



Municipality of Chatham-Kent
Municipal Election
Voting Method Procedures

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General Information

Application of Procedure

This procedure applies to an election conducted by The Municipality of Chatham-Kent that has passed By-law 113-2025 under Section 42 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, authorizing the use of Vote Tabulators at the Voting Locations and the use of internet voting as another alternative for advance polling dates.

Where this procedure does not provide for any matter, an election to which this procedure applies shall be conducted in accordance with the principles of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

Amendments to Procedures

The Clerk has the authority, at any time, up to and including Voting Day, to amend the procedures contained herein. A copy of any amendment will be forwarded to each candidate if amended following the start of the Nomination Period.

Service Provider

The vendor of record for internet voting and optical scan vote tabulators is Voatz, Inc.

System Integrity

The integrity of the voting process shall be the responsibility of the Clerk and shall be preserved by:

- a) Testing the voting system prior to its use with the assistance of the Information and Technology & Transformation team; and
- b) Ensuring that every eligible elector on the Voters' List, as amended, receives a Voter Information Letter (VIL) containing the voter's unique Elector I.D.; and
- c) Providing an opportunity for eligible electors to be added to the Voters' List or to make amendments to the list, up to and including Election Day.

Secrecy

All Election Officials will take an oath and be appointed as per the EL 11 "Appointment and Oath of Election Official".

All complaints regarding any and/or all breaches of secrecy shall be documented by the Election Official as well as questions and answers of the complainant and, if deemed appropriate, the Clerk shall submit same to the Police for further investigation and prosecution.

Definitions

In this procedure,

Act - means the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, S.O. 1996. c. 32, as amended.

ATI - Audio Tactile Interface, a handheld device that an Elector uses during an accessible voting session to navigate through and make selections to their ballot. Headphones that accompanied the ATI allow the Elector to listen to an audio ballot presentation.

Auxiliary Compartment - means the front compartment of the ballot box in the tabulator and where electors' ballots are temporarily stored in the event of vote count tabulator fails to operate;

Ballot - is either an image on a computer screen or an actual ballot card for an election, which includes all choices available to the electors and contains spaces where they can mark their votes.

Ballot Box - is a box containing a compartment for receiving voted ballots after tabulation by the Vote Tabulators. It also contains a compartment for ballots that need processing in the event of failure of the Vote Tabulator. The box serves as the platform for the Vote Tabulator.

BMD - is a Ballot Marker Device used by an Elector during an accessible voting session to print and mark the selections of an Elector with accessible needs. The BMD ballot is indistinguishable from other hand-marked ballots.

Cancelled Ballot - means a ballot that has been issued to an Elector, and

- (a) its marks cannot be properly read by a Vote Tabulator for which an Elector requests a subsequent ballot to properly record their vote; or,
- (b) when inadvertently, an Elector spoils a ballot, they request a subsequent ballot from the Deputy Returning Officer to record their vote.

Candidate - is a person for who has a nomination under Section 33 of the Act.

Clerk - is the Clerk of the municipality who is responsible for conducting this election under the authority of the Act. All references to the Clerk for the purposes of this manual shall mean the Returning Officer (R.O.) for the 2026 Municipal Election. All references to Clerk's designate shall mean the delegated duties of the Returning Officer.

Clerk's Office - location of the Clerk as well as Election team – Chatham-Kent Civic Centre, 315 King St. W. Chatham, Ontario. Open Monday to Friday 8:30am-4:30pm

Count - is the process of totaling votes.

Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) - is a person appointed by the Clerk for each voting place who will be delegated specific duties and powers by the Clerk.

Voatz - the vendor who provides the technology for internet voting and contractually responsible for the delivery of required vote tabulators

Election - is the general election to fill the offices of Mayor and Ward Councillors for the Municipality, District School Trustees and any ballot questions held under the authority of the Act taking place in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

Election Headquarters - is the Clerk's Office located at Chatham-Kent Civic Centre, 315 King St. W. Chatham, Ontario.

Election Official - means a person who has been delegated or assigned duties and/or responsibilities in the conduct of the municipal election. An Election Official may include; a Tabulator Deputy Returning Officer, a Mobile Deputy Returning Officer, a Deputy Returning Officer, a Revision Clerk, a Site Manager, a Greeter, or other such person or persons appointed under the authority of Section 15 (1) of the Act.

Election Results Report - is the printed record generated by the memory card for each Tabulator and represents the number of over-votes and blank ballots processed throughout the day. Also includes the record generated by the Internet Voting System.

Eligible Elector - in the Act, it is defined as a person who meets the voting qualifications and appears on the Voters' List or is added to it.

Institution - is a premise that on September 1, occupies 20 or more beds by persons who are disabled, chronically ill or infirm; or a retirement home where 50 or more beds are occupied. Section 45(7).

Internet Voting System means the technology and software that records, processes, stores, and counts Ballots cast.

Personal Identification Number (PIN) - means a unique multiple digit number assigned by the Voatz System to each voter to provide security for access to the Internet Voting System.

Preliminary List of Electors (PLE) - is a list of electors for the municipality compiled by Elections Ontario and provided to the municipality.

Privacy Sleeve - is a ballot folder to conceal the names of the Candidates and the marks made by the Elector upon the face of the ballot but does expose the initials of the Deputy Returning Officer.

Poll Matrix - is a box found in the top right corner of the ballot that a DRO marks to indicate which Voting Subdivision an Elector is.

Recount - is an additional count of ballots following Voting Day held in accordance with Sections 56 to 64, inclusive, of the Act.

Revision Clerk (RC) - is an Election Official appointed by the Clerk to receive applications to amend the Voters' List at a Voting Station under the authority of Section 15(1) of the Act.

Scrutineer – is an individual, appointed by writing by a certified candidate, to represent them during the voting process.

Site Manager - is an Election Official appointed by the Clerk or designate to assist in the management of the voting location in relation to the conduct of the municipal election.

Tabulation - has the same meaning as “Count”

Tabulator Deputy Returning Officer (TDRO) - is the person appointed by the Clerk to be responsible for the operation of the Vote Tabulator including receiving and processing ballots under the authority of Section 15(1) of the Act.

Time/Clock – is the time as indicated on the clock located in the Clerk's office.

Unused Ballot - is an uncirculated ballot.

Unique Elector Id - this is the ID number found on a voter's individual VIL card and what is required to be able to access and use the Internet Voting System to vote.

