

Town of Bladensburg

INTERNAL PROCEDURES GUIDE

October 2025 Town Election

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2025 Town Election Timeline

Monday, July 21, 2025: Application packet materials are ready for candidates to be provided (12 weeks before election)

Friday, August 22, 2025, by 4:00 pm: To file as a Candidate: Submit a Candidate Certificate and Financial Disclosure Form to the Town Clerk's Office (45 days before election per Charter)

Friday, August 22, 2025, at 4:00 pm: Candidate Bios Due Where is this required

Monday, August 25, 2025: Absentee Ballot applications become available

Monday, August 25, 2025: Ballot information for the draft ballot is sent to the election machine/ballot vendor

Tuesday, August 26, 2025: Board of Supervisors of Elections Meeting 1

Thursday, August 28, 2025: The draft ballot was emailed to me for review

Friday, August 29, 2025: Ballots are approved and sent to print

Thursday, September 4, 2025: Absentee ballots are taken to the post office

Tuesday, September 9, 2025: Board of Supervisors of Elections Meeting 2

Monday, September 22, 2025, by 4:00 pm: Applications for absentee ballots must be received by the Town Clerk.

Monday, September 29, 2025, by 4:00 pm: Deadline to be a qualified write in candidate. Write in candidates must file a declaration of intent and required financial disclosure form.

Monday, October 6, 2025, by 7:00 pm: Deadline to vote for an Absentee Ballot

Monday, October 6, 2025: Town Election Date 7:00 am to 7:00 pm

Qualification of Candidates

Policy Statement:

The Town of Bladensburg Board of Supervisors of Elections (BOSOE) is responsible for promptly reviewing and approving required candidate submissions to ensure timely qualification of candidates. This policy details the responsibilities of the Town Clerk, Ethics Commission, BOSOE, and the Chair of BOSOE to streamline the review process for qualification of candidates, ensuring an open, fair, and well-run election.

Process:

1. Receipt of Candidate Package:

- o Upon receipt of a complete candidate package, the Town Clerk will date stamp the package on the business day received. The Town Clerk will notify the candidate that the forms have been received.

2. Notification of BOSOE and Ethics Commission:

- o The Town Clerk will then forward the Financial Disclosure forms to the Town Ethics Commission for review by email.
- o On the day of receipt, the Town Clerk will notify the BOSOE members and the Ethics Commission Chair by email that an application or multiple applications have been received.

3. Scheduling Review:

- o The Town Clerk will set a date for the Chair of BOSOE to meet and review the candidate submissions while notifying all BOSOE members of the scheduled meeting.
- o The Ethics Chair will set a date for review of the Financial Disclosure form(s) by the Ethics Commission.

4. Initial Document Review:

- o The Chair of BOSOE, the Town Clerk and any available BOSOE member will thoroughly review the Candidate Certificate and Financial Disclosure Form to determine if all blanks have been filled in and to ensure all materials are complete. The BOSOE review of the Financial Disclosure Form is preliminary only, with the in-depth review to be performed by the Ethics Commission. The Ethics Commission will thoroughly review the Financial Disclosure Form to ensure all required information has been provided. The Ethics Commission will notify the Clerk if any information is still required.

- o The review of the candidate forms will be performed as expeditiously as possible to allow candidates to provide additional information when requested. The candidate will be notified if any additional information is required to complete the forms.

5. Managing Incomplete Forms:

- o Upon receipt, if a required form has not been filed, or is found to be incomplete, the Town Clerk will promptly contact the candidate, specifying the missing information and the steps required to complete the form(s).
- o The Town Clerk will notify a candidate after the BOSOE and Ethics Commission reviews if there are any forms that are missing or incomplete.

6. Qualification:

- o Once the candidate's Candidate Certificate and Financial Disclosure forms are complete, the Chair of BOSOE will certify the candidate as qualified, and the candidate will be notified by the Town Clerk.

7. Ongoing Communication and Tracking:

- o Throughout the election process, the Town Clerk will keep BOSOE members informed of each candidate's status. A spreadsheet will be maintained detailing the date received, level of completeness, review date, and approval date for each candidate.

This policy ensures that all candidate submissions are reviewed efficiently, with clear communication between the Town Clerk, BOSOE, the Ethics Commission and the candidates, resulting in a transparent and accountable election process.

ABSENTEE BALLOT ISSUANCE

The Town Clerk must supervise the issuance of ballots.

1. Enter the voter's name and address into the Applications Received spreadsheet on the computer. Complete all fields.
 - a. Check for a different "Mail To" address and note in the spreadsheet.
2. The entry number in the spreadsheet becomes the tracking control number for this ballot.
 - a. The tracking control number is entered in two places:
 - i. Bottom of the application
 - ii. Lower right corner on the back of the #9 Return Envelope
3. Find the voter in the printed roster. Stamp the listing "Mail Ballot," and write the date.
4. Update the bottom of the Application to verify each step above.
5. Clip the Application to a complete Ballot Packet for the Town Clerk's review.

