

# 2022 EAC Clearie Award Submission

## BOE Poll Count and Audit Application

### Project Background

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First used in the 2020 Primary and General Election, the BOE Poll Count and Audit Application enhances the internal/external tracking and reporting for some of Election Day's most critical functions. This application is used to track timely precinct arrival, precinct opening, unofficial precinct counts at specific times, and Election Night precinct returns for ballots and supplies. This application has been a great success with our opening and closing processes, along with managing responses for 3rd party/special interest groups requests for publicly available voter turnout information.

### Project Requirements/Deliverables

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Following preliminary discussion amongst applicable staff, we began developing requirements/deliverables for the prospective application. These requirements were critical to the sound development of the application. The requirements were as follows:

- A. Electronic Polling Place Access Notifications: The application must permit Chief Judges, our polling place managers, with the ability to electronically report that they have arrived and are inside of the polling place and that they are ready to open the polling place to process voters. This would provide for immediate notification to the Board of Elections via a visual dashboard.
  
- B. Electronic Submission of Unofficial Precinct Counts: The application must permit Chief Judges to submit tabulator totals electronically and securely at 10 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. The application would also prevent the Chief Judges from entering in counts prior to the established time. This data would then automatically transfer to the Board of Elections, undergo internal review, and then be automatically published to our public website via a bar chart visualization and downloadable excel file once published.
  
- C. Electronic Return Audit Process: The application must allow Board of Elections staff to electronically conduct a multi-level supply return audit on Election Night for critical supplies. This includes an 'Outside Audit', 'Internal Audit', and 'Exit Audit'.

### Application Development

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Beginning in the fall of 2019, Board of Elections staff and our dedicated Information and Systems Department (IS&T) developer began building the application based on the established requirements. Following six (6) months of development time, the application was first deployed during the 2020 Presidential Preference Primary. Due to substantial beta testing prior to formal release, we did not encounter any application issues.

### Results

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Prior to deployment of the BOE Poll Count and Audit Application, most of all of our processes for tracking Chief Judges and critical information at polling sites was manual. By implementing these electronic/automated procedures, we were able to reduce phone calls on election morning related to facility access and open readiness, which allowed us to take more calls on "first ring" related to matters that needed immediate attention. Additionally, we received multiple compliments from the public on our transparency related to the release of unofficial counts to our website.

Implementation of the new electronic audit feature reduced overall audit times dramatically and provided us with easily extractable data that could be analyzed to improve training for our Chief Judges related to the closing audit process and establish new approaches to making the audit process more efficient.

## **Applicability**

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All jurisdictions would benefit from the implementation of the BOE Poll Count and Audit Application to decrease the workload of election staff on Election Day. Electronic/automated processes are critical to the continued streamlining of election processes where statutorily permissible and where security standards allow.

Due to the popularity of our process for publishing unofficial counts to our website at set increments on Election Day, other North Carolina counties began producing these counts on their websites utilizing alternative tools (ex. Airtable, Google Sheets, Excel Files, etc.) or inquiring with our office as to our process in implementing the program.

