



★ VIRGINIA ★  
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

# Risk Limiting Audit

MANUAL

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS

# Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
1.1 Background on Risk Limiting Audits (RLA) in Virginia .....	3
1.1.1 Definition of an RLA .....	3
1.1.2 History of RLAs in Virginia .....	3
2. RLA BASICS .....	4
2.1 RLA Selection and Notification Process .....	4
2.2 RLA SBE Meeting .....	5
2.2.1 Selected Contests .....	5
2.2.2 Setting the Risk Limit .....	6
2.2.3 Generating the Random Seed Number .....	6
3. RLA PREPARATION: Part 1 .....	6
3.1 Overview .....	6
3.1 Determining the Location of the RLA .....	7
3.2 Scheduling the Public Meeting .....	7
3.4 Recruiting RLA Review Boards .....	8
3.5 Reviewing Ballot Accounting and Storage Practices .....	8
3.6 Creating a Ballot Manifest .....	8
Helpful Tips and Reminders: .....	10
4. RLA Preparation: Part 2 .....	10
4.1 Overview .....	10
4.2 Submitting an ELECT 659-Request to Inspect Sealed Election Material Form .....	11
4.3 Uploading a Ballot Manifest .....	11
4.4 Suggested Supplies .....	14
5. The Public Meeting .....	15
5.1 Ballot Retrieval Process .....	15
5.1.1 Log In to RLA Software .....	15
5.1.2 Audit Boards .....	15
5.1.3 Download and Print .....	16
5.1.4 Retrieving and Tallying Ballots .....	17
5.1.5 Alternative Methods to Traditional Hand Counting .....	19
5.2 Ballot Entry into the RLA Software .....	20
5.3 Completion of RLA .....	22

5.4 Results .....	23
6. APPENDIX .....	23
6.1 Code .....	23
6.1.1 § 24.2-671.2. Risk Limiting Audits .....	23
6.1.2 § 24.2-669. Clerk to keep ballots; inspection; destruction. ....	25
6.1.3 §24.2-671 Electoral Board to Meet and Ascertain Results; Conclusiveness of Results .....	26
6.1.4 § 2.2-3707. Meetings to be public; notice of meetings; recordings; minutes. ....	27
6.2 ELECT 659-Request to Inspect Sealed Election Material .....	30
6.3 RLA Chain of Custody Log.....	31
6.4 Tally Sheet .....	32
6.5 Sample Press Release.....	33
6.6 Glossary .....	34
6.7 1 VAC20-60-80 Request for Risk Limiting Audit Race within a Jurisdiction .....	35
6.8 ELECT §24.2-671.2 (D) Form: Request for Risk Limiting Audit .....	36
.....	36
6.9 Key Dates for the 2022 Risk Limiting Audit.....	38

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background on Risk Limiting Audits (RLA) in Virginia

### 1.1.1 Definition of an RLA

A Risk Limiting Audit (RLA) is a type of post-election audit that utilizes statistical methods and a manual review of paper ballots to confirm that the voting equipment accurately reported the correct outcome of an election. RLAs analyze a random sample of hand-counted ballots to confirm election results. If the margin of an election is wide, less votes are audited; if the margin is narrow, more votes are audited until enough evidence can confirm the results of the contest.<sup>1</sup>

There are two main RLA methods: *ballot-comparison* and *ballot-polling* audits. Ballot-comparison audits manually examine randomly selected paper ballots and compares the results to the voting system's interpretation of the same ballot. Ballot-polling audits manually review a randomly selected sample of ballots to determine if the overall outcome of an election contest was correctly reported. Ballot polling requires more ballots to be audited, although it is simpler to complete; while ballot comparisons audit fewer ballots and require more data. In Virginia, The Department of Elections (ELECT) utilizes the *ballot polling* method to conduct RLAs.

This manual outlines the processes and procedures set-forth by the State Board of Elections (SBE) for conducting RLAs in Virginia using the ballot polling method.

### 1.1.2 History of RLAs in Virginia

RLAs provide strong statistical evidence that the declared winner of a contest actually received the most votes. In 2017, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation that amended the Code of Virginia to include RLAs of ballot scanner machines in use in the Commonwealth and the changes went into effect on July 1, 2018. During the 2022 Legislative Session, §24.2-671.1 was repealed and replaced with §24.2-671.2, which took effect on July 1 of 2022. With these changes, the Code now requires that RLAs be performed by the local electoral boards and general registrars under the supervision of the Department of Elections (ELECT) and in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the State Board of Elections (SBE); this document outlines these procedures and includes guidance on the following:

- Processes for randomly selecting contested races and determining the risk-limit;
- Procedures for preparing for an RLA, including guidelines for organizing ballots, selecting venues, and securing appropriate materials by local electoral boards and general registrars;
- Procedures for ballot custody, accounting, security, and written record retention that ensure that the collection of cast ballots from which samples are drawn is complete and accurate throughout the RLA;

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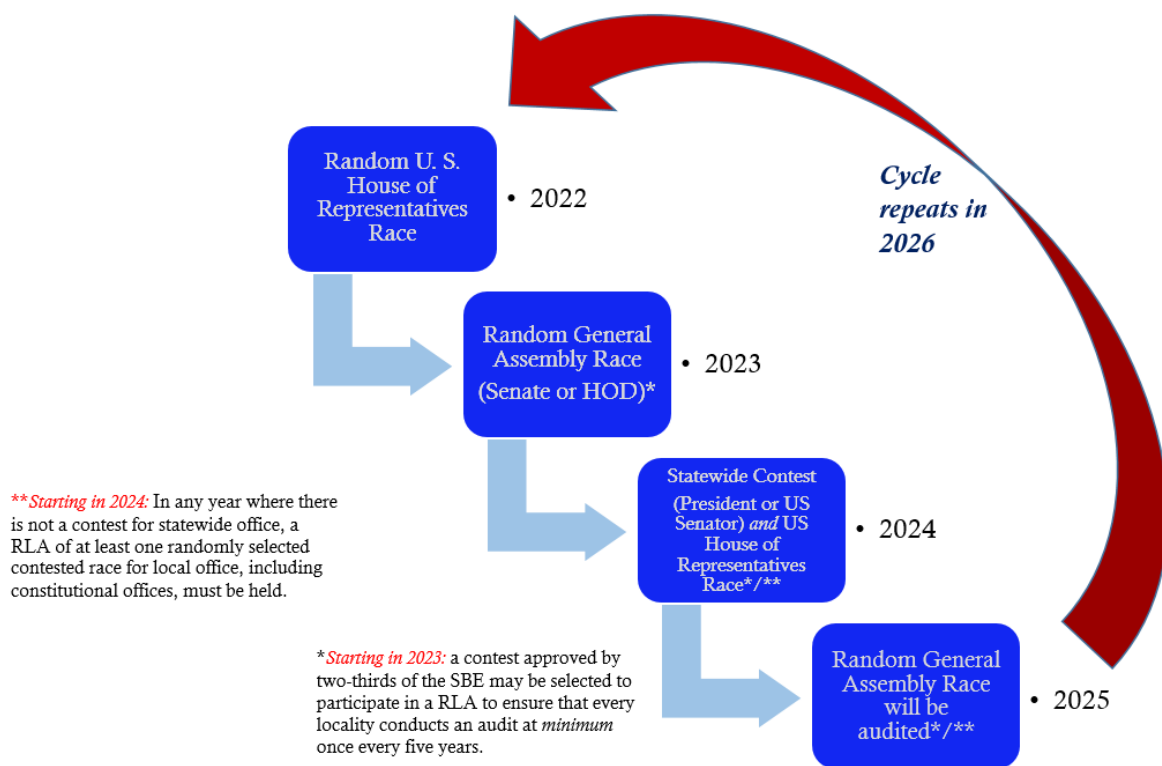
<sup>1</sup> Risk-Limiting Audits, Postelection Audits, A Summary, <https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/risk-limiting-audits.aspx>

- Procedures for hand counting of the audited ballots;
- Processes and methods for conducting the RLA; *and*,
- Procedures for ensuring transparency and understanding of the process by participants and the public, including guidelines for direct observation by members of the public, representatives of the candidates involved in the RLA, and representatives of the political parties.