Vote Tabulator - is an apparatus that optically scans a designated area on the ballots to read the votes and tabulate the number of vote cast for each Candidate or ballot question. The terms Vote Counting Unit, Vote Tabulator Units, Ballot Reader and Vote Recorder are synonymous with the term Vote Tabulator. The Clerk shall designate the number of Tabulators in each Voting Location.

Vote Tabulator Memory Card - means a removable memory device that the vote tabulator uses to store the scanner's election definition, audit log, and other election-specific information, including:

- a) the names of all Candidates for each office to be contested in the election or the particular Ward;
- b) the alternatives of “yes” and “no” for each question; and,
- c) recorded and retained information on the number of acceptable marks made for each Candidate.

Voters' List - is the list of Electors produced by Elections Ontario for each municipality and school board in the province.

Voting Day – (not to be confused with Voting Period) is the final day of voting in an election, which will be Monday, October 26, 2026, with the polls closing at 8:00 pm. (determined by Sections 5 and 46 of the Act)

Voting Location - is the physical location (or “municipally” known address) established for the conduct of the voting

Voting Place - is the physical locations for the electors to cast ballots, as established by the Clerk.

Voting Station - is the area within the Voting Location designated by the Returning Officer where Eligible Electors cast ballots.

Voting Subdivision - is an administrative division representing a contiguous geographic area situated within a Ward and in which Eligible Electors cast ballots at the same Voting Station.

Ward - is a contiguous geographic area representing by a public official(s) (“Councillor(s)”).

Zeros Tape - is the printed record generated from a Vote Tabulator before the acceptance of any ballot at the opening of the Voting Location. It is also the printed record generated from a counting centre before the tabulation of used ballots or at the beginning of any recount procedure, and which indicates as “zero” the number of votes for each Candidate and, if applicable the number of votes for and against each by-law or ballot question.

Optical Scan Vote Tabulator

Programming of the Vote Tabulators

1. The Vote Tabulator shall be programmed so that a printed record of the number of votes cast for each Candidate and with respect to each by-law and question can be produced.
2. The Clerk will be required to determine which, if any ballots will be returned by the vote count tabulator for inspection.
3. The Vote Tabulator shall be programmed so that the following ballots are returned to the TDRO as described:
 - (a) Ballot without votes in any of the specified voting spaces as determined by a Vote Tabulator, with the message "Blank Ballot – You have made no selection on this ballot." If elector still wishes to use the ballot, the tabulator will accept the ballot with an override and no votes will be counted.
 - (b) Ballot with more designated voting spaces marked for an office than the Elector is entitled to vote for, as determined by a Vote Tabulator, with the message “Over

Voted.” If elector still wishes to use the ballot, the tabulator will accept the ballot with an override however not votes will be counted.

Ballot that is damaged or defective or has been marked in such a way that it cannot be properly processed by a Vote Tabulator with the message "Ballot could not be read"

4. A Ballot where the Elector has voted for less than the number of positions to be filled for a single office is under voted. Vote Tabulators will be programmed to automatically accept these ballots and not return them to the TDRO.

Testing of Vote Tabulators

1. Prior to Voting Day, the Clerk or designate shall test all Vote Tabulators, including back-up Tabulators, to ensure that they will accurately and consistently count the votes cast for all Candidates, by-laws and questions that are marked with a valid mark in the designated area.
2. When testing the Vote Tabulator, adequate safeguards shall be taken to ensure that the system or any part of it that is used for processing and tabulating votes is isolated from all other applications or programmes and that no remote devices are capable of gaining access to the system.
3. The Clerk shall give notice of the date and time of the testing of the Vote Tabulators to the Candidates.

The following testing phases will be completed before the voting equipment is ready for use:

Testing the Vote Tabulators (Diagnostic Testing)

This test will ensure that the battery charge, time settings, LCD display, system memory, printer, serial port, auxiliary port, and ballot reader/scanner are all functioning properly.

Testing Memory Devices

This will test every memory device to ensure it is not defective and can only read acceptable ballot faces.

Testing Locations

Every location which will be used for the election, and which will have a Vote Tabulator, must be inspected. As well, at each location, the power source which will be used on Voting Day is also tested.

Testing Ballots

Once the ballots have been printed and received from the printing house, a test deck must be prepared and tested on each machine. A test deck must include every type of ballot used at a

particular location and be comprised of samples of blank, over-voted, under-voted, and properly completed ballots.

Procedure for Testing Audio

1. A test must include every type of ballot to be used and be comprised of samples of blank, under-voted, over-voted, and properly completed ballots
2. A list is to be compiled of predetermined votes to be cast; By using the headphones and hand-switch the votes for all races in the election are to be cast according to the predetermined list;
3. Compare the results from the tape of the voting machine against the predetermined list of votes to be cast.

Test Documentation

A complete record of all testing phases must be retained. In the event that the competency of the voting equipment is questioned, all printouts, reports, and test decks must be retained to verify your actions.

Logic and Accuracy (L&A) Testing

The L&A test shall be conducted as follows:

1. assign a varying number of votes to a pre-audited group of ballots marked with the designated black ballot marking pen in designated area;
2. manually count each valid vote and record the results;
3. tabulate the pre-audited ballots using the vote count tabulator;
4. compare the output of the vote count tabulator with the pre-audited results.

Candidates/Scrutineers

1. Candidates may appoint scrutineers in writing to represent them at the Voting Location.
2. Scrutineers must show their written appointment to Election Officials upon request.
3. The Site Manager is responsible for the conduct of the Voting Location, and no Candidate or scrutineer has any right to interfere with any Election Official in the discharge of their duties.
4. During the fifteen minutes before the opening of the Voting Location, the scrutineers who are entitled to be present in a Voting Location during voting hours are entitled to inspect the ballots and all other papers, forms and documents relating to the vote but not so to delay the timely opening of the Voting Location.

