



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
BUREAU OF ELECTIONS  
LANSING

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 5/13/2020  
TO: County Clerks, Election Directors and Staff  
FROM: Michigan Department of State, Bureau of Elections  
SUBJECT: Release of Voting Equipment

The Board of State Canvassers completed its canvass of the March 10, 2020 presidential primary election on April 29, 2020. In a memo dated April 1, 2020, the Bureau released security of materials in jurisdictions with a May 5 election only.

**CONDUCT OF POST-ELECTION AUDITS:** We are currently conducting a state-wide Risk Limiting Audit pilot. We expect local jurisdictions will begin retrieving ballots on May 18 and that the audit will be completed by May 29.

The security of ballots and election equipment is released as follows:

***Ballots, programs and related materials:*** The security of all optical scan ballots, programs, test decks, accuracy test results, edit listings and any other related materials is released as of May 18, 2020. If your jurisdiction has been selected to pull one or more ballots, the ballots of the selected precinct must remain under original seal in an approved ballot container until the ballot is pulled as part of the Risk Limiting Audit pilot. After the selected ballot is pulled and reported, all voted ballots may be secured in a ballot bag for the 22-month federal retention period.

***E-Pollbook laptops and flash drives:*** The EPB software and associated files must be deleted from all devices by the seventh calendar day following the final canvass and certification of the election (May 6, 2020) unless the deletion of the data has been stayed by an order of the court or the Secretary of State.

**FEDERAL BALLOT RETENTION REQUIREMENT:** If the office of President appears on the ballot, federal law requires that all documents relating to the election -- including optical scan ballots and the programs used to tabulate optical scan ballots -- be retained for 22 months. To comply with the requirement, the Bureau of Elections recommends that optical scan ballots and the programs relating to federal elections be stored in sealed ballot bags in a secure place during the 22-month retention period. The documents subject to the federal retention requirement must not be transferred to ballot bags for extended retention until after they are released under Michigan election law as detailed in this memo.

**Questions?**

If you have any questions, please contact this office via email at [Elections@Michigan.gov](mailto:Elections@Michigan.gov), or by phone at (517) 335-3234 or (800) 292-5973.