

# **Voting Location Manager (VLM) Handbook**

**May 2025**

# Spring 2025 Quick Tips and Reminders!

**State Wide Issue:** All county residents will have the opportunity to vote on a state-wide ballot issue. Several municipalities (Silverton, Sharonville 4th Ward, and the city of Harrison) will conduct partisan primaries this Spring. PEOs in these jurisdictions will receive an insert in their Special instructions Bag that includes Primary specific details to your particular polling location, including which ballot styles voters will be able to select at your location. Some areas will have the ability to select a partisan ballot (those conducting partisan primaries) or an Issues-Only ballot, and some areas will only have an Issues Only ballot (all other areas of the county). The city of Cincinnati will hold a non-partisan primary for the Mayor's race. because the city of Cincinnati holds a non-partisan primary, Cincinnati voters will only have one ballot, with both the mayoral contest and the state-wide ballot issue.

**17 Year Olds:** 17 year old voters, who will be 18 on or before November 4th, 2024 in municipalities holding a partisan primary may vote for candidates, but they may not vote on issues. 17-year-old voters may not vote an Issues Only ballot.

## Areas to Focus On, Spring 2025:

**Curbside:** curbside voting is permitted for those individuals with a

- disability who are physically unable to enter the polling location. They can either call the number listed on the sign you'll post to one of the handicap accessible parking spots, or send a representative into the location. Either is acceptable. Call the Help Desk with questions!

**Address Change within Precinct:** if a voter updates their address at the VAT,

- and it is in the *same* precinct as their old address, the ePB will tell you to give the voter a Registration Form and a regular ballot - not a provisional envelope and ballot.

**Curing Period:** *Only* those provisional voters who have no ID, expired ID, or

- unacceptable ID are required to present valid ID at the Board of Elections with 4 days of the Election.

**Evacuation Procedure:** Please continue with the evacuation procedure

- introduced in Fall 2024. It is vitally important to adhere to and follow all steps during the Monday Night Meeting and Election Day.

## Leadership

The VLM is the location leader – but remember, a smoothly run election takes Team Work!

Qualities of a good leader on Election Day

- Keeping a positive attitude
- Taking responsibility
- Staying focused
- Being able to work cooperatively as a team leader

## What is Teamwork

Combined efforts, or the actions of a group, to achieve a common purpose or goal. For PEOs on Election Day the result is a fairly conducted election where all voters can exercise their fundamental right to vote.

Good Teamwork Skills

- Respect for all individual contributions
- Clear communication
- Consensus building

A good example: the VLM and all PEOs at a location realize at the end of the day they all contributed to a successful voting experience for the voters in their precinct(s).

If you have an unhappy voter – someone who may not have the correct ID materials or understand the check-in process – here are some ideas on how to handle this situation.

**Listen** to the concerns or questions – make eye contact and let the voter speak. Do not interrupt or cut them off.

**Communicate** using positive & helpful statements – assure the voter that you will help them and get all the details; when necessary call the Help Desk for assistance.

On the subject of phones, please keep yours on! Calls from 513-000000X and 513-00X-000X are from the Board of Elections. Please pick up!

**De-Escalation** Techniques / Body language is a powerful communication tool

-Allow a person their personal space–2 to 3-foot distance

If you are uncomfortable, put more physical space between you and the voter

-Watch your body posture–keep arms uncrossed (showing your willingness to listen)

-Never use physical contact or force unless you are defending yourself

## Primary Job Description

The Voting Location Manager (VLM) is part of the PEO management team. They are responsible for the overall conduct of the election at the polling location. VLMs work with the Voting Location Deputy (VLD) to make sure that the election process is handled in an orderly, professional and lawful way by providing their PEO team with the necessary skills, materials and/or information to successfully conduct the election. VLMs must have the ability to interact with individuals from various backgrounds, learning styles and possess good leadership skills. VLMs are appointed by the Board of Elections (Board). The political party that assigns the VLM is determined by the party that carried the location's vote total in the last Gubernatorial election. The Voting Location Deputy (VLD) is also appointed by the Board and they are the opposite party of the VLM. Responsibilities

- The Saturday before the election, pick up the Blue Ballot Bag (with ballots & keys/ codes) and Special Instruction Bag at assigned Pick-up location. You may have an Overflow Blue Ballot Bag this election. Make sure you allow enough space in your vehicle.
- Oversee all activities within the polling location
- Administer the oath to other PEOs (through them clocking in on the ePBs Monday night and Tuesday morning) and appointed observers, and ensuring that oaths are honored.
- Make sure that the location is ready for voting by 6:30 AM
- Assign duties & breaks to PEOs at the location, including rotating job duties throughout the day—no one should work one job the entire Election Day  
Be the contact point with the Board - please keep your cell phone charged and on.
- Report any missing supplies and/or PEOS
- Set up, take down & assist voters with the Access Station
- Assist PEOs with procedural questions or concerns and/or contact the Help Desk when necessary  
Troubleshoot the equipment – ePB, Vscan & Access Station
- Perform other assigned duties or requests from the Board
- Follow federal & state election laws, policies, rules and regulations
- Travel with the VLD in the same vehicle to Election night Drop off location with red ePB case(s), white Vscan(s)-with blue tags, Blue Ballot Bag (with voted ballots & other materials), Blue Provisional and Unscanned Envelope Bag,

## Personal skills

- Ability to perform in a professional manner under stress
- Strong leadership & manager skills
- Ability to communicate in an effective & friendly manner
- Ability to delegate responsibilities and be the person in charge of assigned location
- Accept directives from the Board staff in a positive way

## Requirements

- A valid driver license & personal transportation
- Attend a training session
- Provide a cell phone number & email address
- Maintain a professional attitude & appearance
- Available to work Monday night (before the election) and Election Day
- Must not have a felony conviction

## Overall VLM Timeline

VLMs will receive an email with a link to a Zoom meeting for all Managers, about a week before the election. Participating in the VLM Zoom Call is mandatory, and should take about an hour. The call will cover important reminders and updates to the job of the Voting Location Manager, and will provide a forum for you to ask any questions you might have about the position.

