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DIRECTIVE 2016-15

May 25, 2016

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

Re: Voting System Battery & Server Maintenance

SUMMARY

Each county board of elections must properly maintain its voting equipment and inspect and replace regularly any batteries to ensure a fully functioning inventory of machines and memory cards for use on Election Day.

As with all information technology (IT) systems, components require regular maintenance and periodic upgrade through replacement. As a part of this common IT routine, a server, the workhorse component of any IT system, should be replaced after an extended period of use to reduce the potential for issues during critical periods.

INSTRUCTIONS

Server Maintenance

Several boards of elections that are running central servers installed in 2005 and 2006 have experienced intermittent problems associated with aging equipment. These problems have not at any time jeopardized the accurate recording or tabulating of any ballot, as these counties have continued to properly maintain their systems and many have adequate onsite backup systems.

As instructed in 2014, each board of elections must 1) consult with its voting system vendor and local government IT personnel and 2) develop a schedule for replacing critical election IT system components, including its voting system's central server. It is considered a recommended best practice in IT administration that equipment such as central servers should be replaced every five to seven years. If the primary central server and related components have been in use since at least the 2006 general election, or are outside of the board's established schedule, the board of elections should replace that server and all related components. Following the replacement of the server, the board should administer acceptance testing on all equipment replaced to ensure proper functionality.

Boards must ensure that all systems replaced are using the most recently certified components, systems, and configurations as authorized by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission and the Ohio Board of Voting Machine Examiners.

Battery Testing, Maintenance, and Replacement

Each county board of elections is directed to complete the following **no later than August 15, 2016**:

- Inspect (and replace if necessary) all batteries contained within its voting system. This includes, but is not limited to, internal batteries (backup power source), UPS battery (external backup power source), PEB batteries, and internal motherboard batteries.
- Test the backup battery life of the system. This can be done by fully charging the system, unplugging the system, and determining if it remains powered on for two or more hours. Most systems should run for greater than the two hour requirement, because they will not be in use during this time period. If a system shuts down prior to the two hour timeframe, you should work with your maintenance provider to replace your backup power source.
- Consider your county's ability to supply a backup power source to one or more polling locations in the event of a long-term power failure.

Each county board of elections is directed to complete the following **no later than September 1, 2016**:

- Change all replaceable memory card batteries (e.g., M100 PCMCIA batteries, AccuVote OS Memory Card). This should be a routine practice each year before an election in order to ensure cards do not fail during the election.
- Determine whether it is necessary to replace all M100 PCMCIA cards that are in use and have been purchased prior to 2012. The replacement cards **MUST** meet manufacturer specifications. Contact your maintenance provider for additional information.
- Have at least 25% additional M100 PCMCIA cards than are used on Election Day on hand as backups.

Finally, prior to Election Day, remember to fully charge all equipment. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for this process.

If you should have any questions regarding this Directive please contact Matthew Tlachac at mtlachac@OhioSecretaryofState.gov.

Sincerely,


Jon Husted