

# Voter Intent

Statewide Standards on What is a Vote



Secretary of State

*Tom Wyman*



# Secretary of State

*Kim Wyman*

The Office of Secretary of State is committed to making every effort to ensure that each valid vote is counted.

By law, Washington is a “voter intent” state, which means voters are not disenfranchised if they mark a ballot differently than directed. When voter intent can be discerned, the vote will be counted.

Many times, election outcomes are so close that each vote carries a potentially decisive weight, including the 2000 presidential race in Florida and the 2004 Washington governor’s race. In each, a small percentage of votes separated the two leading candidates. Determining a voter’s intent is always an extremely important part of a county’s canvassing process. It becomes critical in close elections.

Washington’s voter intent policy is grounded in federal and state laws and regulations. The state and nation are committed to equal protection of each citizen’s rights and to ensuring consistency across jurisdictional lines.

This manual illustrates these important standards through the use of pictorial examples of voted ballots and how they should be interpreted by county canvassing boards. While no publication can anticipate all of the possible circumstances that arise in the canvassing process, in cases where the situation is not addressed in state law, administrative rule, or this publication, the authority to determine voter intent rests with the county canvassing board.

Fair and accurate elections remain our shared goal. I commend this publication for your use and thank all of our election officials who tirelessly and professionally support our voting process. Your effort is central to our democracy and self-government.

*Kim Wyman*

Kim Wyman  
Secretary of State

# Table of Contents

2	<b>Target Area</b> Rule A Exception 1. Obvious stray marks Exception 2. Hesitation marks Exception 3. Parts of written notes Exception 4. Corrected votes	58	<b>Write-in: Blank Line</b> Rule K
18	<b>Pattern of Similar Marks</b> Rule B	60	<b>Write-in: Blank Line and Candidate</b> Rule L
28	Premise. One Mark on a Ballot	62	<b>Write-in: Name Combinations</b> Rule M
34	<b>Corrected Votes</b> Rule C	64	<b>Write-in: Candidate and Write-in Response Area</b> Rule N
40	<b>Not a Correction</b> Rule D	68	<b>Write-in: Not Eligible</b> Rule O Exception. Provisional ballots
44	<b>Written Instructions</b> Rule E	70	<b>Write-in: Vote in the Wrong Place</b> Rule P
46	<b>Identifying Marks</b> Rule F	72	<b>Messy Marks</b> Rule Q
50	<b>Overvotes</b> Rule G Exception. Already on the ballot	74	<b>Pattern of Partisan Voting</b> Rule R Exception. Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB)
52	<b>Write-in: Blank Target Area</b> Rule H	75	<b>Anything Else</b> Rule S
54	<b>Write-in: Already on the Ballot</b> Rule I	76	<b>Glossary</b>
56	<b>Write-in: Name Variations</b> Rule J	77	<b>References</b>

---

## Rule A

### **Target Area**

Any marks made in the target area shall be counted as valid votes.

Any marks made outside of the target area shall be valid only if they form a pattern of similar marks as outlined in Rule B or qualify as written instructions in Rule E.

Marks that trace or outline the target area are not valid votes unless they form a pattern of similar marks as outlined in Rule B.


#### Exceptions to Rule A:

1. Obvious stray marks
2. Hesitation marks
3. Parts of written notes
4. Corrected votes (See Rule C and Rule E)

Rule A, Example 1a

All choices marked are valid votes.

In the following example, all choices marked will count because they are all marked in the target area and do not fall under one of the exceptions to Rule A.

<p>Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14</p>		<p><b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b></p>	
<p><b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: </p> <p><b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.</p>			
<p><b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b></p>		<p><b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b></p>	
<p><input type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt</p>		<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison</p>	
<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams</p>		<p><input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks</p>	
<p><input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison</p>		<p><input type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower</p>	
<p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>		<p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	
<p>_____</p>		<p>_____</p>	
<p><b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b></p>		<p><b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b></p>	
<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Wing Luke</p>		<p><input type="radio"/> James Monroe</p>	
<p><input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall</p>		<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry</p>	
<p><input type="radio"/> Sacagawea</p>		<p><input type="radio"/> Clara Barton</p>	
<p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>		<p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	
<p>_____</p>		<p>_____</p>	

## Rule A, Example 1b

All choices marked are valid votes.


