGES

The Tabulator Tender shall advise the elector of any error message displayed by the tabulator. If a ballot is rejected by the tabulator, they shall advise the elector on how to correct the problem.

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**THEY SHALL NOT LOOK AT THE MARKINGS ON AN ELECTOR'S BALLOT; AN ELECTOR'S RIGHT TO A SECRET BALLOT MUST BE PRESERVED.**

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- (1) If an elector needs assistance with a rejected ballot, the Tabulator Tender should use a privacy folder to cover the ballot while explaining the problem or solution.
- (2) If a new ballot is needed, the Tabulator Tender shall instruct the elector to return to the Ballot Clerk.
- (3) If the tabulator jams or malfunctions, the Tabulator Tender shall summon the Moderator before any corrective action is taken. The Tabulator Tender and Moderator shall clear any jammed ballots in accordance with instructions provided for the tabulator and shall avoid looking at the markings on the ballot.
- (4) The tabulator shall not be opened unless the Moderator is present. The Moderator shall make a record of such event in the Moderator's Diary as to whether the tabulator indicates that it has counted the ballot.
- (5) No one shall be permitted to leave the polling place with a ballot, either marked or unmarked.
- (6) Once an elector's ballot has been accepted by the tabulator, the elector shall be directed to immediately leave the polls. (Regs. 9-242a-16) (See below for additional information)

##### **If the tabulator rejects a ballot**

When the tabulator rejects a ballot, it displays a message indicating the reason for the return of the ballot. The Tabulator Tender shall advise the elector of these messages

**BALLOT NOT READ - PLEASE REINSERT**

**without looking at the markings on the ballot.** In many cases simply inserting the ballot in a different orientation ('bottom-first' vs. 'top-first'; 'upside-down' instead of 'right-side-up') may solve the problem; however the two special cases discussed below require special procedures.

##### **a. OVERVOTE**

An overvote occurs when an elector votes for more candidates for an office than they are entitled to. Sometimes, stray marks on the card can be read by the tabulator as an

**OVERVOTE**

extra vote. When an overvote message appears on the voting tabulator, the voting Tabulator Tender shall instruct the elector to recheck the ballot to be sure that the elector did not overvote for an office and that there are no stray marks on the ballot. The Tabulator Tender shall instruct the elector to obtain and remark a new ballot. See: "OBTAINING A NEW BALLOT (SPOILED BALLOT)", above.

The following is a suggested script for the Tabulator Tender to follow:

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“THE TABULATOR HAS REJECTED YOUR BALLOT BECAUSE IT READS MORE VOTES FOR AN OFFICE THAN ALLOWED, WHICH IS CALLED AN OVERVOTE”

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“IF YOU WISH TO CORRECT THE VOTING ERROR, WE WILL BE HAPPY TO SUPPLY YOU WITH A REPLACEMENT BALLOT.”

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“IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO CORRECT THE VOTING ERROR, WE CAN ACCEPT YOUR BALLOT AS PRESENTED. HOWEVER, NO VOTES FOR ANY OFFICE THAT YOU HAVE “OVERVOTED” WILL COUNT. ARE YOU CERTAIN THAT YOU DO NOT WISH TO RECEIVE A REPLACEMENT BALLOT?”

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If the elector insists that the ballot be processed as is, the Tabulator Tender shall instruct the elector that the tabulator will not count the vote for the overvoted office but will count the other votes. The elector shall then be instructed to deposit the ballot in the auxiliary bin. (Regs. 9-242a-18)

**b. UNREADABLE (BLANK) BALLOT**

A blank or unreadable ballot is one on which the tabulator cannot read a single vote for any office. This might occur if someone submitted a ballot and intentionally did not vote for anyone; however, it is much more likely that the elector has incorrectly recorded every one of their votes on the ballot (e.g., circled the names, used X's or checks that the tabulator could not pick up, or used the wrong kind of pen or pencil).