5. Only one scrutineer for each certified Candidate for each Ballot Box may be present at a location at any given time. The number of scrutineers who may be present is reduced by one while the candidate who appointed them is present in the voting place as provided for in Section 47 of the Act.
6. Scrutineers may place their own seal on the ballot box immediately before opening of the Voting Location, so that ballots can be deposited in the box and cannot be withdrawn without breaking the seal. The seal may be identifiable to the Candidate/Scrutineer but must not contain the Candidate's name or imply campaign literature.
7. Scrutineers shall supply themselves with a clipboard for their use, as sitting at the tables provided for Election Officials is not permitted.
8. Scrutineers must not attempt to directly or indirectly influence how an Elector votes.
9. Scrutineers are not allowed to enter a voting compartment while occupied by an Elector, or to be in a position to see how the Elector marks their ballot.
10. Scrutineers shall not display any campaign material or literature in a Voting Location or on themselves.
11. If an Elector is objected to by a scrutineer, the Election Official shall note the objection on the Voters' List and require the Elector to take a prescribed oath prior to issuance of a ballot.
12. To protect the secrecy of the vote, scrutineers will not be able to examine the ballots or to object to ballots or to the counting of votes in a ballot as provided for in Sections 47(5) (e) and 47(5) (f) and Section 54(3) of the Act as the ballots are being fed into the Vote Tabulator by the Election Official.
13. The total of votes cast for each Candidate as counted by the vote tabulating equipment and as accepted by the TDRO is final.
14. Scrutineers may place their seal on the ballot box after counting of the votes, when the TDRO seals the box, so that ballots cannot be deposited or withdrawn without breaking the seal.
15. A Candidate or their Scrutineer is entitled to be present when the ballot box and documents are delivered to the Clerk.

Preparing the Tabulators for Voting

1. Take the vote count tabulator out from the carrying case and organize the supplies and equipment. A checklist of supplies and instruction on setup is provided in the vote count tabulator carrying case.

2. Place the ballot box with the vote count tabulator on a flat surface with the front of the vote count tabulator unit facing toward the voter.
3. Guide the vote count tabulator into position on the top of the ballot box. Plug the power cord directly into a standard 110V outlet.
4. Insert the tabulator key into the lock in the front of the lid to unlock the unit. Ensure the tabulator is properly plugged in. Raise the lid of the vote count tabulator and the unit will automatically power up and begin its boot up process. Verify that the correct election definition is loaded and that the tabulator is running on electricity and not on battery power. If the device indicates otherwise, check that the unit is properly plugged into an operating AC power outlet.
5. Press OPEN POLL (green button) on the screen and the unit will open the polls, and the tabulator printer will automatically print a Configuration Report, a Ballot Status Accounting Report, and a Zero Report. In all, 2 copies of the Zero Report will print (must be programmed to print more than 1 copy). Tear off the printed tape, confirm the date and time and sign the Zero Report. One (1) copy is to be posted in the immediate area for electors/candidates to see, and one (1) copy is to stay attached to the vote tabulator.
6. Print an additional copy of the Zero Report by pressing REPORT OPTIONS to enter the report menu. Then select Zero Reports and PRINT to print another report. Press CANCEL when you are finished printing reports.
7. Tear off and sign the additional Zero Report. Roll the Zero Report, unlock the rear access compartment of the tabulator, and store the report in the rear access compartment of the vote count tabulator. Lock the rear access cover on the vote count tabulator when complete.
8. Press the GO TO VOTING (green button) on the display to go to voting mode. A blue welcome screen will appear. Verify that the vote count tabulator LCD display shows the public counter is at "0" zero.
9. If the totals are zero for all candidates, by-laws and questions, the Tabulator Operator shall ensure that the zero printout remains affixed to the vote count tabulator until the results are printed by the vote count tabulator after the close of the vote. All election officials and scrutineers may sign the zero totals report, if they so desire.

If the totals are not zero for all candidates, and questions/by-laws, the Tabulator Operator or the election official shall immediately notify the Clerk and shall conduct the vote using the auxiliary back-up compartment of the ballot box until the vote count tabulator is made operational or the Clerk provides a back-up vote count tabulator to the voting location.

Procedures in Normal Circumstances – Tabulator Voting

- 1 Each Elector arrives at the ballot issuing table, the DRO verifies that the name of the person is entered on the Voters' List. The DRO shall, at the same time as the ballot is delivered, provide a Privacy Sleeve to each Elector, and briefly explain the voting procedure. Mark off the poll matrix in the top right-hand corner of the ballot.
- 2 Upon receiving the ballot, the Elector shall immediately proceed to the voting compartment; using the ballot-marking pen provided, vote by filling in the circle or oval to the right of the Candidate(s) of their choice or for the answer to any by-law or question. (Normally, only one person is permitted in a voting compartment at any time.)
- 3 After marking the ballot in the voting compartment, the Elector shall,
 - i. insert the ballot into the privacy sleeve;
 - ii. leave the compartment without delay;
 - iii. deliver the Privacy Sleeve containing the ballot to the TDRO.
- 4 The TDRO immediately requests that the Elector please remain until the Vote Tabulator has successfully accepted the ballot, and shall, in the presence of the Elector and without removing the ballot from the privacy sleeve, and,
 - i. if a Vote Tabulator is available in the Voting Location, insert the Privacy Sleeve containing the ballot, into the feed area of the Vote Tabulator until the Vote Tabulator draws the ballot from the Privacy Sleeve in full view of the Elector; or
 - ii. if a Vote Tabulator is not available in the Voting Location, insert the ballot directly into the ballot box from the Privacy Sleeve in full view of the Elector.
- 5 If a Vote Tabulator is available in the Voting Location but fails to operate, the TDRO shall,
 - i. insert the ballot into the Auxiliary Ballot Box compartment and
 - ii. insert the ballots into the feed area of the Vote Tabulator after the close of the voting.
- 6 The TDRO thanks the Elector, and the Elector promptly leaves the Voting Location. A person whose ballot has been placed in the ballot box is deemed to have voted.

Ballot Returned When Using Privacy Sleeve

1. The sleeve (with the ballot inside) is inserted into the input slot on the front of the Tabulator by the TDRO (with the Elector present or nearby). The ballot will be pulled

into the Tabulator, and the TDRO will then pull the Privacy Sleeve away from the input slot.

2. If the ballot is then returned by the Tabulator the TDRO will hold the Privacy Sleeve above the input slot so that the returning ballot will feed out under the sleeve, so that the TDRO cannot see the votes on the ballot.
 - (a) take hold of the ballot as it feeds out of the unit, then take it and press it to the underside of the privacy sleeve, so that the votes on the ballot cannot be seen.
 - (b) holding the sleeve (with the ballot pressed up against the underside of the sleeve), the TDRO will hold the sleeve low and aimed downwards and will hand the sleeve (with the ballot pressed up against the underside of the sleeve) back to the Elector.
 - (c) The TDRO may then prompt the Elector depending on the reason for the ballot being returned in accordance with one of the procedures in extraordinary circumstances.

