2023 Annual Virginia Election Retrospective & Look Ahead

March 6, 2024

★ VIRGINIA ★
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

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Executive Summary

Following each November General Election since 2018, the Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT) has published a post-election report to create a historical record of the election. In producing the reports, ELECT's goal is to provide transparency in its efforts to continually improve the administration of elections in the Commonwealth and to showcase the tremendous joint effort of the State Board of Elections (SBE), ELECT staff, general registrars and their staffs, local electoral boards, and officers of election that results in accurate, fair, open, and secure elections in the Commonwealth.

This report includes key stakeholder perspectives about the 2023 General Election (also referred to as "2023 Election" or "Election" throughout this report) through incorporating data from an ELECT post-election survey of Virginia's general registrar community.

This report highlights several areas, including law and regulatory changes impacting the administration of elections, election participation statistics, elections administration tasks and compliance metrics, special topics related to the 2023 Election, and reflections by the general registrar community of both the Election and election administration generally.

Overview

The information below provides a very high-level overview of the 2023 election as a whole and key takeaways from this report.

2023 General Election by the Numbers

The 2023 General Election provided voters with one of the most extensive ballots during a traditional general election cycle due to every General Assembly seat and a significant number of local offices being listed.

- 41% of approximately 6,164,314 registered voters participated in the 2023 election.
- There were 2,544,818 ballots cast.
- A total of 1,775 offices were on the ballot with a total of 2,563 candidates.
- 66% of ballots were cast on Election Day.
- 33% of ballots were cast by mail or in-person during early voting.
- 1% of ballots cast were provisional ballots (including same day registrants).

Key Takeaways

In general, there are significant changes, improvements, and processes to highlight that occurred in 2023 such as:

- A new Election Night Reporting System (ENR) which translated election results into Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese for the first time in Virginia history.
- ELECT provided 18 different categories of trainings to localities in 2023.
- General registrars and ELECT staff collaboratively redesigned the provisional ballot envelope.
- Increased training and compliance regarding accessibility and language translation.
- An overall reduction in call center inquiries and online complaints from voters.

For general registrars, staffing, support, software, and training are all major concerns in 2023 and beyond. Below are some key takeaways based on 115 general registrars' responses to ELECT's 2023 General Election Survey:

- Most elections offices in the Commonwealth work with limited staff; 66% of respondents reported either one full-time staff person or none at all (other than the general registrar).
- Only 49% of respondents agree that their office has sufficient funding in general to do their jobs well, with a lack of adequate human resources being a significant concern.
- 51% of respondents indicated that their office does not have sufficient physical space.
- The new ENR system was ranked as the #1 or #2 challenge for 76% of respondents.

General Registrar Concerns: Looking Ahead to 2024

ELECT estimates that the Commonwealth will need approximately 20,000 Officers of Election to staff the 2024 elections. Additionally, election officials are concerned about:

- Mail delays and ballot delivery errors resulting from USPS staffing issues.

- Mis/disinformation and partisan pressure.
- The safety and mental and physical health of election workers.
- Adequate funding, staffing (such as OOEs), and space for elections.

Introduction

Over the last four years, election administrators in Virginia have implemented many new processes and procedures that fundamentally changed the way Virginians vote. These changes: significantly expanded early voting; established automatic voter registration, same-day voter registration, and preregistration for persons 16 years of age or older; repealed photo ID requirements; permitted ranked choice voting for specific local elections; and established the Virginia Voting Rights Act. With the conclusion of the 2023 General Election, Virginia election officials have now completed a four-year cycle of elections conducted under many of these new laws.

Unlike many states, Virginia holds off-year elections, which is a general election that takes place in the United States when neither a presidential nor midterm election is held. Virginia is one of five states that elect their governors and one of four that elects their state legislators during odd years. Outside of special elections, Virginia election officials are at a minimum conducting two elections on average a year: one primary and one general with the prep work for actual voting starting months before Election Day and post-election duties extending to weeks after.

Virginia's Four-Year Election Cycle

With this report, ELECT seeks to not only reflect on the 2023 General Election, but to analyze the cumulative impact these changes have had on localities and their staff moving into 2024.
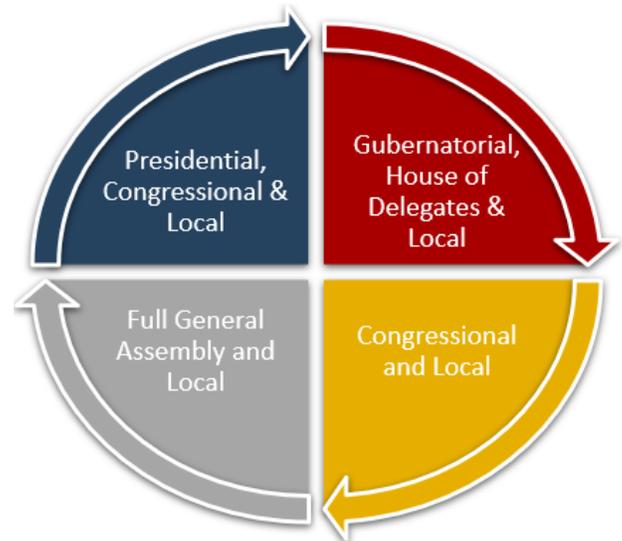
Preparing for the 2023 General Election

As Virginia has a major election every year, election administrators in Virginia are perpetually preparing to conduct elections. This means that every year local election administrators are completing essential tasks, including recruiting and training officers of election, reviewing candidate qualification filings, overseeing procurement and certification of voting systems, administering the absentee ballot process, administering 45 days of early voting, ensuring polling locations are established properly and have all necessary resources, reporting election night results, and assisting in the cavass process. Additionally, election administrators must ensure any new legislative requirements are implemented. While other state's election officials enjoy off years where other tasks can be accomplished and processes finetuned, Virginia election officials

must accomplish these things on top of a continuous cycle of preparing for and administering elections.

Timeline of the 2023 General Election

ELECT and the elections community have many responsibilities to fulfill both in the lead up to Election Day as well as in the weeks following. Below is a condensed timeline highlighting some of the work and responsibilities that go into making a general election run smoothly and efficiently.

June 20 2023
Primary Election; Filing deadline for General Election.

August 2023
ELECT reviews and approves locality ballot proofs.

September 22 2023
Early in-person voting begins and absentee ballots are mailed

October 31 2023
Mandatory date for preprocessing of absentee ballots (additional preprocessing optional)

Effective date for implementation of most new legislation.
July 1 2023

Locality prints ballots and completes Logic and Accuracy testing on voting systems for early voting
September 2023

Registration deadline to vote regular ballot; same-day registration available through Election Day
October 17 2023

November 4 2023
Early voting ends

November 7 2023
Election Day

November 10 2023
Deadline to receive marked absentee ballots postmarked by Election Day

November 15 - 27 2023
Risk-limiting audit process conducted

Localities certify Logic and Accuracy testing of voting systems to ELECT
November 6 2023

Canvass begins; research conducted on provisional voters
November 8 2023

Deadline for local electoral boards to certify election
November 14 2023

State Board of Elections certifies election
December 4 2023

Key Legislative Changes

The General Assembly passed several legislative changes during the 2023 Regular Session, signed into law by Governor Youngkin, that impacted elections administration for the 2023 Election. Some election laws directly impacted voters with changes to absentee voting, voter registration, and the timing for certain special elections. Much of the passed legislation, however, had a less direct impact on voters and included changes to campaign finance reporting requirements, recount standards for multi-seat offices, and removal processes for election officials. This report does not discuss all the election-related laws that passed during the 2023 Regular General Assembly Session but provides overviews of the most consequential legislation that impacted the November election. A comprehensive summary of all 2023 election law changes may be found on ELECT's website.[1]

Absentee Ballots

Absentee voters that vote by mail saw the biggest change in their election processes following the passage of HB 1948. This bill removed the witness signature requirement for absentee ballots and replaced it with the requirement that a voter provide the last four digits of their social security number and their birth year. If a voter attested that they were not issued a social security number when they registered to vote, they are permitted to provide their Voter ID in place of the last four digits of a social security number.

Additionally, the State Board of Elections formally adopted a policy regarding the requirements for reporting central absentee precinct results for early, in-person votes separately from mailed ballots, and for reporting absentee ballots cast by precinct due to the passage of HB 2266.[2] Prior to this statutory requirement, ELECT provided localities with general standards, guidance, and training for absentee reporting.

Protected Voter Status

As it pertains to voter registration, the passage of identical bills HB 2024 and SB 1310 permitted active or retired magistrates to register as a protected voter. Pursuant to §24.2-418 of the Code of Virginia, protected voters are authorized to have their mailing address furnished on lists provided for public inspection in lieu of their residential address. This made no additional changes to voter registration processes; however, the voter registration form was redesigned and approved by the State Board of Elections (SBE) to reflect these changes.

Recounts

Last, HB 2324 required the State Board of Elections to develop recount standards and instructions specifically for elections where more than one candidate can be elected to an office.

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[1] Virginia Department of Elections, Election Law, Election Law and Reference, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/election-law/
[2] Virginia Department of Elections, Election Law, State Board of Election Policies, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/absentee-voting/cap/CAP_August-15_SBE_final.pdf

The State Board of Elections approved guidance documents related to recounts to incorporate these updates, which may be found on ELECT's website.[3]

ELECT Trainings

As the elections landscape in Virginia continues to change and expand, it is essential that all election officials, whether they are new or continuing their service, are prepared and informed to serve voters.

To prepare election officials for the 2023 elections, ELECT updated or developed 18 different types of trainings. These trainings covered topics such as election security standards, same-day registration, Virginia legislative changes, officer of election requirements, election observer standards, and the new Election Night Reporting (ENR) system. ELECT also provided updates to general registrars' certification curriculum and the annual training for Electoral Board members. Trainings are provided online through ELECT's Learning Management System (LMS), virtually through webinars, or in person depending on the type of course.

One of the largest training events organized by ELECT in partnership with the Voter Registrars Association of Virginia (VRAV) is the annual Virginia Elections Workshop (VEW). The VEW event is held as part of the SBE's certification program for general registrars and brings staff from all over the Commonwealth together to discuss a series of election related topics. The 2023 VEW event was held on July 20th and included the following agenda topics:

- How to Keep Calm and Get Along on Election Night;
- Life Cycle of a Mail-In Ballot;
- Voter Accessibility;
- USPS Presentation;
- Election Night Reporting (ENR) Lessons Learned;
- Freedom of Information Act Requests; and,
- Ballot Custody.

Feedback from multiple surveys has continued to inform and improve the curriculum of ELECT's training. ELECT is continuing to reevaluate how trainings are provided to local election officials to ensure they can learn and adapt to any changes required to administer smooth and successful elections. Several trainings have been planned in preparation of 2024 both in response to emerging topics in election administration as well as proposed legislative changes.

Voter Engagement: Media Campaign

This year, ELECT developed a 5-week statewide Voter Education awareness campaign that focused on encouraging participation in the November election. The media campaign, which ran from October 2 to November 7, leveraged online, radio, and print channels to reach English speakers, as well as Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese speakers where possible. This was the first year ELECT provided radio ads in Korean.

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[3] Virginia Department of Elections, Formswarehouse, Recount, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/formswarehouse/recount/

A summary of ELECT's outreach efforts is bulleted below. The creative components of the 2023 Voter Education Campaign may be viewed in Appendix B.

Broadcast Media (Radio)

- Broadcast media markets included Washington D.C., Richmond/Petersburg, Hampton Roads, Tri-Cities, Roanoke/Lynchburg, Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, Winchester, and Fredericksburg.
- Rural radio ran in 16 markets defined as rural by the Office of Management and Budget.
- Spanish radio stations ran in Richmond and D.C. and a Korean radio station ran in D.C.
- A paid partnership with Radio One personality Clovia Lawrence was launched in the Richmond-metro market to remind listeners about key voting dates and deadlines this year.
- Top streaming audio platforms Spotify, AudioGo, and Amazon were also utilized.

Print Media

- A sponsored advertorial focused on what Virginians need to know about this election ran in 18 major daily newspapers.

Social Media

- Social media graphics were developed and executed organically on ELECT's social platforms throughout the campaign.
- A communications toolkit with social shareables was distributed to ELECT partners. All toolkit materials were translated into Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese.

Media Analytics

The 2023 Voter Education campaign garnered over 48.2 million impressions across radio, print, and online platforms, leading to 178,464 clicks to the website for an overall online click-through rate of 0.56% from October 2 - November 7, 2023.

- Online generated 32,090,719 impressions (this includes digital, mobile, audio, and website).
- Radio generated 15,413,145 impressions (of measured markets).
- Print generated 780,540 impressions.

Voter Education Impressions

780,540, 2%

15,413,145, 32%

32,090,719, 66%

- Online
- Radio
- Print
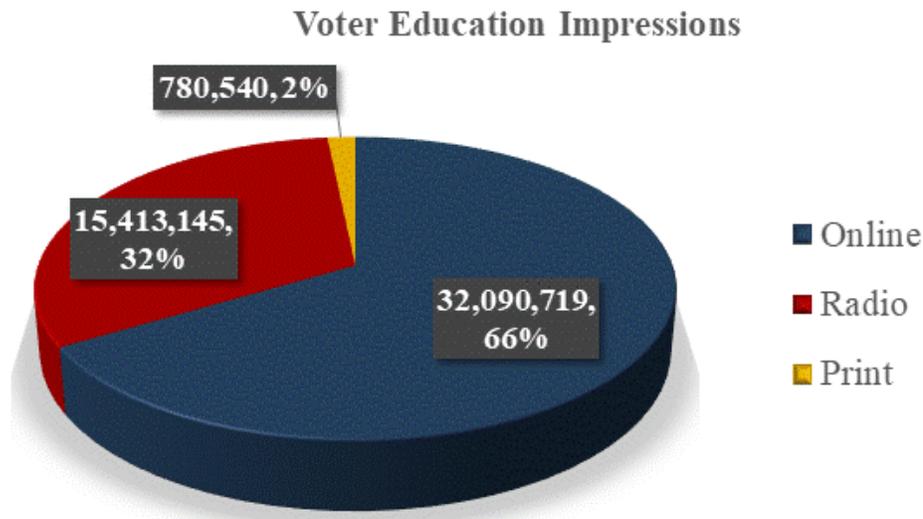
Accessibility

There are numerous provisions in state and federal law related to accessibility that impact election administration. ELECT prioritizes not only complying with these provisions but exploring ways in which elections can be more accessible for all Virginians. This section provides an overview of some of these efforts.

Language Translations

Under both state and federal code, elections are to be accessible for voters with disabilities and voters who may be part of a language minority group.[4] As such, ELECT has increased efforts to ensure that all qualified voters are able to participate in the electoral process.

In Virginia, there are only two languages that must have translated voter materials, Spanish and Vietnamese; ELECT voluntarily translates such materials into a third language, Korean.[5] During

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[4] United State Code 42 U.S.C. §12131 et seq., Americans with Disabilities Act. Code of Virginia §51.5-43, §24.2-128.

