

Election Security in Michigan

Security best practices

Michigan has adopted many national best practices to strengthen our system and ensure our elections are accurate and secure:

● Upgraded voting technology

- All voting machines are next generation optical scan machines, which use paper ballots scanned through electronic tabulators.
- Paper ballots and printed vote tallies are retained and can be recounted and reviewed.
- Voting machines cannot be connected to the internet during ballot tabulation. Only after counting is finished and a paper record has been generated will some jurisdictions connect the machines to the internet to send unofficial results to the county clerk. Simultaneously, these jurisdictions will bring a hard copy of the paper tally to the county clerk to ensure all vote counts remain accurate.
- There is no evidence voting machines in Michigan have ever been compromised or that votes have been changed.

● Improved Qualified Voter File system (QVF)

- The QVF is a modern, custom built system used by Bureau of Elections and clerks to efficiently and effectively maintain the state's registered voter list.
- It has enhanced security built in and utilizes multi-factor authentication.
- The system is continuously monitored and protected.
- Automatic voter registration for all citizens who apply for driver's licenses or IDs and an online voter registration system help keep voter rolls up to date with reliable, voter-provided information.

● Joined the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)

- ERIC is a nonprofit, multistate partnership that offers states key federal databases and the use of sophisticated and secure data-matching technology to safeguard the integrity of their voter files.
- The system uses encrypted voter information from partnering states along with death records from the Social Security Administration to red flag deceased voters, duplicate voter registrations, voters who move, and eligible voters not yet registered so states can reach out to them.
- Until joining ERIC, Michigan had no system in place to verify the accuracy of its voter file against those of other states.



- **Expanded risk-limiting post-election audits**

- The Bureau of Elections has partnered with local election officials and national experts in expanding risk-limiting post-election audits with the goal of a full statewide audit of election results in 2020.
- Risk-limiting audits are the preeminent method for confirming election results and use statistical methods to perform a comprehensive check on the accuracy of reported election results and to detect any anomalies, possibly tied to human error or manipulation.
- Using a mathematical formula, auditors in each locality randomly select ballots to confirm that the ballot tabulators correctly tallied election results.

- **Hired full-time election security specialist**

- The election security specialist is dedicated to coordinating Michigan's overall election security plan.
- The specialist also works with state and federal partners to assess, train and communicate with our local election officials on election security best practices.

- **Improved cooperation among local, state and federal governments**

- Michigan partners with the Department of Homeland Security and other organizations to attempt to hack our systems in order to identify and remedy any vulnerabilities.
- The Bureau of Elections is also partnering with DHS, Michigan Cyber Command and the Department of Technology, Management and Budget on county-by-county election assessments, which provide recommendations to counties, and virtual workshops on election security for election officials.

- **Continued other long-standing accuracy and integrity practices**

- Michigan's decentralized elections system that is primarily administered by more than 1,500 local clerks helps safeguard against state and even county-wide problems, as errors or breakdowns can be confined often to local jurisdictions.
- A detailed and thorough canvassing and certification process is followed at the county level, for each individual precinct.
- Public testing of voting machines is conducted prior to each election.
- Election precincts are open to the public for observation
- Performance-based audits are conducted to verify completion of election tasks.

