

Planning 2020 Workload and Resource Allocation

COVID-19 and Election Administration:

Approaches for Election Officials

May 26, 2020

Housekeeping

- Be gracious about **work-from-home setups**
- **Restart Zoom** if needed
- **Slides and captioned recordings** will be available on the registration page
- Use the **chat panel** to say hello, chat with other attendees, and ask questions

Today's objectives

- Estimate the number of voters requesting mail ballots in your community
- Understand how shifts in voting methods impact your resource allocation plans
- Use new tools to update plans as pandemic conditions change

Today's agenda

- Introduction (5 mins.)
- Preparing to serve more voters by mail (10 mins.)
- Preparing for shifts in in-person voting (10 mins.)
- Resource and planning capacity tools (10 mins.)
- Q&A (20 mins.)
- Wrapping up and course survey (5 mins.)

Hello, there!



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Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL)

Harnessing the promise of technology
to modernize the American voting
experience

@helloCTCL

www.techandcivicliflife.org

Federal resources

- Set of 10 documents (with more coming) provide guidance for state, local, tribal, and territorial election officials
- Written by the Joint COVID-19 Working Group
 - Cyber Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
 - Elections Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council (GCC)
 - Elections Infrastructure Sector Coordinating Council (SCC)

<https://www.cisa.gov/publication/covid-19-election-resources>

Keep in mind

1. This is tough!
2. One size doesn't fit all
3. Things will change
4. Preparation and flexibility > certainty
5. A supportive team > a solo mission
6. Your work *matters*, and it's hugely appreciated

“It’s crazy. Essentially we were running two elections. We were dealing with a massive quantity of mail-out ballots, and then, of course, having to have everything ready for Election Day.”

--Ramona Thomas, Adams County, Nebraska



What to expect and how to plan for it

PREPARING TO SERVE MORE VOTERS BY MAIL

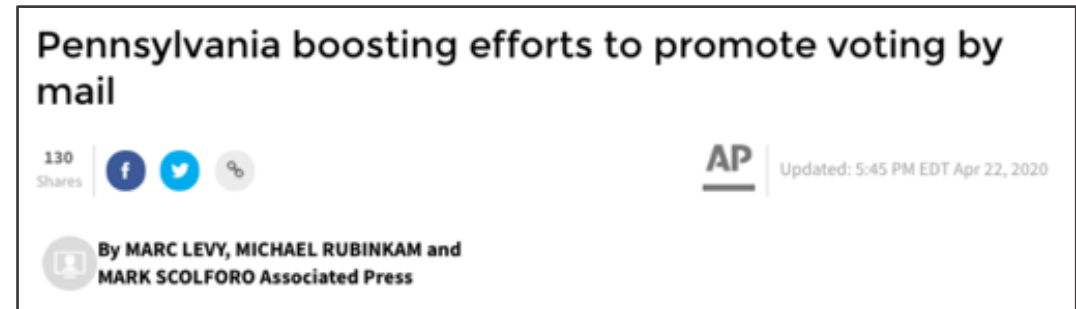
Three VBM scenarios

1. All-mail election



A screenshot of a news article snippet. At the top right, there are social media sharing icons for print, email, Facebook, Twitter, and a plus sign, followed by a notification bubble containing the number '12'. The main text of the snippet reads: "Nevada to conduct its June primaries via mail-in ballots due to coronavirus".

2. Promoted voting by mail



A screenshot of a news article snippet. The title is "Pennsylvania boosting efforts to promote voting by mail". Below the title, it shows "130 Shares" and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. On the right side, the AP logo is displayed next to the text "Updated: 5:45 PM EDT Apr 22, 2020". At the bottom, the byline reads "By MARC LEVY, MICHAEL RUBINKAM and MARK SCOLFORO Associated Press".

3. No vote-by-mail promotion



A screenshot of a news article snippet. The title is "Across the board Mail-in Voting in Mississippi unlikely for November election". Below the title, it says "By Frank Corder - April 14, 2020". At the bottom, there is a "Like 130" button and social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and Pinterest.