In the following example, all choices marked will count because they are all marked in the target area and do not fall under one of the exceptions to Rule A.

<p>Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2022</b></p> <p><b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Abigail S. Adams</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Write-in</p> <p>_____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Write-in</p> <p>_____</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Write-in</p> <p>_____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> James Monroe</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Write-in</p> <p>_____</p>

## Rule A, Example 2a

Only the vote for Teddy Roosevelt is valid.

In the following example, only the vote for Roosevelt will count. The other marks are made outside of the target area and do not fulfill the pattern requirements of Rule B, so they are not valid votes.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: 			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison		<input type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Wing Luke		<input type="radio"/> James Monroe	
<input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input type="radio"/> Sacagawea		<input type="radio"/> Clara Barton	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	

## Rule A, Example 2b

Only the vote for Teddy Roosevelt is valid.

In the following example, only the vote for Roosevelt will count. The other marks are made outside of the target area and do not fulfill the pattern requirements of Rule B, so they are not valid votes.


Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="checkbox"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison		<input type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke		<input type="checkbox"/> James Monroe	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea		<input type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	



Rule A, Example 3a

All choices marked are valid votes.

In this example, the marks made on this ballot get smaller with each race, an implication of 'voter fatigue'. All marks are in the target area and are valid votes.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: 			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
_____		_____	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Wing Luke		<input type="radio"/> James Monroe	
<input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Sacagawea		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Clara Barton	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
_____		_____	

# Rule A, Example 3b

All choices marked are valid votes.

In this example, the marks made on this ballot get smaller with each race, an implication of 'voter fatigue'. All marks are in the target area and are valid votes.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="checkbox"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison		<input type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Monroe	
<input type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea		<input type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	

---

## Rule A, Example 4a–b

The vote for Teddy Roosevelt in Example 4a is the valid vote; the race is not an overvote.

In the following examples from different ballots, marks that trace a target area are not valid and only the vote for Roosevelt in Example 4a will count. Marks that trace or outline a target area will not count unless they fulfill the pattern requirements of Rule B.

4a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	


4b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	

## Rule A, Exception 1, Example 1a

Only the marks for Teddy Roosevelt and Rosa Parks are valid votes.

In this example, the mark near Sacagawea's name is a stray mark and will not count as a valid vote, even though it is in the target area of a candidate.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2022</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: 			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison		<input type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Wing Luke		<input type="radio"/> James Monroe	
<input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input type="radio"/> Sacagawea		<input type="radio"/> Clara Barton	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	

## Rule A, Exception 1, Example 1b

All choices marked are valid votes.

In this example, the mark through the target area of Clara Barton's name is a stray mark and is not overvoted.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Abigail S. Adams	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison	<input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks
<input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison	<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	<input type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke	<input type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Monroe	<input type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry
<input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea	<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	<input type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton	<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in

---

## Rule A, Exception 1, Examples 2a–b

No marks are valid votes.

In the following examples from different ballots, the voters have stricken a candidate's name and it extends into the target area. These are stray marks. The marks will not count as valid votes unless the voter marked only one race or measure, or the marks fulfill the pattern requirements of Rule B.

2a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

~~Teddy Roosevelt~~

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

---

2b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

~~William Henry Harrison~~

Write-in

---

**Target Area**

Rule A, Exceptions 1, 2

Obvious Stray Marks

Hesitation Marks

---

**Rule A, Exception 2, Examples 1a–b**

The vote for Teddy Roosevelt is the valid vote.

In the following examples from different ballots, the marks in the target area of Abigail S. Adams are hesitation marks and do not count as valid votes. Marks made in the same race for Teddy Roosevelt are the clear choice. These races are not overvoted.

1a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	

1b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	


---

## Rule A, Exception 2, Examples 2a–b

The vote for Teddy Roosevelt is the valid vote.

In the following examples from different ballots, the marks in the target area of Abigail S. Adams are hesitation marks and do not count as valid votes. Marks made in the same race for Teddy Roosevelt are the clear choice. These races are not overvoted.

2a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	

2b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	



**Target Area**

Rule A, Exception 2

Hesitation Marks

---

## Rule A, Exception 2, Examples 3a–b

The vote for Teddy Roosevelt is the valid vote.