## 2. RLA BASICS

### 2.1 RLA Selection and Notification Process

Pursuant to § 24.2-671.2, RLAs must be conducted **before** a race has been certified.<sup>2</sup> ELECT must ensure that an RLA is conducted for at least one randomly selected contest each year. The Code provides the contests eligible for selection for an RLA depending on the election cycle, as outlined in §24.2-671.2 (C) and illustrated in the graphic below:



<sup>2</sup> Code of Virginia, § 24.2-671.2. Risk-Limiting Audits, [§ 24.2-671.2. Risk-limiting audits \(virginia.gov\)](https://www.virginia.gov/legislation/code-of-virginia/title-24/chapter-2/section-671.2/risk-limiting-audits)

At least once every five years, every jurisdiction must participate in an RLA of a contest within its jurisdiction. Effective in 2023, the SBE may, with two-thirds majority vote, direct that a locality conduct an RLA of a contest within its jurisdiction.

A local electoral board may also request SBE approval for an RLA of a contested race within the local electoral board's jurisdiction. A "contested race" means *an election for an office where more names appear on the ballot than there are vacancies to be filled or a statewide referendum or proposed constitutional amendment*.<sup>3</sup> The State Board has promulgated both a regulation to guide local electoral boards in selecting a race for RLA (see Appendix) as well as a §24.2-671.2 (D) Form that localities must use to request a race for RLA (see Appendix).

To request a local race for an RLA, an electoral board must cast a majority vote at a public meeting to request an RLA for a particular contested race. Further, an electoral board must sign and complete the current SBE 24.671.2(D) Form and identify the race(s) subject to the requested RLA. All board members should sign and date the form. Once completed, the Secretary of the local electoral board must send the form to ELECT via the locality's Election Registration Specialist. An ideal time for local electoral board members to select a race is during the canvass. These forms must be submitted the day prior to the RLA SBE meeting.

The SBE will grant an RLA request if the form is properly completed, all statutory requirements are met, and the request is submitted the day before the SBE meeting that determines all the contested races subject to an RLA. Finally, the regulation specifies that, as needed, the State Board will grant a two-week extension to an electoral board's certification deadline under § 24.2-671 to accommodate the conduct of the RLA.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.2 RLA SBE Meeting

The SBE will meet electronically at 3:00 PM on the second Wednesday after an election to select contests, set the "risk limit", and determine the random seed number for the RLA.

### 2.2.1 Selected Contests

#### **Eligibility**

For those contests eligible for an RLA as designated by year in §24.2-671.2 (C), the SBE will only consider races with margins greater than 1%. All races that meet that threshold will be placed in the selection pool.

Locally contested races for which local electoral boards who have filled out a §24.2-671.2 (D) Form requesting an RLA of a locally contested race and who also met the criteria established in regulation (1VAC20-60-80) will be announced during this meeting. These contests will not be placed in the selection pool.

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<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Code of Virginia, §24.2-671 Electoral board to Meet to Ascertain Results; conclusiveness of results, <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title24.2/chapter6/section24.2-671/>

### **Drawing**

The Chairman of the SBE or their designated representative will randomly draw one race(s) to audit from this pool. Before the random selection takes place, a member of ELECT staff will explain the selection method. Depending on the size of the selection pool, the SBE may draw a contest from a bowl or roll dice to determine the audited contest. The selection will be held and recorded during a public meeting to ensure that the chosen race is completely random.

#### **2.2.2 Setting the Risk Limit**

A *risk limit* is the maximum chance that the RLA will fail to correct an incorrectly reported outcome. For example, a 10% risk-limit means that there is as a 90% chance that the RLA will correct an incorrect outcome. Every RLA that has been held in the Commonwealth of Virginia has used a 10% risk-limit. The SBE will set the *risk limit* of the RLA following industry best-practices and announce the risk limit of each RLA at the virtual SBE meeting held to discuss RLAs.

#### **2.2.3 Generating the Random Seed Number**

The RLA software uses a 20-digit random seed number to select ballots to be retrieved. A random seed number specifies the starting point of a computer-generated random sequence of numbers. To create this random number, the chairman of the SBE or their designated representative(s) will roll a ten-sided dice twenty times and record each number. This step is done during this public meeting. Any person may be designated to roll the dice, it may be done by one person or several people.

The 20-digit number generated by this activity will be inputted into the RLA software by the RLA *Administrator*. Once this number is inputted, the auditing software will randomly select and generate a list of ballots to be retrieved based on the sample size. For an illustrated example of this process, please review the *Random Seed Number Generation* video on the Virginia Department of Elections' YouTube channel.<sup>5</sup>

## **3. RLA PREPARATION: Part 1**

### **3.1 Overview**

Since RLAs must be conducted before state certification can occur, localities will be performing RLAs on compressed timelines (see Appendix for example of the 2022 timeline.) Before Election Day, localities chosen or approved by the SBE to conduct an RLA can take actions to set themselves up for success, including:

- Determining RLA Location;
- Scheduling the public meeting;
- Recruiting RLA Review Boards;

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<sup>5</sup> Virginia Department of Elections YouTube Channel, Random Seed Number Generation, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jw1DaJGxvxQ&t=208s>

- Reviewing ballot accounting and storage practices; *and*,
- Creating a ballot manifest.

### 3.1 Determining the Location of the RLA

A locality must consider a space for the RLA that can accommodate the public and that is ADA compliant. If only a few ballots are required for an RLA, a locality may choose to conduct their RLA at the courthouse. If more space is needed or if no workspace is available, the RLA may take place in another location such as: the general registrar’s office, a library, firehouse, school, etc. Localities should work with their Clerk of Courts to consult on the physical space of the RLA. The facility where an RLA takes place must have an internet connection to download and print retrieval lists, placeholder pages, RLA board credentials, and labels.

### 3.2 Scheduling the Public Meeting

A local electoral board and general registrar shall conduct an RLA within their jurisdictions at the date, time, and location noticed by ELECT. ELECT will publish the list of contested races as soon as practical. Pursuant to § 2.2-3707<sup>6</sup> and §24.2-671.2 (G), localities should plan for a public meeting for the day of the RLA. Additionally, at least one member of the local electoral board representing each party needs to participate in the RLA and be present for the duration of the RLA. <sup>7</sup> Local party chairpersons must also be notified. In addition to local electoral board members, the general registrar, and the Clerk of the Court or his/her designee, meeting attendees may include:

- Audit Board members;
- General public;
- Representatives from political parties;
- Candidates;
- Campaign staff; *and*,
- Local party chairs.

Localities should plan for a full day to conduct the RLA. As a best practice it is recommended that the public meeting begin in the morning, so the afternoon may be free, if a second round of ballot retrieval is required. Since the sample is random, there is no way to predetermine the number of ballots a locality will need to retrieve ahead of time. An RLA is designed, however, to sample the least number of ballots necessary to gain statistical confidence that the outcome of an election is correct; therefore, most RLAs can be completed in one day.

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<sup>6</sup> Code of Virginia, § 2.2-3707. Meetings to be public; notice of meetings; recordings; minutes, <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title2.2/chapter37/section2.2-3707/>

<sup>7</sup> Code of Virginia §24.2-641.2, Risk-Limiting Audit, <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title24.2/chapter6/section24.2-671.2/>

### 3.4 Recruiting RLA Review Boards

An *Audit Review Board* is a two-person team that retrieves specified ballots, records the results of the ballot, and inputs the results into the ballot software. General registrars and/or the Electoral Boards determine the audit board(s). Audit board members can be: staff, Officers of Election, Electoral Board Members, general registrars, or representatives from each party and/or candidates. Audit boards do not have to declare a party affiliation. As a best practice, it is recommended the audit board consist of one Democrat and one Republican to ensure balanced representation.

The number of *Audit Review Boards* is based on the number of containers that will need to be opened and not on the number of ballots that need to be retrieved. On average, an audit board can pull 20-25 ballots per hour. If many ballot containers must be retrieved, this average decreases to about 15-20 ballots per hour.

