WEST VIRGINIA CODE CHAPTER 3 ARTICLE 6

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§3-6-1. Provisions of article govern general elections; applicability of other provisions of chapter; applicability of article to primary and special elections.

The provisions of this article shall govern the conduct and administration of general elections. Other provisions of this chapter, where applicable, shall be considered supplementary and complementary to the provisions of this article regulating and controlling general elections.

In all voting precincts in which voting machines have been approved, procured, and are in use, the provisions of article four of this chapter shall be applicable to the conduct and administration of general elections.

Where applicable and not inconsistent with other positive provisions of law, the provisions of this article shall govern the conduct of and procedures in primary and special elections.

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§3-6-2. Preparation and form of general election ballots.

(a) All ballots prepared under the provisions of this section are to contain:

(1) The name and ticket of each party which is a political party under the provisions of section eight, article one of this chapter;

(2) The name chosen as the party name by each group of citizens which has secured nomination for two or more candidates by petition under the provisions of section twenty-three, article five of this chapter; and

(3) The names of every candidate for any office to be voted for at the election whose nomination in the primary election, nomination by petition or nomination by appointment to fill a vacancy on the ballot has been certified and filed according to law and no others.

(b) The provisions of paragraphs (C) and (D), subdivision (2), section thirteen, article five of this chapter; subdivision (3) of said section; paragraphs (A) and (B), subdivision (4) of said section; and subdivisions (6), (7), (8) and (9) of said section pertaining to the preparation and form of primary election ballots shall likewise apply to general election ballots.

(c) (1) For all ballot systems, the ballot heading is to be in display type and contain the words "Official Ballot, General Election" and the name of the county and the month, day and year of the election.

(2) After the heading, each ballot is to contain, laid out in parallel columns, rows or pages as required by the particular voting system, the party emblem and the name of each party as prescribed in subsection (a) of this section.

(3) The party whose candidate for president received the highest number of votes at the last preceding presidential election is to be placed in the left, or first column, row or page, as is appropriate to the voting system. The party which received the second highest vote is to be next and so on. Any groups or third parties which did not have a candidate for president on the ballot in the previous presidential election are to be placed in the sequence in which the final certificates of nomination by petition were filed.

(4) For all ballots, any columns, rows or sections in which the ticket of one party appears are to be clearly separated from the other columns, rows or sections by a heavy line or other clear division. For each party, the offices are to be arranged in the order prescribed in section thirteen-a, article five of this chapter under the appropriate tickets, which are to be headed "National Ticket", "State Ticket" and "County Ticket". The number of pages, columns or rows, where applicable, may be modified to meet the limitations of ballot size and composition requirements, subject to approval by the Secretary of State.

(d) The arrangement of names within each office for all ballot systems is to be as follows:

(1) In elections for presidential electors, the names of the candidates for president and vice

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president of each party are to be placed beside a brace with a single voting position, so that a vote for any presidential candidate is a vote for the electors of the party for which the candidates were named.

(2) The order of names of candidates for any office or division for which more than one is to be elected is determined as prescribed in section thirteen-a, article five of this chapter: Provided, That the drawing by lot is to be conducted on the seventieth day next preceding the date of the general election, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

(3) In any office where more than one person is to be elected, the names of the candidates for the office are to be staggered so that no two candidates for that office appear directly opposite any other candidate, as shown in the example below: Provided, That if the voting system cannot accurately tabulate any ballot due to this requirement, the ballot may be adjusted so that it is accurately tabulated. However, each candidate shall be separated by a thin line to distinguish between each candidate.

For House of Delegates For House of Delegates

First Delegate District First Delegate District

(Vote For Not More Than Two) (Vote For Not More Than Two)

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

City (County)

JOHN ADAMS

City (County)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

City (County)

JAMES MONROE

City (County)

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(4) Each voting system is to provide a means for voters to vote for any person whose name does not appear on the ticket by writing it with pen or pencil or by using stamps, stickers, tapes, labels or other means of writing in the name of a candidate which does not interfere with the tabulation of the ballot.