In the following examples from different ballots, the marks in the target area of Abigail S. Adams are hesitation marks and do not count as valid votes. Marks made in the same race for Teddy Roosevelt are the clear choice. These races are not overvoted.

3a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	

3b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	

# Rule A, Exception 3, Example 1a

No marks are valid votes.

In this example, the marks that extend into the target areas are parts of written notes on the ballot. None of the marks will count as votes.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: ●			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt	<i>This election is a sham!</i>	<input type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison		<input type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Wing Luke	<i>I vote for me!</i>	<input type="radio"/> James Monroe	
<input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input type="radio"/> Sacagawea		<input type="radio"/> Clara Barton	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	

**Rule A, Exception 3, Example 1b**

No marks are valid votes.

In this example, the marks that extend into the target areas are parts of written notes on the ballot. None of the marks will count as votes.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<p><b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del>          You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.</p>			
<b>State Representative          District 14, Position #1.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt <input type="checkbox"/> Abigail Adams <input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<b>State Representative          District 14, Position #2</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison <input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks <input type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District          Commissioner</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke <input type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall <input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<b>Water District 12          Commissioner</b> <input type="checkbox"/> James Monroe <input type="checkbox"/> Eliza P. Ferry <input type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	

*Dear Election People,  
 Thank you for the ballot  
 but I prefer not to vote  
 this time.*

*Sincerely,  
 B. Adams*

---

## Rule B

### **Pattern of Similar Marks**

Marks made outside of the target area shall be counted as valid votes as long as those marks form a pattern of similar marks. All races and issues for which the voter has indicated a choice outside the target area must have a similar mark.

Marks made outside of the target area may be counted as valid votes even if one pattern of similar marks is used on one page (side) of the ballot and another pattern of similar marks is used on another page of the ballot.

Marks made outside of the target area shall be counted as valid votes if one pattern of similar marks is used for measures and another pattern of similar marks is used for candidate races.

If some marks are in the target area and some are not, but the same **type** of mark is used, all such marks shall be counted as valid votes.

If the marks strike through candidate names or ballot measure responses in a pattern of similar marks throughout the ballot, all such marks shall be counted as valid votes.

A mark outside the target area on a ballot that contains only one race or measure is not required to form a pattern.

For Rule B, **One Mark on a Ballot**, see page 28.

**Pattern of  
Similar Marks**


Rule B

Rule B, One Mark  
on a Ballot

**Rule B, Example 1a**

All choices marked are valid votes.

While the voter made marks outside the target area, these marks form a pattern of similar marks and count as valid votes.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: 			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt	<input type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison		
<input type="checkbox"/> Abigail S. Adams	<input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks		
<input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower		
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke	<input type="checkbox"/> James Monroe		
<input type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea	<input type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton		
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		

## Rule B, Example 1b

All choices marked are valid votes.

While the voter made marks outside the target area, these marks form a pattern of similar marks and count as valid votes.


Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot - Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt (States No Party Preference)		<input type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison (Prefers <u>Republican Party</u> )	
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Abigail S. Adams</u> (Prefers Republican Party)		<input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks (Prefers Democratic Party)	
<input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison (Prefers Democratic Party)		<input type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower (States No Party Preference)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>County Commissioner District 2</b>		<b>County Treasurer District 1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Wing Luke</u> (Prefers Democratic Party)		<input type="checkbox"/> James Monroe (Prefers <u>Democratic Party</u> )	
<input type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall (Prefers Republican Party)		<input type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry (Prefers Republican Party)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea (States No Party Preference)		<input type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton (States No Party Preference)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	

**Pattern of  
Similar Marks**  
Rule B

**Rule B, Example 2a**

All choices marked are valid votes.

In this example, the voter formed a pattern of similar marks throughout the ballot. Some marks are in the target area and some are not. Because the marks are the same **type** for each race, all votes on this ballot count as valid votes.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: 			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<hr/>		<hr/>	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Wing Luke		<input type="radio"/> James Monroe	
<input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Sacagawea		<input type="radio"/> Clara Barton <input checked="" type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<hr/>		<hr/>	

## Rule B, Example 2b

All choices marked are valid votes.