### 3.5 Reviewing Ballot Accounting and Storage Practices

When preparing for an RLA, it is a good time to review ballot accounting practices, which include ballot tracking, ballot reconciliation, and chain of custody forms and procedures. Ballot accounting forms the basis of a ballot manifest by providing the number of ballots in an envelope/box/container (ballot manifests are explained in greater detail in section **3.6 Creating a Ballot Manifest**.) This information can be found on Ballot Record Reports or on Label #3. ELECT encourages localities to have discussions with their Clerk of Court prior to the election. During these conversations, localities should work with their Clerk of Court to discuss storage limitations, the location of the RLA, and chain of custody concerns.<sup>8</sup>

ELECT has also designed a sample Chain of Custody form to document the control, transfer, and disposition of ballots during an RLA. Localities may choose to utilize this form or design their own to suit their specific needs. This sample form can be found in Forms Warehouse under the RLA section.

### 3.6 Creating a Ballot Manifest

Virginia utilizes the *ballot-polling method* to conduct RLAs; the *ballot-polling method* manually reviews a random sample of ballots across localities to determine if the overall outcome of an election was correctly reported. In order to select random ballots, participating localities must each upload a ballot manifest. A *ballot manifest* is a two column Excel spreadsheet created by localities that includes a list of the “Batch Name” (Column A) and the “Number of Ballots” (Column B).

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<sup>8</sup> Democracy Fund, Knowing It’s Right, Part Three, Planning and Conducting a Risk-Limiting Audit Pilot, Jennifer Morrell, June 2020,

	A	B
1	Batch Name	Number of Ballots
2	Pct 101	75
3	Pct 102	112
4	Pct 103	52

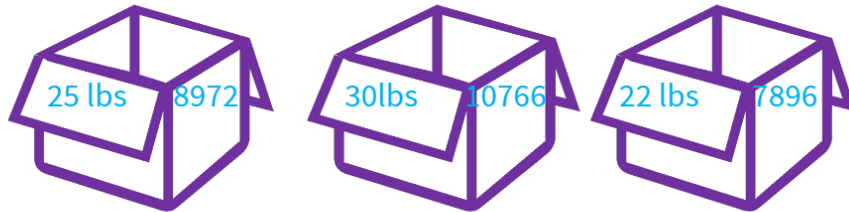
The ballot manifest creates an inventory of every ballot cast in a locality. Depending on the size of the locality, a ballot manifest should take one hour or less to complete. As a best practice, localities are encouraged to build their ballot manifest as they go. Every time an overfull optical ballot container is emptied per 1VAC20-60-50, there is an opportunity to create a “batch” of ballots.

The number of ballots in each batch should be verified independent of the tabulator. The information to create a ballot manifest may be found in the following places:

- Ballot Record Reports from precincts
- Inventory the ballot boxes at the Clerk of Court. Label #3 should contain the information needed.

- Electronic Pollbook Data  
(Reminder: Check Incident Reports or Officer of Election notes for occurrences of failing to check-in voters. This will allow the EPB number to be increased to the correct number.)
- VERIS data from the Final Absentee Report
- Calculating the Number of Ballots in a container by weight.
  - If the number of ballots in a specific container is unknown, a locality can perform a simple equation to approximate the number of ballots in each box. To do this, each container box must be weighed. The weight of each box is added together. The total of this sum is then divided by the total number of ballots cast. The result of this equation is then multiplied by the weight of the corresponding box to get the number of ballots (see graphic.)

# Calculating Ballots by Weight



Total Weight = 77lbs

Total ballots from vote history/credit = 27,634

$27634/77 = 358.88$

Box 1 = 25lb \* 358.88 = 8972

Box 2 = 30lb \* 358.88 = 10766

Box 3 = 22lb \* 358.88 = 7895

## Helpful Tips and Reminders:

- All types of ballots are included (in person, mail-in, provisional, etc.) in the manifest.
- Localities may label the “Batch Name” in any way that helps keep them organized (example: Precinct 101, Box 26, Container 8, etc.). Batch names are unique to each locality.
- Boxes/Containers/Envelopes that contain large amounts of ballots may be grouped into smaller units to ease the physical challenges of conducting the RLA, as long as it is reflected in the batch name (example of “batch names”: Precinct 101 Unit 1; Box 26 Unit 2; Container 8 Unit 3 etc.).
- Keep the spreadsheet simple; avoid color coding and bold, so the ballot auditing software can read it.
- Run a quick equation in excel to check that all ballots have been accounted for in a locality. After performing this check, make sure to **delete** this sum before uploading the manifest into the RLA software.
- Build a ballot manifest as the ballots are being stored after an election in preparation of future RLAs.
- ELECT staff is available to troubleshoot specific challenges and provide support.

## 4. RLA Preparation: Part 2

### 4.1 Overview

Once a locality learns that they have been selected for an RLA or that their electoral board has requested an RLA, they will have to do the following:

- Notify the public and participants identified in section 3.2 and 3.4 of this manual;


- Submit an ELECT 659-Request to Inspect Sealed Election Material form;
- Upload their ballot manifest; *and*,
- Gather supplies.

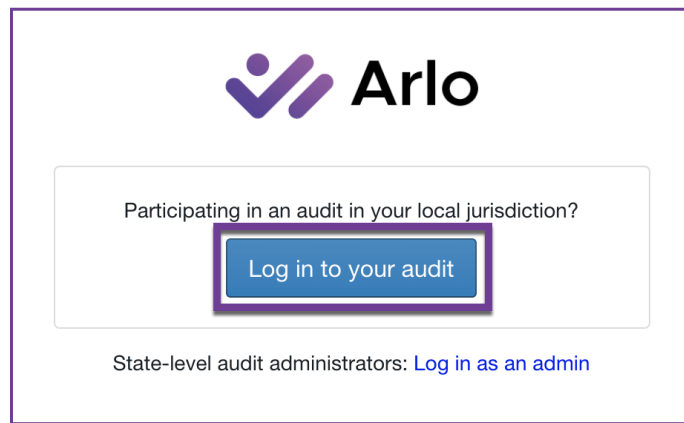
## 4.2 Submitting an ELECT 659-Request to Inspect Sealed Election Material Form

Pursuant to Va. Code § 24.2-659, a locality must receive permission from the Department of Elections to unseal ballots cast on Election Day for a post-election audit. Localities are required to submit an *ELECT 659-Request to Inspect Sealed Election Material* form to obtain permission. Once submitted, the form is sent to ELECT for signature authorization and then presented to the Clerk of the Circuit Court in order to access ballots from the election. This form may be found in Forms Warehouse under the RLA section.

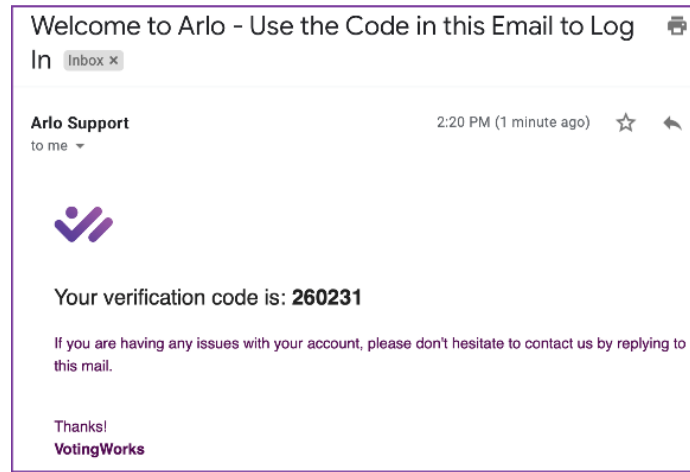
## 4.3 Uploading a Ballot Manifest

Once the ballot manifest is created, participants will save the manifest as a **.csv file** (CSV UTF-8, CSV (Macintosh) or CSV (MS-DOS) are all acceptable) and upload the spreadsheet into the auditing software. The RLA software will let participants know if a mistake has been made when creating or uploading the manifest by generating an error message. Mistakes can include: empty rows, incorrect file formats (the manifest must be saved as a .csv file), or ballot totals in any rows or columns. All ballot manifests must be submitted by all participating localities to start the RLA. Once the software receives all the ballot manifests, it will compile them into one large ballot list. This master list will be used to select random ballots across participating localities. Ballot manifests must be uploaded no-later than the Thursday after the SBE's random draw. Once all ballot manifests are uploaded the RLA can begin. Detailed instructions, on how to upload a ballot manifest into the current auditing software, are listed below:

1. Using Google Chrome  or Safari as your browser, go to this link: <https://arlo.voting.works>
2. Click Log in to your audit



3. Enter email address.
4. Check your email for a new email with a subject "Welcome to Arlo - Use the Code in this Email to Log In" - enter the verification code.