(A) In paper ballot systems which allow for write-ins to be made directly on the ballot, a blank square and a blank line equal to the space which would be occupied by the name of

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the candidate is to be placed under the proper office for each vacancy in nomination and for an office for which more than one is to be elected, any vacancy is to appear after any other candidates for the office. If no write-in lines are included on the ballot, specific instructions are to be added to the top of the ballot notifying the voter that a write-in vote may be cast by writing the name and office on any location on the front of the ballot.

(B) In machine and electronically tabulated ballot systems in which write-in votes must be made in a place other than on the ballot, if there is a vacancy in nomination leaving fewer candidates in any party than can be elected to that office, the words "No Candidate Nominated" are to be printed in the space that would be occupied by the name of the candidate and for an office for which more than one is to be elected, any vacancy is to appear after any other candidates for the office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this code, if there are multiple vacant positions on a ballot for one office, the multiple vacant positions which would otherwise be filled with the words "No Candidate Filed" may be replaced with a brief detailed description, approved by the Secretary of State, indicating that there are no candidates listed for the vacant positions.

(5) In a general election in any county in which unexpired terms of the board of education are to be filled by election, a separate section or page of the ballot is to be set off by means clearly separating the nonpartisan ballot from the ballot for the political party candidates and is to be headed "Nonpartisan Board of Education".

(e) Any constitutional amendment is to be placed following all offices, followed by any other issue upon which the voters are to cast a vote. The heading for each amendment or issue is to be printed in large, bold type according to the requirements of the resolution authorizing the election.

(f) The board of ballot commissioners may not place any issue on the ballot for election which is not specifically authorized under the West Virginia Constitution or statutes or which has not been properly ordered by the appropriate governmental body charged with calling the election.

(g) A ballot may not offer a voter the option of voting a straight party ticket by one mark or punch.

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§3-6-3. Publication of sample ballots and lists of candidates.

(a) The ballot commissioners of each county shall prepare a sample official general election ballot for all political party or nominees with no party affiliation unless those persons have actually been nominated by an independent party, nonpartisan candidates for election, if any, and all ballot issues to be voted for at the general election, according to the provisions of §3-4A-1 *et seq.* of this code, and for any ballot issue, according to the provisions of law authorizing the election.

(b) The facsimile sample general election ballot shall be published as follows:

(1) For counties in which two or more qualified newspapers publish a daily newspaper, not more than 26 nor less than 20 days preceding the general election, the ballot commissioners shall publish the sample official general election ballot as a Class I-0 legal advertisement in the two qualified daily newspapers of different political parties within the county having the largest circulation in compliance with the provisions of §59-3-1 *et seq.* of this code;

(2) For counties having no more than one daily newspaper, or having only one or more qualified newspapers which publish weekly, not more than 26 nor less than 20 days preceding the primary election, the ballot commissioners shall publish the sample official general election ballot as a Class I legal advertisement in the qualified newspaper within the county having the largest circulation in compliance with the provisions of §59-3-1 *et seq.* of this code; and

(3) Each facsimile sample ballot shall be a photographic reproduction of the official sample ballot or ballot pages and shall be printed in a size no less than 65 percent of the actual size of the ballot, at the discretion of the ballot commissioners: *Provided*, That in counties where an electronic voting system has been adopted, the facsimile sample ballot may be a photographic reproduction of the absentee ballot: *Provided, however,* That when the ballots for the precincts within the county contain different senatorial, delegate, magisterial or executive committee districts or when the ballots for precincts within a city contain different municipal wards, the facsimile shall be altered to include each of the various districts in the appropriate order. If, in order to accommodate the size of each ballot, the ballot or ballot pages must be divided onto more than one page, the arrangement and order shall be made to conform as nearly as possible to the arrangement of the ballot. The publisher of the newspaper shall submit a proof of the ballot and the arrangement to the ballot commissioners for approval prior to publication.

