

Use of tabulators and voter assist terminals	City Clerk's Office – Toronto Elections
	Procedure No.: PRO-DVT-001-PBE

Table of Contents

1. Purpose.....	1
2. Application.....	1
3. Authority/Legislative reference(s).....	1
4. Storage and Security.....	1
5. Pre-election procedures	1
6. Voting place procedure	4
7. Closing the voting place during advance vote	8
8. Closing the voting place on election day	9
9. Production of election results from advance vote	10
10. Election Results.....	10
11. Post-election testing	11
12. Related Policies and Procedures	11

Use of tabulators and voter assist terminals	City Clerk's Office – Toronto Elections
	Procedure No.: PRO-DVT-001-PBE

1. Purpose

This document outlines the procedure for the use of vote tabulators (hereafter referred to as “tabulators”) and voter assist terminals in Toronto municipal elections.

2. Application

This procedure applies to election officials designated by the City Clerk, and candidates and scrutineers.

3. Authority/Legislative reference(s)

Section 42(1)(a) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 authorizes the council of a local municipality to pass by-laws, authorizing the use of voting and vote-counting equipment such as voting machines, voting recorders or optical scanning vote tabulators.

City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 53, Elections, Article 1, adopted by By-Law 79-2000, authorizes the use of voting and vote-counting equipment for Toronto municipal elections.

4. Storage and Security

All tabulators, voter assist terminals, memory media and election supplies shall be securely stored at the City Clerk's designated location before and after use at voting places during an election.

5. Pre-election procedures

Preventative maintenance

- (1) The equipment vendor shall conduct maintenance of all tabulators and voter assist terminals prior to voting days.

Appearance of ballots

- (2) A space for marking the ballot shall appear to the right of the candidates' names or, in the case of a by-law or question, to the right of each answer.

- (3) The instruction on the ballot shall direct electors to vote by marking the space to the right of the candidate of choice, and the answer to any by-law or question.

Programming of the tabulators and voter assist terminals

- (4) The tabulators shall be programmed so that:
 - (a) a printed record of the results can be produced indicating the number of votes cast for each candidate and for the answer to any by-law or question.
 - (b) a ballot is returned to the designated election official if the tabulator determines that the ballot:
 - (i) has no votes in the space for marking the ballot;
 - (ii) has more votes in the space for marking a ballot than an elector is entitled to mark; and
 - (iii) is damaged or defective or has been marked in such a way that it cannot be properly processed.
- (5) The voter assist terminals shall be programmed so that:
 - (a) the memory media contains the ballot style(s) for the specific ward;
 - (b) each ballot inserted is recognized and a vote can be marked for the selected candidate for each office and for the answer to any by-law or question; and
 - (c) the elector is able to review and confirm their selected candidate for each office and for the answer to any by-law or question prior to marking the ballot.

Logic and accuracy testing

- (6) The City Clerk shall provide notice of the date and time of the logic and accuracy testing to candidates.
- (7) Prior to advance vote and election day, the City Clerk or designate shall:
 - (a) test each tabulator to ensure it accurately counts the votes cast for all candidates and answers to any by-law or question; and
 - (b) test each voter assist terminal to ensure it accurately marks the ballots for all candidates and answers to any by-law or question.

- (8) The test for each tabulator shall be conducted by:
 - (a) loading the memory media into the tabulator programmed for that voting subdivision;
 - (b) producing a zero tape before the test to confirm that no votes are stored in the memory media; and
 - (c) feeding and tabulating the ballots and comparing the results against the pre-determined outcome.
- (9) The test for each voter assist terminal shall be conducted by:
 - (a) loading the memory media into the voter assist terminal programmed for that ward;
 - (b) inserting each ballot style for the ward to ensure they are accepted and is displayed on the voter assist terminal touch screen;
 - (c) inserting blank ballots and marking each ballot according to a predetermined number of votes for each candidate and answers to any by-law or question, using each type of assistive device;
 - (d) determining if an elector is prevented from marking more spaces for an office or by-law or question on the ballot than the elector is entitled;
 - (e) permitting an elector to not mark a ballot;
 - (f) preparing a tabulator for that ward and producing a zero tape to confirm that no votes are stored in the memory media; and
 - (g) feeding the ballots marked by the voter assist terminal into the tabulator and ensuring that the results are consistent with the predetermined outcome.
- (10) Any errors detected in the testing of the tabulators and voter assist terminals shall be identified, corrected and the test repeated until the desired test results are achieved.

