

## **After-Action Report Board Overview**

During the Election, the District of Columbia Board of Elections (“DCBOE”) engaged Election Workers at Vote Centers, temporary and full-time staff at headquarters, and additional support at the Operations Center in order to support DC’s election efforts. Many of these people join DCBOE election after election and their institutional knowledge and commitment to the election process in DC are significant assets to DCBOE’s work.

### **Vote Centers and Mail Ballot Drop Boxes:**

To comply with the Elections Modernization Amendment Act of 2022, DCBOE operated 25 Early Vote Centers and 75 Election Day Vote Centers instead of precinct-based polling places for the Election. The Vote Center model allows voters to vote at any Vote Center, regardless of the residential address. In-person voters could choose to cast their ballot using a traditional ballot or vote using an electronic ballot marking device. DCBOE uses Ballot-On-Demand (BOD) technology to generate ballots based on a voter’s registration address once they arrive for in-person voting. In addition, DCBOE utilized 55 Mail Ballot Drop Boxes. These boxes opened on October 11, 2024, and allowed voters to drop off their mail-in ballots securely until 8:00 pm on Election Day.

### **Mail-in Balloting:**

During the Election, all registered voters (464,502 in total) in the District of Columbia were mailed a ballot. Overall, 173,561 (52.77%) of voters utilized a mail-in ballot.

There was a decline in undeliverable mail-in ballots in the Election, from approximately 87,000 ballots during the 2022 General Election to approximately 39,000 ballots in 2024. Specifically, half of the undeliverable ballots in 2024 were voters needing address changes. DCBOE is following up with these ballots as part of its annual list maintenance (canvass) process, which helps DCBOE maintain an accurate voter roll.

During the upcoming off-election cycle, DCBOE will engage in voter roll list maintenance to update the voter registration database. This will include removing deceased voters, updating addresses for voters who have moved, and verifying the residential addresses of voters who did not participate in the Election. In the first quarter of 2025, DCBOE will mail approximately 135,000 canvass postcards to help facilitate this process.

As in 2022, voters could use BallotTrax to track the status of their mail-in ballot.

### **Election Worker Division:**

During the Election, DCBOE experienced a significant increase in requests to serve as Election Workers. DCBOE trained more than 2,000 Election Workers in eight weeks, outpacing the initial target of training 2,000 Election Workers in 10 weeks. This achievement allowed DCBOE to fill positions at all 75 Vote Centers. Consequently, Site Coordinators received their final staffing lists earlier than expected, allowing them to be fully aware of the staff assigned to their Vote Centers on Election Day.

Overall, 2,152 Adult Election Workers and 102 Student Election Workers attended training classes. During Early Voting, DCBOE deployed 1,369 Election Workers, which included both adult and student workers. On Election Day, DCBOE deployed 1,071 Election Workers, including 1,003 Adult Election Workers and 68 student workers.

**Vote Center Site Coordinator Recruitment:**

DCBOE received notice that several veteran Site Coordinators would not return after the 2024 election cycle. In response, DCBOE recruited new Site Coordinators to work alongside these retiring veterans. These newly recruited Site Coordinators received expert guidance and training that will ensure they are well-prepared to manage their own Vote Center in future elections.

**Vote Center Site Coordinator Feedback:**

At the end of each Election cycle, DCBOE invites all Site Coordinators to attend a debriefing session. DCBOE organizes feedback sessions that provide a platform for all Site Coordinators to share their insights and experiences. During these sessions, Site Coordinators are encouraged to offer feedback and constructive criticism based on their experiences.

During the debriefing meetings held in December 2024, Site Coordinators expressed gratitude to DCBOE for considering several of their recommendations and suggestions from previous elections. They highlighted several positive changes that were implemented for the Election. These improvements included a reduction in the number of supplies sent to the Vote Centers, more frequent updates through text messages and calls from call center staff, and a quicker replacement of staff on an as-needed basis. The Site Coordinators also appreciated the updates to the Vote Center Operations Manual and the addition of an online training component.

To see additional feedback from Site Coordinators, please view attachment #3.