5. Click on the button with the locality name.



6. Click the Browse button and navigate to the ballot manifest .csv file that was created. Once selected, click Upload File.



### The audit has not started.

Ballot manifest not uploaded.

## Audit Source Data

### Ballot Manifest

Click "Browse" to choose the appropriate Ballot Manifest file from your computer. This file should be a comma-separated list of all the ballot boxes/containers used to store ballots for this particular election, plus a count of how many ballot cards (individual pieces of paper) are stored in each container.

(Click [here](#) to view a sample file in the correct format.)

7. When the upload is successful, a message will appear at the top of the screen that says "Ballot manifest uploaded." If a mistake is found after a ballot manifest has been uploaded, participants have the option to log back in and use the **Replace File** button to update the file.



### The audit has not started.

Ballot manifest uploaded.

Waiting for Audit Administrator to launch audit.

## Audit Source Data

### Ballot Manifest

Click "Browse" to choose the appropriate Ballot Manifest file from your computer. This file should be a comma-separated list of all the ballot boxes/containers used to store ballots for this particular election, plus a count of how many ballot cards (individual pieces of paper) are stored in each container.

[\(Click here to view a sample file in the correct format.\)](#)

**Current Ballot Manifest file:** Oceana ballot manifest - Oceana ballot manifest - Oceana ballot manifest - Oceana ballot manifest.csv

Replace File

8. Once the steps for uploading your ballot manifest have been completed, log out before exiting the screen.

## 4.4 Suggested Supplies

While not required, the following is a list of helpful supplies for a successful RLA:


- Table and chairs for each audit board;
- Bright colored paper;
- Bright colored removable labels;
- Tally sheets;
- Pens;
- Rubber fingers;
- Device to open containers;
- Materials to reseal containers, if necessary;
- Device with Wi-Fi/cellular to enter ballot tallies (laptop, smartphone, etc.); *and*,
- Printer.

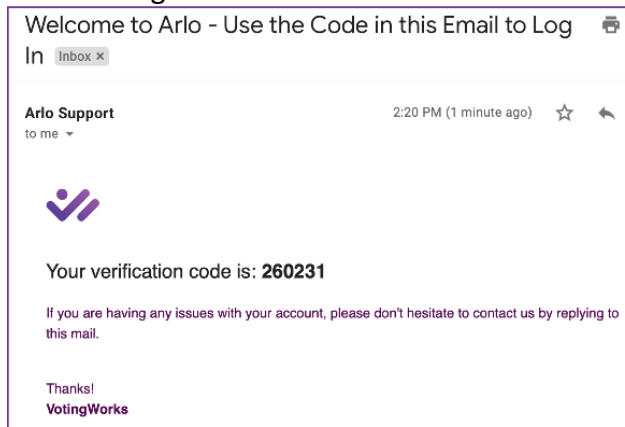
## 5. The Public Meeting

### 5.1 Ballot Retrieval Process

#### 5.1.1 Log In to RLA Software

Once the list of ballots to be audited has been generated by the RLA software, participants will log into the RLA software to review the list of ballots they must retrieve to complete the RLA.

1. Using Google Chrome  or Safari as your browser, go to this link: <https://arlo.voting.works>
2. Click Log in to your RLA.
3. Enter email address.
4. Check your email for a new email with a subject “Welcome to Arlo - Use the Code in this Email to Log In” - enter the verification code.



5. Click on the button with the locality name.



#### 5.1.2 Audit Boards

The RLA software will ask how many audit boards will be participating in the RLA. Since the selection of ballots is random, a locality will have to conservatively estimate the number of audit review boards they deem necessary based on the size of their locality and the race being audited.

Arlo Log out

Round 1 of the audit is in progress.  
Audit boards not set up.

### Round 1 Audit Board Setup

**Number of Audit Boards**

Select the appropriate number of audit boards based upon the personnel available and the number of ballots assigned to your jurisdiction for this round of the audit. You will have the opportunity to adjust the number of audit boards before the next round of the audit, if another round is required.

Set the number of audit boards you wish to use.

Save & Next

### 5.1.3 Download and Print

The RLA software will sort ballot retrieval lists, placeholder sheets, ballot labels, and audit board credentials for every audit board. Print each item for each audit board.

#### TEST RLA ELECTION - April 8, 2021

##### Round 1 of the audit is in progress.

1 of 1 audit boards complete.

Waiting for all jurisdictions to complete Round 1.

#### Round 1 Data Entry

0 ballots to audit in Round 1

	Download Aggregated Ballot Retrieval List
	Download Placeholder Sheets
	Download Ballot Labels
	Download Audit Board Credentials

#### Audit Board Progress

0 of 0 ballots audited



Audit Board #1: no ballots to audit

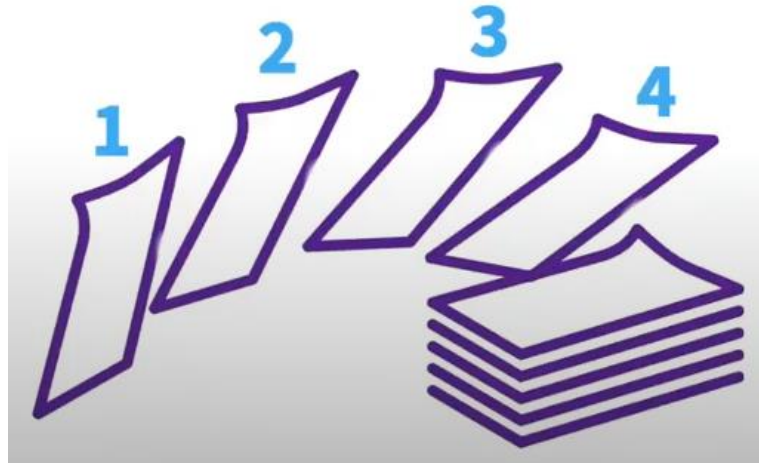
- Ballot Retrieval List:** A ballot retrieval list is a list of ballots to be retrieved by a locality. The “Batch Name” will be the naming convention used in the ballot manifest. Since the selection is random, precincts may have multiple ballots to be retrieved and some precincts may have none.

	A	B
1	Batch Name	Ballot Number
2	Precinct 1	90
3	Precinct 2	2
4	Precinct 2	197
5	Precinct 4	27
6	Precinct 5	313
7	Precinct 5	578
8	Precinct 5	587

- The ballot number reflects the numerical order of a specific ballot. To audit ballot number 90 in Precinct 1, for example, a member of the audit board must count from the top , each stored ballot until they reach the 90<sup>th</sup> ballot in the batch.
- **Placeholder sheets:** Placeholder sheets are individual sheets that contain each batch name and number (ex. Precinct 1, Ballot Number 90). They come in the form of a pdf and are printed on brightly colored paper. These sheets will be used to mark the place of the ballot that is being retrieved in the stack of ballots.
- **Ballot Labels:** Ballot Labels should be placed on ballots when retrieved. A bright colored removable label is recommended but not required.
- **Audit Board Credentials for Data:** The RLA software will create a username and password for the audit board members. The link at the bottom of the audit board credentials or QR code will direct audit board members to the site to enter in the ballot totals.

#### 5.1.4 Retrieving and Tallying Ballots

- 1) Review list of ballots, retrieve the necessary containers.
- 2) Perform any change of custody that may be required by the Clerk of Court. Chain of custody needs to be documented. ELECT has a sample form that may be used to document chain of custody or a locality may design their own form.
- 3) Remove ballots from box and place in a neat stack.
- 4) Review *Ballot Retrieval List* to determine what ballot to select.
- 5) Starting at the top of the stack, count ballots until the desired ballot is reached.