Procedures in Extraordinary Circumstances

1. Blank Ballot

- (a) The TDRO shall advise the Elector that the Tabulator does not detect any votes in the designated voting spaces. If the Elector is present and wishes to correct the ballot, the TDRO will press the “Return” button and direct the Elector to proceed to the voting compartment to complete the ballot.
- (b) If the Elector chooses not to complete the ballot, the TDRO shall confirm the Elector’s intentions and then press the “Cast Blank Ballot” button.
- (c) If a ballot described in this section is rejected by the Vote Tabulator and the Elector who delivered the ballot is not present, the TDRO shall use the Vote Tabulator “Cast Blank Ballot” button to submit the ballot.

2. Over Voted / Ballot Accidentally Spoiled

- (a) The Vote Tabulator will reject ballots which have over-votes for any of the races (i.e., the Elector filled in too many ovals or arrows.) by displaying the message “Over Voted Contests”.
- (b) If an error is identified by the Vote Tabulator and the Elector who delivered the ballot is still present and would like a replacement ballot, the TDRO will press the “Return” button”. The TDRO shall then mark the returned ballot “cancelled,” place the ballot in the cancelled ballot envelope, refer the voter back to a DRO to deliver another ballot to the Elector and instruct the Elector how to properly mark the ballot.
- (c) If the Elector chooses not to complete a new ballot, the TDRO shall confirm the Elector’s intentions and then press the “Cast” button.

(d) If the ballot “Over-Voted Contests” is identified by the Vote Tabulator and the Elector who delivered the ballot is not present, the TDRO shall use the Vote Tabulator “Cast” button.

3. Damaged or Defective Ballot

(a) If the Vote Tabulator displays “Ballot Could Not Be Read”, is rejected by the Vote Tabulator and the Elector who delivered the ballot is still present, the TDRO shall use the “Return” button to retrieve the ballot. If the Vote Tabulator again rejects the ballot, the TDRO shall mark the ballot “defective,” place the ballot in the Defective ballot envelope; refer the voter back to a DRO to deliver another ballot to the Elector.

(b) If the Elector who delivered the ballot is not present, mark the ballot "defective" and insert the ballot into the envelope “Defective Ballots Holding.”

Preparing the AutoMARK for Voting

If a specific DS200 unit has been assigned to your location, check the serial number, located at the back of the unit or on the screen when powered on, to verify that you have the correct unit.

1. If the wrong unit has been delivered, or if the numbers do not match those on the instructions or documents provided, call Election Headquarters immediately.
2. Remove the AutoMARK, power cord, keys, and the optional equipment (headphones, rocker paddle and/or sip-n-puff) from the carrying/ storage case.
3. Position the AutoMARK in the polling place and install the privacy screen. The AutoMARK should be positioned so voters are not passing behind the person using the equipment. A corner with at least 5 feet clearance is ideal. The keypad should be located on the front-right of the terminal.
4. Inspect the power cord for damage. If the cord is damaged, discard it and contact Election Headquarters immediately.
5. Plug the female end of the power cord into the slot on the back of the AutoMARK.
6. Plug the male end of the power cord into the wall outlet.
7. Move the lid latches towards the outer edge so the lid can be opened.
8. Lift the lid flap back until it rests on top of the lid.
9. Lift the entire lid away from you into a vertical position. The Touch Screen Monitor under the lid is now visible.
10. Lift the Touch Screen Monitor towards you into a vertical position.
11. Close the lid, leaving the Touch Screen Monitor in the upright position.
12. Pull up on the Ballot Feed Tray, then pull it towards you and lower it into position.
13. Adjust the angle of the Touch Screen Monitor for viewing comfort.
14. NOTE: The Touch Screen Monitor is held in place by tension bearings, which allows it to be easily positioned by each voter.
15. Optional: Plug the headphones into the appropriate headphone jack in front of the terminal.

16. Insert then turn the Mode Switch Key to the On position.
17. Once the Insert Your Ballot screen appears, remove the Mode Key and secure it in a safe place.

Voting with the AutoMARK

1. There are multiple ways for a voter to interact with and make choices on the ballot using the AutoMARK:
 - Directly on the Touch Screen
 - The Keypad (includes Braille)
 - Rocker Paddle Device
 - Sip-N-Puff Device
 - Audio Headphones
2. The TDRO instructs the Elector as to how to use the ATI to make their selections but should **not** be involved in the vote selection process. Once the Electors selections are complete, the system prints a paper ballot that is then inserted into the Tabulator.
 - (a) First make sure that any required assistive devices are connected to the AutoMARK.
 - (b) Direct the elector to a chair in front of the display screen and give the voter the assistive devices that they will use to generate their ballot.
 - (c) Explain to the Elector that the Tabulator will give audio instructions on how to use the device and will walk them through the process of creating their ballot. Make sure the Elector knows that they are welcome to put up their hand to ask you for assistance at any time.
 - (d) Insert a blank paper ballot into the slot of the AutoMARK. The paper will be drawn into the printer's slot.
 - (e) Next, affix the Privacy Sleeve to ballot return slot.
 - (f) The Elector will first be asked by the unit which language they prefer. The Tabulator will then take the Elector through the complete ballot process.
 - (g) When the Elector is ready to start making vote selections, the display screen will automatically display the ballot electronically. Contest names and candidate names will highlight as the Elector moves through the ballot, so that they can see where they are in the ballot and what selections they have made.
 - (h) If, for any reason, you need to cancel a ballot while it is in session, use the key used to power on the AutoMARK to enter maintenance mode, then select "Eject Ballot."
 - (i) When the elector has completed their ballot, the AutoMARK will produce a paper copy of the ballot for insertion into the Tabulator. The printed paper ballot will be concealed within a Privacy Sleeve as it emerges from the printer.
 - (j) Initial the ballot in the box marked DRO and fill in the appropriate subdivision in the Poll Matrix on the top right of the ballot while the ballot remains in the privacy sleeve.
 - (k) To cast the ballot, follow the same procedures as you would for a manual ballot.

