



Benton County, Washington Hash Verification Project

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission's (EAC) [Field Services Program](#) supports state and local election officials by verifying that EAC-certified fielded voting systems are identical to those tested and certified by the agency. As part of this effort, the EAC conducted a voluntary review of Benton County's ClearVote 2.3 system on July 1, 2025, to confirm conformance with the certified configuration and observed hash verification, logic and accuracy testing, and security practices.

Scope of Review



Hash Verification: Hash verification confirms that the software on voting system components matches the version certified by the EAC. As part of certification, a Voting System Test Laboratory (VSTL) generates unique hash values for each component and provides them to the EAC. Jurisdictions then use these values to compare their fielded systems. In this review, Benton County's ClearDesign and ClearCount server hashes were checked against the trusted values with no discrepancies.



Logic and Accuracy Testing: Logic and Accuracy Testing ensures the election and voting equipment functions as expected and accurately counts votes as marked. This process includes:

- Observation of test deck scanning, adjudication, and result validation
- Adherence to well-documented chain of custody procedures
- Testing that was open to public observation, supporting transparency
- Verification of system accuracy, with all results matched expected outcomes



Conformance with Scope of Certification: EAC staff reviewed voting system components and commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) hardware to confirm that all items in use were included in the certified system configuration. Reviewed components included:

- ClearDesign Server Station (used for election setup and ballot file generation)
- ClearCount Server Station (used for central tabulation and reporting)
- ClearCount Scanning Station (laptop used for high-speed ballot scanning)
- ClearAccess Station (used for accessible ballot marking)
- Related COTS peripherals (including scanners and printers)



Security Observations: EAC staff observed both physical and system security measures in place at the facility. Observed protocols included badge-restricted access to secure areas, tamper-evident seals applied to voting equipment, and locked Central Processing Unit (CPU) enclosures to prevent unauthorized access. Network cabling was organized using color-coded cables routed through visible wire mesh trays, allowing observers to easily verify the system's air-gapped configuration. As an additional measure, a wireless signal sweep was conducted on all voting equipment prior to testing to confirm the absence of unauthorized wireless components.

Conclusions

The review found no issues affecting the security or accuracy of the ClearVote 2.3 system as deployed in Benton County. All components reviewed matched the certified components and hash values from the tested equipment matched the trusted values provided by the EAC. Benton County is successfully implementing hash verification as part of its pre election process, reinforcing transparency and public confidence.

The EAC gives its sincerest thanks to Washington State's Election Division and the Benton County Elections Department for their partnership and support during this review. The full report, including observations and enhancements, is available on the EAC Field Services Program Website on the [reports](#) page.