Completion of testing

- (11) At the completion of the testing, the City Clerk or designate shall:
 - (a) in the case of the tabulator, clear the totals of each tabulator memory media and seal it inside the memory media slot of the tabulator;

- (b) in the case of the voter assist terminal, seal the memory media in the memory media slot of the voter assist terminal; and
- (c) securely store the tabulators and voter assist terminals containing the memory media until they are deployed to a voting place for use during advance vote and on election day.

6. Voting place procedure

- (1) A tabulator shall be used in every voting place during advance vote and on election day.
- (2) A voter assist terminal shall be available at every voting place during advance vote and at two locations per ward on election day.

Candidates and scrutineers

- (3) Candidates and scrutineers' roles and responsibilities at the voting place are outlined in the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.
- (4) To protect the secrecy of the vote, candidates and scrutineers are prohibited from accompanying and assisting electors at the voter assist terminal.
- (5) Candidates and scrutineers are prohibited from examining or objecting to a ballot while it is being fed into the tabulator.

Zero tape

- (6) Before the opening of the voting place during advance vote and on election day, the designated election official shall produce a zero tape, showing that no votes are stored on the memory media of the tabulator for all candidates running in the ward, or for answers to any by-laws or questions.
- (7) The zero tape shall only be produced on the first day of advance vote.
 - (a) Upon the beginning of voting for each subsequent advance vote day, a configuration report will be printed with the details of the tabulator, including the ward and subdivision.
- (8) The zero tape and any configuration reports shall remain affixed to the tabulator until the results are printed by the tabulator after the close of voting on election day.

- (9) Candidates or scrutineers may be present when the designated election official produces the zero tape.
- (10) If the zero tape totals show any votes are stored on the memory media of the tabulator for all candidates running in the ward, or for answers to any by-laws or questions, the designated election official shall immediately notify the City Clerk and await further instructions.

Marking the ballot

- (11) A designated election official shall issue a ballot to an elector in a secrecy folder.
- (12) An elector can mark a ballot manually or use the voter assist terminal to mark a ballot.
- (13) To mark a ballot manually, the elector shall proceed to a voting screen and vote by marking the oval to the right of the candidate of their choice or for the answer to any by-law or question.
 - (a) After marking the ballot, the elector shall place the ballot into the secrecy folder and proceed to the designated election official.
 - (b) The designated election official shall feed the ballot into the tabulator while the elector is still in the voting place.
- (14) To mark the ballot using the voter assist terminal, the designated election official shall, in consultation with the elector, determine the type of assistive device(s) the elector requires to mark the ballot.
 - (a) The designated election official, or the elector, shall attach the device(s) to the voter assist terminal or use the built-in features.
 - (b) After listening to or viewing the instructions on the voter assist terminal, the elector shall, using the assistive device(s) or built-in features, mark the ballot in the space to the right of the candidate of their choice or for the answer to any by-law or question.
 - (c) After marking the ballot, the elector shall place the ballot into the secrecy folder.
 - (d) The elector shall proceed to the designated election official who shall feed the ballot into the tabulator while the elector is still in the voting place.