(c) The ballot commissioners of each county shall prepare, in the form and manner prescribed by the Secretary of State, an official list of offices and nominees for each office which will appear on the general election ballot for each political party or as nominees with no party affiliation unless those persons have actually been nominated by an independent party and, as the case may be, for the nonpartisan candidates to be voted for at the general election:

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(1) All information which appears on the ballot, including instructions as to the number of candidates for whom votes may be cast for the office, any additional language which will appear on the ballot below the name of the office, any identifying information relating to the candidates, such as his or her residence and magisterial district or presidential preference. Following the names of all candidates, the list shall include the full title, text and voting positions of any issue to appear on the ballot.

(2) The order of the offices and candidates for each office and the manner of designating the parties shall be as follows:

(A) The offices shall be listed in the same order in which they appear on the ballot;

(B) The candidates within each office for which one is to be elected shall be listed in the order they appear on the ballot, from left to right or from top to bottom, as the case may be, and the candidate's political party affiliation or independent status shall be indicated by the one- or two-letter initial specifying the affiliation, placed in parenthesis to the right of the candidate's name; and

(C) The candidates within each office for which more than one is to be elected shall be arranged by political party groups in the order they appear on the ballot and the candidate's affiliation shall be indicated as provided in paragraph (B) of this subdivision.

(d) The official list of candidates and issues as provided in subsection (c) of this section shall be published as follows:

(1) For counties in which two or more qualified newspapers publish a daily newspaper, on the last day on which a newspaper is published immediately preceding the general election, the ballot commissioners shall publish the official list of nominees and issues as a Class I-0 legal advertisement in the two qualified daily newspapers of different political parties within the county having the largest circulation in compliance with the provisions of §59-3-1 *et seq.* of this code;

(2) For counties having no more than one daily paper, or having only one or more qualified newspapers which publish weekly, on the last day on which a newspaper is published immediately preceding the general election, the ballot commissioners shall publish the sample official list of nominees and issues as a Class I legal advertisement in the qualified newspaper within the county having the largest circulation in compliance with the provisions of §59-3-1 *et seq.* of this code;

(3) The publication of the official list of nominees for each party and for nonpartisan candidates shall be in single or double columns, as required to accommodate the type size requirements as follows:

(A) The words “official list of nominees and issues”, the name of the county, the words “General Election” and the date of the election shall be printed in all capital letters and in

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bold type no smaller than 14 point; and

(B) The names of the candidates and the initial within parenthesis designating the candidate's affiliation shall be printed in all capital letters in bold type no smaller than 10 point and the residence information shall be printed in type no smaller than 10 point; and

(4) When any ballot issue is to appear on the ballot, the title of that ballot shall be printed in all capital letters in bold type no smaller than 12 point. The text of the ballot issue shall appear in no smaller than eight point type. The ballot commissioners may require the publication of the ballot issue under this subsection in the facsimile sample ballot format in lieu of the alternate format.

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (c) and (d) of this section, the ballot commissioners of any county may choose to publish a facsimile sample general election ballot, instead of the official list of candidates and issues, for purposes of the last publication required before any general election.

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§3-6-4. Late nominations; stickers.

If a nomination to fill a vacancy is made by a political party executive committee or, on its failure to so act within the time prescribed by law, is made by the chairman of the committee, and certified to the clerk of the county commission after the ballots to be used at the ensuing election shall have been printed, the clerk shall forthwith lay such certificates before the ballot commissioners who, without delay, shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, and deliver, or cause to be delivered, to the election commissioners of each precinct in which the candidate is to be voted for, a number of stickers, containing only the name of the candidate, at least equal to the total number of ballots provided for the precinct; but no such stickers shall be furnished to or received by any person except a commissioner of election. It is the duty of the commissioners holding the election to deliver such stickers to the poll clerks, who shall, in the presence of the election commissioners, affix one of the stickers in a careful manner at the proper place for the name of the candidate, upon each ballot to be voted at the election, before the poll clerks sign their names on the ballots. The stickers may be delivered to the election officers, by the clerk of the county commission, with the ballots, poll books and other supplies.