3. In many cases, Electors using an interface may be voting privately for the very first time. It is important to spend some time to explain the system to them, and in particular explain what features are available to them to use. Refer to the AutoMARK Election Day Checklist – Version Number 1.8.x for detailed instructions on use of each assistive device.
4. Electors with needs that require other add on features will complete their ballot in the same manner as outlined above with audio instruction.

AutoMARK Close of Vote

1. Using the Mode Switch Key, insert the key and turn it to the Off position. Remove the key.
2. Unplug the headphones and lift under the front of the ballot feed tray and fold it inwards.
3. Open the lid and fold the Touch Screen Monitor back into the recessed area.
4. Lower the lid over the Touch Screen Monitor.
5. Lower the lid flap over the ballot feed tray and move the lid latches inwards to secure the lid.
6. Unplug the power cord from the wall outlet.
7. Remove the power cord from the AutoMARK.
8. Place the AutoMARK, power cord, Mode Switch Key, and the accessories into the carrying/storage case.

Procedure in the Event a Tabulator or Memory Card Malfunctions During the Voting Process

1. In the event that a Tabulator malfunctions during the voting process and the memory device is still functional, it may be necessary for an adjustment or replacement of the Tabulator. If this is necessary, the preferred course of action is to substitute the faulty equipment with a spare Vote Tabulator.
2. The following steps shall be performed in order to smoothly and quickly replace the faulty equipment and resume the regular voting activities. NOTE: At no time shall an Elector be prevented from casting their ballot. Push in the perforated auxiliary ballot slot on the front of the ballot box and insert ballots until the unit is operational. Before swapping the DS200, record the Public Count, the Voting Station/Poll or Location Number, and the blue barcode security seal number from the original unit.
 - (a) Using the black barrel key, open the keyed access USB compartment, remove the USB thumb drive from the malfunctioning Tabulator, and insert the same USB thumb drive into the replacement Tabulator.
 - (b) The TDRO shall unplug the faulty equipment, replace it with the substitute Vote Tabulator, reconnect the power, lock the USB access compartment, and apply a new blue barcode security seal. In an effort to expedite the replacement, the Election Official who delivered the replacement Tabulator may assist in packing up the faulty equipment.

3. The TDRO shall turn on the replacement Tabulator by pressing the ON button inside the USB access well. If the replacement unit has been properly cleared and qualified, the tabulator will automatically print the Configuration Report, the Ballot Accounting Status Report, and a Zero Report (no Zero Report will print if the poll has already been opened). The TDRO shall then sign the reports and leave the tape attached to the vote count tabulator. After the report is printed and signed, the TDRO will press the “DON’T CLOSE CONTINUE VOTING” button on the tabulator touch screen which will then bring up the blue welcome screen. Verify the public count agrees with the last known public count from the malfunctioning tabulator, then record the serial number of the replacement DS200 and the new blue barcode security seal number. The existing ballot box continues to be used to accept ballots that are to be fed through the replacement Tabulator for the remainder of the day. The ballots that were inserted in the auxiliary ballot slot will remain there until the end of Voting Day.
3. In the event a memory device malfunctions, the TDRO shall immediately contact the Municipal Clerk’s Office. Once a replacement memory device has been provided, the TDRO shall:
 - (a) Verify that the Vote Tabulator and replacement memory device are operational, seal the ballot box containing any ballots which were previously processed or inserted into the Auxiliary Ballot Box compartment during the “equipment swap” and set it aside in a secure location until the close of the poll.
 - (b) A new, empty ballot box is then used to accept ballots that are to be fed through the Tabulator with the new memory device for the remainder of the day.
 - (c) The TDRO shall turn on the Vote Tabulator and proceed to print, verify and sign the Zero Tape, as was done prior to the opening of the poll.
 - (d) The ballots in the original ballot box will be fed through the Vote Tabulator after the close of the poll.

Procedure for Closing the Voting Location During Advance Voting

If a Vote Tabulator has been used for advance voting, the procedures contained in this section shall be followed by the Election Official to close the Advance Voting Location at the end of each day.

TDRO responsibilities:

- (a) The TDRO removes all defective ballots from the envelope for “Defective Ballots Holding.” These ballots were previously placed in this envelope because they could not be read by the Vote Tabulator and the Elector had left the Voting Location.
- (b) The TDRO uses a new unused ballot and prepares a replacement ballot in the view of any Candidates or Scrutineers present by marking a new ballot with the same marks contained in the designated voting spaces on the defective ballot, and the

- replacement ballot shall be clearly labelled "replacement" and given a serial number which shall also be recorded on the defective ballot.
- (c) The TDRO shall substitute the replacement ballot for the defective ballot and feed the replacement ballot into the Vote Tabulator. If the Vote Tabulator still will not process the ballot (i.e., the original marks made by the Elector and duplicated by the TDRO or Election Official are incapable of being processed by the Tabulator), use the Tabulator override button and insert the ballot into the feed area of the Vote Tabulator;
 - (d) The defective ballot is placed in a defective ballot envelope (if the Vote Tabulator was not able to process the replacement ballot, this fact shall be recorded on the defective ballot).
 - (e) The TDRO or Election Official shall, after the close of each Advance Voting Day, check the back-up compartment of the ballot box for ballots to ensure all ballots have been processed.
 - (f) Look at the display on the Vote Tabulator and write down the number of ballots processed through the unit. The number will later be recorded on the statement form.
 - (g) Turn the Vote Tabulator off by pressing and holding the POWER button located in the tabulator USB well (you may have to hold the button for up to 30 seconds before the unit powers off). Place the Vote Tabulator in the carrying case provided, if the Tabulator is to be used on a daily basis, ensure that the memory device and Tabulators are individually secured.
 - (h) Seal the ballot box to ensure the box cannot be re-opened without breaking the seals and to cover the ballot slot.
 - (i) On the last day of advance voting in full view, remove the Zeros Tape from the Vote Tabulator and cut the plastic tie on the Vote Tabulator and remove the memory device. Place the memory device and the Zeros Tape into the Security Envelope and seal the envelope to be uploaded on Election night followed by the close of the polls.