Tabulator Stops Operating

- (15) If the tabulator stops operating during voting, the designated election official shall contact the designated contact centre for instructions.
- (16) If a voting place has been assigned a second tabulator:
 - (a) The designated election official shall insert the ballot from the secrecy folder into the second tabulator, in full view of the elector.
 - (b) When the tabulator is returned to an operational state, the designated election official shall return to inserting ballots into both tabulators in an alternating fashion.
- (17) If the voting place is not assigned a second tabulator:
 - (a) The designated election official shall insert the ballot from the secrecy folder directly into the auxiliary compartment, in full view of the elector.
 - (b) If a tabulator is replaced during voting and the original memory media is still being used, the designated election official shall feed the ballots from the auxiliary compartment into the replacement tabulator.
- (18) If a tabulator is replaced during voting, the zero tape will be transferred to the replacement tabulator.
- (19) If the memory media is replaced during voting, the designated election official shall produce a zero tape, and feed all ballots, including any from the auxiliary compartment, into the replacement tabulator.

Ballots where the tabulator detects less votes than an elector is entitled to mark

- (20) The tabulator shall accept ballots where the tabulator has detected less votes in the space for marking a ballot than an elector is entitled to mark, providing that a mark has been detected for at least one office.

Ballots where the tabulator detects no votes

- (21) The tabulator shall return a ballot if it detects no votes in any of the spaces for marking a ballot.
- (22) The designated election official shall:

- (a) press the "Return" button and advise the elector that the tabulator does not recognize any marks made on the ballot; and
 - (b) return the ballot to the elector and instruct the elector how to mark the ballot.
- (23) If the elector does not want to re-mark the ballot, the designated election official shall re-feed the ballot and press the "Cast Blank Ballot" button so that the ballot is accepted into the tabulator.
- (24) If the elector is not present and the tabulator returns the ballot because it does not detect any marks in the spaces for marking a ballot, the designated election official shall press the "Cast Blank Ballot" button so that the ballot is accepted into the tabulator.

Ballots where the tabulator detects more votes than the elector is entitled to mark

- (25) The tabulator shall return a ballot if it detects more votes in the spaces for marking a ballot than an elector is entitled to mark.
- (26) The designated election official shall:
 - (a) press the "Return" button, to return the ballot to the elector and advise that the tabulator detects more than one vote for an office or for an answer to a by-law or question;
 - (b) instruct the elector that only one vote is permitted per office or for any answer to a by-law or question; and
 - (c) ask the elector if they wish to obtain a new ballot.
- (27) If the elector wishes to obtain another ballot, the designated election official shall fold the original ballot in half, write "SPOILED" across the back of the ballot and place it in the designated file folder. The designated election official shall issue a replacement ballot to the elector.
- (28) If the elector is not present and the tabulator returns the ballot because it has detected more votes in the spaces for marking a ballot than an elector is entitled to mark, the designated election official shall press the "Cast" button so that the ballot is accepted into the tabulator and no votes will be counted.
- (29) If, at any point, the elector does not wish to obtain a replacement ballot, the designated election official shall press the "Cast" button so that the ballot is accepted into the tabulator and no votes will be counted.

Damaged or Defective Ballots

- (30) If the tabulator does not accept a ballot because it is damaged or defective, the designated election official shall:
- (a) remove the ballot and advise the elector that the tabulator did not accept the ballot;
 - (b) re-insert the ballot, trying different orientations (face-down/head-first/last);
 - (c) if rejected again, return the ballot to the elector and direct them to obtain a new ballot;
 - (d) fold the original ballot in half, and write "SPOILED" across the back of the ballot and place in the designated file folder; and
 - (e) issue a replacement ballot to the elector for marking.
- (31) If the elector refuses to accept a replacement ballot, the designated election official shall fold the ballot in half and write "DECLINED" on the back and place it in the designated file folder.
- (32) If the elector is not present, the designated election official shall contact their immediate supervisor for direction.