Getting started: inputs

Jurisdiction data	Value
Voters who would be eligible to receive a ballot by mail if requested	35,000
Ballot request deadline, in days before Election Day	6
Number of days available for canvassing	6

Scenario: All-mail election

Estimated ballots mailed	35,000
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Scenario: Promoted voting-by-mail

Estimated ballots mailed	16,065
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Scenario: No vote-by-mail promotion

Estimated ballots mailed	11,095
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VBM Resource Planning Tool demonstration!



ElectionResourcePlans.org

electionline.org/resources/vote-by-mail-planning-calculator/

What to expect and how to plan for it

PREPARING FOR SHIFTS IN IN-PERSON VOTING

First, what magnitude of change do you expect this year?

Adjusting your in-person voting footprint will only be possible if other voting options are significantly expanded

Maintaining your footprint?



Even if you aren't changing the scale of Election Day voting, you'll need to consider how health guidelines will change infrastructure and staffing needs

Same footprint

- For social distancing, can you be sure your **small facilities can handle the changes**, or do you **need larger ones**?
- Can you increase **financial inducements**?
- What extra effort will be needed to find **poll workers**? With a new workforce, will **training** needs increase?
- How can you prepare for possible **longer wait times** and **physically longer lines**?

Fewer precinct voting locations but larger facilities?



If you expect decreased demand for in-person voting, you may combine locations into larger facilities

Fewer locations but larger facilities

- Can you reduce staffing needs by **programming equipment to include all precincts**?
- How can you **involve stakeholders** in the decision-making progress?
- Can you meet the **legal notice requirements** for changing voting location?
- How will you **use outreach** to inform voters of the change?
- Are **lines** more likely at combined locations?

Shifting from precinct voting to vote centers?



Vote centers may be another option if you face decreased demand and difficulty obtaining facilities and staff

Vote centers

- What **changes to pollbook and voting technology** are needed to accommodate all voters and ballots?
- Can you prepare **enough ballot marking devices**? Enough **paper ballots**? **Ballot-on-demand** technology?
- Will you be able to find **facilities** that are big enough and available?
- What **voter education** will you need to get voters up to speed on this new voting method?

Moving to extra-large “super centers”?



If you need to serve voters with few facilities and poll workers, consider going big

Super centers

- What will the **travel distance** be? Is the location near highways and public transit? Is there parking?
- Is it **accessible** to people of all abilities?
- Does your location have **electricity, internet connectivity, and climate control** (heat and A/C)?
- Is there acceptable **shelter**? Could tents or other infrastructure be helpful?
- Is there **physical security**? Can areas be cordoned off for privacy and security? Can doors be locked?

Managing risk while managing change

- Changes introduce lots of risks – to general operations and to voters' understanding and acceptance of the process
- Foreign adversaries are *not* likely to cut us a break
- Maintain focus on securing your election systems – particularly your public information systems. Lock down your websites and social media accounts and be sure you're sharing information through the ISAC.

Which shift(s) are you considering?



Same footprint but with new health guidelines



Fewer precinct locations but larger facilities



Shifting from precinct voting to vote centers



Moving to extra-large “super centers”

Tech to help you plan






RESOURCE AND CAPACITY PLANNING TOOLS

Vote-by-mail Resource Planning Tool

Resource planning tool	
Documentation: read me!	
Built by Kathryn Peters for the Democracy Fund	
Getting started: inputs	
Jurisdiction data	Value
Voters who would be eligible to receive a ballot by mail if requested (and if an applicable excuse applies)	16,000
Ballot request deadline, in days before Election Day	6
Number of days available for canvassing	6
Time and effort data	
Fraction of mail ballots expected to require duplication	2%
Number of ballot styles in use	2
	(per person-hour of effort)
Voter registrations processed	45
Ballot requests processed	45
Ballot packets prepared	50

ElectionResourcePlans.org
electionline.org/resources/vote-by-mail-planning-calculator/

Michigan AV processing time calculator

Time assumptions	
Each day prior to and including election day	
(1) Receive, date, and time stamp ballot: 	<input type="text" value="10"/> seconds per ballot
(2) Verify signature and check in: 	<input type="text" value="137"/> seconds per ballot
(2a) Percent of ballots that need extra attention on receipt: 	<input type="text" value="0"/> %
Average time required for extra attention:	<input type="text" value="300"/> seconds each
(3) Daily balancing count: 	<input type="text" value="45"/> seconds per ballot
(4) Secure one day's ballots: 	<input type="text" value="5"/> minutes each day

Projections:

Based on the above estimates, processing **7500** ballots would take **497** total hours, as described below.