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§3-6-4a. Filing requirements for write-in candidates.

Any eligible person who seeks to be elected by write-in votes to an office, except delegate to national convention, which is to be filled in a primary, general or special election held under the provisions of this chapter, shall file a write-in candidate's certificate of announcement as provided in this section. No certificate of announcement may be accepted and no person may be certified as a write-in candidate for a political party nomination for any office or for election as delegate to national convention.

(a) The write-in candidate's certificate of announcement shall be in a form prescribed by the Secretary of State on which the candidate shall make a sworn statement before a notary public or other officer authorized to give oaths containing the following information:

(1) The name of the office sought and the district and division, if any;

(2) The legal name of the candidate and the first and last name by which the candidate may be identified in seeking the office;

(3) The specific address designating the location at which the candidate resides at the time of filing, including number and street or rural route and box number and city, state and zip code;

(4) A statement that the person filing the certificate of announcement is a candidate for the office in good faith; and

(5) The words "subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, ____" and a space for the signature of the officer giving the oath.

(b) The certificate of announcement shall be filed with the filing officer for the political division of the office as prescribed in section seven, article five of this chapter.

(c) The certificate of announcement shall be filed with and received by the proper filing officer as follows:

(1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, the certificate of announcement for any office shall be received no later than the close of business on the forty-ninth day before the election at which the office is to be filled;

(2) When a vacancy occurs in the nomination of candidates for an office on the ballot resulting from the death of the nominee or from the disqualification or removal of a nominee from the ballot by a court of competent jurisdiction not earlier than the forty-eighth day nor later than the fifth day before the general election, the certificate shall be received no later than the close of business on the fifth day before the election or the close of business on the day following the occurrence of the vacancy, whichever is later.

(d) Any eligible person who files a completed write-in candidate's certificate of

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announcement with the proper filing officer within the required time shall be certified by that filing officer as an official write-in candidate:

(1) The Secretary of State shall, immediately following the filing deadline, post the names of all official write-in candidates for offices on the ballot in more than one county and certify the name of each official write-in candidate to the clerks of the county commissions of the appropriate counties.

(2) The clerk of the county commission shall, immediately following the filing deadline, post the names of all official write-in candidates for offices on the ballot in one county and certify and deliver to the election officials of the appropriate precincts, the names of all official write-in candidates and the office sought by each for statewide, district and county offices on the ballot in the precinct for which valid write-in votes will be counted and the names shall be posted at the office where absentee voting is conducted and at the precincts in accordance with section twenty, article one of this chapter.

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§3-6-5. Rules and procedures in election other than primaries.

The provisions of article one of this chapter relating to elections generally shall govern and control arrangements and election officials for the conduct of elections under this article. The following rules and procedures shall govern the voting for candidates in general and special elections:

(a) If the voter desires to vote for an official write-in candidate, the voter shall: write with ink or other means or affix a sticker or label or place an ink-stamped impression of the name of an official write-in candidate for an office for whom he or she desires to vote in the space designated for write-in votes for the particular voting system or for paper ballot systems, write or place the name and office designation in any position on the face of the ballot which makes the intention of the voter clear as to both the office and the candidate chosen.

The Secretary of State may proscribe devices for casting write-in votes which would cause mechanical difficulty with voting machines or electronic devices or which would obliterate or deface a paper ballot or any portion thereof, but the Secretary of State shall preserve the right to vote by a write-in vote for those candidates who have filed and have been certified as official write-in candidates under the provisions of section four-a of this article.