The DRO shall complete the remaining tasks:

1. Make out an Election Results Report in duplicate of the number of
 - (a) ballots received from the Clerk;
 - (b) ballots counted by the Vote Tabulator;
 - (c) cancelled ballots;
 - (d) defective ballots; and
 - (e) unused ballots.
2. Sign and place the original copy of the Election Results Report in the return envelope to be delivered to the Clerk or designated Municipal Centre;

3. Attach the duplicate copy of the statement of all ballots that have been counted by the Vote Tabulator to the Voters' List;
4. Ensure that the original signed statement, the security envelope (containing the Zeros Tape and the memory card), and the duplicate copies of Application of Entry on Voters' List at the Voting Location forms are all placed in the return envelope. Seal the return envelope and set aside.
5. Place all other used forms, unused forms and supplies into the ballot transfer carrying case. Seal the case in such a way so that it cannot be reopened without breaking the seal.
6. The TDRO shall deliver the transfer carrying case, all ballot boxes, voting compartments, the Vote Tabulator and the return envelope to the Clerk or designated Municipal Centre.

Procedure for Closing the Voting Location on Voting Day

The procedures contained in this section shall be followed by the Election Official to close the Voting Location at the end of Voting Day.

TDRO responsibilities:

1. The TDRO removes all defective ballots from the envelope for "Defective Ballots Holding." These ballots were previously placed in this envelope because they could not be read by the Vote Tabulator and the Elector had left the Voting Location.
2. The TDRO uses a new unused ballot and prepares a replacement ballot in the view of any Candidates or scrutineers present by marking a new ballot with the same marks contained in the designated voting spaces on the defective ballot, and the replacement ballot shall be clearly labelled "replacement" and given a serial number which shall also be recorded on the defective ballot.
3. The TDRO shall substitute the replacement ballot for the defective ballot and feed the replacement ballot into the Vote Tabulator. If the Vote Tabulator still will not process the ballot (i.e., the original marks made by the Elector and duplicated by the TDRO or Election Official are incapable of being processed by the Tabulator), use the Tabulator override button and insert the ballot into the feed area of the Vote Tabulator;
4. The defective ballot is placed in a defective ballot envelope (if the Vote Tabulator was not able to process the replacement ballot, this fact shall be recorded on the defective ballot).
5. The TDRO or Election Official shall, after the close of the voting, check the back-up compartment of the ballot box for ballots to ensure all ballots have been processed.

6. Look at the display on the Vote Tabulator and write down the number of ballots processed through the unit. The number will later be recorded on the statement form;
7. Secure the Vote Tabulator against receiving any more ballots by using a seal that covers the ballot entry slot;
8. The TDRO shall insert the key into the tabulator USB well access door and open the door. Press the CLOSE POLLS button which is located right above the POWER button. A screen will appear on the LCD monitor; press the red "CLOSE POLLS" button on the screen to continue closing the poll.
9. The Vote Tabulator will automatically begin printing the Ballot Accounting Status and Results Report containing the votes given for each Candidate and, if applicable, the votes given for and against a by-law or question;
10. Sign the certificate portion of the printed record along with any scrutineers who are present and wish to sign;
11. Remove the Zeros Tape and attached printed record from the Vote Tabulator and place them in the Election Results Report envelope;
12. Once all reports have been printed, the LCD display on the Vote Tabulator will indicate that the "device has been successfully closed for voting". This is the final step, press "FINISHED-TURN OFF" on the LCD display screen to power off the tabulator.

After Turning off the Vote Tabulator

1. Once the tabulator screen is off, unplug the machine.
2. Follow your municipal rules regarding returning ballots and election equipment to Election Headquarters.
3. Confirm the ballot box has been sealed to ensure the box cannot be re-opened without breaking the seal and to cover the ballot slot.
4. The TDRO shall deliver the transfer carrying case, all ballot boxes, the Vote Tabulator and the return envelope to the Clerk's Office or designated Municipal Centre.
5. Once at the designated return location an election official will cut the seals on the tabulator, remove the memory devices and upload the results to Civic Centre.
6. Once the upload is complete, all broken seals, memory cards and signed security seal forms are placed in the TDRO Envelope, sealed and affixed to the side of the Ballot Transfer Case.

The DRO responsibilities:

1. Make out a statement in duplicate of the number of,
 - (a) ballots received from the Clerk,
 - (b) ballots counted by the Vote Tabulator,
 - (c) cancelled ballots,
 - (d) defective ballots, and
 - (e) ballots unused.
2. Sign and place the original copy of the Election Results Report in the statement envelope;
3. Attach the duplicate copy of the Election Results Report and all ballots that have been counted by the Vote Tabulator to the Voters' List;
4. Ensure that the original signed statement, the security envelope (containing the Zeros Tape with one copy of Election Results Report as provided by the Vote Tabulator), and the duplicate copies of Application of Entry on Voters' List at the Voting Location forms are all placed in the return envelope. Seal the return envelope and set aside.
5. Place all other used forms, unused forms and supplies into the ballot transfer carrying case. Seal the case in such a way so that it cannot be reopened without breaking the seal. Return to the Clerk's Office or nearest Municipal Centre along with the voting compartments.
6. If a Vote Tabulator has been used to tabulate votes cast in a Voting Location but the tabulation of the votes cannot be completed because the Vote Tabulator is not operating or cannot be made to operate within a reasonable time following the close of the voting, the TDRO shall, after the close of the voting and after determining the tabulation cannot be completed,
 - (a) seal the ballot box in such a manner that it cannot be opened, or any ballots deposited in it without breaking the seal;
 - (b) secure the Vote Tabulator against receiving any more ballots;
 - (c) place all supplies and all cancelled, declined, defective and unused ballots in the transfer carrier and seal it;
 - (d) personally deliver the ballot box, supply carrier, ballot transfer container and Vote Tabulator to a place designated by the Clerk where a back-up Vote Tabulator is located;
 - (e) ensure that the totals of the back-up Vote Tabulator are zero for all Candidates, by-laws and questions;
 - (f) insert all the ballots from the ballot box into the back-up Vote Tabulator and follow the procedures for closing the voting location.

The Site Manager responsibilities:

1. Maintain the integrity of the election process and to assist in carrying out the election responsibilities.
2. If necessary, may fill in throughout Election Day as any of the election positions that may be required (i.e., Greeter, Revision Clerk, DRO, TDRO)

No Vote Tabulator Provided

If a Vote Tabulator has not been provided in a Voting Location, the DRO shall immediately after the close of voting:

1. deliver all materials, and ballot boxes to the location designated by the Clerk;
2. the Clerk, or a person designated by the Clerk, shall at the close of the vote, feed the ballots (from the Voting Location(s) where voting equipment was not used) into a Vote Tabulator and into the ballot box;
3. The “Procedure for Closing the Voting Location on Voting Day” shall be followed.

