

Board of Elections

HAMILTON COUNTY OHIO



Voting Location Manager (VLM) Handbook



A Guideline to Managing a Polling Location

November 2025 General Election



Page of Contents

3	<i>Your Role</i>
6	<i>Quick Tips and Reminders: Fall 2025</i>
7	<i>VLM Timeline</i>
8	<i>VLM: Monday Night</i>
9	<i>VLM: Tuesday Election Day</i>
10	<i>Evacuating the Polling Location</i>
11	<i>PEO Credential Verification</i>
12	<i>Job Assignment Sheet</i>
13	<i>Contact Sheet</i>

Your Role



VLM

What is a VLM

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 (BOE). 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 VLD is also appointed by the Board and they are the opposite party of the VLM.

VLM 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

Leadership

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

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

The Result: the VLM and all PEOs at a location know at the end of the day they all contributed to a successful voting experience for the voters in their precinct(s).



As a leader of people, you may have to be a great listener, a great motivator, be very good at praising and bringing out the best in people.”

-Richard Branson



VLM Responsibilities

The Saturday before the election, pick up the Blue Ballot Bag (with ballots & keys/codes) and Special Instructions Bag at assigned pick-up location. You may have an Overflow Blue Ballot Bag this election.

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 signing the payroll card *New*) and appointed observers, and ensuring that oaths are honored.

Make sure that the location is ready for voting by 6:30 AM.

Assign duties and 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 ON.

Report any missing supplies and/or PEOs

Assist PEOs with procedural questions or concerns and/or contact the Help Desk when necessary

Troubleshoot the equipment – ePB, Vscan, and Access Station

Perform other assigned duties or requests from the Board

Follow federal and state election laws, policies, rules, and regulations

Travel with the VLD in the same vehicle to the Election Night drop-off location with red ePB case(s), white Vscan(s), Blue Ballot Bag (with voted ballots and 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

How to Use Those Skills

If you have an unhappy voter – someone who may not have the correct ID materials may not 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.

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

- Allow a person their personal space, two to three 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. Call 911 in case of an emergency, and then please alert the Help Desk that you have done so.



Quick Tips and Reminders: Fall 2025



Name Change Policy Clarification

Voters with a change of name may vote a regular ballot if they provide proof with one of the following name change documents and complete the *Form 10L* in the Forms Binder:

- Court Order
- Certified Abstract of Marriage License (does not need to have both voter's former and new names)
- Other proof of legal name change that includes both the voter's former and new name (e.g., Divorce Decree)

Update on Clocking-in

We are introducing another **required** method of clocking-in during Monday Night and Tuesday Morning at your polling location. You will be required to clock-in using the ePB **AND** by signing the Payroll Card found in the *Special Instructions Bag* the VLM picks up along with their *Blue Ballot Bags*.

Please Return the Payroll Card in the Forms Binder. It will be three hole punched for your convenience. As Manager, it is your responsibility to ensure that every PEO present signs the card during the Monday Night Organizational Meeting, and checks the box confirming their attendance Monday night. Further, on Tuesday Morning, it is your responsibility to check the box confirming their attendance on Tuesday, Election Day. Both the Payroll Form and Payroll Card are new procedures introduced to aid in the payroll processing post-Election.

New Payroll Form!

Found in **Confirmation Packets** mailed to every PEO. Please be sure to read in full the brand-new Payroll Form found in your confirmation packet. If a PEO at your location has not returned their Payroll Form by Election Day, please collect the completed forms from them and return them in the Forms Binder. This form will help us confirm your information for payroll and introduces a new pilot program we are testing regarding paychecks. For PEO convenience, the Board of Elections will make the option of picking up your payroll check in person at the Board an option this Fall, 4 weeks after the Election.

New Page in Quick Guide to Help Out

Page 40 of the Quick Guide – handed out in class, and also available on our website – features a new graphic that summarizes what color button you need to press on the ePB for different kinds of voters.

Final Reminders:

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.

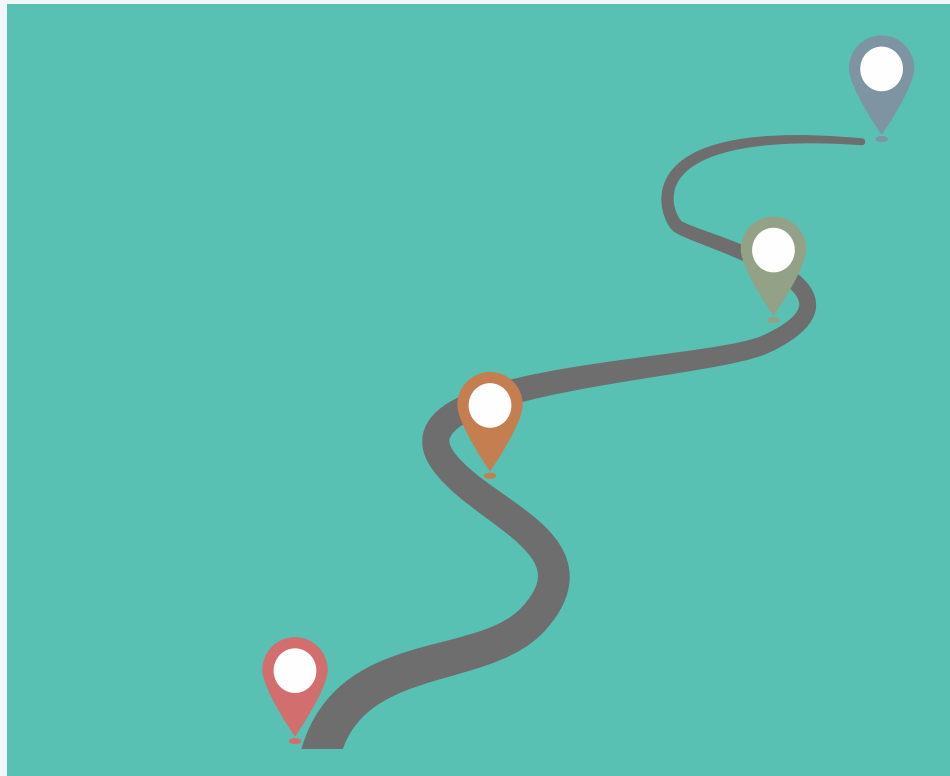
Curing Period: Only those provisional voters who have no ID, expired ID, or unacceptable ID are required to present valid ID at the Board of Elections within 4 days of the Election.