(b) If the voter marks more names than there are persons to be elected to an office or if, for any reason, it is impossible to determine the voter's choice for an office to be filled, the ballot shall not be counted for the office. The intention of the voter shall be deemed to be clear if the write-in vote cast for an office contains both the first and last name of an official write-in candidate for that office; and if no two official write-in candidates for that office share a first or last name, either the first name or last name alone shall be deemed to express the clear intention of the voter.

(c) Except as otherwise specifically provided in this chapter, no ballot shall be rejected for any technical error which does not make it impossible to determine the voter's choice.

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§3-6-6. Ballot counting procedures in paper ballot systems.

When the polls are closed in an election precinct where only a single election board has served, the receiving board shall perform all of the duties prescribed in this section. When the polls are closed in an election precinct where two election boards have served, both the receiving and counting boards shall together conclude the counting of the votes cast, the tabulating and summarizing of the number of the votes cast, unite in certifying and attesting to the returns of the election and join in making out the certificates of the result of the election provided for in this article. They may not adjourn until the work is completed.

In all election precincts, as soon as the polls are closed and the last voter has voted, the receiving board shall proceed to ascertain the result of the election in the following manner:

(a) In counties in which the clerk of the county commission has determined that the absentee ballots should be counted at the precincts in which the absent voters are registered, the receiving board must first process the absentee ballots and deposit the ballots to be counted in the ballot box. The receiving board shall then proceed as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section. In counties in which the absentee ballots are counted at the central counting center, the receiving board shall proceed as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section.

(b) The receiving board shall ascertain from the pollbooks and record on the proper form the total number of voters who have voted. The number of ballots challenged shall be counted and subtracted from the total and the result should equal the number of ballots deposited in the ballot box. The commissioners and clerks shall also report, over their signatures, the number of ballots spoiled and the number of ballots not voted.

(c) The procedure for counting ballots, whether performed throughout the day by the counting board as provided in section thirty-three, article one of this chapter or after the close of the polls by the receiving board or by the two boards together, shall be as follows:

(1) The ballot box shall be opened and all votes shall be tallied in the presence of the entire election board;

(2) One of the commissioners shall take one ballot from the box at a time and shall determine if the ballot is properly signed by the two poll clerks of the receiving board. If not properly signed, the ballot shall be placed in an envelope for the purpose, without unfolding it. Any ballot which does not contain the proper signatures shall be challenged. If an accurate accounting is made for all ballots in the precinct in which the ballot was voted and no other challenge exists against the voter, the ballot shall be counted at the canvas. If properly signed, the commissioner shall hand the ballot to a team of commissioners of opposite politics, who shall together read the votes marked on the ballot for each office. Write-in votes for election for any person other than an official write-in candidate shall be disregarded.;

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(3) The commissioner responsible for removing the ballots from the box shall keep a tally of the number of ballots as they are removed and whenever the number shall equal the number of voters entered on the pollbook minus the number of provisional ballots, as determined according to subsection (a) of this section, any other ballot found in the ballot box shall be placed in the same envelope with unsigned ballots not counted, without unfolding the same or allowing anyone to examine or know the contents thereof, and the number of excess ballots shall be recorded on the envelope;

(4) Each poll clerk shall keep an accurate tally of the votes cast by marking in ink on tally sheets, which shall be provided for the purpose, so as to show the number of votes received by each candidate for each office and for and against each issue on the ballot; and

(5) When the reading of the votes is completed, the ballot shall be immediately strung on a thread.

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§3-6-7. Ballot irregularities; procedures.

If two or more ballots are found folded or rolled together and the names voted for thereon be the same, one of them only shall be counted; but if the names voted for thereon be different, in any particular, neither of them shall be counted except as hereinbefore provided; and in either case, the commissioners of election shall, in writing in ink, place a common number on the ballots and state thereon that they were folded or rolled together when voted. If any ballot be found to contain more than the proper number of names for any office, the ballot shall not be counted as to the office. In any election for state senator, if a person is voted for on any ballot who is not a resident of the proper county, as required by section four, article VI of the Constitution, the ballot shall not be counted for the office. Any ballot or part of a ballot from which it is impossible to determine the elector's choice of candidates shall not be counted as to the candidates affected thereby.