Advance Voting and Early Closing of Voting Locations – Voting Day

The total of the votes at an Advance Voting Location or at a Voting Location that closes early under Section 46(3) of the Act shall not be printed and the procedures for closing a voting location of this manual shall not be followed until after 8:00 p.m. on the Voting Day.

General

If, at the close of the voting, the Clerk is of the opinion that it is impracticable to count the votes with the Vote Tabulators, they may direct that all the votes cast in the election shall be counted manually following as far as practicable the provisions of the Act governing the counting of votes.

The Clerk shall, at the completion of the count, retain the programs, memory devices, test materials and ballots in the same manner as is provided for in the Act for the keeping of election records.

Institution/Retirement Home Voting Results

The total of the votes from the Institution/ Retirement Home locations shall not be made available until after 8 p.m. on Voting Day. For this purpose, the Election Official shall attend at the location designated by the Clerk to complete the Voting Location final Election Results Report and provide the results to Candidates or Scrutineers present. The same procedure for “Closing the Voting Location on Advance Voting Day” shall be followed.

Recounts

Subject to the order of a judge under Section 60(3) of the Act, if a recount of votes is held, the votes shall be counted in the same manner as the votes were counted on Voting Day.

A Vote Tabulator shall be tested before the recount in the manner described in the testing of vote tabulators' section of this manual.

The Clerk shall attend the recount and bring the supply carriers, ballot transfer containers, Vote Tabulators, statement envelopes and all documents that, in the opinion of the Clerk, are relevant to the recount.

If a Vote Tabulator is used for a recount, the recount is limited to the ballots tabulated by a Vote Tabulator during the Advance Voting Days and on Voting Day.

- (a) Subject to an order of a judge under Section 60(3) of the Act, if a Vote Tabulator is used for a recount, those persons referred to in paragraph 2, 3 or 4 of Section 61(1) or 61(2) will be unable to examine the ballots or to dispute the validity of a ballot or the counting of votes in a ballot as provided for in Section 61(5) of the Act, as the ballots are being fed into the Vote Tabulators by the Election Officials.

Internet Voting Procedure

Opening of Internet Voting

Prior to the Voatz system activation, the auditor or other authorized election official will generate the confirmation report that contains all candidate names running for an office (through the Voatz System by secure ID and password). The report displays in real time the sum total of votes cast for each candidate running for an office. The timing of this report activity ensures that all totals for all candidates confirms zero (0) votes before the electronic election begins.

The Voatz System will be activated unless any of the counts associated with the candidate names do not indicate a zero total, and unless directed otherwise by an election official.

Candidates or their scrutineer may be present to verify and ensure that all totals of votes cast are at zero (0) and shall be permitted to sign a document that attests to this fact.

Preparation of Voter Notification Cards (VNCs)

Voter Notification Cards will contain unique Elector I.D.s for every eligible elector registered to vote with the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Elector I.D.s will be required when registering to vote online. VNCs should be received by Electors no later than the first day of October.

The Voters' List, being the compilation of the Preliminary List of Electors and Interim List of Changes, shall be provided to Datafix in electronic format so that the Voter Notification Cards

may be printed.

Voter Notification Cards shall be delivered to Canada Post and distributed by mail to all eligible voters to enable them to use the Internet Voting service.

The Voter Notification Cards will contain:

- (a) the elector's unique Elector Identification number with barcode;
- (b) dates, hours and locations of voting (including advance and internet voting)
- (c) voter eligibility criteria;
- (d) location and contact information for the Clerk's Office (Election Office)

A person cannot give their Voter Notification Card to another eligible elector for the purpose of voting. Acceptance of another person's Voter Notification Card including the actual voting thereof will be considered an illegal and corrupt practice and therefore subject to the penalty provision under the Municipal Elections Act, specifically Sections 89 and 90.

Returned Voter Information Letters

Should a Voter Information Letter be returned to the Municipal Office unopened, the PIN status will be disabled by an election official in a manner that prevents the PIN from being successfully validated in the voting process. The Voter Information Letters will then be marked "unused" and be retained in a secure means and subsequently destroyed at the same time as all other Municipal Election material as provided for under Section 88(2) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.

Should a Voter Information Letter be returned to the Municipal Office that has been opened but has not been used for voting purposes, the PIN status will be disabled by an election official in a manner that prevents the PIN from being successfully validated in the voting process. In this circumstance, the Voter Information Letter shall be marked unused and be retained and destroyed as noted above.

Duplicate Voter Information Letters

Duplication of names on the Preliminary List of Electors shall be investigated by the Clerk and/or Election Official(s), and all obvious duplicate names of individuals shall be deleted prior to the final preparation of the Voters' List as certified by the Clerk. However, should an eligible voter receive more than one Voter Notification Card, the eligible voter may only vote once and must return the other Voter Notification Card(s) to the municipal Election Office and complete an "Application to Amend Voters' List", Form EL15, to remove the duplicate name(s).

The Clerk and the Election Official(s) shall ensure a complete audit trail is maintained of all Voter Notification Cards:

- (a) that were sent to eligible voters;

- (b) that were returned from the Post Office;
- (c) that were returned by an elector or other individual(s) either opened or unopened but unused for voting purposes;
- (d) that were re-issued to an eligible elector; and
- (e) that were assigned by Election Officials to eligible electors that have completed “Application to Amend Voters’ List” Form EL15.

The Clerk’s Office

The Clerk’s Office shall be responsible for the following:

1. Eligible voters who attend the Clerk’s Office and are not on the Voters’ List will be able to be added to the list by filling out an “Application to Amend Voters’ List”, Form EL15, and providing proof of identity and residence as prescribed in O. Reg. 304/13. Their names will be added to the Voters’ List, and they will be assigned and delivered a Voter Notification Card; however, for additions to the List made after September 18, 2026, the Notice of Voter Registration will be provided to the individual.
2. Eligible voters who attend the Clerk’s Office will also be able to request a “replacement” Notice of Voter Registration in the event they did not receive or need to be re-issued a PIN. Where an elector requires a new PIN, they must attend the Clerk’s Office and prove to the satisfaction of the Election Official that:
 - they require a new PIN;
 - they are the eligible elector as indicated on the Voters’ List.
3. Answering election questions and referring detailed questions to the Returning Officer or authorized Election Official.

