



# 2008 November General Election Recounts

Office of the Secretary of State

Joanie Deutsch  
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## State Law

Counties certified election results for the November 4, 2008 General Election on November 25, 2008. ([RCW 29A.60.190](#))

The Office of the Secretary of State certified statewide election results for the November 4, 2008 General Election on December 4, 2008. ([RCW 29A.60.250](#))

A mandatory machine recount is conducted if the difference between the candidates is less than one half of one percent and also less than 2,000 votes. ([RCW 29A.64.021](#))

A manual recount is conducted in a statewide race if the difference between the candidates is less than one quarter of one percent and also less than 1,000 votes. ([RCW 29A.64.021](#))

In regional and local offices a manual recount is conducted if the difference between the candidates is less than 150 votes and one quarter of one percent. ([RCW 29A.64.021](#))

A recount may be requested by any candidate or officer of a political party for whom votes were cast.

The State reimburses the counties for mandatory recounts for State Measures. The counties pay for all other mandatory recounts. In the case of a requested recount, the individual or group who makes the request pays for the recount unless the outcome is reversed, and then the county pays.

After the recount has been conducted, the County Canvassing Boards certify the results of the recount by submitting an amended abstract of votes.

## Recount Terms

**Overvote:** An overvote occurs when the number of choices selected by a voter in a contest is more than the maximum number of selections allowed.

**Undervote:** An undervote occurs when the number of choices selected by a voter in a contest is less than the maximum number allowed for the contest or when no selection is made for a single choice contest.

**Write-in:** For any office at any election, any voter may write in on the ballot the name of any person for an office who has filed as a write-in candidate for the office.

## Clark County Commissioner District 1

After initial certification of the county's General Election results on November 25, 2008, the Clark County Commissioner District 1 race between candidates Tom Mielke and Pam Brokaw fell into mandatory machine recount range with 207 votes separating the two candidates, equaling a difference of 0.25 percent. Mielke received a total of 84,306 votes and Brokaw received a total of 84,099.

The machine recount began on December 9, 2008. Brokaw received a total of 84,100 votes, one vote more than the original count. Mielke received a total of 84,309 votes, an addition of three votes. A total of 212 write-ins, 7 overvotes, and 16,070 undervotes were identified. The total number of ballots cast for this race equaled 168,621.

One overvote was recorded incorrectly by human error, that vote was given to Brokaw. Three undervotes were changed because the machine could not read the voters' marks, all three went to Mielke.

## Island County Commissioner District 2

After initial certification of the county's General Election results on November 25, 2008, the Island County Commissioner District 2 race between candidates Angie Homola and William (Mac) McDowell fell into manual recount range with 60 votes separating the two candidates, equaling a difference of 0.16 percent. Homola received a total of 19,222 votes and McDowell received a total of 19,162.

The hand recount began on December 1, 2008. McDowell received a total of 19,156 votes, six fewer than the original count. Homola received a total of 19,218 votes, two less than the original count. A total of 4,223 votes consisted of undervotes and write-in votes. The total number of ballots cast for this race equaled 42,597.

Differences between the original tally and the recount occurred because the voters marked their selections outside of the response positions on the ballot, which originally read as an undervote. This appears to be an error in how the voter marked the ballot.

## San Juan County Council District 4

After initial certification of the county's General Election results on November 25, 2008, the San Juan County Council District 4 race between candidates Mindy Kayl and Richard Fralick was requested for a hand recount by Kayl. Fralick received 947 votes and Kayl received 827, with 12 write-in votes and 136 undervotes.

The hand recount began on December 4, 2008. The recount included only 1,833 ballots cast on Orcas Island. Fralick received 931 votes and Kayl received 769. A total of 133 write-ins and undervotes were identified. The recount results matched the original results.

## Snohomish County Legislative District 44, Representative Position 2

After initial certification of the county's General Election results on November 25, 2008, Snohomish County's Legislative District 44, Representative Position 2 race between candidates Liz Loomis and Mike Hope fell into manual recount range with 118 votes separating the two candidates, equaling a difference of 0.17 percent. Loomis received a total of 34,319 votes and Hope received a total of 34,437.

The hand recount began on December 4, 2008. Loomis received a total of 34,353 votes, a difference of an additional 34 votes. Hope received a total of 34,487 votes, a difference of an additional 50 votes. A total of 63 write-ins, 6 overvotes, and 4,687 undervotes were identified. The total number of ballots cast for this race equaled 68,903.

It appears that most of the changes in the vote totals were because voters had incomplete marks or light marks on their ballots, picked up as undervotes by the tabulator. Many write-ins were actually undervotes because voters marked the write-in arrow, but did not put any name in the write-in box. These were changed to undervotes with the recount. Some voters put the candidate's name in the write-in box and were changed to a vote for the candidate with the recount.

## Spokane County Legislative District 6, Representative Position 2

After initial certification of the county's General Election results on November 25, 2008, Spokane County's Legislative District 6, Representative Position 2 race between candidates John E. Ahern and John F. Driscoll fell into manual recount range with 74 votes separating the two candidates, equaling a difference of 0.11 percent. Ahern received a total of 35,033 votes and Driscoll received a total of 35,107.

The hand recount began on December 4, 2008. Driscoll received a total of 35,106 votes, one vote less than the original count. Ahern received a total of 35,034 votes, an addition of one vote. The vote total of 75,947 did not change. Undervotes and overvotes also did not change.

It appears human error was the cause of the discrepancy when rerunning a jammed ballot. The county believes the jammed ballot was an Ahern vote and the ballot next to it, a Driscoll vote, was incorrectly rerun.