[5] Code of Virginia §24.2-128. U.S. Department of Justice, Voting Rights Act Amendments of 2006, Determinations Under Section 203, Federal Register Vol. 86 No. 233, https://www.justice.gov/crt/page/file/1460416/dl?inline , December 8, 2021.

2023, ELECT utilized Google Translate for the first time to ensure more content was translated than ever before and that translated content remained current on the website. Additionally, Virginia election results were provided in multiple languages, with results translated into Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese, for the first-time using ELECT's new ENR System.

Web Content Accessibility

ELECT has also made strides in ensuring that its website is more accessible. ELECT IT staff has ensured that ELECT's website content is more screen reader friendly and continuously monitors the website for improvements. ELECT addressed 42 accessibility issues on its main website as well as 31 accessibility issues with Citizen Portal, the online portion of ELECT's website that allows citizens to update and view their voter registration information.[6] ELECT's website currently meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level 2 AA, which is considered the standard for website accessibility.[7] The Commonwealth of Virginia and ELECT use a tool called *Siteimprove* to measure website accessibility, user experience, analytics, and search engine optimization. ELECT's main website scored a 90.4% accessibility rating, which is higher than the industry benchmark of 87.5% and an increase of 15% over the last year; ELECT's Citizen Portal received a 91.6% accessibility rating, a 4% increase over the last year.[8]

Polling Place Accessibility

Working with the disAbility Law Center of Virginia (dLCV), ELECT made great progress in increasing awareness regarding issues for voters with disabilities and increasing compliance with both state and federal law. In 2022, dLCV surveyed 500 polling places and identified several areas of improvement including better curbside voting and accessible parking signage and additional tweaks that would make polling places remain as accessible as possible.[9] Specifically, dLCV noted, "approximately 80% of the sites [surveyed] had appropriate curbside voting signs, 82.5% had accessible parking spots closest to the door, 87% had an accessible pathway to the door, and 79% had accessible doors that could be opened with a closed fist."[10] In response to this survey, ELECT offered accessibility training to general registrars and Electoral Boards at the annual VEW training event held in July of 2023. Additionally, ELECT updated its accessibility guidance materials such as Chapter 5 Accessibility of the GREB Handbook and Checklist for Polling Place Accessibility, and the ELECT 310-C ADA Compliance Confirmation Form. [11][12] ELECT now requires local Electoral Boards to certify to ELECT annually that they have

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[6] Virginia Department of Elections, Citizen Portal, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/citizen-portal/
[7] World Wide Web Consortium, Web Accessibility Initiative, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/, December 11, 2008.
[8] Virginia Department of Elections, Web Accessibility Snapshot.
[9] disAbility Law Center of Virginia, How Accessible were the Polls Really in 2022?, https://www.dlcv.org/voting-report-2023, April 20, 2023.
[10] *Id*.
[11] Virginia Department of Elections, General Registrar and Electoral Board Handbook Chapter 5 Accessibility, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/grebhandbook/2023-updates/5_Accessibility_final_(2023).pdf
[12] Virginia Department of Elections, FormsWarehouse, Accessibility, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/formswarehouse/accessibility/

inspected their polling places for accessibility compliance and that polling places are accessible.[13]

These efforts proved effective in 2023 as dLCV noted in their survey of 579 polling places during the 2023 election cycle.[14] In the areas noted above, 92% of sites surveyed had appropriate curbside voting signs, 87% had accessible parking spots closest to the door, 88% had an accessible pathway to the door, and 86% had accessible doors that could be opened with a closed fist.[15] ELECT is also partnering with the disAbility Law Center to provide additional training at ELECT's annual VEW training event in the July of 2024.

dLCV Survey of Polling Places in 2022 and 2023
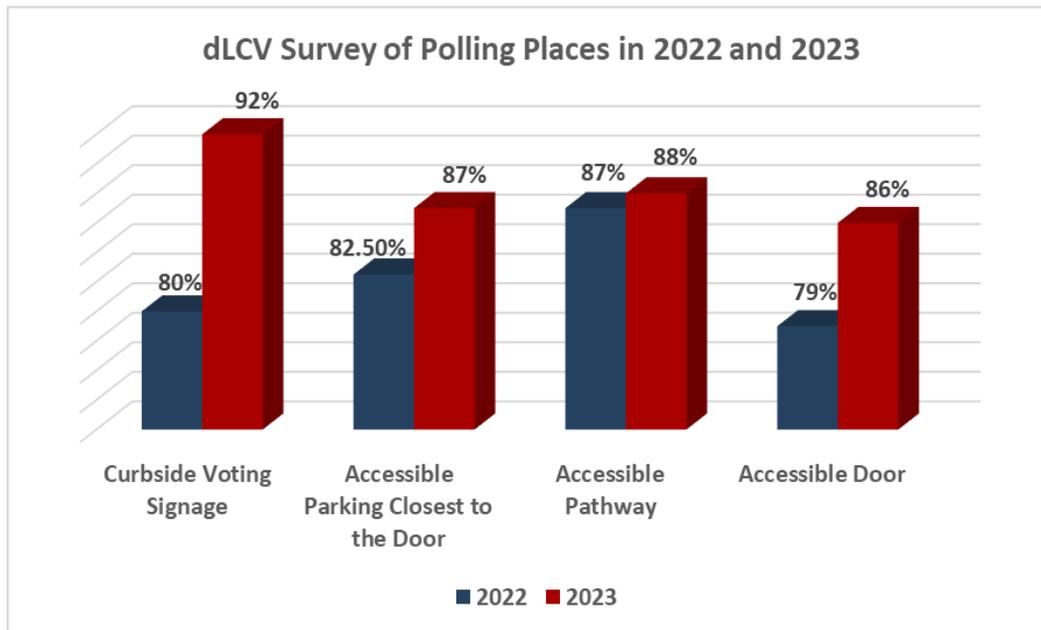
While there are always ways to improve accessibility, ELECT feels confident that voters will find their polling places and ELECT's website more accessible in 2024. ELECT will continue to monitor accessibility and language compliance and work with stakeholders in the elections, language minority, and disability communities to ensure equal access to the ballot.

New Initiatives

New Election Night Reporting (ENR) System
In 2023, ELECT rolled out a new ENR System which transformed how election results are presented. This system improves ELECT's website user interface and experience by providing:

- An interactive map with displays for specific localities participating in a particular race;
- A search bar where users can look for specific candidates or contests;
- A function that allows user to follow results; and,

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[13] Virginia Department of Elections, General Registrar and Electoral Board Handbook Chapter 5 Accessibility, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/grebhandbook/2023-updates/5_Accessibility_final_(2023).pdf
[14] disAbility Law Center of Virginia, 2023 Polling Place Survey to be published on disAbility Law Center of Virginia's website at https://www.dlcv.org/
[15] *Id*.

- The option to toggle different voting methods to display ballot totals, including absentee by precinct results.

This was the first time in the history of Virginia that election results were provided in multiple languages, with results translated into Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese. The new ENR also increased the accuracy of Election Night results by conducting automatic comparisons between votes cast, ballots cast, voter turnout, precinct totals and summary totals. This internal data validation allows for localities to immediately identify any inconsistencies in their reporting, while reviewing and certifying their results.

The planning phase for the new ENR went from June 2022 through December 2022, and the implementation phase of the project began in early January 2023. Internal ELECT ENR testing occurred throughout March, April, and May of 2023 with localities participating in testing for the March 28th Special Election, as well as in late April, May, and June for deployment in the June 20th Primary Elections. Additionally, two recorded webinar trainings were conducted on April 27 and May 11 for locality users and posted on ELECT's LMS.

After feedback from localities following the June primary elections, additional product requirements and features were developed into the System. Three recorded trainings were conducted from July to October to respond to locality feedback and guide locality users through the new system. Those recordings, along with updated guidance documents were posted on the LMS for locality reference and the updated ENR was deployed for the 2023 Election.

Redesigned Provisional Envelope
Same Day Registration (SDR) was first available to voters in 2022 General Election. During the 21 days where registration records are closed prior to an election, SDR allows voters to complete a voter registration application and vote a provisional ballot. The use of provisional ballots is necessary for the SDR process due to the administrative delay in entering registration information into VERIS and the need to verify that an SDR voter did not vote in multiple locations. In the 2022 Post-Election Report, general registrars overwhelmingly listed SDR as one of the top challenges in administering the election, with over 75% of respondents ranking it as their first or second top challenge.[16] The challenges related to SDR included larger than expected use of SDR (especially in localities with a university) and the cumbersome nature of processing SDR voters.

In early 2023, ELECT convened a work group of general registrars to explore ways in which the SDR process could be improved. The group divided into two areas of focus: training and forms. The training group focused on the pain points of the process and identified areas where additional guidance was required. The forms group recommended a new provisional envelope as a measure to expedite the SDR process. Previously, SDR voters were required to fill out a voter registration application and the information required on the provisional envelope. This requirement for duplicative information added unnecessary time to the process and made it more

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[16] Virginia Department of Elections, 2022 General Election Retrospective, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/2022-Post-Election-Report_FINAL.3.3.2022.pdf

likely that voters would miss required information on either the application or the envelope. It also created additional paperwork in the polling place. A method was needed to streamline the process. The workgroup redesigned the provisional envelope to contain the voter registration application on one side and the more traditional elements on the reverse.[17] This would require SDR voters to only fill out the voter registration side of the envelope.

Although ELECT expected some challenges with changes to the provisional envelope and the resulting adjustments to the process, overall, the new envelope was well received. Further discussion of the implementation of the new envelope and the experience of general registrars and officers of election can be found in the *Frequently Discussed Topics in Election Administration* section.

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[17] See Appendix C.

2023 General Election: By the Numbers

With the entire General Assembly and many local and constitutional offices up for election, the 2023 General Election had the most offices on the ballot of the four-year election cycle. However, without federal and statewide races on the ballot, this type of election generally sees lower voter turnout. This section provides statistics and information about the 2023 General Election. Additions to reporting requirements in recent years, such as precinct-level reporting, have led to more complex data entry processes for localities. This may account for slight variations in data from different sources at ELECT, but such variations do not impact the results of any contest.

Contests and Candidates

While there were no statewide or federal contests in 2023, it was an important year for Virginia as every seat in the General Assembly was on the ballot in addition to many local offices including Clerk of Court, which only comes up for election once every eight years. A total of 1,775 offices were on the ballot last November. This was the first election following redistricting and a historic number of retirements from the General Assembly, which amounted to a loss of over 500 combined years of institutional knowledge.
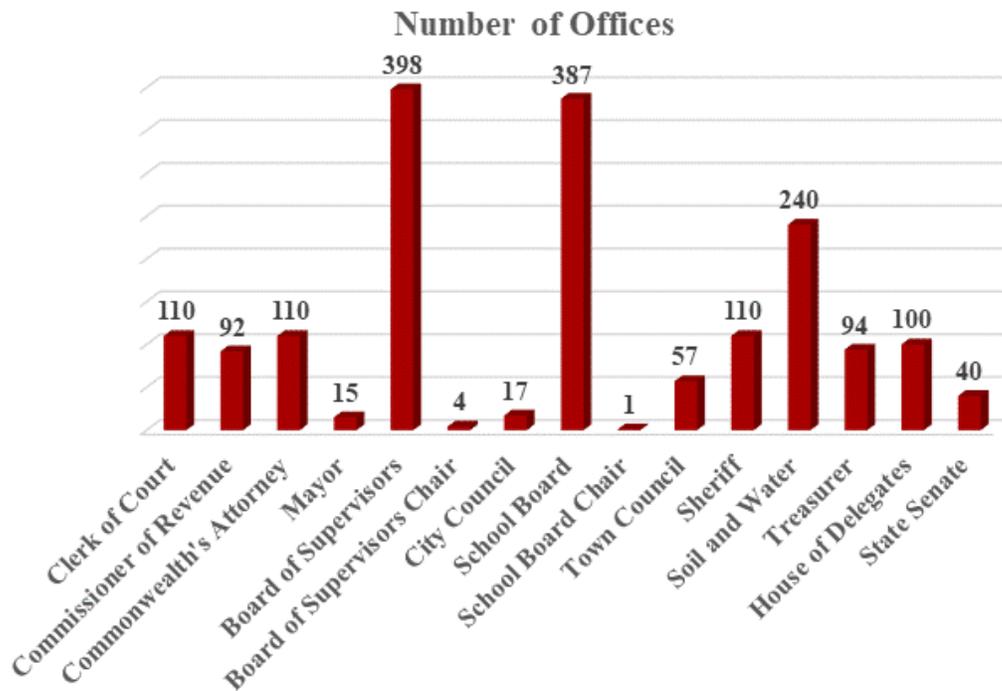
Among the 1,775 offices on the ballot for the 2023 Election, 2,563 candidates qualified to participate in the election. Comparatively in 2019, which similarly also featured the entire General Assembly on the ballot as well as many local contests, there were 2,478 candidates, making 2023 in many ways one of the largest elections held in Virginia in recent years in terms

of candidate participation.[18] The chart below outlines the number of candidates by office for both the Virginia General Assembly races and local contests.

Number of Candidates
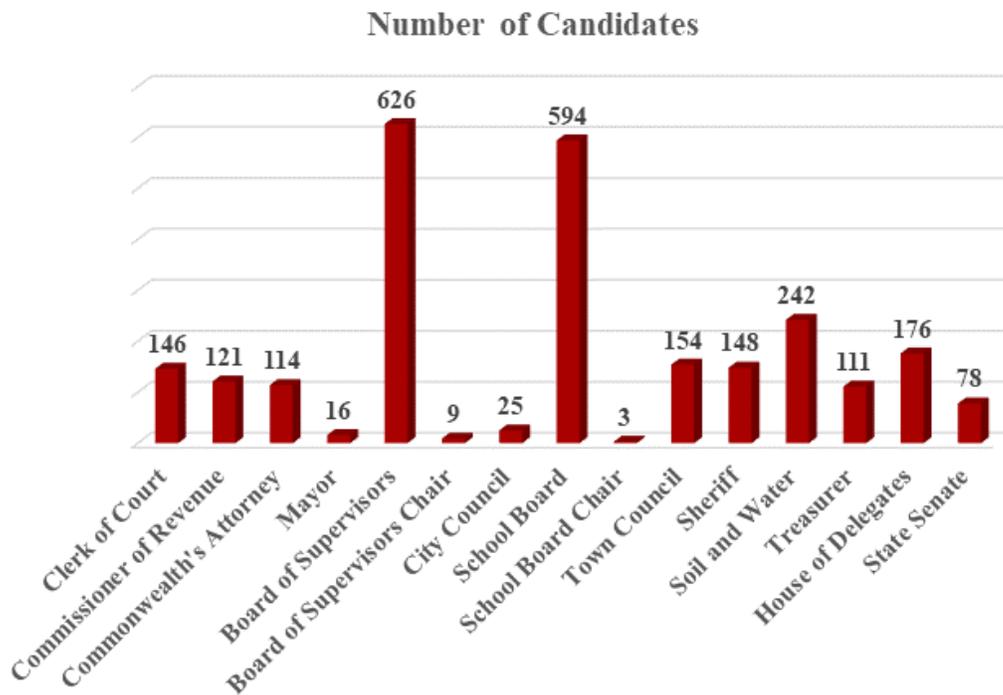
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[18] Virginia Department of Elections, 2019 Post-Election Report,
https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/Post-Election-Report_FINAL.1.24..22docx.pdf

Voting Population

Below is a chart that looks at voter registration holistically throughout the last five years. As of December 31, 2023, the Commonwealth has 6,164,314 registered voters. The numbers represented below includes both active voters as well as those voters who were flagged as inactive following the federally mandated National Change of Address (NCOA) confirmation mailings.