7. Closing the voting place during advance vote

- (1) Each night of advance vote, after the close of voting, the designated election official shall:
- (a) ensure any ballots in the auxiliary compartment are fed into the tabulator;
 - (b) ensure that the polls are not closed and the election results are not generated;
 - (c) unplug the tabulator, close and lock the screen on the tabulator;
 - (d) unplug the voter assist terminal; and
 - (e) ensure the tabulator and voter assist terminal are securely stored.
- (2) On the last night of advance vote, after the close of voting, the designated election official shall repeat steps 7(1)(a) to (d) and place the tabulators in

secure storage until they are picked up and delivered to the City Clerk's designated location.

- (3) The voter assist terminal will be returned to its case and securely stored until election day.
- (4) The City Clerk shall provide notice to candidates of the designated location to produce advance vote results.
- (5) At the City Clerk's designated location:
 - (a) the tabulator, with the memory media and zero tape, will remain sealed and intact and shall be stored in a secure place until election day; and
 - (b) the designated election official shall generate advance vote results after the close of voting on election day.

8. Closing the voting place on election day

- (1) After the close of voting on election day, the designated election official shall:
 - (a) ensure any ballots in the auxiliary compartment are fed into the tabulator;
 - (b) close the poll on the tabulator to produce two copies of the results tape;
 - (c) call the Results Accumulation Contact Centre and report the results;
 - (d) remove the memory media from the tabulator and deliver it to the City Clerk's designated location; and
 - (e) place the tabulator in the election supply cart, and lock and seal the cart. The cart will be stored securely at the voting place until it is picked up and returned to the City Clerk's designated location.

Tabulator stops operating at the close of election day

- (2) If the tabulator stops operating within the last 30 minutes of voting, the designated election official shall contact the designated contact centre for instructions.
- (3) The designated election official shall insert the ballot from the secrecy folder directly into the auxiliary compartment, in full view of the elector.
- (4) After the close of the voting place, the designated election official shall:

- (a) remove all the ballots from the tabulator stand, including the auxiliary compartment, of the inoperable tabulator and place them into the designated ballot box;
 - (b) advise all candidates and scrutineers present at the voting location of the City Clerk's designated location where the ballots will be re-tabulated; and
 - (c) deliver the inoperable tabulator, and the designated ballot box to the City Clerk's designated location.
- (5) At the City Clerk's designated location, the designated election official shall:
 - (a) replace the inoperable tabulator and/or the memory media;
 - (b) produce the zero tape;
 - (c) feed all ballots from the designated ballot box into the replacement tabulator;
 - (d) close the poll on the replacement tabulator to produce the results tape;
 - (e) the replacement tabulator shall print two copies of the results tape and the designated election official shall enter the results into the City's results system; and
 - (f) deliver the replacement tabulator and other election supplies to the City Clerk's designated location, if required.

9. Production of election results from advance vote

- (1) At the City Clerk's designated location, a designated election official shall generate advance vote results for each tabulator and voting place by closing the poll on the tabulator and:
 - (a) producing two copies of the results tape on each tabulator for viewing by any scrutineers or candidates present; and
 - (b) removing the memory media from the tabulator and inserting it into a memory media reader that uploads the results into the results system.

10. Election Results

- (1) Election results will be generated after the close of voting on election day by closing the poll on the tabulator and:

- (a) producing two copies of the results tape on each tabulator for viewing by any scrutineers or candidates present;
 - (b) telephoning the results from the results tape into the Results Accumulation Contact Centre by the designated election official, for data entry into the results system; and
 - (c) removing the memory media from the tabulator and inserting it into a memory media reader that uploads the results into the results system.
- (2) Election results will be declared official by the City Clerk at a later date.

11. Post-election testing

- (1) A post-election test shall be conducted on selected tabulators by inserting the memory media with zero votes into the tabulators and tabulating a pre-determined group of ballots.
- (2) The tabulated results shall be compared against the pre-determined results.
- (3) If a discrepancy is identified on an individual tabulator, the ballots that were cast using the affected tabulator will be fed into another tabulator to confirm the results.

12. Related Policies and Procedures

Retention of election records

Date Approved: December 2024