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**DIRECTIVE 2017-18**

August 29, 2017

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

Re: Ballots for November 7, 2017 General Election

**SUMMARY**

This Directive provides the certified form of the official ballot to be used in the November 7, 2017 General Election. **This form contains the exact ballot language that must be used for the two statewide issues on all ballots.**

Please note that, in lieu of issuing a separate Directive with specific details covering ballot layout, proofing, and quantities, the Secretary of State's Office is issuing only this Directive, which must be used in conjunction with [Chapter 4](#) (Ballots) of the Election Official Manual (EOM) when preparing ballots for this election. [Chapter 4](#) of the EOM provides specific instructions on the following subjects:

- Ballot format (e.g., headings, date of election and facsimile signatures of board members, etc.);
- Voter instructions;
- Ballot stubs;
- Candidate guidelines (e.g., office headings, candidate names, restrictions, political party, rotation, etc.);
- Questions and issues guidelines;
- Ballot proofs;
- Overlaps;
- Bid requirements;
- Ballot quantities;
- Logic and accuracy testing; and
- Public test.

**I. VERIFYING DISTRICT RELATIONSHIPS**

Before programming any aspect of the central tabulating system for the November 7, 2017 General Election, 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 September 15, 2017, the board also must ensure that 1) the Secretary of State's precinct codes (three alphabet letters) are accurate in the tabulating system and, if appropriate, the county's voter registration system; and 2) the precinct names correspond between the two systems.

**Note:** It also is 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 September 15, 2017, the board must send a complete list of the district(s) that had changes to Robin Fields at [swvrd@ohiosecretaryofstate.gov](mailto:swvrd@ohiosecretaryofstate.gov). Be sure to include the name and the state code associated with each district so the names can be corrected in the SWVRD.

The board must spot-check at least one voter record for each precinct in the SWVRD against the county's VRS.

## II. ORDER OF OFFICES AND ISSUES

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 the Municipal Court and Clerk of Municipal Court, which are followed by the other nonpartisan offices. The names of all candidates, who have not withdrawn pursuant to R.C. 3513.30, must be arranged, rotated, and printed upon the ballot in accordance with the provisions of Ohio Revised Code Chapters 3505, 3506, and 3513 and [Chapter 4](#) of the EOM.

Offices for which candidates may be elected are presented on the ballot first, followed by the questions and issues.

### A. Order of Offices

The order of offices for the November 7, 2017 General Election shall be as follows<sup>1</sup>:

#### 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)

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 3505.03; .04.

## 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 (if a vacancy occurred that requires an unexpired term election)
- g. Member of Governing Board of Educational Service Center
- h. Member of Board of Education (City, Local and Exempted Village)

If there is both a full and an unexpired term for the same office, place the full term first followed by the unexpired term.

### **Note: Statutory Municipalities v. Home Rule Municipalities**

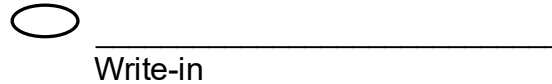
A statutory municipal corporation is a city or village that is governed by the general laws of Ohio (i.e., the Revised Code of Ohio). In comparison, a municipal corporation that has adopted a form of limited home rule may have adopted provisions governing elections for municipal offices or issues that 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 offices 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).

#### 4. Write-In Vote Blank Spaces<sup>2</sup>

A write-in space must be provided on the ballot for every office for which the board of elections has received a valid declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate.



#### B. Questions and Issues

**The ballot form contains the exact ballot language that must be used for the two statewide issues on all ballots for all voting systems.** The ballot form also contains examples of some of the local questions and issues that may appear on the ballot in your county. Not every category or type of question/issue will appear on every ballot in every county, so please apply as much of the form as is appropriate to the ballots in your county.

Additional instructions on headings, ballot language, and percentage of votes can be found in [Chapter 4](#) of the EOM.

The order of ballot questions and issues for the November 7, 2017 General Election shall be as follows<sup>3</sup>:

1. State
2. County
3. Municipal
4. Township
5. School and other districts

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 method for doing so (i.e., ordered alphabetically or by date filed, etc.). Absentee ballots must contain identical ordering of issues within groups to regular ballots.

Please 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 attached Official Questions and Issues Ballot.

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<sup>2</sup> R.C. 3513.041.

<sup>3</sup> R.C. 3505.06.

### III. ABSENTEE BALLOTS<sup>4</sup>

Each board of elections must have absentee ballots printed and ready for use 45 days before the general election (September 23, 2017) for Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) voters, and by October 11, 2017 regular, non-UOCAVA absentee voters.

A copy of each absentee ballot must be sent to the Secretary of State's Office at least 46 days before the election, by Friday, September 22, 2017. Please send to Serena Henderson at either of the following:

Email: [shenders@ohiosecretaryofstate.gov](mailto:shenders@ohiosecretaryofstate.gov)

Mail: Ohio Secretary of State's Office  
Elections Division  
Attn: Serena Henderson  
P.O. Box 2828  
Columbus, OH 43216

If you have any questions regarding this Directive or [Chapter 4](#) of the EOM, please contact the Secretary of State's elections counsel that is assigned to your county at (614) 466-2585.

Sincerely,

  
Jon Husted

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<sup>4</sup> R.C. 3509.01; R.C. 3511.04.