It is important to note an inactive voter status has no effect on a voter's ability to vote in any given election. Any voter-initiated action, such as updating their registration, voting, or requesting an absentee ballot, moves a voter from an inactive to active status at any point during the year. In general, the number of registered voters continues to increase each year.

Registered Voters 2019-2023

Year	Registered Voters
2019	5,628,035
2020	5,975,696
2021	5,959,692
2022	6,132,331
2023	6,164,314
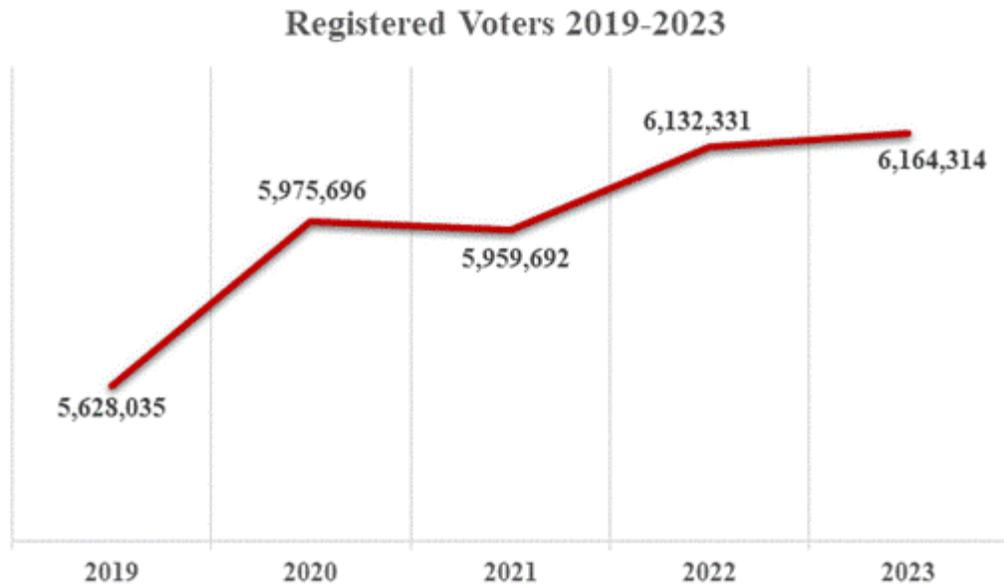
[19]

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[19] Virginia Department of Elections, Registration/Turnout Reports, Summary of Virginia Registration and Turnout Statistics, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/resultsreports/registrationturnout-statistics/

New Registrations

The number of new registrants has declined since 2020, despite a brief spike in 2022 which coincided with the enactment of Same Day Registration as well as pre-registration of 16-year-olds. As of December 2024, 1,760 individuals were pre-registered to vote, meaning they are at least 16 but will not be 18 before the next general election.[20] To clarify, pre-registered voters are not reflected in the new registrant statistics *until* they become eligible to vote. When comparing 2023 new registrant data to 2019, a like year in terms of contests, ELECT saw about 17,801 less new registrations despite the *total number of registered voters* continuing to increase across the last four-years along with population gains. Comparatively, ELECT also saw about 1.44% less voter turnout in 2023 as opposed to 2019 (*see Voter Participation* section). In combination, it may be inferred that voter enthusiasm and engagement was less in 2023 than in the 2019 election. In 2024, ELECT expects to see an increase in new registrants to coincide with the federal elections featured on the ballot.

New Registrants By Year

426,508 (2020)
266,528 (2019)
258,358 (2021)
276,497 (2022)
248,727 (2023)

[21]

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[20] Virginia Department of Elections, 2023 Registration Statistics, December Statistics, Monthly Pre-Registration County by Locality, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/registration-statistics/2023/12/pdf/Monthly_Registrant_Count_By_Locality_For_PreRegistration_2024_01_01_053845.pdf
[21] Virginia Department of Elections, Archived Registration Statistics, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/resultsreports/registration-statistics/

Voter Participation

2023 saw similar turnout to 2019 with 41% of registered voters participating in the election and 2,544,818 ballots cast. This off-off year election typically sees the lowest turnout in a four-year cycle as there is not one statewide race on the ballot. Turnout in the chart below is represented as a percentage and defined by the number of ballots cast divided by *both* active and inactive voters. Ballots cast refers to the total number of ballots counted towards the total results of an election (see Appendix A for an explanation of commonly used terms.)

Voter Turnout Percentage

Year	Turnout
2019	42.40%
2020	75.08%
2021	54.90%
2022	49.28%
2023	40.96%

[22]
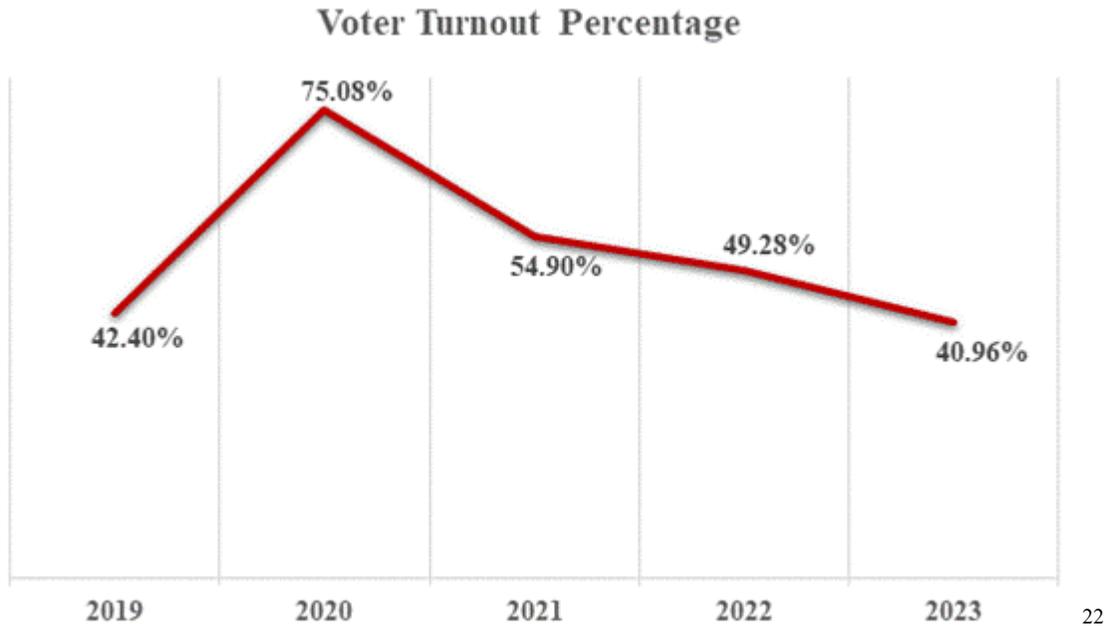
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[22] Virginia Department of Elections, Registration/Turnout Reports,
https://www.elections.virginia.gov/resultsreports/registrationturnout-statistics/

When comparing 2023 to other like election years, both 2011 and 2015 saw less than 30% of registered voters turnout. 2019 saw a significant increase in voter turnout at 42%, which remained relatively consistent in 2023 with 40.96% of registered voters participating in the election.

Voter Turnout Percentage:
General Assembly Election Years

28.61% 29.10% 42.40% 40.96%

2011   2015   2019   2023
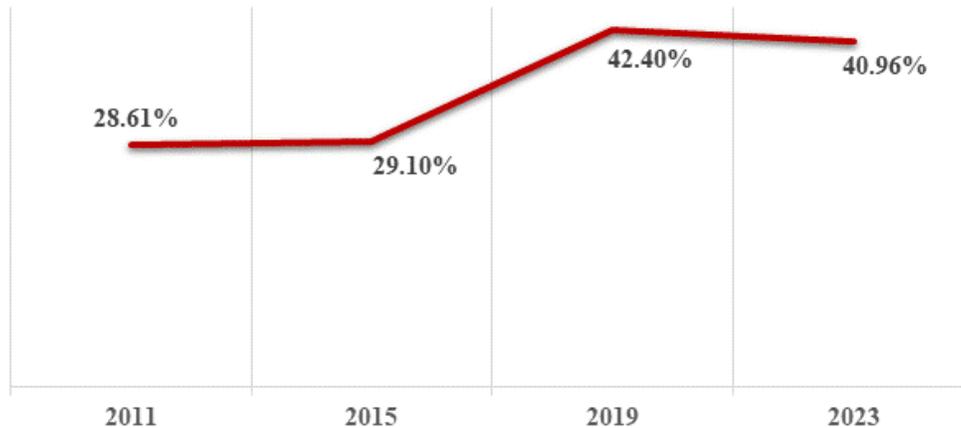
While 2019 had a slightly higher percentage of registered voters participating in that election, 161,172 more ballots were cast in the 2023 Election. In comparing like election years, consistently more Virginians are casting ballots in odd year elections with no statewide candidates on the ballot.

Total Ballots Cast:
General Assembly Election Years

1,462,761   1,509,864   2,383,646   2,544,818

2011   2015   2019   2023   [23]

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[23] *Id.*

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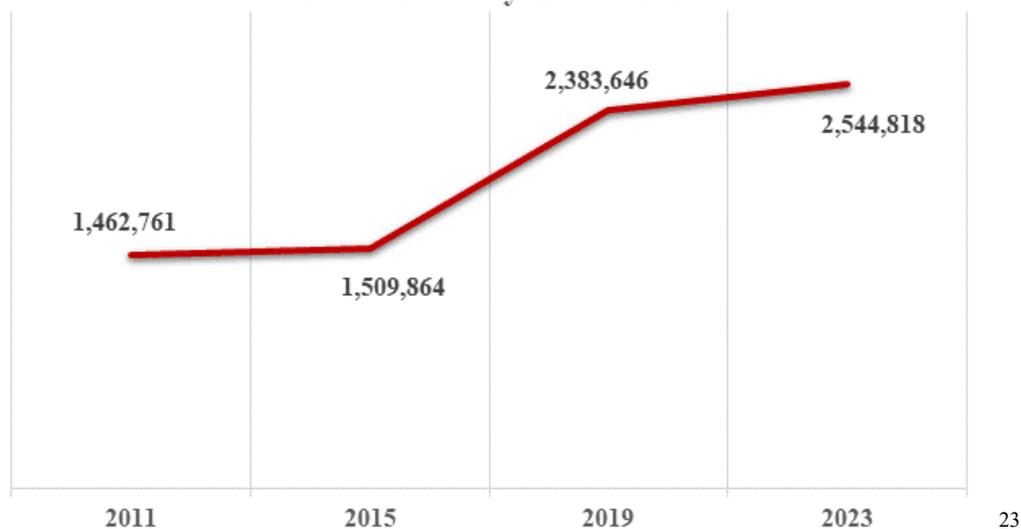
Ballots Cast by Category

The following section will discuss types of ballots cast by category. Categories of ballots cast include Election: Day (In Person), Absentee (Mail and In-Person Early), Provisional, and Late-Arriving Absentee. The chart below shows a snapshot of ballots cast breakdown.

Types of Ballots Cast

- 1%
- 1%
- 32%
- 66%

- ■ Election Day (In Person)
- ■ Absentee (Mail and In-Person Early)
- ■ Provisional (Including Same Day Registration)
- ■ Late-Arriving Absentee (Postmarked by Election Day)
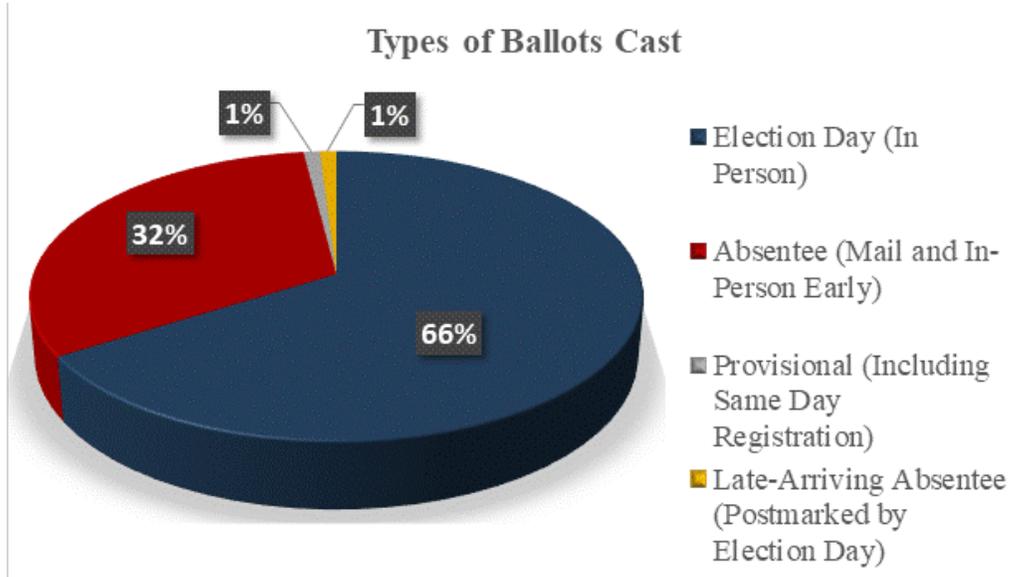
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Absentee: Mail and In-Person Early

Absentee voting has grown since 2019, due to legislation that expanded access to early voting opportunities in 2020. While there were fewer absentee applications specifically for the 2023 General Election than for the 2022 General Election, permanent absentee applications did see an approximate 11.5% increase from 294,658 to 328,555 in 2023.[24]

Absentee Ballot Applications By Type
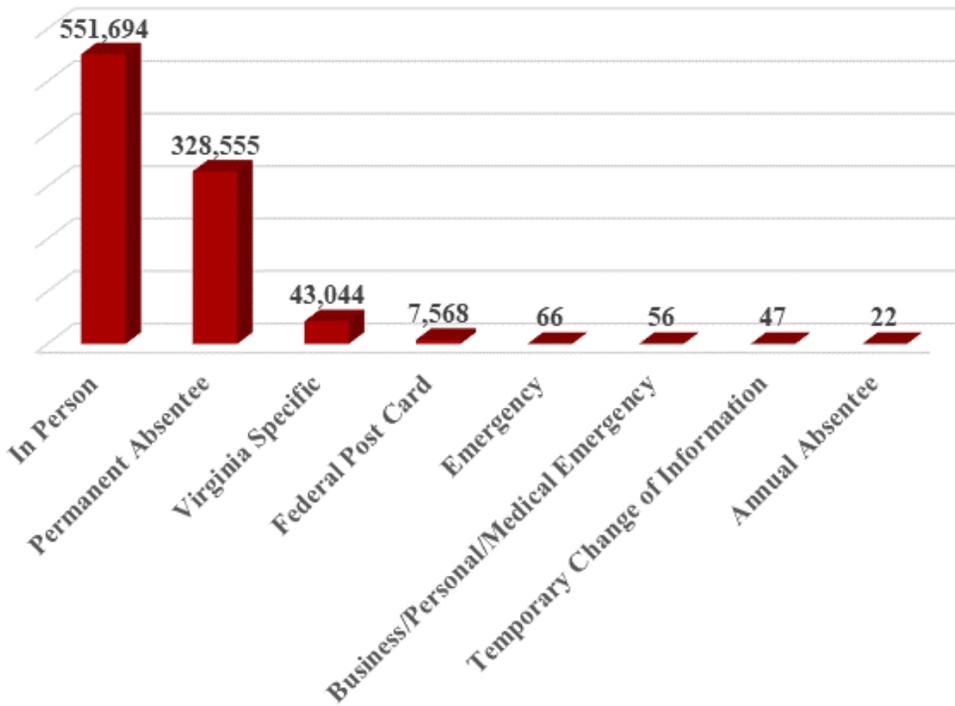
25

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[24] Virginia Department of Elections, 2022 General Election Retrospective, March 7, 2023, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/2022-Post-Election-Report_FINAL.3.3.2022.pdf
[25] Virginia Department of Elections, Election Night Reporting, https://enr.elections.virginia.gov/results/public/Virginia/elections/2023-Nov-Gen/stats

Absentee ballots cast via In-Person Early Voting remains the most common method to vote, followed by mail return via the United States Postal Service (USPS). The following charts provide statistics regarding absentee application types and methods of return.