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**THE TABULATOR DOES NOT “SEE” THE COLOR RED. IF THE ELECTOR USES A RED PEN, THE BALLOT WILL APPEAR BLANK**

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If this occurs, the Tabulator Tender shall review with the elector the instructions and direct the elector to obtain a new ballot. See: "OBTAINING A NEW BALLOT (SPOILED BALLOT)", above.

The following is a suggested script for the Tabulator Tender to follow:

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“THE TABULATOR HAS REJECTED YOUR BALLOT BECAUSE IT DOES NOT READ ANY VOTES ON THE BALLOT.”

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“IF YOU WISH TO CAST VOTES ON THE BALLOT, YOU MAY RETURN TO THE VOTING BOOTH. INSTRUCTIONS ON THE VOTING PROCESS ARE AVAILABLE THERE. IF YOU WANT A REPLACEMENT BALLOT THE BALLOT CLERK WILL BE HAPPY TO SUPPLY YOU WITH ONE.”

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“IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO RETURN TO THE VOTING BOOTH, YOU MAY CAST YOUR BALLOT AS PRESENTED. HOWEVER, NO VOTES WILL COUNT FOR ANY CANDIDATES OR QUESTIONS THAT YOU HAVE LEFT BLANK. ARE YOU CERTAIN THAT YOU DO NOT WISH TO RETURN TO THE VOTING STATION?”

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If the elector requests that the ballot be processed as is, the elector shall then be instructed to deposit the ballot in the auxiliary bin. The voting Tabulator Tender should instruct the elector that the ballot will be counted by hand after the polls close. If the

election officials are unable to determine the intent of the elector, some or all of their votes may not be counted.

**c. BALLOT JAM OR BALLOT BOX FULL**

If a ballot jams in the tabulator, the Tabulator Tender shall immediately summon the Moderator before any corrective action is taken. The Moderator will make record of such problem in the Moderator's diary.

**RETURNED BALLOT -  
JAMMED IN READER**

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**EVEN IF THE TABULATOR IS OUT OF SERVICE, BALLOTS SHALL CONTINUE TO BE ISSUED, VOTED, AND PLACED IN THE AUXILIARY BIN.**

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If the ballot box becomes full, officials of opposing political parties shall replace the ballot box in the manner prescribed by the Secretary of the State or empty the ballot

**COUNTED BALLOT -  
JAMMED IN READER**

box as long as the ballots removed are placed in a secure container. (Regs. 9-242a-16) See pages E-8 and E-9 for information and procedures for clearing ballot jams and emptying the ballot box

**d. LCD MESSAGES – CALL MODERATOR**

Two LCD messages need immediate attention, but there may be a remedy available.

1) "INVALID BALLOT - SEE OFFICIAL RACE" means that the tabulator thinks the wrong ballot has been inserted, most likely one from another precinct. Reinsert the ballot

**INVALID BALLOT -  
SEE OFFICIAL RACE**

and if the problem persists, call the Moderator. Check the ballot's precinct designation. Either the tabulator is in the wrong precinct, or the tabulator has the wrong memory card, or the ballots are in the wrong precinct, or possibly more than one of these errors has occurred. If the problem is with the tabulator or memory card the error should occur immediately with the first vote cast. If this problem occurs later in the day, the most likely reason is that the most recently opened ballot package is for a different precinct or is defective.

2) "POWER FAIL" indicates that your electrical hookup is incorrect or your back-up battery is not turned on or you need to use a different wall plug that has functioning electrical power.

**POWER FAIL**

**e. LCD MESSAGES – CALL REGISTRAR**

If the LCD screen reads "OK TO FORMAT THIS MEM CARD" or "MEMORY CARD BAD -

PLEASE REMOVE" or "TEST BALLOTS?" the Tabulator Tender must contact the Moderator immediately. The Moderator should immediately contact the Registrar of Voters as well and start unpacking the back-up tabulator, because in the first two cases the tabulator's memory card is defective and cannot be

used, and in the third case the memory card was not set in "election mode."

**OK TO FORMAT  
THIS MEM CARD**

**MEMORY CARD BAD  
- PLEASE REMOVE**

**TEST BALLOTS?**