- 6) Once the ballot needed to be retrieved is reached, pull it out of the stack and insert the placeholder sheet in the stack to mark its position. Place the removable label on the ballot. The placeholder sheets and ballot labels are generated by the RLA software.
- 7) Once all ballots have all been pulled from the containers, the audit board will use the procedures established by ELECT for conducting hand counts of ballots.<sup>9</sup> These procedures are outlined in Forms Warehouse under Election Management, Election Day Instruction and Forms, *Hand Counting-Ballots-Examples*. Include the batch name, ballot number, and the vote on the tally sheet. ELECT has sample tally sheets available for use during an RLA but a locality may choose to create their own.

Audit Board Tally Sheet					
	Batch Name	Ballot No.	YES	NO	TOTAL
YES			X		
NO					

- 8) Localities may return ballot(s) to the appropriate container(s) or keep all the ballots from the RLA in a designated envelope/container.

<sup>9</sup> Virginia Department of Elections, Commonwealth of Virginia, Ballot Examples, Hand Counting Printed Ballots for Virginia Elections or Recounts, <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/election-management/election-day-instructions-and-forms/ELECT-Management-Handcounting-Ballots-Examples.pdf>

- 9) The containers should be resealed and returned to the Clerk of the Circuit Courts following the Chain of Custody procedures.

### 5.1.5 Alternative Methods to “Counting Down the Stack”

If a locality has a “batch” that is too large to locate a single ballot efficiently by counting down the stack of ballots, the locality may perform the **K-Cut Method** to locate the ballot or utilize a **Commercial Scale**. The methods are explained in more detail below:

#### **K-Cut Method**

To make a k-cut of a given stack of ballots:

- Cut the stack into two parts at *random*, designated a “top” part and a “bottom” part.
- Switch the order of the parts by moving the “bottom” part to the top and the “top” part to the bottom.
- The two parts are placed together.
- Cut the stack at least five times.
- The ballot at the top of the new stack is selected.<sup>10</sup>

A locality must perform a k-cut five times before selecting the top ballot. A random number must be used to dictate the percentage of the cut. One way to randomize the percentage of the cut is to utilize a random number generator set to 1-100.<sup>11</sup> The number generated then becomes the percentage of the cut (*example* 23=23% of the stack is moved to the bottom.) After performing the cut five times the top ballot becomes the retrieved ballot.

#### **Commercial Scale**

Localities may utilize a commercial scale to locate a ballot. Using a ballot scale is highly accurate, saves time, and places less stress on a locality’s audit board. By calculating the average weight of the ballots, a scale can easily identify the corresponding ballot in a ballot retrieval list.<sup>12</sup>

#### **Helpful Tips and Reminders:**

- ELECT has a limited number of counting scales to loan. Localities may send an email to their Elections and Registration Specialist to request use of a scale.
- ELECT has sample Chain of Custody forms and Tally Sheets available for use in Forms Warehouse.

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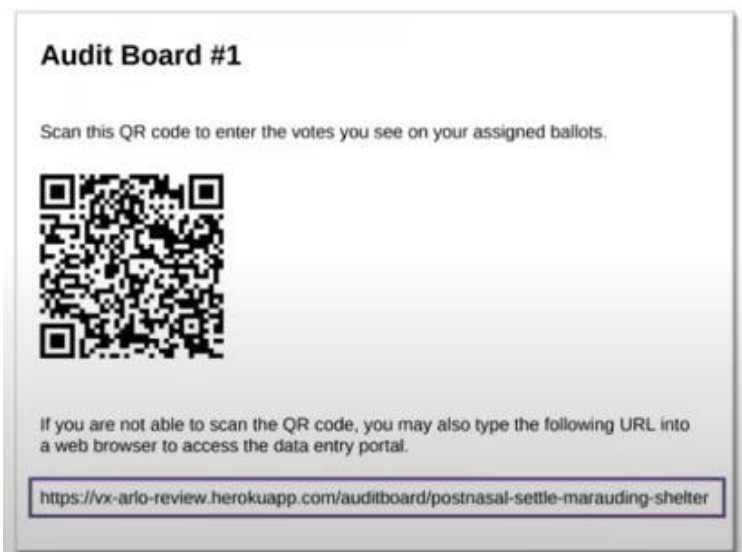
<sup>10</sup> k-Cut: A Simple Approximately-Uniform Method for Sampling Ballots in Post-Election Audits, Mayuri Sridhar and Ronald L. Rivest, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, <file:///C:/Users/bzk52383/Downloads/SridharRivest2019-k-cut.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Sample Random Number Generator, <https://www.calculator.net/random-number-generator.html>lom Number Generator (calculator.net)

<sup>12</sup> Weight, Weight, Don’t Tell Me: Using Scales to Select Ballots for Auditing, Cynthia Sturton, Eric Recorla, and David Wanger, University California Berkeley, <https://www.cs.unc.edu/~csturton/papers/ballot-weight-evt09.pdf>

## 5.2 Ballot Entry into the RLA Software

The link and/or QR code found at the bottom of the audit board credentials will take audit board members to the data entry portal to input the results of the RLA. A device with a Wi-Fi connection is needed to record the paper tally sheet. This may include a laptop or a smartphone. If using a smartphone, scan the QR code or type in the URL into the web browser.



- 1) The audit board members will be prompted to sign-in. The audit board will see the list of ballots. Audit board members will “key-in” results from the list of ballots. If a locality has 22 ballots to retrieve, there will be 22 separate fields to record each ballot. ELECT recommends both audit board members participate with one audit board member reading the results and one audit board member entering the results. Audit board members must **both** agree on the results of each ballot.
- 2) Click the **Start Auditing** button to begin.

**Arlo** Log out

**Audit Board #1: Ballot Cards to Audit**

The following ballots have been assigned to your audit board for this round of the audit. Once these ballots have been located and retrieved from storage, click "Start Auditing" to begin recording the votes you see marked on the paper ballots. When you are finished auditing these ballots, click "Auditing Complete - Submit Results" to submit the results. **Note that you will not be able to make changes after results are submitted.**

**Start Auditing** Auditing Complete - Submit Results

Batch	Ballot Position	Tabulator	Status
Arlo City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct ...	7	N/A	Not Audited
Arlo City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct ...	52	N/A	Not Audited
Arlo City of Lansing, Ward 2, Precinct ...	38	N/A	Not Audited
Arlo City of Lansing, Ward 2, Precinct ...	24	N/A	Not Audited
Arlo City of Lansing, Ward 4, Precinct ...	36	N/A	Not Audited
Arlo City of Lansing, Ward 4, Precinct ...	49	N/A	Not Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct 3	113	N/A	Not Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct 5 & 45	5	N/A	Not Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 3, Precinct 22 & 26	46	N/A	Not Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 4, Precinct 41	4	N/A	Not Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 4, Precinct 42	35	N/A	Not Audited

- 3) Go through the ballots in order.
- 4) Select the candidate marked on the ballot, both audit board members need to agree with the results. Click Review. Verify accuracy before clicking Submit & Next Ballot button.

The first screenshot shows the 'Audit Board #1: Ballot Card Data Entry' screen. It has a section 'Enter Ballot Information' with a sub-header 'Auditing ballot 1 of 11'. Below this, there's a 'Current ballot' section with a red box around it. The 'Current ballot' section contains the following information: Tabulator: Batch: AVCB City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct 3 Batch 147 Record Position: 7. To the right of this, there's a question 'Are you looking at the correct ballot?' with a red box around the 'Submit & Next Ballot' button. The second screenshot shows a grid of candidate names for POTUS (DEM). The candidates are: Bennett, Biden, Bloomberg, Bookin, Rutledge, Castro, Delawaty, Calhoun, Kibbuck, Sanders, Serrano, Singer, Uncommitted, Warren, Williamson, Yang. At the bottom, there's a red box around the 'Submit & Next Ballot' button. The third screenshot shows the 'Audit Board #1: Ballot Card Data Entry' screen. It has a section 'Enter Ballot Information' with a sub-header 'Auditing ballot 1 of 11'. Below this, there's a 'Current ballot' section with a red box around it. The 'Current ballot' section contains the following information: Tabulator: Batch: AVCB City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct 3 Batch 147 Record Position: 7. To the right of this, there's a question 'Are you looking at the correct ballot?' with a red box around the 'Submit & Next Ballot' button.