Absentee Ballots By Method of Return

Method	Count
In Person	553,701
Mail	220,598
Drop Off	26,764
Non-USPS Mail	1,520
Designated Representative	39
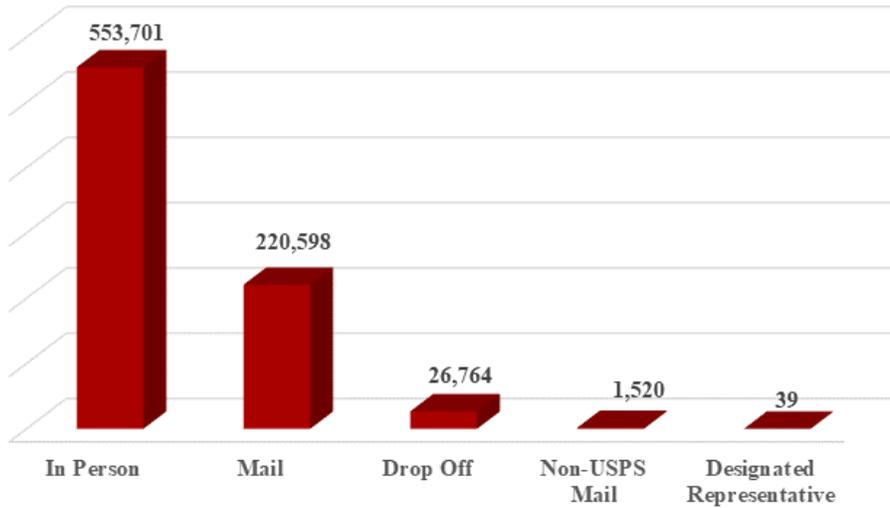
[26]

While absentee voting reached its highest percentage of method of ballots cast in 2020 at 59.89 % likely due to it being the first year for expanded early voting opportunities that occurred both during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and a presidential election year, the percentage of those who utilize absentee voting post 2020 remains at approximately 30% of ballots cast.

Percentage of Ballots Cast Absentee (By Mail and In Person)

Year	Percentage
2019	6.05%
2020	59.89%
2021	36.11%
2022	32.83%
2023	32.95%
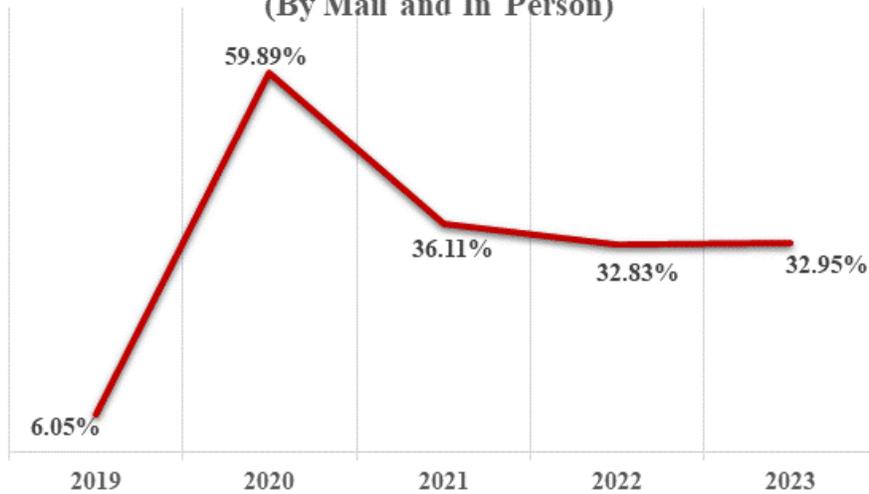
[27]

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[26] *Id.*

[27] Virginia Department of Elections, Registration/Turnout Reports, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/resultsreports/registrationturnout-statistics/; Virginia Department of Elections, Election Night Reporting, https://enr.elections.virginia.gov/results/public/Virginia/elections/2023-Nov-Gen

In Person on Election Day

While absentee ballots accounted for approximately 33% of total ballots cast in 2023, most votes cast in 2023 General Election arrived on Election Day accounting for roughly 66% of the total ballots cast.

Post-Election

Pursuant to §24.2-709 (B), any absentee ballot received after the close of the polls on Election Day that was postmarked on or before the day of the election is allowed to be counted, although not subject to absentee cure, if it was received by noon on the Friday following the election.[28] These ballots accounted for 1% of the total voter turnout.

Provisional Ballots

Federal and state laws require polling locations to provide provisional ballots to ensure that eligible Virginians have an opportunity to cast a vote if their eligibility is uncertain. In Virginia, the Same Day Registration (SDR) process is administered using the provisional ballot process. Provisional ballots made up only 1% of the total ballots cast in the 2023 Election, including SDR.

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[28] Code of Virginia §24.2-709(B).

Below is a chart showing provisional turnout grouped by reason code on the provisional ballot envelope. Election Day SDR made up most provisional ballots in the 2023 general election. On the green provisional ballot envelope utilized in Virginia, officers of election are instructed to select a reason code to denote why a voter is being given a provisional ballot.[29] The reason why a voter may cast a provisional ballot are as follows:

- **Reason #1**- Same Day Registration (SDR) or voter's name does not appear in the pollbook.
- **Reason #3**- Polling hours extended by court order. [30]
- **Reason #4**- Voter on absentee ballot list appears at polling place and does not have their ballot to surrender.
- **Reason #5**- Voter is listed in the pollbook as "Already Voted".
- **Reason #6** – Other
- **Reason #7** – Voter does not have required identification and did not complete ID Confirmation Statement.

Provisional Voter Turnout

Election Day Same Day Registration	15,908
Early Voting Same Day Registration	2,470
Other (Reason Codes 3-6 on Provisional Envelope)	7,637
Voting Provisionally Due to No ID or Confirmation Statement	38
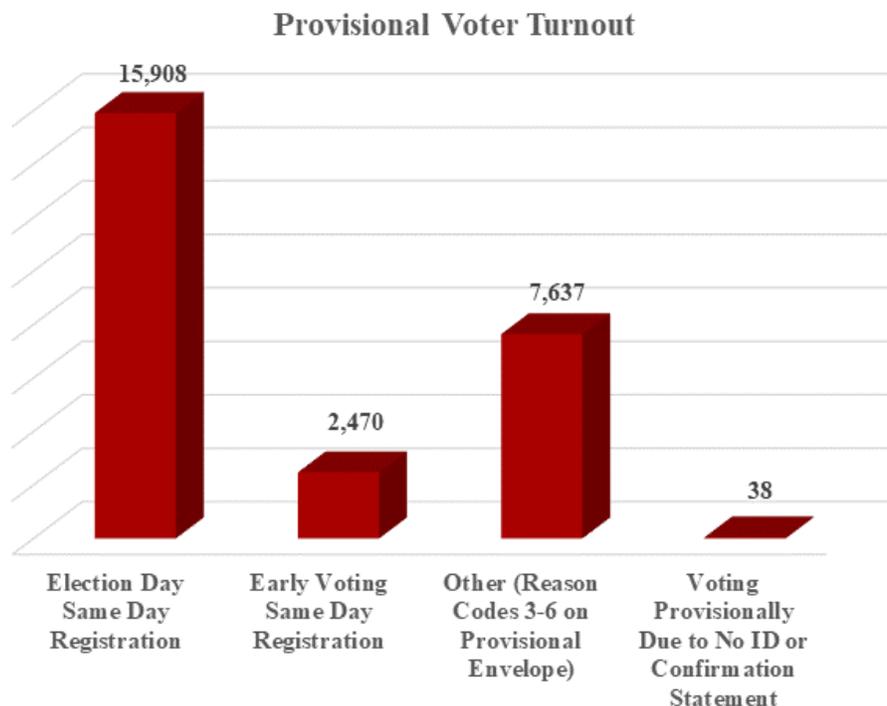
[31]

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[29] For an example of the new provisional ballot envelope, please see Appendix C.
[30] The redesigned provisional envelope does not include a "Reason #2" due to the consolidation of Reason # 1 and Reason # 2 from the previous envelope. In order to avoid confusion of officers of election who have become familiar with the reason codes, Reason Codes 3-6 were kept the same as the previous envelope.
[31] Virginia Department of Elections, Election Night Reporting, https://enr.elections.virginia.gov/results/public/Virginia/elections/2023-Nov-Gen/stats

Same Day Registration (SDR) Provisional Votes

98% or 18,088 of SDR ballots cast during the 2023 General Election were counted. While 2% (or 290 total) of SDR ballots were rejected. While 2% of SDRs were not counted, most of those voters were still able to register to vote for future elections using the SDR process. Possible reasons why a SDR ballot may be rejected include: voting in the wrong precinct or incomplete voter registration data.

SDR Ballots Accepted vs. Rejected
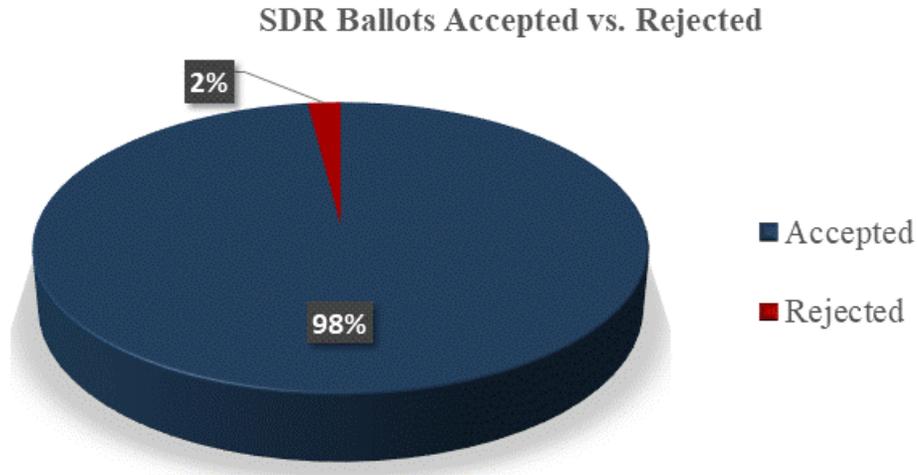
Complaints

As part of its post-election reports, ELECT provides data regarding inquiries and complaints fielded in the given election cycle. These focus on two sources: the ELECT call center and the online complaint form.

Call Center

ELECT operated a call center from September 11 to November 13, 2023. The average wait time for callers was 9 seconds with the average talk time of 4 minutes. The topics that received the most calls remained the same as in previous years: absentee ballots, registration status, and polling location.

Call Center Calls by Subject Matter
September 11 - November 13

Absentee Ballots: 639
Registration Status: 633
Polling Locations: 291
Registration Card Not Received: 119
Candidates: 102
Restoration of Rights: 59
Complaints: 52
QA Calls: 50
Other: 22
Polling Hours: 9
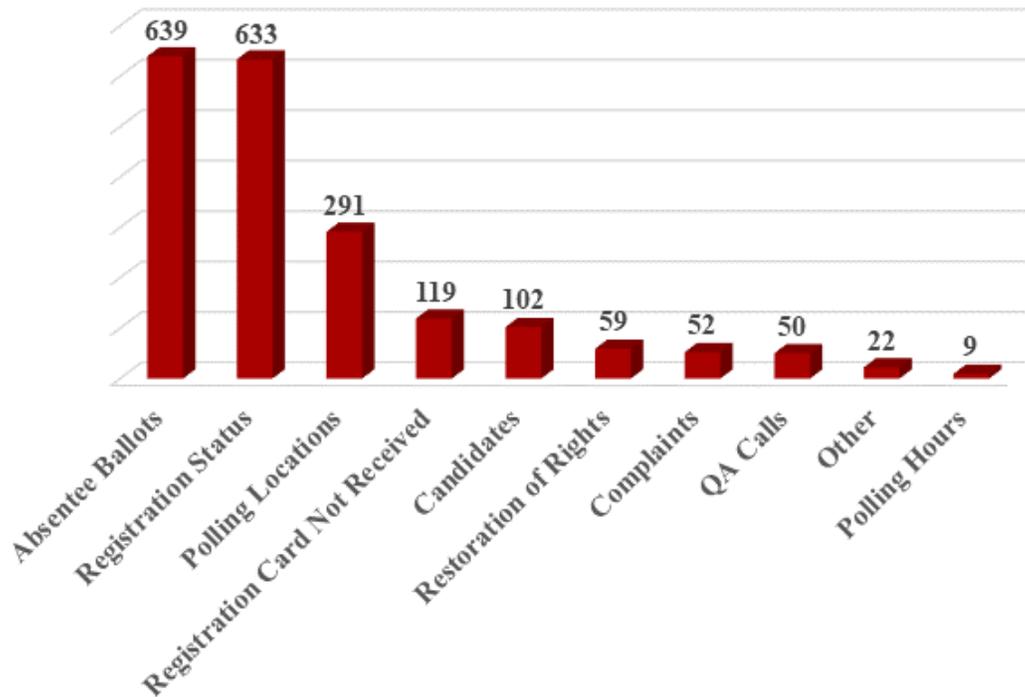
ELECT saw a reduction in overall call center inquiries in 2023. This year absentee ballot status and registration status calls were nearly identical in frequency averaging approximately 636 between the two. Comparatively during the 2022 General Election, registration status was the top topic while absentee ballot status was the second largest topic by approximately 1,000 calls.

Absentee ballot related calls have progressively declined since their height in 2020, where 11,572 calls were made during that election. Given that 2020 was a presidential year that also took place during a global pandemic *and* the first year for expanded early voting, this number is justifiable. Since 2020, however, the number of absentee related inquiries has consistently dropped to 2,297 in 2021 to 1,012 in 2022 to 639 in 2023.[32] While 2024 will likely see an increase in call center inquiries as presidential years tend to be the years with the highest voter engagement, the consistent overall reduction in absentee related calls is a reflection of the process improvements, trainings, and collaboration between localities and ELECT staff to streamline and improve absentee ballot process and procedures over the last four years.

