



Securing Mail Ballots

IN THIS SPOTLIGHT

Securing Mail Ballots covers the work of protecting mail ballots end to end – from outbound mailing through return, intake, signature verification, and curing. It spans chain-of-custody tracking, voter-facing materials and instructions, observer transparency, and curing workflows that help eligible ballots count.

AWARD-WINNING PROGRAMS



Rebuilding Ballot Drop Box Chain of Custody -

2025 Award Winner

• *Pierce County Elections, Washington*

Developed in-house in 80 days after a vendor discontinued critical software, this system manages drop box chain of custody across 51 locations with real-time tracking, automated tasks, and audit readiness – deployed in time for the August 2025 primary.

WHAT TO BORROW

- ✓ Shows how to recover quickly in response to unexpected software changes.
- ✓ Built with office needs, including real-time tracking and audit readiness, in mind.
- ✓ Gives supervisors clear visibility into collection activity, strengthening both efficiency and voter confidence.

Learn more: Read the full program writeup → <https://www.eac.gov/clearinghouse-awards/2025-winner-innovations-or-new-practices-election-administration-washington>



Election Office Workflow Innovation Using Microsoft 365 -

2025 Award Winner

• *Douglas County Clerk, Kansas*

Used Microsoft 365 tools to centralize tracking of mail ballot application errors and signature deficiencies, replacing fragmented manual workflows. Reduced misplaced requests, improved consistency, and eliminated reliance on costly vendor tools.

WHAT TO BORROW

- ✓ Allows staff to document, monitor, and resolve issues during high-volume election periods.
- ✓ Centralized tracking reduces the misplaced-request errors and improves consistency.
- ✓ Replicable in any office with a Microsoft 365 license.

Learn more: Read the full program writeup → <https://www.eac.gov/clearinghouse-awards/2025-winner-innovations-or-new-practices-election-administration-kansas-73941>



Text2Cure - 2024 Award Winner

• *Maryland State Board of Elections*



Implemented a curing-by-text-message method for voters who did not sign their mail-in ballot oath envelope, offering multiple cure methods, including secure text-back signature submission.

WHAT TO BORROW

- ✓ Leverages technology voters already use – text messaging.
- ✓ Multiple cure paths mean voters can choose what works for them.
- ✓ Reduces the number of eligible ballots rejected for missing signatures.

Learn more: Read the full program writeup → <https://www.eac.gov/clearinghouse-awards/2024-winner-innovations-or-new-practices-election-administration-maryland>

CONTINUE EXPLORING

Browse every Clearinghouse Award-winning program by topic.

The full Index collects honoree programs from across the country and groups them by the work they address – from poll workers to security to accessibility and more – so you can find ideas already proven in the field.

See the full index:

[eac.gov/
clearinghouse-awards-index](https://www.eac.gov/clearinghouse-awards-index)

ABOUT THE CLEARINGHOUSE AWARDS

The EAC's annual Clearinghouse Awards – the "Clearies" – recognize outstanding work by election officials across the country, including innovations in areas like voter list maintenance, poll worker recruitment, accessibility, and communications.

ABOUT THIS SPOTLIGHT

Each spotlight focuses on a single area of election administration and surfaces programs that other offices can borrow from. Use this document as a quick reference, share it with peers, or pin it as a starting point for your next initiative.