Prior to Election Day:

In each of the **28** work days prior to election day, the process of receiving the ballots should average **13.9** hours.

Based on data collected so far from other jurisdictions about their daily incoming ballots, a majority of days will require less time than the above average. However, some days could require up to 2 times the average (up to **27.8** hours), and occasional extreme cases could require more than 3 times the average (**41.7** hours).*

Election Day:

Total time required on election day is projected to be **107.80000000000001** hours, broken down as the average **13.9** hours to receive and process that day's ballots in the mail, plus **93.9** hours with the election day preparation and tabulation procedures.

Note that the above assumes an average number of incoming absentee ballots arrives on election day. However, it may be likely that election day is one of those days with an above-average number of ballots arriving, so the time for receiving ballots this day could be considerably higher.

* Based on data gathered to date, Mondays are the most likely day of week for the quantity of incoming ballots to exceed twice the average, with Wednesdays being the second most likely.

Polling Place Resource planner

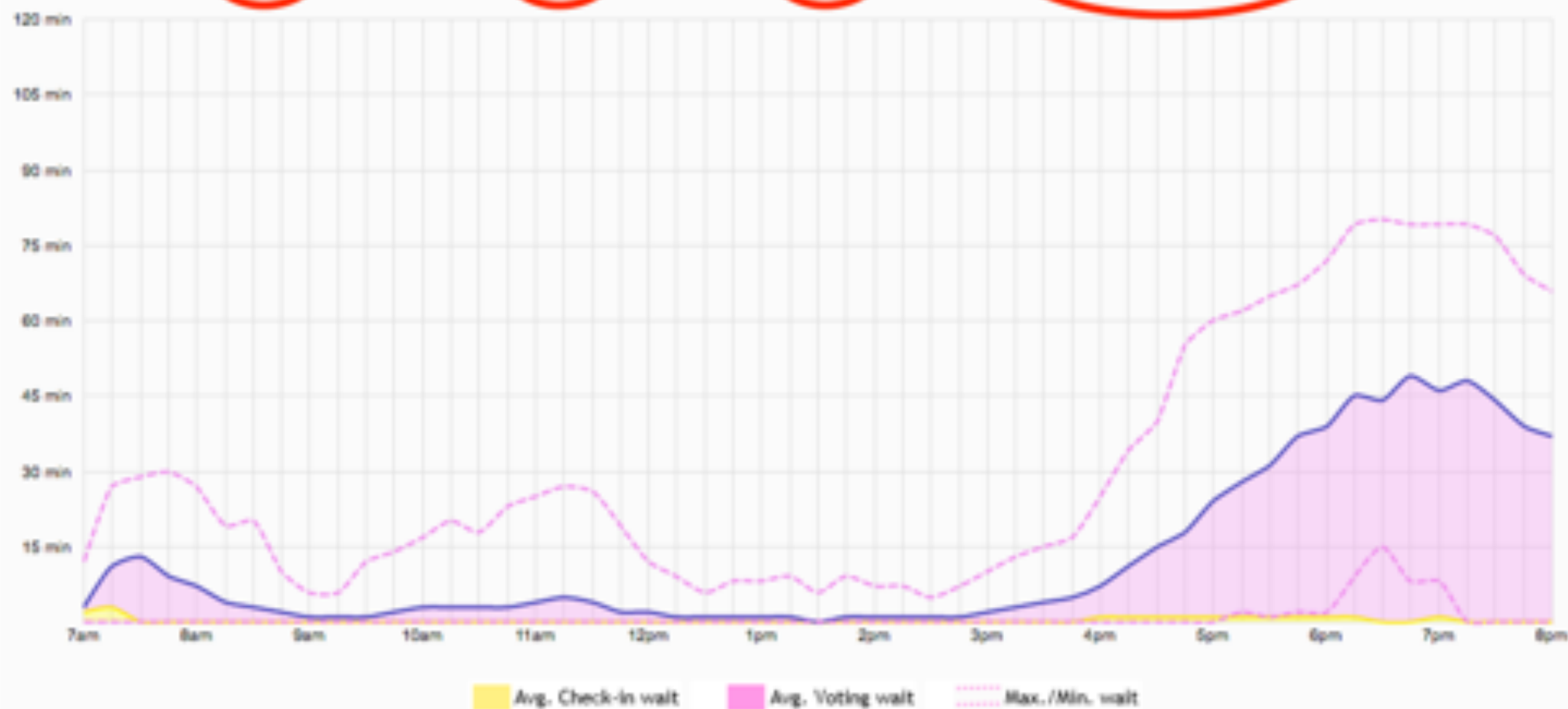


Polling place resource planner

A free program to help you estimate resource needs at a polling place



Expected voters Check-in stations Voting stations Poll is open to



Run Simulation

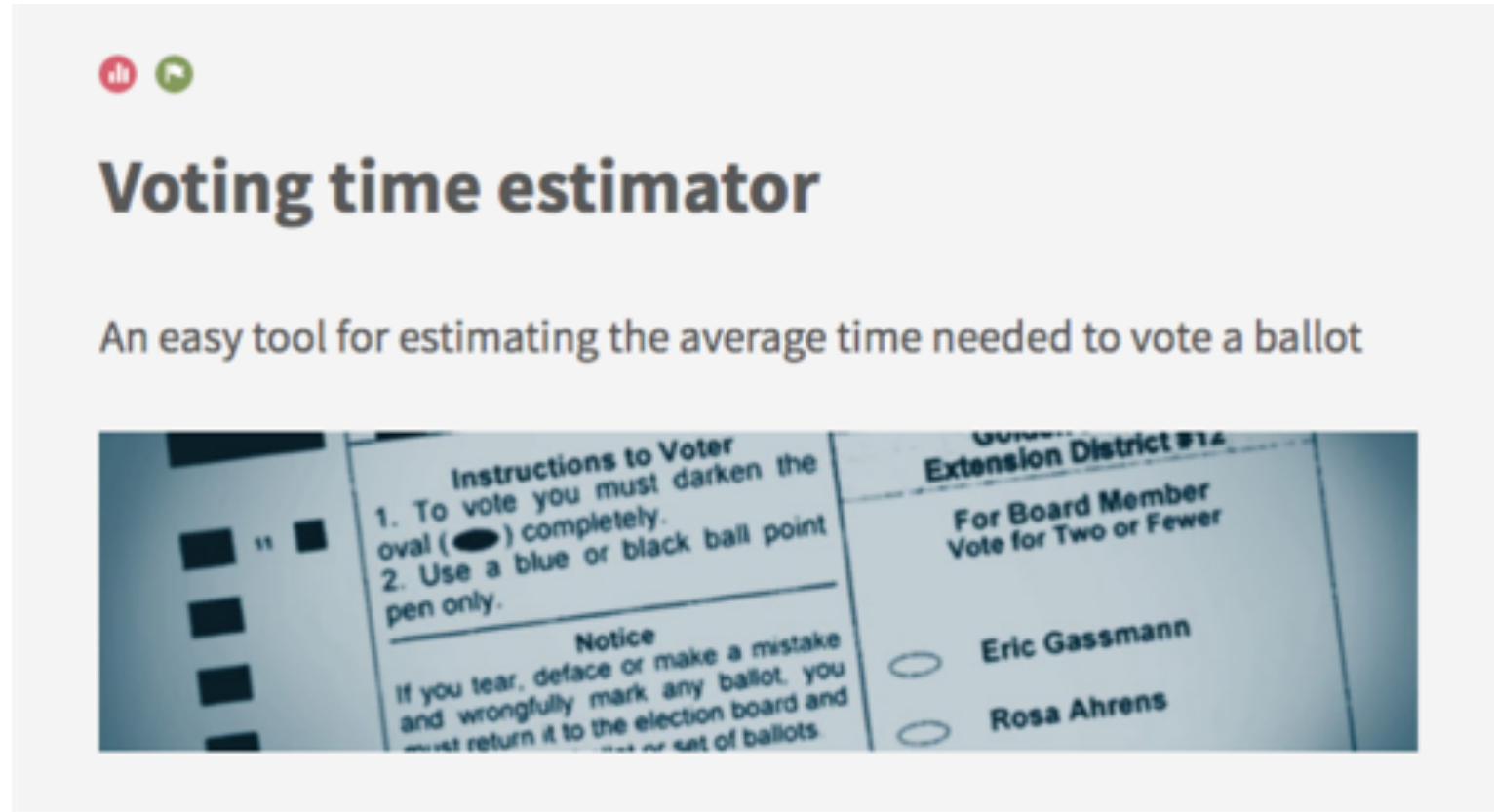
Avg. Minutes to check in: Avg. Min. to vote:
Arrival pattern: Early arrivals: Cannot check-in:
 Same-day Registration Scanner Lines Simulate walk-offs