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[32] Virginia Department of Elections, November 3, 2020 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/PostElectionReport_FinalRevised_211001.pdf; Virginia Department of Elections, November 2, 2021 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/Post-Election-Report_FINAL.1.24..22docx.pdf; Virginia Department of Elections, 2022 General Election Retrospective, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/2022-Post-Election-Report_FINAL.3.3.2022.pdf

Similarly, registration status calls have also been reduced from their height in 2020 at 8,088 calls; the number of calls has been steadily dropping from 2,297 calls in 2021 to 2,139 calls in 2022 to 633 in 2023.[33] While this year saw less voter participation, the availability of online tools such as ELECT's Citizen Portal, voter education campaigns run by ELECT and stakeholders, as well as the enactment of SDR may have all contributed to the reduction in voter registration inquiries.[34]

Polling locations remains the third most called about subject matter, but it has also seen a steady decline in frequency. Since its height in 2020 at 1,554, the number of calls has been continuously falling to 727 in 2021 to 530 in 2022 and to 291 in 2023.[35] ELECT continued to see a reduction in polling location calls despite recent redistricting efforts.[36] With tools such as Citizen Portal and the Polling Place Lookup on ELECT's website, voters have multiple avenues to check their polling location which reduces the need to call.[37]

Total Calls by Year
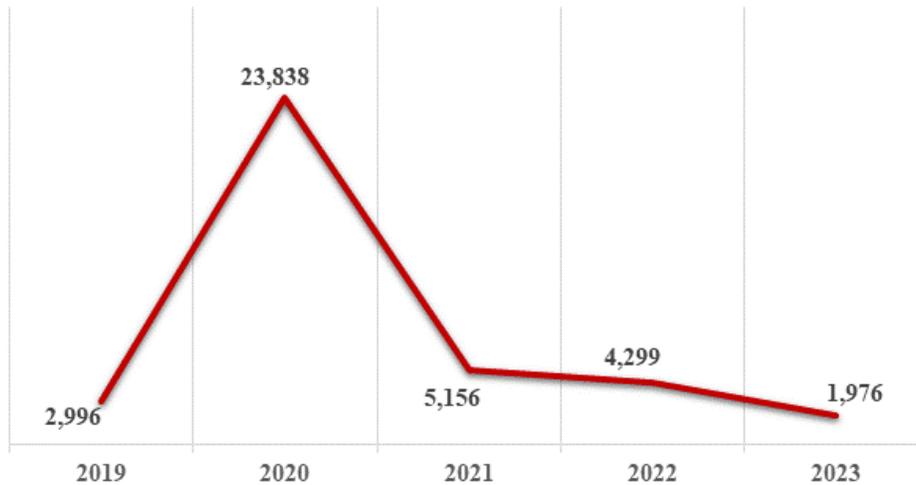
[38]

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[33] *Id*.

[34] Virginia Department of Elections, Citizen Portal, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/citizen-portal/.

[35] Virgnia Department of Elections, November 3, 2020 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/PostElectionReport_FinalRevised_211001.pdf; Virginia Department of Elections, November 2, 2021 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/Post-Election-Report_FINAL.1.24..22docx.pdf; Virginia Department of Elections, 2022 General Election Retrospective, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/2022-Post-Election-Report_FINAL.3.3.2022.pdf

[36] Virginia Department of Elections, November 5, 2019 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/Post-Election-Report-November-2019-with-Appendixes.pdf

[37] Virginia Department of Elections, Citizen Portal, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/citizen-portal/. Virginia Department of Elections, Polling Place Lookup, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/polling-place-lookup/.

[38] Virginia Department of Elections, November 5,2019 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/Post-Election-Report-November-

In analyzing previous years, ELECT saw a significant reduction in call center inquiries even in comparing this year's data to 2019, a like election year. While turnout was lower in this election, the consistent reduction in calls is a direct reflection of the work ELECT and localities have collaboratively undertaken to streamline processes and procedures through training and improved guidance as well as provide better customer service to voters.

Online Complaints

For several years, ELECT has provided an online tool for voters to voice their concerns about an election. In most cases, because election officials in the voter's locality best adjudicate these issues, ELECT forwards these issues to the local general registrar. ELECT follows up with the local general registrar to determine the outcome. A few of these issues are more urgent and require immediate attention from ELECT staff. These issues most often involve whether someone is registered to vote, finding a voter's correct polling place, or other factors that may limit a voter's ability to cast a ballot.

By providing a high-level overview of the patterns of voter complaints, the system alerts ELECT staff to analyze complaint data and monitor what may be a situation developing in a locality or precinct. In many cases, the general registrar or officers of election are already aware of a particular situation (e.g. long lines, voting machine issues, etc.) and are working on a solution, and simply have not had time to contact ELECT. In rare cases, ELECT will be the first to report a problem or pattern of issues to the general registrar. Either way, the voter complaint system allows ELECT and general registrars to quickly recognize and work to resolve Election Day issues.

ELECT received 106 online complaints, which represents .0004165% of the number of voters who participated in the 2023 general election.[39] 45 online complaints were filed before Election Day. 58 online complaints were filed on Election Day, while only 3 online complaints were filed after Election Day.

<div align="center">CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE</div>

2019-with-Appendixes.pdf; Virgnia Department of Elections, November 3, 2020 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/PostElectionReport_FinalRevised_211001.pdf; Virginia Department of Elections, November 2, 2021 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/Post-Election-Report_FINAL.1.24..22docx.pdf; Virginia Department of Elections, 2022 General Election Retrospective, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/2022-Post-Election-Report_FINAL.3.3.2022.pdf

[39] Virginia Department of Elections, November 6, 2018 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/Post-ElectionReportNovember2018rev.pdf; Virginia Department of Elections, 2022 General Election Retrospective, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/2022-Post-Election-Report_FINAL.3.3.2022.pdf

Online Complaints By Subject Matter
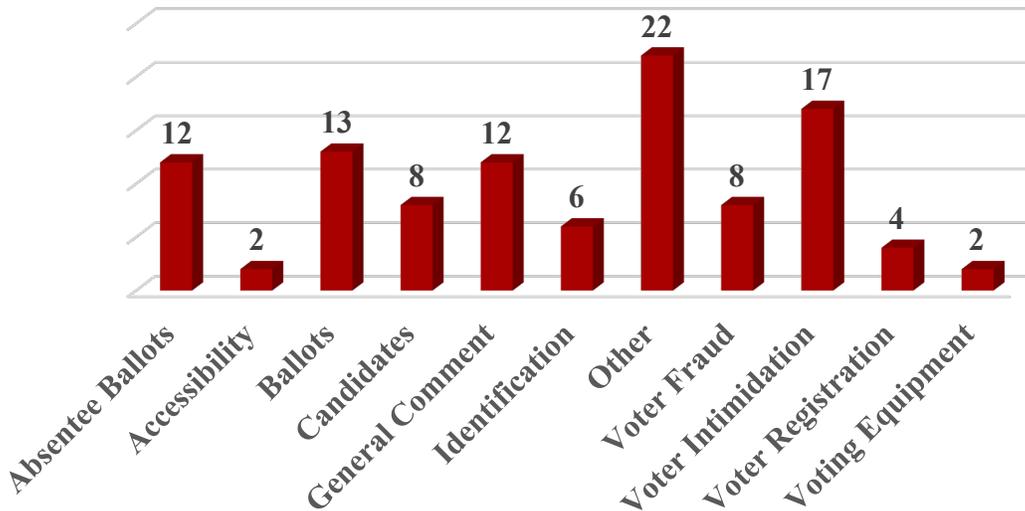
On the online voter complaint form, the voter selects the subject matter of their complaint. The "Other" and "General Comment" categories tend to be the largest as some complaints may have multiple topics or the voter may feel that the categories listed do not fit their complaint. Each of these complaints are still passed along by ELECT to the affected localities so they may be addressed at the local level. The "Other" category proved to be the highest complaint by subject matter in 2023 with voter intimidation coming in second with 7 complaints.

Absentee and other ballots are the next highest subject matters. Complaints in these categories tend to be about confusion regarding candidates on the ballot, issues with casting a ballot at a polling place, or not receiving an absentee ballot by mail; it should be noted that if a voter does not receive their mailed absentee ballot they are still permitted to vote a provisional ballot on Election Day.[40] Complaints in both categories have dropped to pre-2020 levels, which may be linked to both the amount of voter turnout from year to year or to the improvement in processes and procedures at the local level.[41]

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[40] Code of Virginia §24.2-653.1.
[41] Virginia Department of Elections, November 3, 2020 Post-Election Report, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/PostElectionReport_FinalRevised_211001.pdf.

Complaint Type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Absentee Ballots	26	8	161	24	18	12
Accessibility	32	6	9	6	8	2
Ballots	27	45	232	21	20	13
Candidates	X	X	X	X	X	8
General Comment	42	17	42	16	15	12
Identification	27	8	23	11	11	6
Law Enforcement	2	1	X	2	X	X
Long Lines	113	X	3	X	X	X
Other	69	33	160	38	33	22
Vandalism	X	X	1	X	X	X
Voter Fraud	12	20	4	137	18	8
Voter Intimidation	44	5	56	53	21	17
Voter Registration	11	17	51	16	16	4
Voting Equipment	62	10	36	15	8	2
Total	475	154	911	221	168	106

*** An "X" in a column indicates that no complaints were filed that year regarding that subject.

General Registrar Survey

In the 2022 Post-Election Report, ELECT utilized a survey of general registrars to include a broader perspective on the administration of elections in the Commonwealth. This provided ELECT with information regarding administrative challenges faced by general registrars, areas for change or improvement in ELECT training and guidance, and general concerns about working environment, resources, and future elections in the current environment. A survey was utilized again for this year's report. It is not an identical survey, as issues and concerns vary by year; however, some questions and issues were carried forward to track the experience of general registrars year-over-year.

Methodology

After reviewing the literature and comparing other types of surveys of general registrars as well as building off the success of last year's post-election survey, ELECT's policy team designed the 2023 General Election Survey (hereafter referred to as the "2023 ELECT Survey" or "the Survey") to not only focus on the biggest challenges in administering the 2023 Election but also to seek a better understanding of the challenges in the year to come. The survey was comprised

of 20 questions that included both multiple choice and short answer and the topics included questions on: demographics, job satisfaction, 2023 election administration challenges, as well as 2024 emerging concerns. A full list of questions may be found in Appendix D. ELECT designed the survey and distributed a communication containing the survey to all 133 general registrars. The communication included a brief explanation of the intent of the survey and provided a link to access the questions. [42]

Sample Size

The survey was sent on November 21, 2023, with a completion date of November 30, 2023. General registrars were instructed to contribute one submission. Of the 133 general registrars, 115 responded or an 86.466% response rate and ELECT included a question asking for general registrars' consent in using the data collected in the survey.[43] On average, general registrars spent 35 minutes completing the survey.

Demographics

Of the 115 respondents, the chart below illustrates that all sizes of Virginia localities were well-represented in the survey responses. Further, the distribution of responding localities corresponds nearly proportionally to the general distribution of localities across the Commonwealth by size.[44]

Responding Localities by Size

- 1-10,000
- 10,001-20,000
- 20,001-40,000
- 40,001-75,000
- 75,001-100,000
- 100,001-200,000
- 200,001+
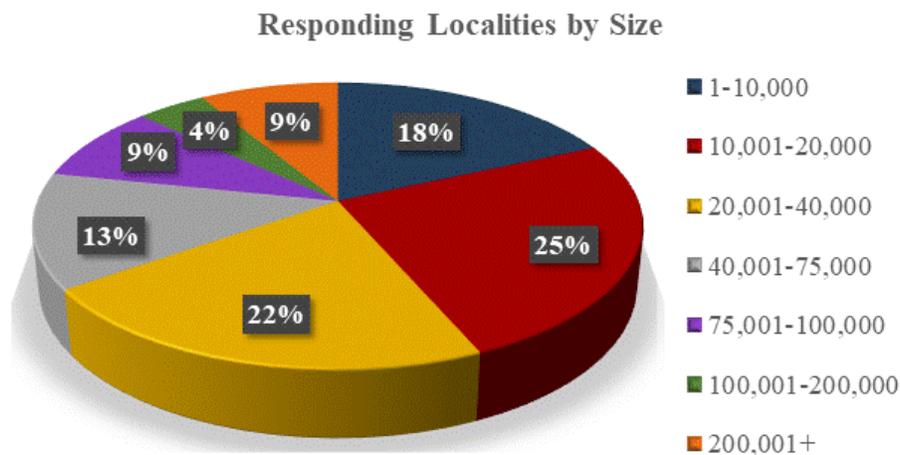
Experience

One of the Commonwealth's most valuable resources when it comes to the administration of elections is the experience of its general registrars. 45% of general registrars have greater than 8 years of experience in election administration, with another 32% having between four and seven

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[42] A list of questions from the Survey are found in Appendix D.

[43] 117 registrars accessed the survey but 2 opted out of the survey. Therefore, the are no results from those individuals to include in the feedback contained in this report.

[44] https://www.coopercenter.org/virginia-population-estimates: 1-10,000 – 14%; 10,001-20,000 – 26%; 20,001; 40,000 – 28%; 40,001-75,000 – 11%; 75,001-100,000 – 8%; 100,001-200,000 – 6%; 200,001- 8%

years. With elections every year and ever-increasing demands on election officials, Virginia is fortunate to have experienced leadership in its localities.

General Registrar Experience

- 0-3 years
- 4-7 years
- 8-11 years
- 12+ years
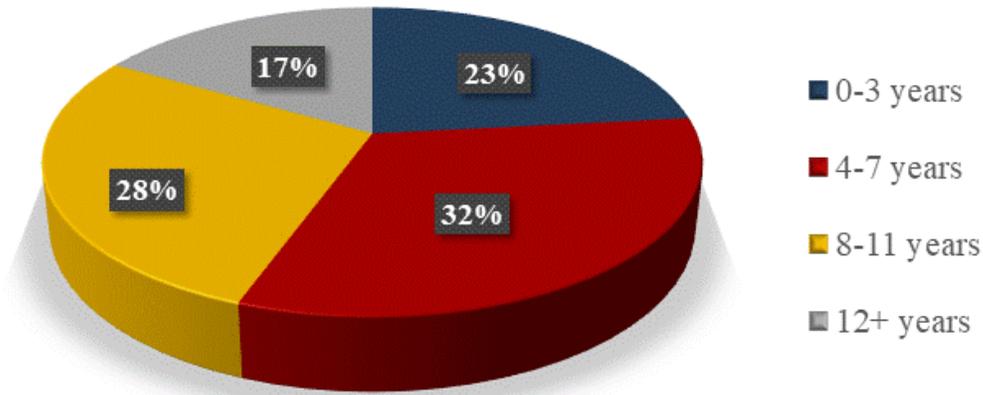
This experience carries over to those serving as officers of election (OOE). 86% of respondents categorized the experience level of their officers of election as either very experienced or somewhat experienced. Having experienced officers of election is essential to ensure complex processes are carried out properly and to handle unexpected situations that arise.

