

# Double Scanning of Ballots and the Need for Reconciliation

## One Person – One Vote

### Verity Vote

The number of ballots cast should never exceed the number of voters who participate in an election—each person should get only one vote. In jurisdictions all around the country, official government records show more ballots counted than voters who participated in elections. Unfortunately, many jurisdictions fail to reconcile these discrepancies.

There are numerous causes of voter deficits, the condition where the number of ballots cast exceeds the number of voters credited with participating in an election. The most frequently documented cause is due to double scanning of ballots. Many people believe that it is impossible for a ballot to be scanned more than once, or for a person to vote twice, but it is a repeatedly documented problem.

#### Four Examples of Double Scanning

Scanning the same batch of ballots through the tabulator more than once creates a situation where there are more ballots counted than voters who vote. This error occurs during tabulation of the mail or absentee ballots that are processed in batches usually consisting of 50-200 ballots.

Below are just four examples of double scanning the same batch of ballots which created a voter deficit. In each of the examples below, government officials confirmed that the “error” occurred.

#### Maricopa County, AZ

Review of the Cast Vote Record (CVR) and ballot images revealed that ballots were scanned twice. Maricopa County Elections Department admitted this audit finding was correct.

After performing this analysis, we found 137 ballots that had the same combination of unique characteristics to another ballot. We then compared the images for these 137 and found that 87 were unique ballots and not a double counted ballot. After further review, it appears that a tabulator operator inadvertently included an already tabulated stack of 50 ballots from a previous batch in a subsequent batch. The two batches are listed below.

- Tabulator ID# 6004, Batch 287, Ballots 1 – 50 (50 ballots correctly scanned)

Maricopa County Elections Department  
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Source: [elections.maricopa.gov/asset](https://elections.maricopa.gov/asset)

## Fulton County, GA

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Review of the CVR and ballot images revealed ballots scanned twice. Fulton County officials declined to comment.

### *Double-Scanning of Ballots*

One of the allegations leading to the General Assembly's request for this review was that ballots were double scanned. As has already been reported, Secretary Investigators substantiated the allegations that two batches totaling almost 200 ballots were double scanned during the initial count of the November 2020 election.<sup>9</sup> As one election expert said, and the Performance Review Board concurs, double-scanning of ballots is "something that should never happen."<sup>10</sup> Contributing

Source: [sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Performance%20Review%20Board%20Report%20on%20Fulton%20County%20Elections%20%281-13-23%29.pdf](https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/Performance%20Review%20Board%20Report%20on%20Fulton%20County%20Elections%20%281-13-23%29.pdf)

## Frederick County, MD

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The Board of Elections in Frederick County had to decertify election results after it was discovered that they had double scanned 96 ballots.

*"The discrepancy — which came to light five days after results were initially certified — showed that there were more votes counted in the race between Keegan-Ayer and Di Cola than there were accepted ballots. Election officials told The Frederick News-Post that 96 ballots were double-scanned due to human error. In addition, officials found, in a folder, four provisional ballots that hadn't been counted."* Source: <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/results-show-di-cola-winning-065100352.html>

While preparing for the recount, the Frederick County Board of Elections discovered a discrepancy in the total number of votes in the certified results and the number of accepted mail-in and provisional ballots. This discovery triggered a further review of the ballots cast in

Source: [elections.maryland.gov/about/meeting\\_materials/September\\_28\\_2022.pdf](https://elections.maryland.gov/about/meeting_materials/September_28_2022.pdf)

## Warren County, NJ

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A random audit in Warren County, NJ found that operator error caused ballots to be scanned twice. The audit included only 2% of mail ballot batches.

In Lopatcong Township – Mail-In – 2/A0026 the hand to eye audit determined that there were only 196 physical ballots, not 198 as reported on the Batch Report. After reviewing the ballot images and the logs for Lopatcong Township – Mail-In – 2/A0026, the Commissioners concluded that because of operator error 2 ballots were scanned twice.

Source: <https://www.state.nj.us/state/elections/assets/pdf/election-results/2020/audits/warren-county.pdf>

## Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a commonsense process that should be mandatory for every election jurisdiction in the US. Election officials should be required to provide a complete list of voters who voted in each precinct (protected voters' names redacted) along with the certified election results for each precinct. There **is no situation** in which a county should certify results where the ballots counted exceed the number of people who participated in an election.

End of Report  
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