**Public Awareness Campaigns:**

During the Election, DCBOE executed a robust communications plan to inform voters about voter registration with an emphasis on checking and updating their registration, Mail Ballot

Drop Boxes, Early Voting, and Election Day operations. DCBOE's "Ready, Set, Vote" campaign shared valuable election-related information with DC residents, made sure DC residents were aware of election processes and procedures, and established DCBOE as the trusted source for District elections. Communications activities included radio, TV, print, and digital ads, multiple postcard mailings, email notifications, social media posts across multiple platforms, print materials, press outreach, public roundtables, public presentations, and other voter education outreach. DCBOE also mailed a Voter Guide to every District of Columbia household and created brochures for targeted groups including seniors, returning citizens, and college students. In addition, DCBOE distributed palm cards to community members and placed yard signs with QR codes throughout the District of Columbia to provide election information to voters.

Specifically, DCBOE:

- Utilized various forms of Metro advertising between September 23 and November 5, including 62 geofencing/digital ads, 40 bus exterior ads, 90 bus tail advertisements, and 24 Metro live boards;
- Ran 40 print ads in collaboration with five different print newspapers (Washington Informer Newspaper, Hill Rag/East of the River Newspapers, El Tiempo Latino Newspaper, Washington Blade Newspaper, and Georgetown Newspaper);
- Created and ran 30-second advertisements in both English and Spanish;
- Ran 614 television ads across local news, 24/7 news, and other cable channels during high-watch volume shows and entertainment programming;
- Aired 97 radio spots and digital advertisements on WPGC-FM, WTOP-FM, and WPRS-FM/Praise;
- Ran 13 online ads with Washington City Paper;
- Distributed 3,000 yard signs, 375,000 Voter Guides, and palm cards with election information;
- Sent two informational postcards to registered voters and a postcard to eligible but unregistered DC residents;
- Facilitated 200+ press interviews, including a large delegation of international media on Election Day and during Early Voting; and,
- Garnered 296,863 media impressions through social media channels from June 14 until December 31, 2024 including X, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok. This is a 138% increase as compared to the Primary Election time period (January 1 to June 13, 2024).

These multiple touch points allowed DC residents to learn about election information in the communications spaces most accessible to them.

**Voter Education and Outreach:**

The DCBOE’s Voter Education and Outreach Division (VEOD) is committed to providing opportunities for DC residents to register, vote, and learn about the voting process. Proactive and inclusive voter outreach increase the meaningful participation of all eligible voters. To increase voter registration among residents in marginalized and vulnerable communities and groups, DCBOE engages in outreach and education efforts to increase awareness, perception, and confidence among all residents.

Ahead of the Election, DCBOE participated in 164 outreach events. Comparatively, DCBOE participated in 97 outreach events before the 2022 General Election. These outreach efforts included in-person and virtual activities. Specific factors contributed to an increase in outreach efforts in 2024 compared to 2022. In addition to this being a Presidential Election, DC had new legislation that required more outreach and new community partnerships.

In February 2023, the DC Council passed the Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2022, giving non-citizen DC residents the right to vote in local elections. DCBOE targeted multi-ethnic and multi-lingual communities to increase outreach and education efforts surrounding the new legislation for non-citizen DC residents. DCBOE focused its efforts on Spanish-speaking neighborhoods and building stronger partnerships with community organizations that provide services to multi-ethnic populations, such as Mary’s Center, the DC Bar Legal Clinic, Carlos Rosario Public Charter School, and Naturalization Ceremonies.

DCBOE collaborated with various community groups and municipal partners to ensure every eligible voter had an opportunity to register and vote in the Election. DCBOE strengthened its existing partnerships with the DC Department of Aging and Community Living, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, retirement communities, and senior residential buildings by engaging District seniors and registering them to vote. In addition, DCBOE collaborated with high schools to engage and educate first-time voters about voter registration, voting, and District of Columbia elections. Below is a list of high school outreach events facilitated before the Election:

School Name	Ward	Date
Thurgood Marshall Academy 2427 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, SE	8	August 20, 2024
Friendship Technology Prep Academy	8	September 4, 2024

2705 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE		
Maya Angelou School 5600 E Capitol Street, NE	7	September 13, 2024
The Next Step PCS 3047 15 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW	1	September 16, 2024
Carlos Rosario International PCS 1100 Harvard Street, NW	1	September 16, 2024
Washington Latin PCS 5200 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street, NW	4	September 16, 2024
Carlos Rosario International PCS 1100 Harvard Street, NW	1	September 16, 2024
Carlos Rosario International PCS 514 V Street, NE	1	September 17, 2024
Friendship Technology Prep Academy 2705 Martin Luther King Avenue, SE	8	September 17, 2024
Richard Wright PCS 475 School Street, SW	4	September 19, 2024
Cesar Chavez PCS 3701 Hayes Street, NE	7	September 20, 2024
Washington Leadership Academy	5	September 21, 2024