Procedure in Normal Circumstances - Internet Voting

Internet Voting will commence on October 8, 2026 at 10:00 am through to October 16, 2026 at 4:00 pm.

During the Voting Period, the Clerk’s Office (including municipal centres) will be open Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.,

Eligible electors will be able to access a designated internet address and cast their vote(s). Every eligible elector shall be limited to one ballot for all races and questions, for which they are entitled to vote, using the authentication credentials established by the Clerk, which include a PIN, date of birth, CAPTCHA validation and eligibility affirmation.

- (a) The elector will receive their VIN card which will contain a unique voter PIN number. This PIN number is what will be used to access the ballot.
- (b) Every eligible elector shall be limited to only one vote through the use of a PIN. Before accessing the ballot, the elector shall complete any required CAPTCHA

verification and affirm the prescribed eligibility statement. The elector shall not proceed to ballot access until all required authentication and eligibility steps are successfully completed.

- (c) The Voatz System will allow the eligible voter to vote using the internet.
- (d) An elector who has not finalized ballot submission may re-enter the system and re-start their voting session, subject to session timeout and security controls.
- (e) Prior to final ballot submission, the elector shall be provided with an opportunity to review and modify selections. The system shall require explicit confirmation before the ballot is finally submitted and transmitted to the digital ballot box.
- (f) A person who has hit “submit” to the electronic ballot is deemed to have voted.

Once the Voter PIN has been used to complete the ballot, it cannot be used again, and further access shall not be granted to the internet voting service using that PIN.

The names of electors who have voted during the voting period will be provided to the Clerk electronically by Voatz using the Clerk’s assigned password. A report will be created in an electronic file format suitable for electronic distribution and will only be done so under the control and direction of the Clerk.

The Internet Voting System shall permit electors to intentionally submit a blank ballot or decline their ballot in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act.

If requested in writing by a candidate(s) on Form EL 14, “Candidates Declaration - Proper Use of Voters List”, the Clerk will provide a list of Advance Poll voters, after the Advance Poll period on paper or in the electronic version.

Pin Procedures

1. Where an eligible voter has tried their PIN and has been unsuccessful in accessing the voting system, the Election Official will determine its status, and once verified shall advise the voter that the PIN is valid and has not been used. The Election Official may suggest the voter try the PIN or attend the Clerk’s Office to obtain assistance in voting.
2. Where an eligible voter has tried their PIN and has determined that it has already been used, the voter can present themselves at the Clerk’s Office with proof of identity and residence as prescribed in O. Reg. 304/13 and have an Election Official confirm that the elector’s PIN has been used by an impersonator.
3. Prior to authorizing the re-issuance of a new Voter Information Letter, which contains a new PIN, the voter shall be required to respond and answer any and all questions from the election official.
4. Once the voter has properly answered all questions and taken the prescribed oath, a new Voter Information Letter containing a new PIN may be issued.
5. Where an eligible voter has received an incorrect Voter PIN in terms of ward and / or school support, the voter can contact the Clerk’s Office and have the proper information

applied to the existing PIN. The voter may re-access the system and vote for all races not yet completed.

6. New PIN(s) shall not be given out over the telephone or by mail without the expressed approval of the Clerk or their designate. A Voter Information Letter containing a PIN shall not be given to any person unless satisfactory identification is provided and the individual has taken the required oath, if required, as administered by an election official.

Internet Voting Security

1. An Eligible Voter may only vote once during the 2026 Municipal Election, regardless of the number of properties they may own and/or lease or the number of voting methods available to them.
2. A predefined security protocol is adhered to during the entire Municipal Election period. This protocol ensures access control to the status of the election is only available to the Clerk and persons authorized by the Clerk.
3. The Internet Voting System is subject to strict logic and accuracy testing using a predefined set of Ballots, which are cast with a known outcome. This is then compared to the actual vote counts to ensure complete confidence in the accuracy of the voting system. The thorough logic and accuracy phase allows Election Officials to review the full voting process prior to the opening of the voting.
4. At the completion of the logic and accuracy testing, the entire voting system is locked down prior to the start of the Internet Voting Period. No system, code or configuration changes can occur during the lock down or once voting has started.
5. The voting system is hosted by Voatz within their own data centers' environment, which undergoes continuous and rigorous penetration prevention testing.
6. The Internet Voting System shall be hosted within secure Canadian cloud infrastructure with continuous monitoring, encryption, and cybersecurity protections.
7. The Internet Voting System prevents the casting of multiple Ballots via the internet. Once a PIN is used to cast a Ballot, it is flagged by the system, and the voter is immediately struck off of a real-time electronic Voters' List. This ensures that an Eligible Voter cannot obtain another Ballot.
8. At the time a Ballot is cast, the Internet Voting System records the action in their database, and an audit record of the Ballot is created. The system will also capture unique identifiers, such as IP addresses, which are never connected to personally identifiable information, and are used for the sole purpose of monitoring for suspicious activities.
9. The Internet Voting System shall maintain immutable audit logs and provide a mechanism for confirmation that a ballot was successfully cast and included in the final tally, without compromising ballot secrecy.

Close of Internet Voting and Results

1. The Municipality shall keep its public internet voting open until Friday, October 16, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.
2. The Clerk shall request the close and deactivation of the Internet Voting. The final results of each candidate by ward and school support, and polling subdivisions shall be available following the close of vote on Election Day.
3. The Clerk shall report the “unofficial” results when received from the Voatz System, combined with votes cast from Vote Tabulators, as soon as practicable after the close of vote on Voting Day.

Procedure in Extraordinary Circumstances - Internet Voting

In accordance with section 53 of the Act, the Clerk may declare an emergency if they are of the opinion that circumstances have arisen that are likely to prevent the election being conducted in accordance with the Act.

In the event of a cybersecurity incident, infrastructure failure, connectivity disruption, or other emergency affecting the integrity or availability of the Internet Voting System, the Clerk may suspend, pause, extend, or terminate internet voting in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act.

In the event the Clerk/returning officer or assistant returning officer is unable to be present to conduct procedures on voting day, there shall be a substitute qualified person appointed or available to attend to the election details.