Officer of Election Experience

- Very Experienced
- Somewhat Experienced
- Unsure
- Somewhat Inexperienced
- Mostly First-Time Officers
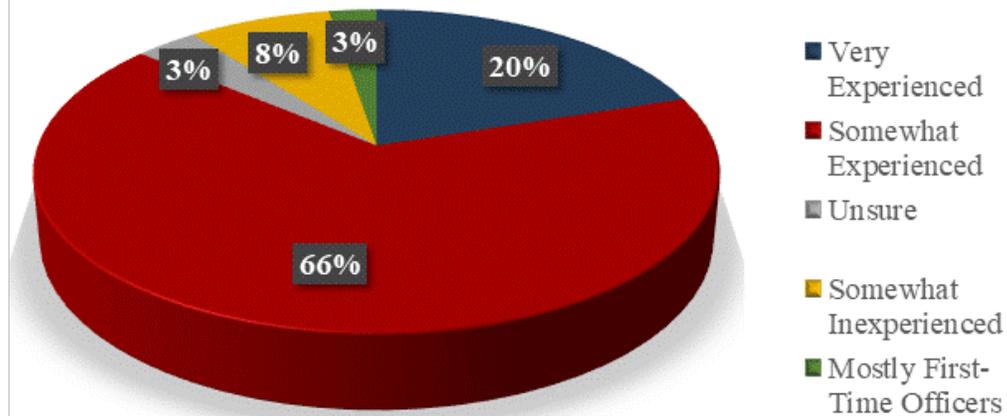
ELECT estimates that the Commonwealth will need approximately 20,000 OOEs to staff the 2024 elections. In an ELECT survey sent in September of 2023 to collect data on OOEs, many general registrars mentioned challenges recruiting and retaining officers; these challenges stem from inconsistent OOE nominations from political parties, long hours on Election Day, a hostile

political climate, and low compensation.[45] One general registrar in looking to the year ahead commented that "with 3 elections and already a limited pool of people, it's going to be a challenge to find OOEs, especially with the amount of Dis and Mis information shared by media, it truly turns people away."

Only 5 out of the 87 localities that responded to the September OOE survey indicated that local political parties provided consistent nominations for officers of election, which resulted in roughly 55% of respondents expressing that more than 1/3 of their OOEs do not represent a political party. ELECT has addressed the lack of OOE nominations with both major political parties to recruit more OOEs to promote party parity and assist localities in obtaining OOEs. The recruitment of officers of election continues to be a challenge in most localities.

Frequently Discussed Topics in Election Administration

While there was a wide range of issues discussed by general registrars in their responses to the 2023 ELECT Survey, certain topics received repeated mention. This section provides an overview of these topics and direct feedback from general registrars.

Election Night Reporting (ENR)

While ELECT received positive praise from the media and public on updated design of election night reporting data, the new software received mixed reviews from general registrars and their staffs.

Out of seven election administration challenges ENR was ranked as the #1 challenge for 53% of respondents in the 2023 General Registrar Survey, and 23% of respondents ranked it as their second biggest challenge. Additionally, an ENR-specific survey was sent to localities in December to get more feedback on the ENR software. The main areas of feedback in these two surveys revolved around training on the new ENR software, the data validation feature, and election complexity.

After the initial launch of the new ENR software for the June primary, additional trainings were provided in September and October to incorporate feedback received. Additionally, ELECT offered a sandbox environment where general registrars could practice using the ENR system without editing an actual election or impacting publicly viewable pages. Despite these opportunities, only 69% of the localities started or finished the September training, 28% completed the first ENR course prior to Election Day, and 46% completed the second ENR course prior to Election Day. This was problematic as not every locality hosted a June Primary and therefore did not have direct experience using the new system ahead of the November election.

Ideally updated trainings necessary to correctly use a new system would not be provided so close to an election. However, after receiving feedback from the June primary election, the timeline was tight to develop, deploy, and train on the requested features ahead of early voting.

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[45] Delivering Election Material by One Officer on Election Representing Both Major Parties, Virginia Department of Elections, November 1, 2023

> **"[T]he main issue was the 'newness' of it all. (We did not have a June Primary so this was our first go at it)[.] The training and guidance helped, especially having a sandbox environment for us to practice in …."**

> **"This training needed to be more hands on. A webinar was not sufficient. And testing it ahead of time just didn't reflect reality."**

> **"I think the trainings were overall pretty good, but finding them to watch [after I] missed live trainings was very difficult."**

> **"The training was not in line with our actual experiences."**

> **"We need face to face training on ENR."**

Locality participation in training coincided with questions about features of the new software. One of the biggest ENR specific challenges stemmed from general registrars correcting their locality's data validation errors. Some general registrars felt the validation alerts were not specific enough and that addressing those alerts slowed their data input time. This resulted in ELECT fielding a lot of calls from localities following the close of polls to assist with fixing errors and inputting election results. It also led to mixed survey results.

> **"ENR was cumbersome but once we got into the rhythm of it - it was not bad. I think going forward we will be better prepared in pulling our numbers together before starting to enter in ENR. I did see the value in how 'in the weeds' the ENR entry was in making sure all of our numbers were correct!"**

> **"Easy to see you had errors but confusing to figure them out."**

> **"Data validation was super frustrating. The errors were effective in alerting us where the errors were, they did not provide a lot of guidance on how to resolve them."**

Additionally, many respondents with negative comments regarding the ENR system noted the sheer volume of information required to be entered into the system.

> **"Need to cut down on the numbers we have to manually enter on Election Night."**

> **"ENR was not difficult to utilize, however, having to report each precinct by absentee, ED [Election Day], early voting, provisional and post results is time consuming along with conducting the canvass."**

> **"CAP reporting by precinct was difficult this election plus adding in a new ENR system to learn."**

> **"Election night reporting with so many races on the ballot was difficult and very time-consuming for staff."**

As noted earlier in the report, while the Election had the lowest turnout in recent years, it also featured one of the most complex ballots in any four-year election cycle due to the number of

offices and candidates participating. This was the first year that an election of that magnitude was conducted using precinct level reporting. The influx of candidates and offices made for many more data inputs than found on any other election night. ELECT's previous election night reporting system did not contain real time validation checks on data inputs. While incorporating validation checks into data inputs aligns with industry best practices and improves the quality of the election's data, it provides yet another requirement on general registrars' and their staff at the end of a 20+ hour workday that started for many at 5:00 AM and continued well past midnight.

Finally, the positive and negative feedback from localities demonstrated the diverse environment which elections operate in Virginia, as each of the 133 localities is likely to have a unique experience adapting to the new software. Since the Election, ELECT has provided additional training on the new system. Following the additional feedback from the post-election surveys, ELECT has edited its internal training documents and is conducting smaller trainings with regional groups to better address questions or concerns over ENR with the 133 localities ahead of the 2024 election cycle.

Resources

Since elections are administered at the local level, localities must absorb the related costs. These costs are significant when considering the various components to running elections, including purchasing, and maintaining voting systems, general registrar and staff salaries, registrar/election office resources, officer of election salaries, and costs associated with providing physical space for polling locations. These costs can be even greater in any given year depending on new, unfunded legislative requirements. In the 2023 ELECT Survey, respondents were asked to provide insights into their available resources. The chart below shows assessments of general registrars regarding their resources divided into three broad categories: financial, human, and technological.

Response to Question: *Do you agree or disagree that your office has adequate resources in the following categories?*
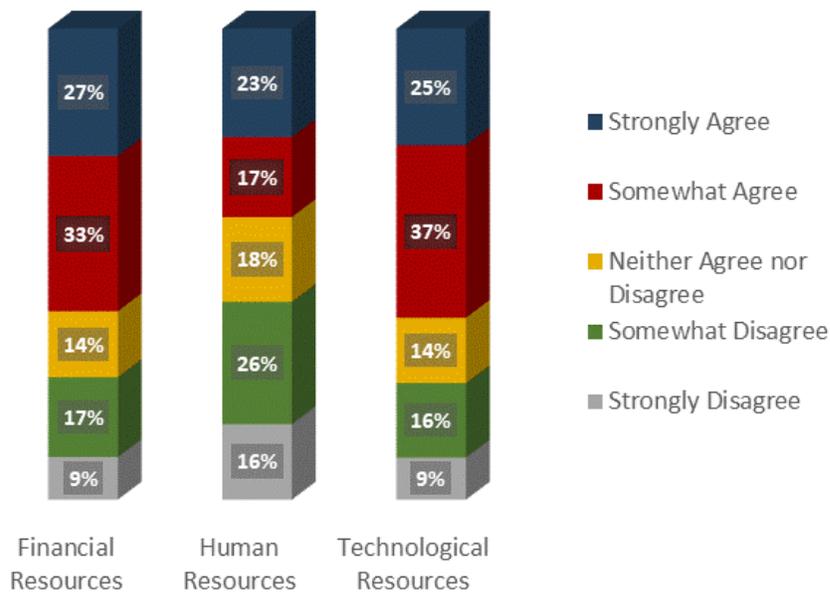
It should be noted that many general registrars report that they receive sufficient funding. Of the respondents to the ELECT Survey, 49% agree with the statement "my office has sufficient funding to do our jobs well." As demonstrated in the chart above, respondents either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that they had adequate resources at the following rates: 59% for financial resources, 40% for human resources, and 62% for technological resources.

"We are very lucky to have a supportive county admin and board of supervisors."

"We are a very well-funded and operated department, if there is something we need, we typically don't have a hard time getting that."

"My locality gives my department anything it needs without any problem."

It is noteworthy that 60% and 62% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they have adequate financial and technological resources, respectively. Although approximately two-thirds

of respondents agree they have adequate financial and technological resources, one-third of respondents disagree which is still a significant number. Out of the three categories of resources, adequate human resources was the area that general registrars were the most dissatisfied with. While 40% of respondents strongly or somewhat strongly agreed that they were adequately supported, 42% of respondents either strongly or somewhat disagreed that they were adequately staffed.

"In my experience, election offices are not adequately staffed to allow the level of service expected by the public, to give staff an opportunity to learn and grown in an environment that demands it, and to allow staff a reasonable quality of life."

"Resources here are scarce and our office is treated as if we are not a part of the [locality]."

"Our [locality] has never given us a working budget. We end up having to move funds around or get it from the compensation fund at the end of the year to balance our budget. If given what we know we need, this would not occur. When the state mandates anything they always ask 'why doesn't the state supply the funding?'"

"Unless it is something that is required by Election laws, it is very hard to get the [governing body] to increase our budget. We are a small [locality] and not a lot of income coming in to the [locality]. It would be good if the State could help out with expenses to keep our offices up to date."

A reoccurring theme throughout the Survey was the need for additional space to conduct elections with a focus on early voting.

"Space, space, space is a HUGE concern!"

A little over half of general registrars, 51%, indicated that their office did not have sufficient physical space to do their jobs well, while 33% strongly or somewhat agreed that their physical space was adequate and 16% were indifferent. One general registrar stated, "We are limited in our office space and this limits everything from storage to room for early voting". Many localities utilize the general registrar's office to conduct early voting. One general registrar explained "(I) have to make due in a 12 foot by 18 foot room that is used for our everyday operations and early voting". Another "a bigger election equals more absentee ballots mailed out. I barely have the space to do this now. I am to move to a larger office, but if this does not occur by the beginning of [early voting] for the 2024 November election, it will be a mess."

Overall, adequate funding in general remains a major issue for other general registrars across the Commonwealth. Many respondents do not feel that their localities and the state offer sufficient support for the administrative requirements. Relatedly, some respondents felt that a poor relationship between their department and locality governing board led to lesser treatment than other locality departments.

Staffing

Most elections offices in the Commonwealth work with limited staff. As shown in the next chart, not including the general registrar, 77 of the 115 respondents reported either one full-time staff person or none at all. Only 10 offices of those responding have 6 or more full-time staff.

General Registrar Full-Time Staff
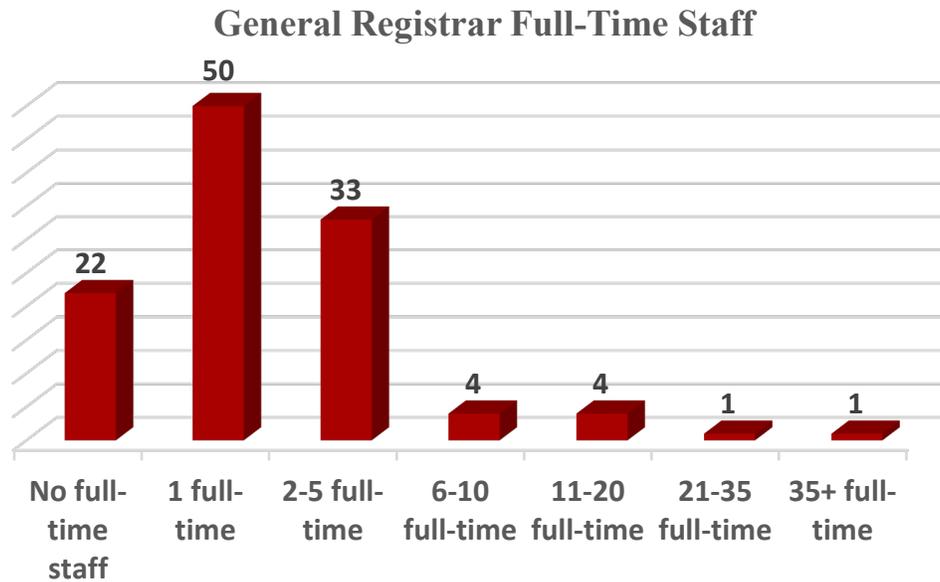
Without adequate support staff, general registrars end up taking on more tasks to save money and comply with code; this contributes to burnout. Last year, 56.6% of general registrars surveyed indicated that the job had some impact on their physical and/or mental health, while 27.6% of participants responded that the job had a significant impact.[46] ELECT asked a similar question in the 2023 ELECT Survey, 76% of general registrars surveyed said that they experienced negative impacts to their physical and/or mental health. In this year's survey, 65.2% of respondents *somewhat* or *strongly disagreed* with the statement that their position allowed for healthy work-life balance and 53.1% of respondents *somewhat* or *strongly disagreed* with the statement that their workload was reasonable.

Yearly additions to duties was an issue mentioned by many respondents to the Survey. One general registrar said, "With the many new laws passed in the last 4 years, it has required more from myself and my only other full-time employee. The new processes are very labor intensive, yet my locality does not feel I need additional staff." One general registrar summed up the impact of the legislative changes of the last four years by stating the following, "AB (by-mail absentee) has changed the way we conduct election as well as the 45-day Early Voting. Whereas elections used to be Election Day, it is now election season, but the amount of staff has not

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[46] Virginia Department of Elections, 2022 General Election Retrospective, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/2022-Post-Election-Report_FINAL.3.3.2022.pdf

changed." The administrative processes surrounding AB encapsulate this overall concern, as it was frequently mentioned in the Survey as being particularly labor intensive:

"Absentee ballots were a challenge just in terms of volume and the high-level of staffing needed to manage all the elements of that process."