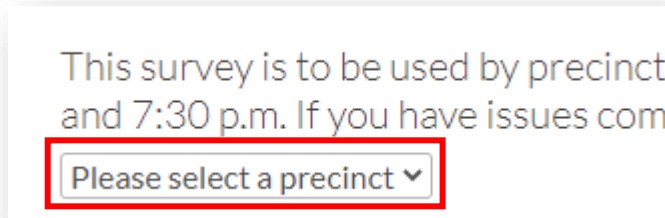
## **Cost**

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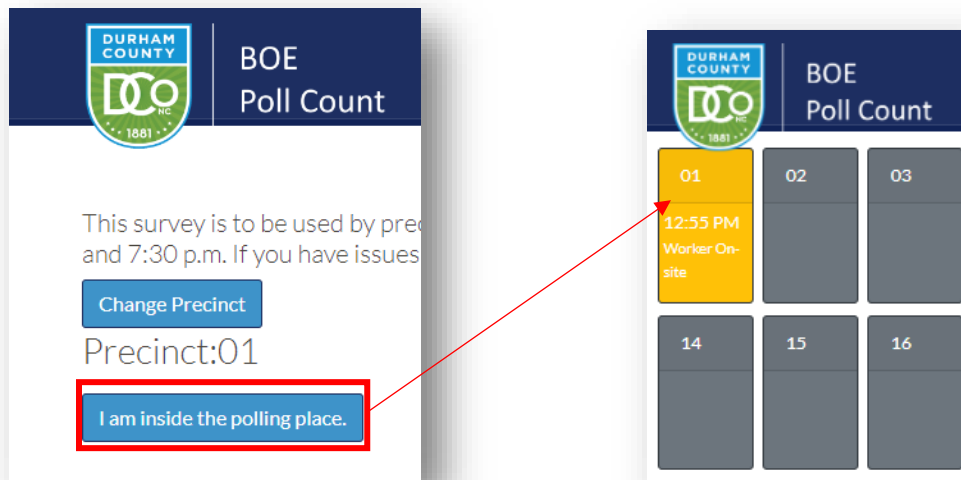
The creation of the BOE Poll Count and Audit Application came at no cost to the Durham County Board of Elections. Due to collaboration with our IS&T Department, this application was created with resources already available to all county departments. As mentioned under the applicability section, many of these processes can be implemented utilizing alternative tools that would likely not be cost prohibitive for most jurisdictions.

## POLLING PLACE ACCESS AND UNOFFICIAL COUNTS REPORTING MODULE WORKFLOW

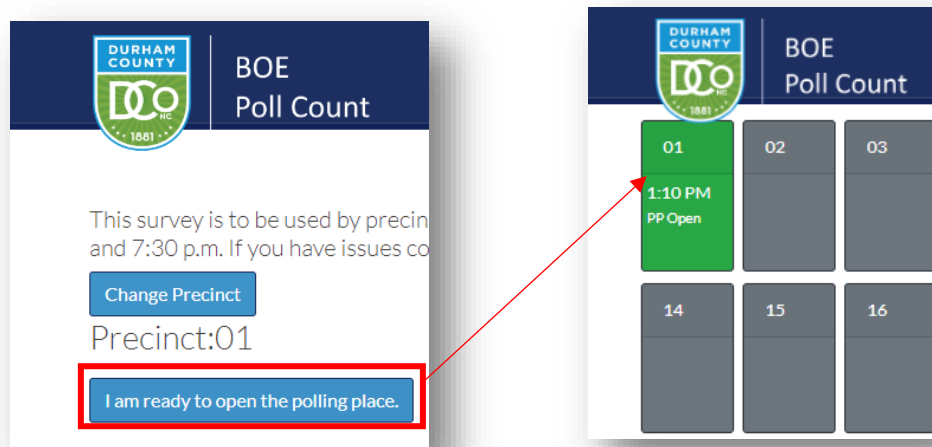
**STEP 1:** Chief Judge opens and logs into the application from their I-Phone and selects their assigned precinct.



**STEP 2:** The Chief Judge acknowledges that they are inside the precinct by clicking the “I am inside the polling place” button. They also have the option to change their precinct if they selected the wrong one. Once their acknowledgment is saved, staff will be notified on the internal administrative side of the application that the Chief Judge is on-site at the polling place.



**STEP 3:** Following acknowledgement, the Chief Judge will inform the Board of Elections that they are ready to open the polling place in the application. Once the acknowledgement is saved, staff will be notified on the internal administrative side of the application that site is ready to receive voters.



**STEP 4:** Once the site is open, the Chief Judge is responsible for electronically submitting tabulator counts at the times of 10:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. through the application. Data can only be entered into the application on or after the scheduled reporting time. Staff will be notified of the entry and count on the internal side of the application. The tile colors for each precinct will change each time a new entry is entered at the established increments.

The image shows two parts of the application. On the left is a data entry form titled "Change Precinct" with "Precinct:01" selected. It has a table with columns for time and count. The "10:00 AM" row has a count of "100" entered in a red-bordered box. Below the table is a "Submit Data" button. On the right is a dashboard titled "BOE Poll Count" with the Durham County logo. It shows a grid of precinct tiles. The tile for precinct "01" is highlighted in light blue and shows "1:19 PM" and "Count at 10:00 AM: 100". A red arrow points from the "100" in the form to the "100" on the dashboard tile. Other tiles (02, 03, 14, 15, 16) are greyed out.

