

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

The Calling Method

The “calling method” is a hand-count process where individual teams, preferably bipartisan, read aloud, verify and record votes, ensuring accuracy by comparing independent tally sheets for each contest.

While most jurisdictions in the United States have moved away from hand-counting as the primary method of tabulation, many jurisdictions use it to conduct post-election tabulation audits and hand recounts. In these jurisdictions, teams use a variety of procedures and forms to manually tally votes cast in a specific contest or a subset of contests on a small portion of the voted ballots. Next, they compare those hand-counted results to the machine-counted results.

SUPPLIES

- Tables and chairs for each team
- Tally sheets
- Pencils with erasers or pens with ink colors other than blue or black
- Rubber finger tips
- Finger moisteners
- Voter Intent Guide

METHOD

In the calling method, hand-count teams typically have four members. No more than two members of each team should have the same political party affiliation. Two team members with different party affiliations read the ballots; they are called the ballot readers. And two team members with different party affiliations separately record the vote tallies; they are called the ballot recorders. The vote tallies are then compared and, if they match, the process continues to the next contest or batch of ballots.

- 1.** One ballot reader reads the name of the person who received a vote on the first ballot, while the second ballot reader — or verifier — observes and verifies that the first ballot reader announced the correct name.
- 2.** The two ballot recorders separately mark their respective tally sheets to indicate a vote for the candidate called by the ballot reader.
- 3.** At various intervals, the two ballot recorders' tally sheets are compared to verify they have the same counts.

If your jurisdiction allows write-in votes (and segregates the ballots that contain write-in votes), be sure to locate those ballots and include them in the hand-count tally.