"It remains a very labor-intensive process.

"The cure process continues to be taxing on the staff."

Localities not only repeatedly highlighted the need for additional full-time employees but noted the lack of adequate pay for deputy registrars. While 77.3% of general registrars indicated that they were satisfied or neutral about their pay, many advocated for pay increases for their staff. Pursuant to §24.2-112 of the Code of Virginia, deputy registrars are subject to the same requirements, limitations, and qualifications as the general registrar with the exception that they *may* serve as an officer of election, and they are not required to live in the county or city that they serve.[47] Low wages make it difficult to retain and recruit competent staff in an environment that often comes with long hours, specialized knowledge, and a politically-charged work environment.

Although localities are sympathetic to the challenges of local county and city budgets, many responses still expressed a lack of support in both raising the pay of deputy registrars and hiring additional staff. One general registrar said "I have asked for additional staff and additional funds added to wages. Each budget cycle, I max out part-time wages both with part-time office staff and election officials even though my Electoral Board continues to offer their labor for free...I need additional office staff which keeps getting denied in budget request."

Registrars feel that pressure at the state level, either from ELECT or the General Assembly, may mitigate this issue. One general registrar stated, "there is no code or state support to get the finance department to approve increases." Another, "the deputy registrar's annual salary budget is too low and there are no recommendations or mandates set to offer guidance. I feel, it is unrealistic to expect a minimal pay part-time/seasonal employee to be able to oversee election and office needs as well as be expected to step in as GR, if needed."

Other respondents noticed disparities in pay when comparing the Office of the General Registrar's salaries across other local government departments. "HR doesn't deem the positions in this office worthy of the pay the staff in the offices of other constitutional officers." Two additional comments drew parallels between the Office of the General Registrar and the local Treasurer "the salaries of the Chief Deputy General Registrar need to be on a similar scale to that of local Treasurers." "The Treasurers Office and Commissioners Office have the potential to service the same amount of county residents as this office, but they have 5-6 employees to handle the different jobs they're responsible for."

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[47] Code of Virginia §24.2-112.

Same Day Registration

In the 2023 ELECT Survey, provisional voting/SDR was still reported as a top challenge, with 20% of respondents ranking it as their top challenge and 23% ranking it second. However, 50% of respondents stated that the process established for provisional voting/SDR in the 2023 versus 2022 was either somewhat improved or much improved. Based upon the comments in the 2023 ELECT Survey, some of the perceived improvement stems from lessons learned and knowing what to expect, based upon the experience of administering SDR in 2022. The feedback on the new provisional envelope was mixed, with some registrars viewing it as an improvement and others viewing it as an additional burden, but on balance it appears to have improved the SDR process.

ELECT will continue to solicit stakeholder input about the SDR process and seek ways in which the administrative burden can be alleviated. However, absent legislative changes and/or technology advances, it will continue to be a process based upon provisional voting; the related increase in provisional voters creates certain challenges, especially at polling places on Election Day and in the canvass period. Two of the key takeaways from the 2022 Report addressed structural areas that could potentially ease the burden on this process: (1) requiring all SDR to occur at the general registrar's office to alleviate the burden at polling places, and (2) extending the canvass period to allow additional processing time.[48]

Technology in Elections

Related to overall funding, many general registrars responding to the Survey cited concerns about technology and/or IT support. While 62% of respondents indicated that they somewhat or strongly agreed that their offices have adequate technological resources, which was reflected in the comments, 25% of respondents either somewhat or strongly disagreed. Based upon respondents' comments, these concerns about technological resources seemed to come especially from those in small and medium sized localities.

"We are a small-medium locality with only two individuals in HR & IT to serve the entire locality. Everyone is pretty stretched."

"Technological resources are lacking because we don't have a dedicated IT person."

"We have a central computer in our office that is shared by both the [general registrar] and the deputy. The [general registrar] does have a laptop that was purchased with covid money that is helpful but would be good to have our own to process everyday work. All equipment is at bare minimum. We do not have a copier or a fax but do share one when needed with another office."

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[48] Virginia Department of Elections, 2022 General Election Retrospective, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/maintenance-reports/2022-Post-Election-Report_FINAL.3.3.2022.pdf, at page 26.

This technology disparity among localities is also demonstrated in several comments about the lack of electronic pollbooks in some localities. As one respondent stated, "[e]lectronic Pollbooks would help reduce the amount of errors with voter check in on election day. It would also help with expediting voter credit." Electronic pollbooks allow voter credit to be updated automatically, while paper pollbooks require manual data entry. Voter credit is an essential research component, when adjudicating SDR ballots during the canvass.

Related to concerns about technology within localities is the issue of security. Pursuant to § 24.2-410.2 of the Code, the State Board is required to create standards to ensure the security and integrity of VERIS and supporting technologies used by localities, known as the Locality Election Security Standards (LESS). The standards must be updated annually in consultation with representatives of local government IT professionals and general registrars who, along with ELECT staff, make up the Voter Registration System Security Advisory Group. The electoral board of each locality must then develop and annually update local security plans and procedures in compliance with LESS. The most recent update to the LESS was approved by the State Board on November 15, 2023. Importantly, the LESS requires governing bodies of localities to have a role ensuring compliance with the LESS, including by developing a locality Information Security Program and a System Security Plan. This is one more critical area of technology support by localities for general registrars, electoral boards, and election departments.

The local administration of elections is a key part of the democratic structure in Virginia and the United States. While there are many benefits to this system, a resulting challenge is the disparity of available election resources; this is encapsulated in varied ability of localities to meet the increased need for technological resources. As new legislative requirements are added and election technology continues to advance, the resource gap between localities will continue to expand, which could impede the uniform administration of elections across the Commonwealth.

Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS)

When asked about concerns heading into the 2024 election cycle, Virginia's Election and Registration Information System (VERIS) was a frequently mentioned topic. Virginia utilizes VERIS, a fifteen-year-old system implemented in 2007, to support the Commonwealth's electoral process as the statewide voter registration system tasked with maintaining voter rolls. As VERIS is an aging system currently being replaced, it is not surprising that there are such concerns amongst general registrars. However, ELECT has taken measures to ensure that VERIS will operate in a reliable manner throughout the 2024 election cycle. These include:

- Expanded resource capacity on cloud assets to better prepare for increased demand.
- Moved VERIS reporting to dedicated resources.
- Identified the need for true High Availability architecture when processing reports.
- Optimized reports to reduce processing time.

In addition to the general maintenance of VERIS, changes or additions to VERIS can also add stress to the system. For this reason, ELECT has asked the General Assembly to consider delaying, where possible, the enactment date of any new legislation that would impact VERIS until its replacement is in place in 2025.

Concerns Going into 2024 Elections

"I did love this job, but it gets more stressful with every election. We are dedicated to it, would have to be, but we really need support."

ELECT asked general registrars what their biggest concerns were in administering three elections during 2024. The responses echoed national conversations in election administration and illustrated that election officials continue to face partisan pressure, carry unstainable workloads, and fear for their health and safety. In Virginia, unease about levels of mis/disinformation, burnout, and the mental and physical health of election workers featured prominently in the responses. Based on general registrars' concerns, these quotes best sum up the feedback of the 2023 Survey:

"The held over mistrust from the 2020 election. This is such a distraction that takes away your time and attention to the business at hand. The election is a year away and already I feel I need to wear gloves to open the mail. We suffered through 2 years of non-stop FOIA requests and challenges to our integrity, our process, our motives, our voting equipment, etc. to the point of being overwhelming at times. It will only be worse in the coming year, I'm afraid. My selfish hope was that more people would want to see the process from the inside and sign up to be [OOEs] to ensure that everything was above board, but it seems to be the opposite."

"People who don't know how elections work, don't listen to explanations about how elections work, and/or are insistent that elections should work in a way inconsistent with reality or the law."

"My ability to handle all of the things thrown at us at the last minute. My mental and physical health is declining due to the stress. And the political party's interference is relentless. I dread dealing with them more than anything."

"The time involved and the cost. There is no real rest period from now until the end of 2024. As for cost, the locality having all the responsibility makes it really hard for smaller localities."

"The political climate is at an all-time high of anxiety. The workload is extreme, pressure is everywhere, too many changes in election law to keep in mind, especially for [having] only full-time position [in the] office. This one of the main reasons I am contemplating retiring. I cannot continue to stretch myself so thin and risk my health."

"That we [general registrars] are able to retain our staff. That we have enough experienced staff to get through the presidential year and beyond. That we all remain health from the long days, stress and tension that comes with each election cycle and are able to complete our duties to the best of our ability."

Emerging Issues in the 2023 General Election

In the lead up and execution of any general election, instances occur that require ELECT and localities to address emerging election-related concerns on a variety of election administration topics. While this report does not cover every abnormality, it does seek to provide a high-level overview of some of the major issues that impacted the administration of the 2023 General Election.

Candidate Qualification: Fairfax School Board Race

A petition to disqualify a candidate for school board in Fairfax County was filed in the Fairfax County Circuit Court on October 13, after ballots were printed and early voting had commenced. The petition alleged deficiencies with the candidate's qualifying petitions. The court disqualified the candidate on October 25, finding that the candidate wrote her address incorrectly on one page of the petition thereby invalidating a sufficient number of signatures to render the candidate unqualified. Pursuant to § 24.2-612.1 of the Code, ELECT instructed the general registrar to provide notice to voters of the disqualification, including via posting on the locality's website. Subsequently, the court considered evidence regarding additional petition signatures that the candidate attempted to submit prior to the filing deadline. The candidate initially submitted a sufficient number of signatures, which the general registrar deemed sufficient upon review. Later, the candidate attempted to submit additional petition signatures, but the general registrar did not accept the additional signatures due to the candidate petition signatures already being sufficient. On November 1, the court reversed its decision and reinstated the candidate, finding the additional signatures to be valid and that the candidate would have qualified if the locality had accepted the additional signatures. ELECT again worked with the locality to ensure that notice was provided to voters that the disqualification decision was reversed.

This situation stems from a lack of clarity in the Code regarding the timeline and mechanisms for candidate qualification and disqualification. While § 24.2-612.1 of the Code discusses ELECT's role subsequent to a disqualification, a process for disqualification is not prescribed. For instance, once a candidate has been deemed qualified upon review of their petitions, is a court order the exclusive avenue for disqualification prior to ballots being printed? A more defined process and timeline in the Code for candidate qualification and disqualification would be helpful in administering the process but also could avoid chaotic situations like in the Fairfax County race.

Electronic Pollbooks (EPBs)

On November 7th, 2023 more then 60% of localities who used DemTech electronic pollbooks (EPB) experienced various technical issues. These technical issues ranged from connectivity to battery and power operations.

The most frequently reported issue with DemTech EPBs resulted from the Merlins not being able to connect to the electronic pollbooks at polling locations. A Merlin is a device (router) that allows the several separate electronic pollbooks in a polling place to communicate with one another. It's important to note that while the electronic pollbooks may be connected to each other, they are not connected to the internet; internet connectivity is not allowed for both voting

systems and electronic pollbooks in Virginia on Election Day. When the Merlin cannot connect to a pollbook, it means that the pollbook cannot keep track of the check-in for registered voters on multiple machines. As a remedial measure, some localities used one EPB for their precinct to avoid registered voters being able to re-check in or utilized paper pollbooks.

Some localities reported a time error message popping up on the EPB screen; this time error message would be displayed randomly and had to be clicked off every so often. The time error message issue was due to the Merlin's battery running out of power. When the Merlin's battery ran out of power, the time between the Merlin and the EPB would no longer be synchronized, causing an error message to be displayed and be repeated. In this situation, the DemTech software automatically reverts to the time on the laptop, which is set by the user at the beginning of the day. This failsafe ensures that the time is ultimately correct on the report, despite the error message continuing to occur. Due to a delay in certification of a *de minimus* change to fix this issue, DemTech was unable to address this issue in time for the November General Election. A *de minimus* change means a minimum change to a certified EPB system's hardware, software, TDP, or data; the nature of the change will not materially alter the system's reliability, functionality, capability, or operation and does not require complete recertification of the equipment.[49] In the meantime, DemTech brought new batteries to replace those Merlins affected.

To ultimately remedy these issues, DemTech was given a deadline of January 8th, 2024 to update all EPBs in all localities with their new ELECT approved de minimis fixes for the issues which DemTech achieved. While the procurement and service contracts for DemTech are between the vendor and the locality, ELECT continues to work with the DemTech to ensure that these issues are addressed and do not occur in the future. Additionally, localities who use DemTech are working together to address issues and learn from each other to better operate their EPBs.

Felon Cancellation

In October of 2023, ELECT processed nearly 3,400 records of voters for reinstatement who were cancelled after violating their probation but were misclassified as having new felonies. This occurred as a result of reports provided by the Virginia State Police (VSP) to ELECT which listed probation violations on previous felony convictions as new felonies, even if such violation was not a felony.

ELECT receives a monthly list of individuals convicted of felonies from the VSP which incorrectly included those on probation that violated that probation. ELECT sent these records to local general registrars who removed the voters from the voter list and sent cancellation letters by mail in accordance with state law. A report of a discrepancy with an individual's reported felony conviction prompted ELECT to discover this error. Probation violations have been removed from the list of felony convictions sent to ELECT in monthly files since October of 2023. Additionally, given this process had gone unchanged for decades, ELECT requested VSP

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[49] Virginia Department of Elections, Electronic Pollbook Certification Standard, https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/election-security/Virginia_Electronic-Pollbook-Certification-Standard-FINAL.pdf

conduct a historical review of individuals cancelled to identify affected voters which resulted in nearly 3,400 records being sent to registrars for reinstatement.

Although all impacted voters were eligible to vote in the November election, ELECT worked with VSP to establish a Watch Team to ensure any person listed as having a felony conviction could be individually verified. No individuals listed as having a felony conviction were turned away from the polls and general registrars were able to contact the VSP Watch Team directly for confirmation regarding individual records. The Watch Team assembled in October and remained available to registrars until November 10th, 2023, the Friday after the election.

Mail

Every election the United States Postal Service (USPS) has an essential role in delivering absentee ballots. However, severe staffing issues throughout the Commonwealth led to delays and even errors in ballot delivery. General registrars and voters throughout different localities experienced ballots being returned as undeliverable when attempting to mail their ballot to the registrar's office. Additionally, there is a consistent issue with ballots not having their Intelligent Mail barcodes (IMBs) scanned which allows for individual ballot tracking. Many localities experienced multiple days in which no ballots were delivered to the registrar's office at all and were instead being held at USPS processing centers.

ELECT held a series of meetings with USPS representatives, general registrars, and Virginia postmasters to mitigate issues and discuss the process to prioritize the delivery of election mail. This resulted in USPS leadership conducting specific USPS site visits and the development of a map which indicates where processing facilities are located throughout the Commonwealth. Additionally, Commissioner Beals has met with members of Congress to address these issues ahead of the presidential election.

Fentanyl Narcan Training

The FBI, United State Postal Inspection Service, as well as local and state law enforcement partners investigated reports in November that mail received by election officials in California, Georgia, Nevada, Oregon, Texas, and Washington contained fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid used to treat severe pain.