- 5) When all ballots have been inputted, audit boards should return to the audit overview screen to verify every ballot has been entered into the audit software. Once everything has been verified, click the **“Auditing Complete-Submit Results”** button.

The screenshot shows the 'Audit Board #1: Ballot Cards to Audit' screen. It has a table with the following columns: Batch, Ballot Position, Tabulator, and Status. The table contains 12 rows of data. The 'Status' column has a red box around it. The 'Auditing Complete - Submit Results' button is highlighted with a red box.

Batch	Ballot Position	Tabulator	Status
AVCB City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct ...	7	N/A	Audited
AVCB City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct ...	32	N/A	Audited
AVCB City of Lansing, Ward 2, Precinct ...	18	N/A	Audited
AVCB City of Lansing, Ward 2, Precinct ...	24	N/A	Audited
AVCB City of Lansing, Ward 4, Precinct ...	36	N/A	Audited
AVCB City of Lansing, Ward 4, Precincts ...	49	N/A	Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct 3	113	N/A	Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 1, Precinct 5 & 45	3	N/A	Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 3, Precinct 22 & 26	46	N/A	Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 4, Precinct 41	4	N/A	Audited
City of Lansing, Ward 4, Precinct 42	35	N/A	Audited

- 6) Audit board members will sign-off. Names must be keyed in exactly how the audit board member signed-in. For example, if the caps lock was on when the audit board member signed in, then the caps lock must be on when the audit board member signs out.

## Audit Board #1: Board Member Sign-off

Thank you for completing the ballots assigned to your Audit Board. Please sign your name below to confirm that all ballots were audited to the best of your ability and in accordance with the appropriate state statutes and guidelines.

If another round of auditing is needed, you will be notified by election officials.

**Audit Board Member: RACHEL LAWLESS**

Full Name

**Audit Board Member: rachel lawless**

Full Name

Sign Off

### 5.3 Completion of RLA

When all audit boards have completed their ballot entry and the risk limit has been met, the *Audit Progress* screen will display the message “Congratulations - the audit is complete!”

If the risk limit was not met after all the ballots have been audited for the contest, the audit software will initiate another round of sampling. A new ballot retrieval list, placeholders, labels, and audit board credentials will be generated for an additional round of ballot retrieval. If more than one locality is auditing for the same office, both localities must complete before the software will determine the need for the second round and subsequently generate the new retrieval list(s).

## Audit Completion

Completed

**Audit Progress**

**Audit Progress by Jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction Name	Status	Total Audited	Remaining in Round
Kalamazoo County	Complete	0	0
Kalamazoo County	Complete	0	0
Kalamazoo County	Complete	0	0
Kalamazoo County	Complete	0	0

Additional  
Sampling

**Round 2 of the audit is complete - another round is needed**

When you are ready, start Round 3

Pursuant to § 24.2-671.2 (I), if an RLA of a contested race escalates to a full hand count, the results of the hand count shall be used to certify the election in lieu of the tabulation of the unofficial results obtained prior to the conduct of the RLA.<sup>13</sup>

## 5.4 Results

At the conclusion of the RLA, ELECT will submit a report to the SBE on the findings of the RLA. The report will include the results of the RLA as well as an analysis of any detected discrepancies. If a locality would like to send a press release to local news outlets, ELECT has created a sample press release template that localities may utilize. This press release is found on the RLA section in Forms Warehouse.

## 6. APPENDIX

### 6.1 Code

#### 6.1.1 § 24.2-671.2. Risk Limiting Audits

A. For the purposes of this section:

"Contested race" means an election for an office where more names appear on the ballot than there are vacancies to be filled or a statewide referendum or proposed constitutional amendment.

"Risk limit" means the largest probability that the Risk Limiting Audit will fail to correct an election outcome that differs from the outcome that would be found by a full manual tabulation of the votes on all ballots cast in the contested race.

"Risk Limiting Audit" means an audit protocol conducted after an election and prior to the certification of the election results with a pre-specified minimum probability of requiring a full hand count of votes cast if the outcome reported by the voting system differs from the outcome that would be found by a full hand count of the votes in a contested race. A "Risk Limiting Audit" requires a hand count of randomly sampled printed ballots that continues until there is either strong statistical evidence that the reported outcome is correct or, in the absence of such evidence, a full hand count of all ballots cast in the contested race that determines the outcome.

B. Risk Limiting Audits conducted pursuant to this section shall be performed by the local electoral boards and general registrars under the supervision of the Department and in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the State Board, including:

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<sup>13</sup> Code of Virginia, §24.2-671.2 Risk-Limiting Audits,  
<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title24.2/chapter6/section24.2-671.2/>

1. Processes for randomly selecting contested races and determining the risk limit.
2. Procedures for preparing for a Risk Limiting Audit, including guidelines for organizing ballots, selecting venues, and securing appropriate materials by local electoral boards and general registrars.
3. Procedures for ballot custody, accounting, security, and written record retention that ensure that the collection of cast ballots from which samples are drawn is complete and accurate throughout the audit.
4. Procedures for hand counting of the audited ballots.
5. Processes and methods for conducting the Risk Limiting Audit.
6. Procedures for ensuring transparency and understanding of the process by participants and the public, including guidelines for direct observation by members of the public, representatives of the candidates involved in the Risk Limiting Audit, and representatives of the political parties.

C. The Department shall provide that the following Risk Limiting Audits be conducted:

1. In the year of a general election for members of the United States House of Representatives, a Risk Limiting Audit of at least one randomly selected contested race for such office;
2. (Effective July 1, 2023) In the year of a general election for members of the General Assembly, a Risk Limiting Audit of at least one randomly selected contested race for such office;
3. (Effective July 1, 2024) In any year in which there is not a general election for a statewide office, a Risk Limiting Audit of at least one randomly selected contested race for a local office, including constitutional offices, for which certification by the State Board is required under § 24.2-680; and,
4. (Effective July 1, 2023) In any year, any other Risk Limiting Audit of a contested race that is necessary to ensure that each locality participates in a Risk Limiting Audit of an office within its jurisdiction at least once every five years or that the State Board finds appropriate. Such audits must be approved by at least a two-thirds majority vote of all members of the Board.

D. A local electoral board may request that the State Board approve the conduct of a Risk Limiting Audit for a contested race within the local electoral board's jurisdiction. The state board shall promulgate regulations for submitting such requests. The State Board shall grant an extension of the local electoral board's certification deadline under § 24.2-671 as necessary to accommodate the conduct of a Risk Limiting Audit conducted pursuant to this subsection. The Department may count a Risk Limiting Audit conducted pursuant to this subsection toward the requirement in subdivision C 4.

E. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections C and D, no contested race shall be selected to receive a Risk Limiting Audit if the tabulation of the unofficial result for the contested race

shows a difference of not more than one percent of the total vote cast for the top two candidates.

F. Upon the tabulation of the unofficial results of an election, the State Board shall determine, in accordance with subsection C, all the contested races for that election that will receive a Risk Limiting Audit and shall set the risk limit to be applied in such audits. As soon as practicable after selection of the contests to be audited, the Department shall publish a notice of the contested races in accordance with the requirements for public meetings in § 2.2-3707. The Department shall provide support to local electoral boards and general registrars in preparing to hold the Risk Limiting Audits.

G. The local electoral board and general registrar shall conduct a Risk Limiting Audit within their jurisdiction at the date, time, and location noticed by the Department. At least one member of the local electoral board representing each party shall participate in the Risk Limiting Audit and be present for the duration of the Risk Limiting Audit when ballots are being selected and counted and calculations are being made. All Risk Limiting Audits shall be conducted in a place and manner that is open to the public. At the conclusion of a Risk Limiting Audit, all audit materials, including ballots and any records generated during the course of the audit, shall be delivered to the clerk of the circuit court and retained as election materials pursuant to § 24.2-668.

H. The local electoral board in coordination with the general registrar shall promptly report the results of a Risk Limiting Audit of any contested races subject to § 24.2-680 in their jurisdiction to the Department. The results of any Risk Limiting Audit for a local contested race shall also be retained by the local electoral board. At the conclusion of each Risk Limiting Audit requiring certification by the State Board, the Department shall submit to the State Board a report, which shall include all data generated by the Risk Limiting Audit and all information required to confirm that the Risk Limiting Audit was conducted in accordance with the procedures adopted by the State Board. The Department shall publish the results of all Risk Limiting Audits pursuant to this section on the Department's website.