VLMs receive a mailing from the Board about a week before the election, that indicates:

- 1.The place and time for the Saturday Supply Pick-up – (the Saturday before the election.) VLMs must pick up all the supplies for their location at their assigned Supply Pick-up location between 9am-1pm. If a VLM cannot pick up the supplies, they need to contact their PEO coordinator and make arrangements; and
- 2.The list of poll workers at your location accompanied with their contact info. VLMs call each PEO to make sure that they know where they are assigned to work on election day, what time to report for Monday Night Set-up and what time to report on Election Day. If a PEO indicates they are not working, call your PEO coordinator. The Saturday before the election, you will receive via E-mail a list of updated PEOs.

## Monday Night Set-up 6:30 PM

- VLM brings the Blue Ballot Bag with keys & codes and the special instructions bag to their assigned Monday Night Set-up location. (The caddy with voting equipment & supplies is delivered to the location prior to Monday night.)
- Use the Monday Night Set-up checklist in the Quick Guide & check off tasks as you go.
- Gives one set of keys & codes to VLD and takes one set home.
- VLM makes PEO job assignments. Use the attached sheet on Monday & Tuesday.

Note: When assigning PEOs – all PEOs should be familiar with each task.

They will need to rotate positions to cover lunch & dinner breaks. Some may be more familiar with checking in voters & others with processing provisional voters; it is useful for all PEOs to have experience.

## Tuesday, Election Day

- VLM, VLD, and all PEOs arrive at Polling Location at 5:30 AM
- Set-up and Clock in on the ePBs – follow steps in the Quick Guide
- Power up the Vscan & Access Station – follow steps in the Quick Guide
- Place signage indicating the location entrance & area outside the flags for campaigners
- Open the polling location by 6:30 AM

## Tuesday, Election Day (continued)

- VLM assists voters with disabilities who want to use the Access Station. There are step-by-step instructions on setting up & opening the polls on the Access Station; and a complete list of How to Vote on the Access Station in the Quick Guide.
- VLM reviews the information provided on Troubleshooting – ePBs, Vscans & Access Station
- VLM (and all PEOs) keep cell phones on all day to accept calls from the Board & contact the Help Desk when needed
- VLM rotates job duties throughout the day. No one person should work one job the entirety of Election Day.

## Closing the Polls

- Use the checklist in the Quick Guide for closing the Vscan, Access Station & ePBs
- Follow the step-by-step procedures for ballot accounting
- Use the Pack-up checklist in the Quick Guide and deliver:
  - Red ePB case(s)
  - White Vscan case(s)
  - Blue Ballot bag
- The VLM & VLD (or a PEO of the opposite party) ride together in the same car to the assigned Drop off location by 9:00 PM

# Evacuating the Polling Location

The Board of Elections of Hamilton County has plans in place if your polling location needs to be evacuated. During the Monday Night Meeting, the Voting Location Manager and all poll workers will survey their polling location, making note of the exits. The VLM will designate a meeting area safely outside of the polling location, where both poll workers and voters will assemble if the building needs to be evacuated. All PEGs need to be aware of this meeting area, and the ideal evacuation route to reach it. The VLM will also distribute Emergency Action Cards to all PEGs during the Meeting. The Cards will tell each individual poll worker a specific piece of critical election equipment to carry with them while evacuating, if it is safe to do so. As a result, the VLM should be mindful of who is best suited to carry certain pieces of equipment. Bipartisan representation must be maintained whenever Election Equipment is concerned as well. The pieces of election equipment to be assigned are:

- 1.The VAT ePB & Red Emergency Bag
- 2.The Vscan(s) - 2 PEGs per Vscan at your location
- 3.The Blue Ballot Bag(s) - 1 PEG per BBB at your location
- 4.The Blue Provisional and Unscanned Ballot Bag

Each PEG will unplug their assigned piece of equipment from the wall, then carry it with them while evacuating if it is safe to do so. In the case of the Vscan, one PEG will unlock the ballot box using the **black** key, and pull the white string forward. They will then remove the Vscan from the top of the ballot box, and evacuate the building. The other PEG will drag the ballot box across the floor using the side handles as they evacuate. Blue Ballot Bags can be dragged using the suitcase style wheels on the underside of the Bag. Scripts will be printed on the backs of the cards, instructing poll workers what to tell voters in the event of a building evacuation. In the event of an emergency, say a fire at the polling location, an alarm will sound. The VLM will calmly take charge of the situation by announcing the need to evacuate the polling location, and that if voters have ballots in their hands already, to carry those ballots with them. The VLM will lead voters out of the polling location in a calm, organized manner to the predetermined meeting area. PEGs will then follow with their unplugged, assigned piece of equipment, if it is safe to do so. Finally, the VLD will be the last person out of the location, ensuring that all voters have exited the premises. Once all voters and poll workers are present at the meeting area, the VLM will call the Board of Elections to inform them of the polling location evacuation, and to ask what the next steps will be. The Board will instruct the VLM on how to use the new Red Emergency Bag to allow voters who had ballots already to finish voting and to cast their ballot. The Board will also make the determination of whether the polling location will move to an alternate, 'back up' location, or whether a mobile voting location will be deployed to the area. All election related materials will be maintained under a strict chain of custody by Board staff members. Remember, emergencies are rare, but it is always important to be prepared. **The main priority in the event of an evacuation will always be people first, but if it is safe to do so, critical election equipment should also be evacuated.**