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 highly encouraged, and should take about an hour; there will be two calls, you only need to attend one. 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:

- 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-12pm. If a VLM cannot pick up the supplies, they need to contact their PEO coordinator and make arrangements.
- The list of PEOs 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 an E-mail a list of updated PEOs.



VLM: Monday Night

The following is a checklist of responsibilities unique to the VLM role. As the leader of your polling location, it is your duty to ensure that these items are checked off. Please call the Help Desk on Monday Night or Tuesday if you have any questions or concerns, and our team will help!

Monday Night Meeting Checklist:



- **TURN THE ROUTER ON, POWER UP EVERY ePB TO THE START SCREEN!**
- Check PEOs Training Completion Cards.
- If a PEO does not have one and reports to your location Monday Night, please call your PEO Supervisor directly
- Distribute Emergency Action Cards to PEOs.
- Make note of the Exits and decide on an evacuation route in case of an emergency.
- Ensure every PEO clocks in on both the ePB and the Payroll Card (found in the *Special Instructions Bag*).
- If any PEO has a Payroll Form that wasn't turned in at class or mailed back to the Board, collect and place in the Forms Binder.
- All other duties as assigned!

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.



VLM: Tuesday, Election Day



Tuesday Morning Election Day Checklist:

- Assign jobs to PEOs, ensuring bipartisan representation on key equipment/procedures
- Rotate jobs throughout Election Day, ensuring every PEO is involved in the process
- PLEASE keep your phones on and volume up throughout the day. The BOE or the Help Desk may try to reach you. 513-946-XXXX is a Board phone number trying to reach you – PLEASE pick up!
- All other duties as assigned

Tuesday Election Day: 5:30 am - 7:30 pm

- VLM, VLD, and all PEOs arrive at Polling Location at 5:30 AM.
- Set-up and Clock-in on the ePBs – follow steps in Quick Guide.
- Power up the Vscan & Access Station – follow steps in Quick Guide.
- Place signage indicating the location entrance & area outside the flags for campaigners.
- Open the polling location by 6:30 AM.
- 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: 7:30 pm

- 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(s)
- The VLM & VLD (or a PEO of the opposite party) ride together in the same car to their 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 PEOs 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 PEOs and voters will assemble if the building needs to be evacuated. All PEOs 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 PEOs during the Meeting. The Cards will tell each individual PEO 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 PEOs per Vscan at your location
 3. The *Blue Ballot Bag(s)* - 1 PEO per BBB at your location
 4. The *Blue Provisional and Unscanned Ballot Bag*
-

Each PEO 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 PEO 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 PEO 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 should 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. PEOs 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 *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.

Job Assignment Sheet

Use this page to make job assignments. When setting up and taking down equipment, always follow the one read, one do model, and always ensure bipartisan representation on starred tasks!

Monday Night: Follow the Monday Night Checklist in the QG

- TURN ON ROUTER, TURN ON EVERY ePB TO THE START SCREEN _____
- *Set up VAT, Clock-in on VAT, Clock-in on Payroll Card (New!) _____
- *Set up Ballot Box(es) & Vscans (do not power up!) _____
- *Set up Access Station: Access Writer + Printer (do not power up!) _____
- *Set up Voting Booths: _____
- Assign jobs for tomorrow morning: _____

Tuesday Morning – Election Day: Follow the Tuesday Morning Checklist in the QG

- *Set up VAT ePB, Clock-in on VAT, check attendance on Payroll Card (New!) _____
- *Set up Check-In ePBs _____
- *Power up and Open Polls on Vscan(s) _____
- *Power up and Open Polls on Access Station _____
- *Post signs inside and out, including the curbside sign _____

Tuesday – During the Day

- VAT ePB _____
- Assist VAT ePB/Pull Ballots _____
- Check-in ePB 1 _____
- Assist ePB 1/Pull Ballots _____
- Check in ePB 2 _____
- Assist ePB 2/Pull Ballots _____
- Direct voters on the floor _____

Election Night: Follow Tuesday Night Checklist

- *Close polls on Vscan(s) _____
- *Close polls on Access Station _____
- *Close polls on Check-in ePBs _____
- *Close polls on VAT ePB _____
- *Complete Ballot Accounting on VAT ePB _____
- *Pack Blue Ballot Bag (BBB) _____
- Pack supply box, remove signs, pack and lock caddy, pack voting booths _____

Evacuation Assignments:

- Vscan – White Box _____
- Black Ballot Box _____
- Blue Provisional and Unscanned Envelope Bag _____
- Red Emergency Bag & VAT ePB _____