**STEP 5:** Once all sites have entered their counts at the established times, staff will publish the data to our website after evaluation. This populates an unofficial counts dashboard on our public website, with an option to download the data to excel.  
**NOTE:** All data entered by the Chief Judge can be edited if necessary by staff. Staff can also enter counts if necessary.

The image shows a public website dashboard titled "BOE Poll Count" with the Durham County logo. The navigation menu includes "Dashboard", "See Totals", "Returns", "Reports", "Maps", and "Admin". A "Publish" button is highlighted with a red box. Below the button is a section titled "Publish Totals" containing a bar chart titled "Totals". The y-axis is labeled "Votes cast" and ranges from 0 to 110. The x-axis is labeled "Precinct" and lists precincts from 01 to 55-49. The bar for precinct 01 is blue and reaches the value 100. All other precinct bars are grey and at 0.

Precinct	Votes cast
01	100
02	0
03	0
04	0
05	0
06	0
07	0
08	0
09	0
10	0
12	0
13	0
14	0
15	0
16	0
17	0
18	0
19	0
20	0
21	0
22	0
23	0
24	0
25	0
26	0
27	0
28	0
29	0
30-1	0
30-2	0
31	0
32	0
33	0
34-1	0
34-2	0
35-3	0
36	0
37	0
38	0
39	0
40	0
41	0
42	0
43	0
44	0
45	0
46	0
47	0
48	0
50	0
51	0
52	0
53-1	0
53-2	0
54	0
55-11	0
55-49	0

# SOCIAL MEDIA FEEDBACK ON PUBLISHING UNOFFICIAL COUNTS TO OUR WEBSITE

**Kristen M** @krispymerryman · Nov 3, 2020  
Durham's election data game is next level

**Durham County Board of Elections** @dcovotes · Nov 3, 2020  
Want to see unofficial precinct counts? We have them. Click the link below to view and even export the data.  
[dcovotes.com/public-informa...](https://dcovotes.com/public-informa...)

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**Brent Woodcox** @BrentWoodcox · Nov 3, 2020  
This is interesting. Don't typically get this information on Election Day on a live basis in NC. Any other counties releasing this info? #NCPOL

