



Results Reporting

The tabulation and reporting of election results is a complex process with many elements and quality controls. Here is a guide to understanding that process and how election results become official.

ELECTION NIGHT REPORTING

Results reported on election night are not official and must be verified.

MAIL VOTING

All mail ballots returned are scanned in the weeks leading up to and including Election Day. A report is produced tabulating these results and is reported after the polls close.



PRECINCT RESULTS

Precinct-level results are reported by the election officers. After they print result tapes from ballot scanners, they report the totals. These results are reviewed and uploaded or entered to the state website. Results from polling places arrive continuously for several hours after the polls close.



EARLY VOTING

At 7:00 pm on Election Day, the scanners from early voting are closed to produce results tapes. The digital drives from these scanners are uploaded to a tabulator that combines the results for reporting.



UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

All of these sources are reported on Election night as unofficial results. There are still steps to complete. The media often predicts winners, but some ballots and verification remain.

VERIFICATION PROCESS

In the final stage, all results are reviewed to verify accuracy before results are official.

- ✓ **CANVASS**
Election officers review official results tapes to ensure results are accurate.
- ✓ **RESULTS VALIDATION**
Staff verifies results, turnout, and precinct detail against state validation tools.
- ✓ **RISK-LIMITING AUDIT**
In general elections, the state conducts an audit to verify the accuracy of the results.
- ✓ **CERTIFICATION**
The Electoral Board reviews the results a final time and certifies the local election.

VOTES STILL BEING COUNTED

MAIL BALLOTS STILL ARRIVING

Mail ballots postmarked on Election Day can arrive until Friday after the election. These ballots are reviewed and tabulated.

PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

Ballots where the registration or voting status are unclear are reviewed by the Electoral Board. Accepted ballots are counted.

STATE CERTIFICATION

All state and federal results are reviewed and certified by the Virginia State Board of Elections.