I. If a Risk Limiting Audit of a contested race escalates to a full hand count, the results of the hand count shall be used to certify the election in lieu of the tabulation of the unofficial results obtained prior to the conduct of the Risk Limiting Audit. A full hand count conducted pursuant to this section shall not be construed as a recount under Chapter 8 (§ 24.2-800 et seq.). Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the rights of a candidate under Chapter 8. 2022, cc. 443, 444.

#### 6.1.2 § 24.2-669. Clerk to keep ballots; inspection; destruction.

The clerk to whom the counted and uncounted ballots are delivered shall, without breaking the seal, deposit them in a secure place in his office, where they shall be kept for the time required by this section. He shall not allow the ballots to be inspected except (i) by an authorized representative of the State Board or by the electoral board at the direction of the State Board to ensure the accuracy of the returns or the purity of the election, (ii) by the officers of election,

and then only at the direction of the electoral board in accordance with § [24.2-672](#) when the provisions of § [24.2-662](#) have not been followed, (iii) on the order of a court before which there is pending a proceeding for a contest or recount under Chapter 8 (§ [24.2-800](#) et seq.) of this title or before whom there is then pending a proceeding in which the ballots are necessary for use in evidence, or (iv) for the purpose of conducting an audit as part of a post-election pilot program pursuant to § [24.2-671.1](#). In the event that ballots are inspected under clause (i), (ii), or (iv) of this paragraph, each political party and each independent candidate on the ballot, or each primary candidate, shall be entitled to have a representative present during such inspection. The representatives and observers lawfully present shall be prohibited from interfering with the officers of election in any way. The State Board or local electoral board shall provide such parties and candidates reasonable advance notice of the inspection.

After the counted ballots for a federal election have remained in the clerk's office for two years, if no election contest or other proceeding is pending in which such ballots may be needed as evidence, the clerk shall destroy such ballots. After the counted ballots for any other election have remained in the clerk's office for one year, if no election contest or other proceeding is pending in which such ballots may be needed as evidence, the clerk shall destroy such ballots. After the unused ballots have remained in the clerk's office and the time has expired for initiating a recount, contest, or other proceeding in which such ballots may be needed as evidence and no such contest or proceeding is pending, the clerk may then destroy the unused ballots other than punchcard ballots, which shall be returned to the electoral board.

#### 6.1.3 §24.2-671 Electoral Board to Meet and Ascertain Results; Conclusiveness of Results

Each electoral board shall meet at the clerk's or general registrar's office of the county or city for which they are appointed at or before 5:00 p.m. on the day after any election. The board may adjourn to another room of sufficient size in a public building to ascertain the results, and may adjourn as needed, not to exceed seven calendar days from the date of the election unless an extension has been granted to accommodate a Risk Limiting Audit conducted pursuant to § [24.2-671.2](#). Written directions to the location of any room other than the clerk's or general registrar's office where the board will meet shall be posted at the doors of the clerk's and general registrar's offices prior to the beginning of the meeting.

The board shall open the returns delivered by the officers.

If the electoral board has exercised the option provided by § [24.2-668](#) for delivery of the election materials to the office of the general registrar on the night of the election, the electoral board shall meet at the office of the general registrar at or before 5:00 p.m. on the day after any election.

The board shall ascertain from the returns the total votes in the county or city, or town in a town election, for each candidate and for and against each question and complete the abstract of votes cast at such election, as provided for in § [24.2-675](#). For any office in which no person was elected by write-in votes, and for which the total number of write-in votes for that office is less than (i) 10 percent of the total number of votes cast for that office and (ii) the total number

of votes cast for the candidate receiving the most votes, the electoral board shall ascertain the total votes for each write-in candidate for the office within one week following the election. For offices for which the electoral board issues the certificate of election, the result so ascertained, signed and attested, shall be conclusive and shall not thereafter be subject to challenge except as specifically provided in Chapter 8 (§ [24.2-800](#) et seq.).

Once the result is so ascertained, the secretary of the electoral board shall deliver one copy of each statement of results to the general registrar to be available for inspection when his office is open for business. The secretary shall then return all pollbooks, any printed inspection and return sheets, and one copy of each statement of results to the clerk.

Beginning with the general election in November 2007, a report of any changes made by the local electoral board to the unofficial results ascertained by the officers of election or any subsequent change to the official abstract of votes made by the local electoral board shall be forwarded to the SBE and the explanation of such change shall be posted on the State Board website.

Each political party and each independent candidate on the ballot, or each primary candidate, shall be entitled to have representatives present when the local electoral board meets to ascertain the results of the election. Each such party and candidate shall be entitled to have at least as many representatives present as there are teams of officials working to ascertain the results, and the room in which the local electoral board meets shall be of sufficient size and configuration to allow the representatives reasonable access and proximity to view the ballots as the teams of officials work to ascertain the results. The representatives and observers lawfully present shall be prohibited from interfering with the officials in any way. It is unlawful for any person to knowingly possess any firearm as defined in § [18.2-308.2:2](#) within 40 feet of any building, or part thereof, used as a meeting place for the local electoral board while the electoral board meets to ascertain the results of an election, unless such person is (a) any law-enforcement officer or any retired law-enforcement officer qualified pursuant to subsection C of § [18.2-308.016](#); (b) occupying his own private property that falls within 40 feet of a polling place; or (c) an armed security officer, licensed pursuant to Article 4 (§ [9.1-138](#) et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1, whose employment or performance of his duties occurs within 40 feet of any building, or part thereof, used as a meeting place for the local electoral board while the electoral board meets to ascertain the results of an election.

#### 6.1.4 § [2.2-3707](#). Meetings to be public; notice of meetings; recordings; minutes.

A. All meetings of public bodies shall be open, except as provided in §§ [2.2-3707.01](#) and [2.2-3711](#).

B. No meeting shall be conducted through telephonic, video, electronic or other electronic communication means where the members are not physically assembled to discuss or transact public business, except as provided in § [2.2-3708.2](#) or as may be specifically provided in Title 54.1 for the summary suspension of professional licenses.

C. Every public body shall give notice of the date, time, and location of its meetings by:

1. Posting such notice on its official public government website, if any;

2. Placing such notice in a prominent public location at which notices are regularly posted; and
3. Placing such notice at the office of the clerk of the public body or, in the case of a public body that has no clerk, at the office of the chief administrator.

All state public bodies subject to the provisions of this chapter shall also post notice of their meetings on a central, publicly available electronic calendar maintained by the Commonwealth. Publication of meeting notices by electronic means by other public bodies shall be encouraged.

The notice shall be posted at least three working days prior to the meeting.

D. Notice, reasonable under the circumstance, of special, emergency, or continued meetings shall be given contemporaneously with the notice provided to the members of the public body conducting the meeting.

E. Any person may annually file a written request for notification with a public body. The request shall include the requester's name, address, zip code, daytime telephone number, electronic mail address, if available, and organization, if any. The public body receiving such request shall provide notice of all meetings directly to each such person. Without objection by the person, the public body may provide electronic notice of all meetings in response to such requests.

F. At least one copy of the proposed agenda and all agenda packets and, unless exempt, all materials furnished to members of a public body for a meeting shall be made available for public inspection at the same time such documents are furnished to the members of the public body. The proposed agendas for meetings of state public bodies where at least one member has been appointed by the Governor shall state whether or not public comment will be received at the meeting and, if so, the approximate point during the meeting when public comment will be received.

G. Any person may photograph, film, record or otherwise reproduce any portion of a meeting required to be open. The public body conducting the meeting may adopt rules governing the placement and use of equipment necessary for broadcasting, photographing, filming or recording a meeting to prevent interference with the proceedings, but shall not prohibit or otherwise prevent any person from photographing, filming, recording, or otherwise reproducing any portion of a meeting required to be open. No public body shall conduct a meeting required to be open in any building or facility where such recording devices are prohibited.