Although no occurrences of suspicious letters were reported in Virginia, ELECT advised localities to take extra precautions when handling incoming mail out of an abundance of caution. ELECT also coordinated with the Virginia Department of Health to make Narcan (a brand of Naloxone that temporarily reverses the effect of an opioid overdose) and training on administering Naloxone available to local election offices and ELECT staff. Additionally, election administrators were advised to wear gloves when handling mail and to contact the local law enforcement if they encountered a suspicious piece of mail or package in their facilities.

Conclusion

In 2024, general registrars and local electoral boards will, at a minimum, conduct three elections: a Presidential Primary held on March 5, a second Primary on June 18, and a November 5

General Election. In total, localities will have to administer 135 days (or 4 ½ months) of early voting and will need approximately 20,000 Officers of Election to staff precincts. Historically, voter participation is the highest during a presidential election year. Adequate staffing and support, using lessons learned not only from the 2023 General Election but also on the last four-year election cycle will be essential in administering these elections successfully and promoting free and fair elections in the Commonwealth.

Appendix A: Terminology

Many terms are used to describe election results. For purposes of the data included in this report, please keep the following definitions in mind:

Absentee Voting includes in-person voting in the early voting period and by mailed absentee ballots.

Ballots Cast refers to the total number of ballots counted towards the total results of an election. For example, 1 paper ballot may have 3 elections on it. No matter how many bubbles are filled in for each election, all 3 elections, 1 election, or none at all, that 1 paper ballot is considered 1 ballot cast.

Voter Turnout refers to the number of registered individuals that attempted to vote in an election. ELECT calculates turnout as the amount of ballots cast by the amount of active and inactive voters and is commonly expressed as a percentage.

Votes Cast refers to the number of votes cast that go towards a particular election, meaning a particular candidate, referendum, etc. Referring to the example above, 1 paper ballot may have 3 elections on it. If a voter makes 1 selection in each of the 3 elections, a total of 3 votes have been cast on the 1 ballot.

Appendix B: Voter Education Campaign Materials

Digital Animated Banners

English

Digital Static Banners

English

Spanish

Korean

Mobile Advertisements

English

On November 7th, all 140 Virginia House and Senate seats are up for election. Vote early now until November 4th. Make your voting plan at **Vote.Virginia.gov**

Embrace your inner early bird. Election Day is Nov 7th, but you can vote early now through November 4th. Make your voting plan at **Vote.Virginia.gov**

Ready to mark your election ballot? Mark your calendar. Vote early now through November 4th. Election Day is Nov 7th. Make your voting plan at **Vote.Virginia.gov**

Print

English

Spanish

Korean

Vietnamese

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE NOVEMBER ELECTIONS

This November 7 is Election Day and every one of Virginia's General Assembly seats are on the ballot — all 100 two-year term State Delegate seats and 40 four-year term State Senator seats — as well as some local offices. That's why it is so important that everyone who can vote should vote, and Virginia has many options to make sure you can.

Register to Vote

To vote a regular ballot, you have until October 16 to register online at Vote.Virginia.gov, by mail, or at your general registrar's office. If registering October 17-November 4, or on Election Day, you will vote a provisional ballot.

You have more than one way to vote.

- **Election Day:** Polling locations will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 7. If you are in line to vote by 7 p.m., you will be able to cast your ballot.

- **Early In Person Voting:** Until Saturday, November 4, you can go to your general registrar's office to cast a ballot just as if it was Election Day. In addition, registrar's offices will be open for voting on two Saturdays — October 28 and November 4 — and satellite polling locations are available in some localities. You can find them listed on Vote.Virginia.gov.

- **Absentee Voting Via Mail or Drop Off:** October 27 at 5 p.m. is the last day to request an absentee ballot. Carefully review the instructions mailed with your ballot. After you have applied to vote absentee, you can visit Vote.Virginia.gov to check the status of your absentee ballot. For your vote to count, you must complete and return your ballot either to your general registrar's office or a drop-off location by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, or mail it postmarked on or before Election Day.

Voting in Virginia is fast, easy, and convenient. Make your plan to vote today!

· VIRGINIA ·
DEPARTMENT *of* **ELECTIONS**

Radio

English

EARLY BIRD :30

AVO: Being early is a good thing, right? The early bird gets the worm.

Early to bed, early to rise. So why not early voting? This election season, you don't have to wait until November seventh. Early voting runs now through November fourth. And with all one hundred and forty seats in the Virginia House and Senate up for election, every vote counts. Visit your local registrar's office to learn more about early voting. Or make your voting plan at Vote dot Virginia dot gov. That's Vote dot Virginia dot gov

MANY REASONS :30

AVO: There are so many reasons to vote this November seventh.

A hundred and forty of them, in fact. This election, all one hundred and forty seats in the Virginia House and Senate are up for grabs. That gives you a lot of say in how the state is run. So mark your calendar for November seventh. Or take advantage of early voting now through November fourth. Make your voting plan today at Vote dot Virginia dot gov. That's Vote dot Virginia dot gov

Social Graphics

English

Campaign Social Shareables

English

Toolkit Social Shareables

English

Spanish

Korean

Vietnamese

Appendix C: Redesigned Provisional Ballot Envelope

Virginia Provisional Vote and Same Day Registration Application   Precinct # _____

Only for voters not registered in this precinct.

Use blue or black ink

*Starred (*) items are required. If you do not complete all of the items that are marked with *, your application may be denied.*

1   * I am a citizen of the United States of America   ☐ YES   ☐ NO

   * Full Social Security Number ☐☐☐ - ☐☐ - ☐☐☐☐   ☐ No SSN was ever issued

   * Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY) ☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐☐   * Gender _____

2   * Last Name _____   Jr. Sr. II III IV (Circle one) Other (write-in): _____

   * First Name _____   * Middle Name _____   ☐ None

   * Residence Address (May not be a P.O. Box) _____   Apt. _____

   * City/Town _____   * Zip Code _____

   Email _____   Phone ☐☐☐ - ☐☐☐ - ☐☐☐☐

3   * Have you ever been convicted of a felony or judged mentally incapacitated and disqualified to vote? ☐ YES ☐ NO
   If YES, has your right to vote been restored? ☐ YES ☐ NO

4   ☐ I am an active-duty uniformed services member, spouse or dependent; or an overseas citizen.

   ☐ I am providing a mailing address (below) because my residence address cannot receive mail or I am homeless.

   ☐ I am providing a Virginia P.O. Box (below) to protect my residence address from public disclosure because I or a household member is/has:

      ☐ An active or retired law enforcement officer, judge, magistrate, U.S. or Virginia Attorney General attorney.
      ☐ Been granted a court issued protective order.
      ☐ In fear for personal safety from being threatened or stalked by another person.
      ☐ A participant in the Virginia Attorney General's Address Confidentiality Program.
      ☐ Been approved to be a foster parent.

   My mailing address
   (Complete only if you have checked a box in this section)   _____
   _____
   _____

5   ☐ I am currently registered to vote in another state: __ __ (Indicate state of previous registration)

6   ☐ I am interested in being an Officer of Election (poll worker) on Election Day. Please send me information.

7   AFFIRMATION: I swear/affirm, under felony penalty for making willfully false material statements or entries, that the information provided on this form is true and that, to the best of my knowledge, I am eligible to vote in this election. I authorize the cancellation of my current registration and I hereby affirm that I have read the Privacy Act Notice and Warning.
   (See back for Privacy Act Notice and Warning.)

   ▶ * Signature _____   Today's date: ☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐☐

   ☐ By checking this box, I affirm both that I am an individual with physical disabilities and the Affirmation Statement above. Pursuant to Article II, § 2 of the Constitution of Virginia, individuals with physical disabilities are not required to sign the application for voter registrations.

ELECTION OFFICER	OFFICE/ELECTORAL BOARD USE ONLY
YOU MUST SELECT THIS REASON CODE:	Voter ID # _____
☐ #1: Same Day Registration (or not on pollbook)	
Did voter show ID or complete ID Confirmation Statement?	Adjudication: ☐ COUNT ☐ DO NOT COUNT
☐ YES ☐ NO	**Voter Identification**
Comments:	1. If the voter returns with the proper identification, check this box and sign ☐ X _____
Election Officer: X _____ Sign Here	2. Attach a copy of the identification document.

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Virginia Provisional Vote (Non-Same Day Registration)

If Same Day Registration, complete only the other side.

Precinct # _____

Use blue or black ink

Starred (*) items are required. *If you do not complete all of the items that are marked with *, your vote may not count.*

1   *Last Name _____   Jr. Sr. II III IV (Circle one) Other (write-in): _____

    *First Name _____   *Middle Name _____   ☐ None

2   *Date of Birth ☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐☐

3   *Social Security Number   ☐☐☐ - ☐☐ - ☐☐☐☐
    Last 4 digits REQUIRED

Providing your full Social Security number, though not required, may prove helpful in determination of your eligibility to vote.

4   *Residence Address *(May not be a P.O. Box)* _____   Apt. _____

    *City/Town _____   *Zip Code _____

    If address is different than voter registration record, provide the date you moved: __ __ / __ __ / __ __ __ __
    Your address information will be used to update your voter registration record.

5   Phone ☐☐☐ - ☐☐☐ - ☐☐☐☐   Email _____

6   **Statement of Voter**

To the best of my knowledge, I am a registered voter of this locality and I am eligible to vote in this election. I hereby affirm that I have read the Privacy Act Notice and Warning.

Voter:
*Sign Here

X

Today's Date:

☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐☐

Privacy Act Notice: This form requires personal information, including information related to your Social Security number, for identification purposes and to prevent fraud. Federal law (the Privacy Act and Help America Vote Act) and state law (the Virginia Constitution, Article II, § 2; Title 24.2 of the Code of Virginia; and the Virginia Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act) authorize collecting this information and restrict its use to official purposes only. Failure to provide the requested information may prevent determining your eligibility to vote and result in your provisional ballot not being counted.

Warning: Intentionally making a materially false statement on this form constitutes the crime of election fraud, punishable as a felony in Virginia. Violators may be sentenced up to 10 years in prison, or up to 12 months in jail and/or fined up to $2,500.

ELECTION OFFICER

You Must Select a Reason Code.

☐ #3: Voting after hours due to court order

☐ #4: Vote by mail – no ballot to surrender

☐ #5: Shown on pollbook as already voted

☐ #6: Other: _____

☐ #7: Voter does not have required ID and declined to complete
    ID Confirmation Statement

Comments:

Election Officer: **X**
Sign Here

OFFICE/ELECTORAL BOARD USE ONLY

Voter ID # _____

Adjudication: ☐ COUNT   ☐ DO NOT COUNT

Voter Identification

1.   If the voter returns with the proper identification,

    check this box and sign ☐   **X** _____

2.   Attach a copy of the identification document.

ELECT-653 - 7/2023

Appendix D: *2023 General Election Survey* Questions

ELECT 2023 Post-Election Survey of General Registrars ⎇

For completion by general registrars. Please submit only one response per general registrar.

* Required

1. Will you allow ELECT to use your answers **anonymously** to help tell the story of the 2023 General Election in the Post-Election Report? *

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

2. What is the population of your locality? *

   ○ 1-10,000

   ○ 10,001-20,000

   ○ 20,001-40,000

   ○ 40,001-75,000

   ○ 75,001-100,000

   ○ 100,001-200,000

   ○ 200,000+

3. How many years have you been in election administration (including as a deputy, staff member, or poll worker)? *

○ 0-3

○ 4-7

○ 8-11

○ 12+

4. **Including yourself**, how many people have served as the General Registrar in your locality over the past 10 years? *

○ 1

○ 2

○ 3

○ 4

○ 5

○ Greater than 5

○ Unsure

5. **Not including yourself**, how many permanent FTE (full-time equivalent) staff work in your office? *

○ No full-time staff

○ 1

○ 2-5

○ 6-10

○ 11-20

○ 21-35

○ 35+

6. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that your office has adequate resources in the following categories: *

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	S(
Financial Resources	○	○	○	
Human Resources	○	○	○	
Technological Resources	○	○	○	

7. Based upon your previous answer, please elaborate on additional resources most needed: *

[text box]

8. Overall, how satisfied are you with serving as a general registrar? *

○ Very satisfied

○ Somewhat satisfied

○ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

○ Somewhat dissatisfied

○ Very dissatisfied

9. Are you considering retiring or otherwise leaving your position? *

○ Yes, I am considering retiring/leaving my position in the next year

○ Yes, I am considering retiring/leaving my position in the next two years

○ Yes, I am considering retiring/leaving my position at the expiration of my current term

○ No, I am not considering retiring/leaving my position

○ Unsure

10. What reasons motivate you to consider leaving your position? *Please select all that apply.* *

- [ ] I want to do something else for work
- [ ] I want to do something else with my time
- [ ] I no longer enjoy the position
- [ ] Election administration changes in my locality make the work unsatisfying and/or more difficult
- [ ] State/federal election law changes make the work unsatisfying and/or more difficult
- [ ] I do not enjoy the political environment
- [ ] I can earn more in another position or career
- [ ] I have concerns about my health or personal safety

11. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements: *

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agi
My work gives me a feeling of fulfillment	○	○	
My workload is reasonable	○	○	
My position allows for healthy work-life balance	○	○	
My work is respected by other officials in my locality	○	○	
My work is respected by citizens	○	○	
I am satisfied with my pay	○	○	
My office has sufficient funding to do our jobs well	○	○	
My office has sufficient physical space to do our jobs well	○	○	
My local governing body consults me on budget decisions	○	○	

12. Have you or your staff experienced negative impacts to your physical and/or mental health because of your duties in relation to the 2023 General Election? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

13. How would you characterize the average experience level of officers of election in your locality? *

- ◯ Very experienced
- ◯ Somewhat experienced
- ◯ Unsure
- ◯ Somewhat inexperienced
- ◯ Mostly first-time officers

14. In relation to administering the 2023 General Election, please rank the following issues from most challenging to least challenging: *

| Same day registration/provisional ballots |
| Recruitment and/or retention of officers of election |
| Authorized Representatives |
| Candidate Qualification processing |
| Postal Service issues |
| Election night reporting |
| Absentee ballot issues |

15. Based upon your rankings in the previous question, please provide a short explanation of the top three (3) challenges faced by your locality (you may also provide a challenge you faced that was not listed): *

16. According to responses to the 2022 Post-Election Survey, same day registration was the area of election administration that presented the biggest challenge. How would you compare the process established for same day registration/provisional voting in the 2023 General Election versus 2022. *

- ◯ Much improved
- ◯ Somewhat improved
- ◯ About the same
- ◯ Somewhat worse
- ◯ Much worse

17. What was the most challenging aspect of administering same day registration/provisional voting in the 2023 General Election? *

18. Looking ahead to the November 2024 General Election, how confident are you about the following statements: *

	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Neutral
I will be able to recruit a sufficient number of officers of election	◯	◯	◯
My officers of election will have the necessary experience and training	◯	◯	◯
My office will be sufficiently funded to administer the election	◯	◯	◯

19. What is your biggest concern as an election administrator going into 2024? *

20. Is there anything more you'd like to share with ELECT regarding the 2023 General Election? *