3015 4th Street, NE		
IDEA PCS 1027 45th Street, NE	7	September 24, 2024
The PCS 3047 15 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW	1	September 30, 2024
SEED PCS 4300 C Street SE	7	September 30, 2024
Richard Wright PCS 475 School Street, SW	6	October 1, 2024
Columbia Heights Education Campus 3101 16th Street, NW	1	October 17, 2024
Friendship Collegiate Academy 4095 Minnesota Avenue, NE	7	October 27, 2024

DCBOE also facilitated voter education and outreach efforts at 16 shelters and facilities for unhoused individuals or those without a permanent residential address. Some of these organizations included Catholic Charities (East Men’s Shelter, Adam’s Place, Harriet Tubman Women’s Shelter, and New York Avenue’s Men’s Shelter), DC Coalition for the Homeless, So Others Might Eat (SOME), and Calvary Women’s Services.

**Community Partnerships:**

During the 2024 Election cycle, VEOD established many new community partnerships to strengthen relationships with District residents and to facilitate voter registration services throughout the city. By collaborating with a diverse group of partners, VEOD advanced voter education, increased voter confidence, boosted election awareness, and expanded voter engagement in an impactful manner. Below is a list of VEOD’s 2024 new community partners:

- DC National Army Guard

- Davis Boxing Promotions
- N Street Village
- Smart from the Start
- Capitol Classics
- Day of Play at RFK
- El Tamarindo Restaurant
- Harriet Tubman Women’s Shelter
- St. Josephine’s Women’s Shelter
- A Taste of the DMV Festival
- A Wider Circle
- Black Nurses Rock – DMV Chapter
- Building Bridges Across the River (THEARC)
- DC Bar
- National Hand Dance Association
- Hope and a Home
- Christ House

**Adopt-A-Vote Center (AAVC):**

During the Election, VEOD and the Election Worker Division actively engaged 12 organizations in DCBOE’s Adopt-A-Vote Center (AAVC) program. This program aimed to mobilize civic organizations, fraternities, sororities, and other community groups. Each participating organization provided 10 or more dedicated members to serve in various roles as Election Workers on Election Day, ensuring smooth and efficient operations at Vote Centers.

Post-election, VEOD developed and distributed an outreach survey to participating groups and organizations in the AAVC program. The survey was intended to obtain feedback on the participants’ overall experience. It sought information on communication from VEOD and the Election Worker Division and their expectations and experience. It also provided space for individuals to share additional comments and suggestions. The results of the survey were favorable and positive. VEOD received an “excellent” in all categories.

To learn more about DCBOE’s 2024 Voter Education and Outreach activities, see attachment #6.

**Election Security:**

The safety and security of elections in the District of Columbia was a high priority in 2024. DCBOE employed rigorous protocols to safeguard the integrity of the Election, including advanced cybersecurity measures to protect voter registration systems, ballot tabulation equipment, and infrastructure from cyber threats.

To ensure the physical safety of Election Workers and staff, DCBOE hired additional security for headquarters and deployed increased security at Vote Centers. DCBOE maintained security

relationships with both Homeland Security and the DC Metropolitan Police Department, which supported the physical safety of voters and staff on Election Day, along with the safe delivery and protection of paper ballots and electronic voting results. On Election Day, MPD escorts delivered paper ballots and electronic voting results to their respective counting locations. Mail Ballot Drop boxes were located in high traffic, visible areas near public libraries.

For security threat preparedness, DCBOE partnered with law enforcement agencies and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) and developed contingency plans for physical and cyber threats. This included tabletop exercises to simulate different threats.

### **Non-citizen Voting:**

In 2024, qualified non-citizen DC residents could vote in local (non-federal) elections, per the [Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2022](#). Specifically, under District of Columbia law, non-citizen DC residents can vote in District of Columbia elections held for the offices of Mayor, Attorney General, member(s) of the DC Council, member(s) of the State Board of Education, or Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner(s), and on initiative, referendum, recall, and charter amendment measures that appear on District of Columbia ballots. During the Election, 480 non-citizen DC residents cast ballots in local races.