H. Minutes shall be recorded at all open meetings. However, minutes shall not be required to be taken at deliberations of (i) standing and other committees of the General Assembly; (ii) legislative interim study commissions and committees, including the Virginia Code Commission; (iii) study committees or commissions appointed by the Governor; or (iv) study commissions or study committees, or any other committees or subcommittees appointed by the governing bodies or school boards of counties, cities and towns, except where the membership of any


such commission, committee or subcommittee includes a majority of the governing body of the county, city or town or school board.

Minutes, including draft minutes, and all other records of open meetings, including audio or audio/visual records shall be deemed public records and subject to the provisions of this chapter.

Minutes shall be in writing and shall include (a) the date, time, and location of the meeting; (b) the members of the public body recorded as present and absent; and (c) a summary of the discussion on matters proposed, deliberated or decided, and a record of any votes taken. In addition, for electronic communication meetings conducted in accordance with § 2.2-3708.2, minutes of state public bodies shall include (1) the identity of the members of the public body at each remote location identified in the notice who participated in the meeting through electronic communication means, (2) the identity of the members of the public body who were physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location, and (3) the identity of the members of the public body who were not present at the locations identified in clauses (1) and (2) but who monitored such meeting through electronic communication means.


1968, c. 479, § 2.1-343; 1973, c. 461; 1976, c. 467; 1977, c. 677; 1982, c. 333; 1989, c. 358; 1990, c. 538; 1993, c. 720; 1995, c. [562](#); 1999, cc. [696](#), [703](#), [726](#); 2000, c. [227](#); 2001, c. [844](#); 2004, cc. [730](#), [768](#); 2005, c. [352](#); 2007, c. [300](#); 2009, c. [628](#); 2010, c. [309](#); 2015, c. [131](#); 2017, c. [616](#); 2018, c. [55](#).


## 6.2 ELECT 659-Request to Inspect Sealed Election Material




★ VIRGINIA ★  
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS


ELECT 659 - Request to Inspect Sealed Election Materials

Election Date: \*  


Election Type: \*  


Date of Request: \*  



Name of Requester \*

Position \*  


Email Address \*

Phone Number \*

Confirm Email Address \*


Locality \*  


Precinct Name \*

Precinct #: \*

Specific Envelope which needs to be inspected:

The Envelope needs to be inspected to determine:

Powered by  formsite

Submit

### 6.3 RLA Chain of Custody Log

#### RLA Chain of Custody Log

Jurisdiction Name:

Election Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Audit

Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Name (Please sign)	Title	Precinct Box/Envelope being checked out or back in	Time Out	Time In

6.4 Tally Sheet

RISK-LIMITING AUDIT TALLY SHEET

Total Ballots Audited: \_\_\_\_\_

Audit Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Office	Batch	Ballot#	Batch	Ballot#	Batch	Ballot#	Batch	Ballot#	Batch	Ballot#	Batch	Ballot#	Batch	Ballot#	Batch	Ballot#	Batch	Ballot#	TOTAL
CANDIDATE																			0
Mickey																			0
Minnie																			0
Goofy																			0
Write-In:																			0
Over Votes:																			
Under Votes:																			

## 6.5 Sample Press Release

[For Immediate Release (unless embargoed)]

[Organization Name]

[Date]

### **[Headline, use Times New Roman or Arial font]**

*[Insert Sub header, Keep font sizes standard, and 1 point apart in size. For example, if your headline is 14, your sub header should be 13, and your body should be 12]*

[CITY] – Provide general news release content. For example, begin by naming official who announced the results and summarize the results.

Here you can include 1-2 paragraphs explaining some of the details about the audit.

[Quote from the Director of Elections/General Registrar]

Include any additional information or resources related to the audit, which can include links to the audit report, voter registration website, etc.

#### **Media Contact:**

[Name]

[Job Title]

[Email address]

[Phone number]

[Website]

###

## 6.6 Glossary

*Risk Limiting Audit:* a type of post-election audit that utilizes statistical methods and a manual review of paper ballots to check that the voting equipment accurately reported the correct outcome of an election.

*Risk Limit:* the maximum chance that the audit will fail to correct an incorrectly reported outcome. For example, a 10% risk limit means there is a 90% chance that the audit will correct an incorrectly reported outcome.

*Administrator:* a member of ELECT staff that adds elections to be audited, sets the risk-limit, adds participants, inputs the random seed number, and reviews the progress of the RLA.

*Contested Race:* an election for an office where more names appear on the ballot than there are vacancies to be filled *or* a statewide referendum or proposed constitutional amendment.

*Participants:* a general registrar or appointed person that will be responsible for coordinating the audit in their locality. Participants are responsible for uploading a ballot manifest, entering audit review boards, and downloading ballot retrieval lists from the audit software.

*Audit Review Boards:* a two-person team that retrieves specific ballots, records the results on a tally sheet, and uploads the results into the auditing software.

*Ballot Polling:* one of two methods for conducting RLA's that relies on manually reviewing a random sample of ballots across localities to determine if the overall outcome of an election was correctly reported.

*Ballot Manifest:* a two-column Excel spreadsheet that creates an inventory of every ballot cast in a locality during a contest.

## 6.7 1 VAC20-60-80 Request for Risk Limiting Audit Race within a Jurisdiction

Pursuant to § 24.2-671.2(D) of the Code of Virginia, a local electoral board shall follow the process below to request a Risk Limiting Audit of a contested race within its jurisdiction:

1. At the public canvass meeting following the election, an electoral board may elect to request an audit of a contested race, or multiple races, within its jurisdiction (Risk Limiting Audit) by a majority vote.
2. If a question to request a Risk Limiting Audit achieves a majority vote, an electoral board must complete Form SBE 671.2(D) to request SBE (SBE) approval of the audit(s).
3. The SBE will grant a request for a Risk Limiting Audit within a locality's jurisdiction if:
  - a. The submitted Form SBE 671.2(D) contains sufficient information for the SBE to determine that the local electoral board members cast a majority vote in favor of the audit request;
  - b. The submitted Form SBE 671.2(D) contains sufficient information for the SBE to determine which contested race or races are subject to the requested audit and that those races are in fact within the jurisdiction of the local electoral board;
  - c. The SBE concludes that the audit is permissible under Code of Virginia § 24.2-671.2 and all other relevant provisions of law; and
  - d. The following conditions are met:
    - i. The margin of the candidate with the most votes and the second most votes is equal to or greater than 1%; and,
    - ii. The number of estimated ballots to be sampled exceeds 15% of the total number of ballots cast.
4. Upon granting an electoral board's request for a Risk Limiting Audit, the SBE may grant an extension, not to exceed two weeks, of the local electoral board's certification deadline, under Code of Virginia § 24.2-671, if necessary for the conduct of the audit.

### Statutory Authority

§ [24.2-103](#) of the Code of Virginia.

## 6.8 ELECT §24.2-671.2 (D) Form: Request for Risk Limiting Audit



★ VIRGINIA ★  
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

### REQUEST FOR RISK LIMITING AUDIT

#### PURPOSE OF THIS FORM

Under Code of Virginia § 24.2-671.2(D), “A local electoral board may request that the State Board approve the conduct of a Risk Limiting Audit for a contested race within the local electoral board’s jurisdiction.” The local electoral board may request an audit of such a race by completing and submitting this form to their Election Services Registrar Liaison prior to the SBE meeting to choose races to audit.

#### COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

**Locality:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Public Meeting:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contested Race:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Town Name/District Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of RLA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of RLA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preliminary Vote Totals:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate A:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate B:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate C (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate D (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

**On the lines below, please include any other relevant information:**

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*\*ELECT reserves the right to ask additional questions on behalf of the SBE, if necessary.*

*\*\*Please submit a form for each contested race your locality is requesting to have audited.*

We, the members of the electoral board, request an audit of the above contested race(s) within our jurisdiction:

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Printed name of Chairperson	Signature	Date
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Printed name of Vice-Chairperson	Signature	Date
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Printed name of Secretary	Signature	Date
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*If your audit request is approved by the SBE, then the Board may grant an extension of up-to two weeks to your certification deadline under 24.2-671 of the Code of Virginia for the audited race.*

## 6.9 Key Dates for the 2022 Risk Limiting Audit