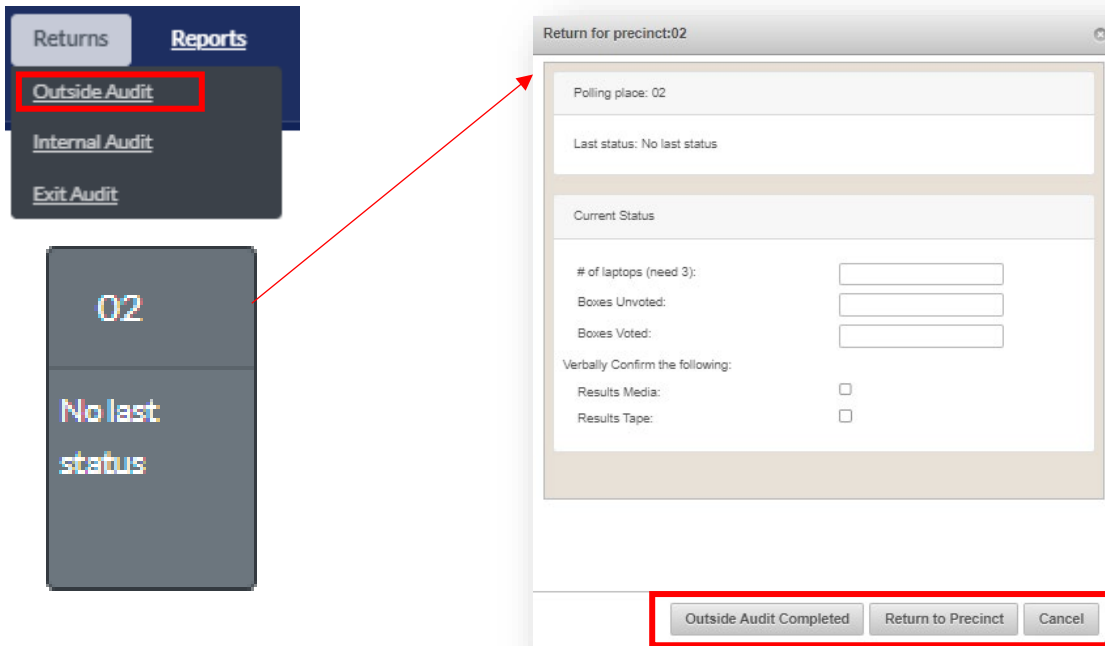
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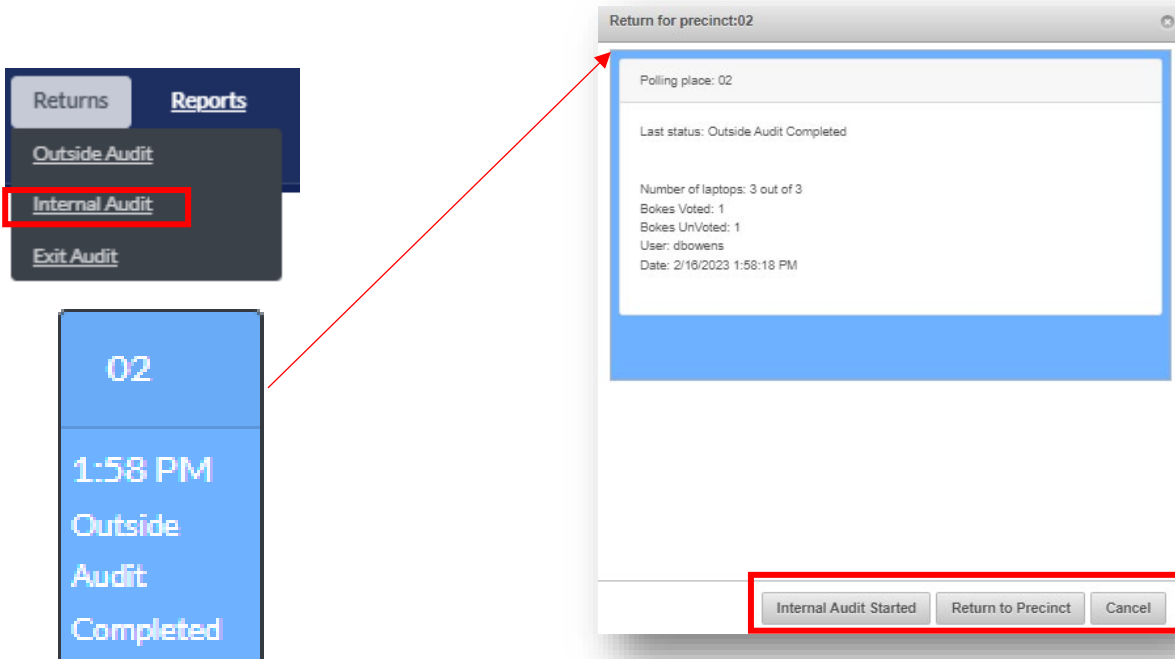
<https://twitter.com/dcovotes/status/1323646518021279744?s=20>

## ELECTION NIGHT RETURNS AND AUDIT MODULE

**STEP 1:** Once the Chief Judge enters the Board of Elections parking lot to return precinct supplies and undergo the return audit, staff will open the 'Outside Audit' dashboard and select the arriving precinct. Staff will then confirm that all supplies listed have been returned before the Chief Judge can proceed to the next step in the audit process. Based on the results of the initial audit, staff can select either "Outside Audit Completed" or "Return to Precinct".



**STEP 2:** If the "Outside Audit Completed" button is clicked, the precinct's tile will disappear from the 'Outside Audit' dashboard and appear on the 'Internal Audit' dashboard. This informs internal audit staff that the Chief Judge has returned essential supplies and can proceed with the remainder of the audit process. Based on the results of the initial internal audit, staff can select either "Internal Audit Started" or "Return to Precinct".



**STEP 3:** If the staff person conducting the internal audit selects “Internal Audit Started”, the precinct tile will disappear from the “Internal Audit” dashboard and appear on the “Exit Audit” dashboard. This is the last audit station before the Chief Judge is authorized to leave following confirmation of all returned supplies. Based on the results of the exit audit, staff can select either “Return Complete” or “Return to Precinct”.

