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DIRECTIVE 2015-12

August 21, 2015

To: All County Boards of Elections
Directors, Deputy Directors, and Board Members

Re: Verifying the Accuracy of District Relationships and Establishing the Order of Offices
and Issues for General Election Ballot

SUMMARY

This Directive provides instructions to the boards of elections for verifying the accuracy of district relationships before programming the central tabulating system.

The Directive also provides the order of offices and questions and issues that may appear on the ballot for the November 3, 2015 General Election.

INSTRUCTIONS

I. VERIFYING DISTRICT RELATIONSHIPS

Before programming any aspect of the central tabulating system for general election held on November 3, 2015, the boards of elections must verify the accuracy of district relationships in the central tabulating system against the county's voter registration system. This is to ensure that each voter receives the correct ballot style (i.e., the correct combination of candidate offices and issues) based upon that voter's residential address.

As a part of the review for accuracy of district relationships between the county's voter registration system and its tabulating system, but no later than October 6, 2015, the board should also ensure that the Secretary of State's precinct codes (three alphabet letters) are accurate in the tabulating system and, if applicable, the county's voter registration system and that the precinct names correspond between the two systems.

Note: It is also imperative that a board of elections upload to the statewide voter registration database (SWVRD) any changes to district relationships (including wards and precincts) that have been made locally in the county's voter registration system (VRS). After the board has completed all changes in the county VRS, but no later than October 6, 2015, the board must send a complete list of the district(s)

that had changes to Robin Fields at swvrd@ohiosecretaryofstate.gov. Include the name and the state code associated with each district so the names can be corrected in the SWVRD. The board should spot-check at least one voter record for each precinct in the SWVRD against the county's VRS.

II. ORDER OF OFFICES AND ISSUES

A. Order of Offices

If your county has partisan and nonpartisan city and village offices, please pay particular attention to the order of offices for each precinct. The ballot order must have the partisan offices listed first, followed by Judge of Municipal Court and Clerk of Municipal Court, which are followed by the other nonpartisan offices.

The order of offices for the November 3, 2015 General Election shall be as follows:¹

1. Partisan City Offices

- a. Mayor
- b. President of Council
- c. Auditor
- d. Treasurer
- e. Director of Law
- f. Member of Council at Large
- g. Member of Council - Ward

2. Partisan Village Offices

- a. Mayor
- b. Clerk-Treasurer
- c. Clerk
- d. Treasurer
- e. Member of Council
- f. Member of Board of Trustees of Public Affairs

3. Nonpartisan Offices

- a. Judge of Municipal Court
- b. Clerk of Municipal Court
- c. City Offices (order of offices same as above)
- d. Village Offices (order of offices same as above)
- e. Township Trustees
- f. Township Fiscal Officer
- g. Member of Governing Board of Educational Service Center
- h. Member of Board of Education (City, Local and Exempted Village)

¹ R.C. 3505.03; .04.

Note: **Statutory Municipalities vs. Home Rule Municipalities**

A statutory municipal corporation is a city or village that is governed by the general laws of Ohio (i.e., the Revised Code of Ohio). In comparison, a municipal corporation that has adopted a form of limited home rule may have adopted provisions governing elections for municipal offices or issues that differ from general statutory provisions. If specific home rule provisions relating to elections cannot be harmonized with the statutory provisions, the home rule provisions will control elections of the home rule municipality.

If a city or village has adopted a charter or one of the three alternate forms of home rule government set forth in Revised Code Chapter 705 (i.e., commission plan, city manager plan, or federal plan), you must refer to the charter or appropriate provisions of R.C. Chapter 705 to determine the following: what officers are to be elected; proper office titles; the term of each office to be elected; and the form of the ballot, if such ballot is prescribed by charter.

Questions about the applicability or implementation of home rule provisions should be directed to the municipal corporation's legal counsel (i.e., City Attorney, Director of Law).

B. Questions and Issues Ballot

The order of ballot questions and issues the November 3, 2015 General Election shall be as follows:²

- State
- Township
- Schools and other districts
- County
- Municipal

Except for the order of statewide issues, each board of elections may determine the specific order in which the questions/issues within each group are placed on the ballot in that county, however, a board should adopt a consistent method for doing so from election to election (i.e., ordered alphabetically or by date filed, etc.). Although not required by state law, numbering questions and issues is a recommended practice.

² R.C. 3505.06.

When numbering local issues, the board must number local issues in succession with any statewide ballot issues. Since there are three statewide ballot issues, the board may begin the numbering of its local issues with the number four.

Absentee ballots must contain identical ordering of issues as regular ballots within the ordering of groups above.

Boards of elections must review the appropriate sections of the Ohio Revised Code, local charter (if applicable), and the [Questions and Issues Handbook](#) for ballot language and formats that are not on the Official Questions and Issues Ballot.

If you have any questions regarding this Directive, please contact the Secretary of State's elections counsel assigned to your county at (614) 466-2585.

Sincerely,


Jon Husted