Nevada County, California prepares vote centers using estimator tools



Natalie Adona: “While line management can be data driven, there’s some art to the process, too.”

Voting Time Estimator



Voting Time Estimator

Number of Contested Races (Choose One Candidate):

Number of Uncontested Races:

Multiselect Races
(Vote for More than One Candidate)

Number of such races:

Total selections in all:

Number of Initiatives, Referendums, Propositions:

Number of Yes/No Retention Votes:

Voting Style:

Paper

Electronic (DRE)

Calculate

The projected average is 3.2 minutes. Compared with data collected so far, there is 90% confidence that your average ballot completion time will be between 2.4 and 4 minutes (145 to 242 seconds).

Average time to complete ballot (in minutes) is predicted to be in the range shown below



Voting Timer App



Voting timer app

A free app to measure the average time voters spend with a ballot





<https://go41.com/voteti>



Voting Timer - Recording



Menu

Stop



Help

Voter Enters



0:08

Vacant Booth

Voter Enters

Booth 2 empty

Vacant Booth

Voter Enters



3:04

Vacant Booth

Voter Enters



3:27

Vacant Booth

RECORDING

14 Voters, Average Time 3:05, 5 to Upload

Pause

Let's talk

DISCUSSION



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Share your thoughts

- What resonated with you from today's webinar? (Any “ah-ha” moments?)
- What are your next steps?
- What questions do you have about what we covered today?
- What questions do you have about what we didn't cover today?

As questions come up for you...

- Reach out to CTCL
 - We'll help out, or
 - We'll find someone for you who can

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We've covered a lot of ground

WRAPPING UP



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Today's resources

Katy Peters/Democracy Fund VBM Resource Planning Tool	ElectionResourcePlans.org electionline.org/resources/vote-by-mail-planning-calculator/
Joint COVID-19 Working Group: Guide for In-Person Voting (<i>forthcoming</i>)	cisa.gov/publication/covid-19-election-resources
Polling Place Resource Planner	www.electiontools.org/tool/polling-place-resoure-planner
“Nevada County, California Prepares Vote Centers Using Estimator Tools”	www.electiontools.org/nevada-county
Voting Time Estimator	www.electiontools.org/tool/voting-time-estimator
Voting Timer App	www.electiontools.org/tool/voting-timer-app

Timeline considerations, 161 days out:

Receiving and processing mail ballots

- Analyze space and staffing needs based on expected volume (165 days)

Planning temporary, indoor drop boxes

- Make arrangements with facilities where boxes will be placed (158 days)

Online data capture

- Write tech specs (w/ existing OVR) (158 days)

What was your experience with today's webinar?

- A brief survey is linked in the chat box
- Please complete the survey now to provide feedback and improve the course for future participants

Up next

- ~~Supporting election officials (Thursday, May 21)~~
- ~~Planning 2020 workload and resource allocation (Tuesday, May 26)~~
- Ensuring access, equity, and inclusion (Thursday, May 28)
- Educating voters about their options (Thursday, June 4)
- Maintaining voter lists (Tuesday, June 9)
- Managing mail ballot request forms (Thursday, June 11)
- Organizing ballot dropoff locations (Tuesday, June 16)
- Streamlining the inbound ballot process (Thursday, June 18)
- Verifying and curing signatures (Tuesday, June 23)
- Recruiting and training election workers (Thursday, June 25)
- Implementing public health guidelines for voting locations (Tuesday, June 30)

techandcivicliflife.org/covid-19-webinars/

Thanks!

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