

# EXHIBIT A

**Manual Recount Procedures  
Most Frequently Asked Questions  
Secretary of State**

**Q: What is a manual recount?**

A manual count is the process of hand counting ballots.

Most counties in Washington have conducted manual recounts in local elections, but this is the first statewide manual recount.

Manual recounts are typically conducted by two or three member counting boards, but the actual method varies from county to county.

King County, for example, is proposing 80 counting boards consisting of three members each. Each board would have 1 Republican, 1 Democrat, and 1 King County staff member. King County has requested that each party nominate 80 party members for these assignments. In addition, parties are entitled to have official observers.

Ballots are typically sorted into precincts. Each counting board then proceeds to place each precinct's ballots into separate stacks for each candidate and counts each stack to determine the results for that precinct.

The totals from each counting board are combined to determine the final results.

**Q: What does "canvassing" ballots mean and how does it differ from "counting" ballots?**

Counting ballots is the process of tabulating ballots either by machine or by hand.

Canvassing is a broader term that includes the process of examining ballots to determine matters such as the voter's intent.

The method of voting varies from county to county. Votes are registered by filling in ovals, connecting arrows, or punching out chads.

More than 99% of all voters properly mark their ballot such that no analysis is needed. The tabulating machine will properly count these votes.

Fewer than 1% of voters do not follow instructions and make other marks on the ballot that the machine is not able to tabulate. Examples of these situations in a county where the voter fills in ovals are as follows.

A voter may fill in the oval for Chris Gregoire and also fill in the oval for a write-in. In the write-in space, the voter may then write the name Chris Gregoire. The machine will record that as an "overvote" and not record a vote for Chris Gregoire. Upon hand inspection, the voter's intent will be discovered, and a ballot will be duplicated so the tabulating machine can read that vote for Chris Gregoire.

Some voters may underscore, circle, or check candidates on the ballot instead of filling in the oval. The tabulating machine will not record a vote in those instances. Upon hand inspection, if the voter's marks evidence a clear and discernible pattern, votes will be reported consistent with that voter intent.

Some voters may properly fill in the oval, but then inadvertently draw a line that passes through another oval. The machine may record that as an "overvote" but on hand inspection examination voter intent may be determined.

**Q: What rules do counties use in determining voter intent on a ballot where the voter has not followed instructions?**

After the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Bush v. Gore, Washington promulgated statewide regulations to guide county decisions on "what constitutes a vote." These include standards relating to the infamous "hanging chads" in punch card counties as well as various markings on ballots in optical scan counties.

Typically, election workers make determinations in straightforward situations regarding voter intent in consultation with trained supervisors. Questions are referred to the county's three member canvassing board for decision.

Each county's canvassing board consists of the County Auditor (in King County, the Manager of Records, Elections, and Licensing), Prosecuting Attorney and chair of the County Council or Commission, or their designees. Canvassing Board decisions are made in an open public meeting with observers present and these decisions are the final say on what constitutes a vote.

**Q: Will the ballots be "canvassed" in a manual recount?**

At the point of a manual recount, the vast majority of ballots have already been canvassed in that the ballot has been individually examined and a determination made regarding the voter's intent and other matters.

Most canvassing decisions are made in the original count. Additional canvassing decisions are made in the machine recount when some ballots not previously hand inspected are examined for the first time.

At the point of a manual recount, all ballots should have been hand inspected and canvassing board decisions have been made.

With over 2.8 million individual ballots involved, however, the possibility that election workers hand counting ballots will find markings or situations on ballots that were not previously canvassed is possible.

In these instances, the same process and standards used in the original count and machine recount will be used to determine issues such as voter intent, and the ballot will be processed according to that determination.

**Q: In a manual recount, will the counties revisit prior canvassing decisions?**

As a general matter, counties will not revisit prior canvassing decisions in the manual recount.

The statutes require a "recount," not a "re-canvass" of the election.

Canvassing boards have made literally thousands of decisions already regarding signature verification and voter intent on ballots. These decisions were made in the original count and in the machine recount.

These prior decisions of the canvassing boards will be the basis for the manual recount.

Two exceptions exist to this general rule.

First, if a ballot is discovered in the hand recount that presents issues such as voter intent not previously resolved, that ballot will be "canvassed" to determine voter intent under the same standards and process used in the original count and machine recount.

Second, any canvassing board at any time in the original count, machine recount, or manual recount may, upon finding that a discrepancy or inconsistency exists, direct a re-canvass of any necessary portion of the ballots.

**Q: Will the rules or standards change in a manual recount?**

No. Other than counting the ballots by hand, the standards and rules for canvassing and counting ballots will remain the same throughout the entire election process.

A fundamental bedrock principle of election administration is that the rules should not be changed in the middle of an election.

If irregularities, discrepancies, or errors are discovered, these must be resolved by the existing rules and standards in place for the election that are being uniformly observed statewide.