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§3-6-8. Precinct returns; certificates; procedures.

As soon as the results are ascertained, the election officials shall make out and sign, under oath as provided in section fifteen, article five of this chapter, four certificates of result on a form prescribed by the Secretary of State, giving the complete returns of the election at the polling place, including the name of each office and the full name of every candidate on the ballot and the full name of every official write-in candidate for each office and the number of votes, in words and numbers, received by each, and the designation of each issue on the ballot and the number of votes, in words and numbers, for and against the issue.

The certificates shall be sealed and disposed of as provided in section fifteen, article five of this chapter for certificates of result of a primary election.

Immediately after the completion of the tabulation and the posting of the certificate of result of the general election in each precinct, the ballots, registration books, poll books, tally sheets and other election supplies shall be sealed and delivered to the clerk of the county commission as provided in section sixteen, article five of this chapter.

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§3-6-9. Canvass of returns; declaration of results; recounts; recordkeeping.

(a) The commissioners of the county commission shall be ex officio a board of canvassers and, as such, shall keep in a well-bound book, marked "election record", a complete record of all their proceedings in ascertaining and declaring the results of every election in their respective counties.

(1) They shall convene as the canvassing board at the courthouse on the fifth day (Sundays excepted) after every election held in their county, or in any district of the county, and the officers in whose custody the ballots, pollbooks, registration records, tally sheets and certificates have been placed shall lay them before the board for examination.

(2) They may, if considered necessary, require the attendance of any of the commissioners, poll clerks or other persons present at the election to appear and testify respecting the election and make other orders as shall seem proper to procure correct returns and ascertain the true results of the election in their county; but in this case all the questions to the witnesses and all the answers to the questions and evidence shall be taken down in writing and filed and preserved. All orders made shall be entered upon the record.

(3) They may adjourn, from time to time, but no longer than absolutely necessary.

(4) When a majority of the commissioners are not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned until the next day and so from day to day, until a quorum is present.

(5) All meetings of the commissioners sitting as a board of canvassers shall be open to the public.

(6) The board shall proceed to open each sealed package of ballots laid before them and, without unfolding them, count the number in each package and enter the number upon their record.

(7) The ballots shall then be again sealed carefully in a new envelope and each member of the board shall write his or her name across the place where the envelope is sealed.

(8) After canvassing the returns of the election, the board shall publicly declare the results of the election.

(A) For a candidate on the ballot in entirely one county, the board shall not enter an order certifying the election results for a period of forty-eight hours after the declaration. At the end of the 48-hour period, an order shall be entered certifying all election results except for those offices in which a recount has been demanded.

(B) For a candidate on the ballot in more than one county, the board may not enter an order certifying the election results for a period of forty-eight hours after the final county's board has publicly declared the results of the election. In such case, each relevant board shall notify the Secretary of State immediately following each relevant board's public declaration

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of results. For offices on the ballot in more than one county, the Secretary of State shall notify the board of each relevant county when the final county has made a public declaration of the results of the election. At the end of the 48-hour period in this section, an order shall be entered by each relevant county certifying all election results except for those offices in which a recount has been demanded.

(b) Within the 48-hour period, a candidate on the ballot in entirely one county may demand the board to open and examine any of the sealed packages of ballots and recount them.

(c) If a candidate is on the ballot in more than one county, then within the 48-hour period after the final county's board has made a public declaration of the results, such candidate may demand the board to open and examine any of the sealed packages of ballots and recount them.