Ballot Packet: (Proposed)

- a. Mail out envelope (10)
 - b. Return envelope (9) with the tracking control number written in the lower right corner of the back of the envelope
 - c. Oath envelope (#6) –
 - d. Ballot
 - e. Instructions
 - f. Voter Assistance Affidavit
 - g. I Voted Sticker
 - h. Permanent Vote by Mail notice
6. Once the Town Clerk signs off, assemble and seal the ballot packet. Apply postage and set aside for personal delivery to the Post Office at the end of the day.

COLLECTION PROCEDURE:

PURPOSE: The Town of Bladensburg has developed the following procedures to document the internal operations and to note the steps that must be taken by staff during municipal elections.

Candidate Certification for this election will be available on July 21, 2025, and ballots will be mailed September 4, 2025. Collections from Drop Boxes and Post Office Box will begin on September 12, 2025. Collections are Monday-Friday at 3:00 pm.

Collections from Drop Boxes will end on October 6, 2025, at 7:00 pm

Collections from USPS on October 6, 2025, at 7:00 pm

The Chair of the BOSOE should swear in persons collecting from boxes.

Collections will be from the Ballot Drop Boxes:

- Ballot Box at Town Hall
 - Ballot Box at Community Center
1. The two-person team will begin their shift at Town Hall.
 - a. Town Clerk's office will record their start time.
 - b. Materials to be provided:
 - i. Security Seals for drop boxes
 - ii. Keys for drop boxes
 - iii. Scissors
 - iv. Calculator
 - v. Clipboard with one form:
 1. Ballot Collection Chain of Custody Log
 - vi. Pens
 - vii. Large rubber bands
 - viii. Small post-it notes pads
 - ix. One vinyl zippered bag for ballots – check to be sure bag is empty.
 2. The team will drive together and should go to each collection spot together.
 3. At ballot drop box:
 - a. Examine the security seal for evidence of tampering. If you see the “void” watermark on the seal, or any other sign of tamper, contact the Town Clerk's office immediately at Town Hall. If no tamper evidence is found, proceed.
 - b. Record the security seal number found on the box on the Ballot Chain of Custody log.
 - c. Break the seal and stick it on the back of the Ballot Chain of Custody log.
 - d. Unlock the drop box, remove the contents. Complete the appropriate line of the Ballot Collection Chain of Custody Log with the number of ballots collected at each location. Wrap a rubber band around the ballots collected and use a sticky note to label with the location. Place the ballots in the zippered Ballot Bag.
 - e. Close and lock the ballot box and apply a new security seal. Record the seal number on the Ballot Chain of Custody log.
 4. When collections are complete, return to the Town Hall and bring everything to the Town Clerk. The Clerk will check the number against the Tracking Control Number list. If the oath is not signed, the Clerk will notify the voter that their ballot is not valid and how to correct this issue either through signing the ballot at Town Hall or voting on Election Day.

Example of Logs:

Town of Bladensburg
 Ballot Collection Chain of Custody Log
 (Use a separate log to track applications)

Date: _____

Collection Location	Security Seal found upon arrival – remove and place on back of form	# of Ballots Collecte d	Security Seal left upon departure	Officia l 1	Officia l 2
Box #1 Town Hall					
Box #2 Community Center					
Other:					
TOTAL BALLOTS COLLECTED					

Count Verified By: _____ Date/Time: _____

Ballots Sorted and Scanned By: _____ Date/Time: _____

WHEN THE COLLECTION STAFF RETURNS

With the Collection Team present, the Town Clerk’s staff will reconcile the contents of each vinyl bag with the collection logs.

1. Count the number of ballots in the vinyl bag and compare it to the number on the Ballot Custody Log. Reconcile any discrepancy from the staff count. The Town Clerk will sign the log to validate the count.

RECEIVING AND SECURING BALLOTS RECEIVED

Purpose: This procedure is for Town staff receiving mail or Ballot Dropbox and how these will be secured at Town Hall for the BOSOE inspection for the Election

Procedures for Staff:

1. Separate the ballots into Wards.
2. Scan the ballot into the mail out tab of the excel spreadsheet to pull up the voter (*this would be included if we use a vendor for envelopes*)
3. Mark the voter Ballot Received and the date
4. Wrap ballots from each ward with a rubber band, attach a post-it with the date, and secure the ballots in the proper bin/glass voting box/ or locked file cabinet.
5. Assure the area is secure – i.e., lock the file cabinet drawer.
6. The ballots shouldn't be touched again until Pre-Processing by the Board of Election Supervisors.