

Ballot Drop Boxes



Helping America Vote

About the Quick Start Guides: The EAC's Quick Start Guides are intended to familiarize local election officials with various topics they will likely encounter in election administration. The guides are a starting point to identify areas of concern and give officials a broad idea of factors they should consider in approaching a given topic.

Utilizing Drop Boxes

In jurisdictions that permit ballot drop boxes, election officials must address several considerations before deploying drop boxes. First, they must familiarize themselves with state law and regulatory requirements. Some states only permit drop boxes in certain locations or with specific security measures. Drop boxes also come with additional costs, including staff to empty the boxes daily, hardware, security seals and locks, ballot containers, and other security equipment.



Locations

- Follow state statutes on required or permissible locations for the installation of drop boxes.
- Use demographic data to determine whether there should be a different formula for placing drop boxes in rural or urban locations (i.e., 1 for every 15,000 residents might be every mile in an urban area, but every 50 miles in a rural area).
- Choose a location that is accessible by public transportation (where available).
- Avoid locations that can be obstructed by high traffic events.
- Ensure the drop box is clearly visible and the path to it is accessible with a 30 inch by 48 inch minimum clear and level ground space in front.
- Publish Public Service Announcements on radio and in local newspapers, and share drop box locations on social media.
- Provide a list or map of drop box locations on your website and with mail ballot voting instructions.

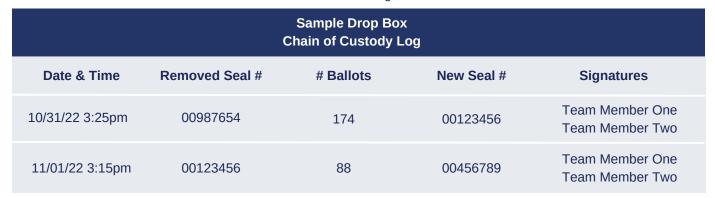
Ballot Return Deadline
Election officials must ensure
teams are present at each
drop box as the ballot return
deadline passes. Teams
must allow any voters in line
by the deadline to deposit
their ballots, then collect all
ballots, and lock the box so
no additional ballots can be
deposited.







- Provide local law enforcement a map of drop box locations and request extra patrols.
- Ensure the area is well lit and any unsupervised drop boxes have video surveillance.
- Implement rigorous chain of custody procedures. For each drop box, teams should record the time and date
 emptied, verify the box's seal number, document the number of ballots retrieved, reseal the drop box, and
 seal the ballot container.
- Track the return of drop boxes after the ballot return deadline passes to ensure all drop boxes are emptied and ballots collected are included in election night unofficial results.



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