(d) After any recount pursuant to either subsection (b) or (c) of this section the board shall seal the ballots again, along with the envelope above named, and the clerk of the county commission and each member of the board shall write his or her name across the places where it is sealed and endorse in ink, on the outside: "Ballots of the election held at precinct No.____, in the district of _____, and county of _____, on the _____day of _____."

(e) In computing the 48-hour period as used in this section, Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays shall be excluded. A candidate on the ballot in more than one county shall not be precluded from demanding a recount in any county in which the candidate is on the ballot until the final county in which the candidate is on the ballot has certified the election results.

(f) If a recount has been demanded, the board shall have forty-eight hours in which to send notice to all candidates who filed for the office in which a recount has been demanded of the date, time and place where the board will convene to commence the recount. The notice shall be served under the provisions of subsection (g) of this section. The recount shall be set for no sooner than three days after the serving of the notice: Provided, That after the notice is served, candidates so served shall have an additional twenty-four hours in which to notify the board, in writing, of their intention to preserve their right to demand a recount of precincts not requested to be recounted by the candidate originally requesting a recount of ballots cast: Provided, however, That there shall be only one recount of each precinct, regardless of the number of requests for a recount of any precinct. A demand for the recount of ballots cast at any precinct may be made during the recount proceedings only by the candidate originally requesting the recount and those candidates who notify the board, pursuant to this subdivision, of their intention to preserve their right to demand a recount of additional precincts.

(g) Any sheriff of the county in which the recount is to occur shall deliver a copy thereof in writing to the candidate in person; or if the candidate is not found, by delivering the copy at the usual place of abode of the candidate and giving information of its purport, to the spouse of the candidate or any other person found there who is a member of his or her family and

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above the age of sixteen years; or if neither the spouse of the candidate nor any other person be found there and the candidate is not found, by leaving the copy posted at the front door of the place of abode. Any sheriff, thereto required, shall serve a notice within his or her county and make return of the manner and time of service; for a failure so to do, he or she shall forfeit $20. The return shall be evidence of the manner and time of service.

(h) Every candidate who demands a recount shall be required to furnish bond in a reasonable amount with good sufficient surety to guarantee payment of the costs and the expenses of the recount in the event the result of the election is not changed by the recount; but the amount of the bond shall in no case exceed $300.

(i) After the board of canvassers has made their certificates and declared the results as hereinafter provided, they shall deposit the sealed packages of ballots, absent voter ballots, registration records, pollbooks, tally sheets and precinct certificates with the clerk of the county commission from whom they were received, who shall carefully preserve them for twenty-two months: Provided, That the clerk may use these records to update the voter registration records in accordance with subsection (d), section eighteen, article two of this chapter. If there is no contest pending as to any election and their further preservation is not required by any order of a court, the ballots, pollbooks, tally sheets and certificates shall be destroyed by fire or otherwise, without opening the sealed packages of ballots. If there is a contest pending, they shall be destroyed as soon as the contest is ended.

(j) If the result of the election is not changed by the recount, the costs and expenses of the recount shall be paid by the party at whose instance the recount was made.

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§3-6-10. Certificates of election results.

Whenever an election is held in any county or district to fill any national, state, county, or district office, the board of canvassers of the county, or a majority of them, under the regulations prescribed in the next preceding section, shall carefully and impartially ascertain the result of the election in their county and in each district thereof, and shall record the same in the following form, or to the following effect: "The board of canvassers of the county of ....., having carefully and impartially examined the returns of the election held in said county, in each district thereof, on the ..... day of ....., do hereby certify that in said county for the office of ....., A..... B..... received ..... votes, C..... D..... received ..... votes, and E..... F..... received ..... votes. And we further certify that at said election held in the district of ....., in the said county, for the office of ....., G..... H..... received ..... votes, and I..... J..... received ..... votes." (And so on as to each particular office.) In such certificates shall be set forth, according to the truth, the full name of every person voted for, and, in words at length, the number of votes received for any office. When the certificates are all entered, the record shall be signed by the board or majority of them. The board shall then sign separate certificates of the result of the election within the county, for each of the offices to be filled.