During the 2024 Election cycle, DCBOE facilitated voter registration outreach and voter education activities to inform non-citizen DC residents of their ability to register to vote and cast ballots in DC's local elections. This included hiring a bilingual public affairs specialist to assist with outreach, translating voter registration forms and documents into languages other than English, and partnering with groups that served non-citizens for voter registration events.

### **Mail-in Ballot Processing:**

During the Election, DCBOE moved the mail-ballot processing to a new location. As such, DCBOE encountered a short ballot processing delay because of the timing of the negotiation process to acquire the new space. DCBOE notified voters about the delay in processing through social media, on DCBOE's website, and through messages on BallotTrax. This processing delay did not affect ballot counting.

### **Election Day Results:**

Due to substantial in-person voting on Election Day, some Vote Centers experienced lines when the polls closed at 8:00 pm. DCBOE did not release the preliminary election results until the lines were cleared. This was communicated to the public through press reports, posts on DCBOE's website, and social media postings. The first set of preliminary results was released at approximately 10:00 pm on Election Night.



**Security on Election Day:**

On Election Day, a security incident occurred at the MLK Library that resulted in the temporary closure of the Mail Ballot Drop Box there and prevented voters from entering or exiting the Vote Center. DCBOE's relationships with Homeland Security and the DC Metropolitan Police Department allowed for a quick resolution of the issue. In addition, DCBOE notified voters on social media about the temporary closure and subsequent reopening.

**Voting Equipment:**

There were no widespread problems with voting equipment. Some voters reported difficulties with the Ballot Marking Devices (BMD), which are touchscreen machines designed to allow voters to select their preferred candidates electronically. Some individuals expressed frustration with touch screen recognition delays. This situation was resolved by having Vote Center technicians available to swiftly recalibrate these devices, ensuring they functioned correctly.

In addition to the challenges with the BMDs, several DS200- ballot tabulation machines experienced paper jams. These incidents required Vote Center technicians to intervene by manually clearing the jams or replacing the machines entirely. Addressing these technical issues promptly ensured the efficiency of the voting process.

**Address Changes and Updates at Vote Centers:**

Due to the rapid growth in DC, Election Workers faced some challenges during in-person voting, such as updating addresses in the voter roll database. With the rapid construction of new apartment buildings, condominiums, and homes simultaneously in various areas, DCBOE did not always have updated address information regarding some of the unfinished properties, which delayed the voting process for some new residents.

**Wait Times for Same-Day Voter Registration at Vote Centers:**

The increased number of address changes and voter updates impacted the workflow of Registration Clerks at the Vote Centers, requiring additional assistance to process some same-day registration voters. The Clerks required additional support from their Site Coordinator, who had to contact specific staff members at DCBOE to update or add voter addresses so voters could cast their ballots. Site Coordinators reported they found it easy to manage the process over the phone with staff members.

**Wi-Fi Connectivity in Vote Centers:**

Some Vote Centers faced Wi-Fi connectivity challenges, resulting in delays in the sign-in and sign-out processes for Election Workers. To address this, additional cradle points were added,

which significantly improved connectivity and efficiency. These proactive measures will help ensure better functionality in future elections.

#### **International Watchers and Observers on Election Day:**

The Election garnered widespread international attention, and it was monitored by observers from various nations. The District of Columbia experienced an unprecedented influx of visitors from around the globe, many of whom were eager to witness the voting process firsthand. Site Coordinators faced the challenging task of managing Vote Centers and responding to the inquiries of international visitors. The need to effectively balance these competing demands highlighted the importance of providing adequate training to ensure that both the electoral process and the interests of observers were handled smoothly and efficiently.

#### **Needs for Upcoming Election Cycles:**

DCBOE has already begun planning for upcoming election cycles. As part of this process, it has identified two important needs: the replacement of aging election equipment and upgrading its website.

DCBOE is concerned about the age of DC's election equipment, which heightens cybersecurity vulnerabilities and complicates operations. DCBOE's current poll books need to be replaced due to compatibility issues with upcoming software updates.

In addition to voting equipment updates, DCBOE is focused on upgrading its website platform to improve efficiency and strengthen security. A modernized, secure platform would streamline workflows, alleviate bottlenecks in processing voter applications, and provide a more accessible experience for voters. Enhanced website security features are essential to safeguard voter data and protect against cyber threats.

#### **In Memoriam:**

This Election cycle is dedicated to two important members of the DCBOE family that we lost in 2024: Robert "Reds" Hunter and Mike Gill. We will always hold them in our memories.