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§3-6-11. Disposition of certificates.

The separate certificates of the board of canvassers, made pursuant to section ten of this article, shall be disposed of by the board of canvassers as follows: Of the certificates respecting the election for delegate or delegates in the Legislature, they shall, upon request of the candidate, transmit a copy to any candidate, and shall file a copy in the office of the clerk of the county commission to be preserved and made available to the general public and to the media. The clerk shall transmit a copy to the Secretary of State within thirty days from the date of the election, except that in the case of a recount, within thirty days from the date of the completion of the recount, who shall submit the same to the House of Delegates, on the first day of the next ensuing session, together with a list of the persons appearing thereby to be elected. Of the certificates respecting the election of state senator, they shall, upon request of the candidate, transmit a copy to any candidate, and shall file a copy in the office of the clerk of the county commission to be preserved and made available to the general public and to the media. The clerk shall transmit a copy to the Secretary of State within thirty days from the date of the election, except that in the case of a recount, within thirty days from the date of the completion of the recount, to be submitted by the Secretary of State to the Senate, on the first day of the next ensuing session, together with a list of persons appearing thereby to be elected. Of the certificates respecting the election of state officers, a copy for each officer, except justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals, shall be sealed and transmitted by the commissioners to the Secretary of State within thirty days from the date of the election endorsed on the envelope as follows: "Returns of the election for state officers." Except in the case of a recount, the certificates shall be transmitted within thirty days from the date of the completion of the recount. The Secretary of State shall deliver the certificates to the Speaker of the House of Delegates on the first day of the next session of the Legislature; and the speaker shall, immediately after the organization of the House of Delegates and before proceeding to other business, open and publish the certificates in the presence of a majority of each house of the Legislature, which bodies shall, for that purpose, assemble in the hall of the House of Delegates. The person having the highest number of votes for any one of such offices shall be declared duly elected thereto; but if two or more persons have the same and the highest number of votes for the same office, the Legislature shall, by a joint vote of the two houses, choose one of said persons for the office; and one of each of the last-mentioned certificates shall also be transmitted, under seal, to the Governor, who shall immediately tabulate the vote in all the counties, for each office, and cause the results to be printed in a newspaper published at the seat of government. Of the certificates respecting the election for United States senator, member of the House of Representatives in the Congress of the United States, justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals, judge of a circuit court, and president and vice president of the United States, respectively, the commissioners shall, upon request of the candidate, transmit a copy to any candidate, and a copy to the Governor within thirty days from the date of the election; except that in the case of a recount, within thirty days from the date of the completion of the recount; and the Governor shall ascertain who are elected and make proclamation thereof. The commissioners shall also file a copy of the certificates in the office of the clerk of the county commission to be preserved and made available to the general public and to the

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media. Of the certificates respecting the election of all county and district officers, the commissioners shall, upon request of the candidate, transmit a copy to any candidate, and shall file a copy in the office of the clerk of the county commission to be preserved and made available to the general public and to the media.

No county may be charged for the publication of any certificates of election.

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§3-6-12. Tie vote procedures.

Whenever the Governor or the board of canvassers of a county is to declare the result of an election, and it appears to him or them that two or more of the persons voted for have received the highest and equal number of votes for the same office, so that the election to the office is not decided by the returns, he, or they, being required to declare the result, shall decide the tie by the election of one of such persons, but in the event the board of canvassers shall have failed to decide the tie within thirty days after such tie shall have been found by them to exist, upon application to the Governor by any one of such persons so voted for, he shall break the tie by the selection of one of such persons and shall certify his choice to such board of canvassers and declare such person duly elected for the office for which such person was a candidate.

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§3-6-13.

Repealed.

Acts, 1972 Reg. Sess., Ch. 52.

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