In this example, the voter formed a pattern of similar marks throughout the ballot. Some marks are in the target area and some are not. Because the marks are the same **type** for each race, all votes on this ballot count as valid votes.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="checkbox"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke		<input type="checkbox"/> James Monroe	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea		<input type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	




**Pattern of  
Similar Marks**  
Rule B

**Rule B, Example 3a**

Only the vote for Thurgood Marshall is valid.

In this example, one choice is marked in the target area and more marks are made outside the target area. Together, these marks do not form a pattern of similar marks. Only the vote for Marshall counts as a valid vote, because it is marked in the target area.

<p>Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14</p> <p><b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b></p> <p><b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: </p> <p><b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.</p>	
<p><b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams</p> <p><input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p> <hr/>	<p><b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p> <hr/>
<p><b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Wing Luke</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Sacagawea</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p> <hr/>	<p><b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> James Monroe</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Clara Barton</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p> <hr/>

## Rule B, Example 3b

Only the vote for Thurgood Marshall is valid.

In this example, one choice is marked in the target area and other marks are made outside the target area. Together, these marks do not form a pattern of similar marks. Only the vote for Marshall counts as a valid vote, because it is marked in the target area.


Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt ✓		<input type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="checkbox"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison		<input type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower ✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke		<input type="checkbox"/> James Monroe	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea		<input type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton ✓	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	

**Pattern of  
Similar Marks**  
Rule B

**Rule B, Example 4a**

All choices marked are valid votes.

In this example, all choices marked by the voter form a pattern of similar marks. While some marks are made outside the target area, the marks form one pattern of similar marks on the **front** of the ballot and another pattern of similar marks on the **back**.

Official Ballot – Sample County, WA General Election November 6, 2022		Page 1 / 2
<small>oters: Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="radio"/></small> <small>take: Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del>  <small>option of making another choice if you wish.</small> </small>		
<b>Measure No. 1</b> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b> <input type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt <input checked="" type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams <input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Measure No. 2</b> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b> <input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison <input checked="" type="radio"/> Wing Luke <input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Measure No. 3</b> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<b>Port Commissioner Position #1</b> <input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall <input checked="" type="radio"/> Sacagawea <input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Measure No. 4</b> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<b>Continue voting next side</b> 	

Official Ballot – Sample County, WA General Election November 6, 2022		Page 2 / 2
<b>Port Commissioner Position #2</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison <input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks <input type="radio"/> Write-in	<b>Cemetery District Commissioner, Position #2</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> May Arkwright Hutton <input type="radio"/> Joseph Marion Hernandez <input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Fire District Commissioner, Position #1</b> <input type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower <input checked="" type="radio"/> Belle Reeves <input type="radio"/> Write-in	<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Emma Smith DeVoe <input type="radio"/> Charles Wilkes <input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Fire District Commissioner, Position #2</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Juan de Fuca <input type="radio"/> Chief Seattle <input type="radio"/> Write-in	<b>Proposition No. 1</b> <input type="radio"/> Approved <input checked="" type="radio"/> Rejected	
<b>Hospital District Commissioner, Position #1</b> <input type="radio"/> Isaac Stevens <input type="radio"/> Mary Wilson <input type="radio"/> Write-in	<b>End of ballot. Thank you for voting!</b>	



This is a multiple page ballot.

# Rule B, Example 4b

All choices marked are valid votes.

In this example, all choices marked by the voter form a pattern of similar marks. While marks are made outside the target area, the marks form one pattern of similar marks for **measures** and another pattern of similar marks for candidate **names**.

Official Ballot – Sample County, WA General Election November 6, 2222		Page 1 / 2
<small>Instructions: Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>  <small>Take: Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <u>George Washington</u>  <small>Option of making another choice if you wish.</small> </small></small>		
<b>Measure No. 1</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Measure No. 1</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>Measure No. 2</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Measure No. 2</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>Measure No. 3</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Measure No. 3</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>Measure No. 4</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Continue voting next side</b>	

Official Ballot – Sample County, WA General Election November 6, 2222		Page 2 / 2
<b>Port Commissioner Position #2</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Rosa Parks</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	<b>Cemetery District Commissioner, Position #2</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>May Arkwright Hutton</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Joseph Marion Hernandez <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>District Commissioner, Position #1</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Belle Reeves</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Emma Smith DeVoe <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Charles Wilkes</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>Fire District Commissioner, Position #2</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Juan de Fuca</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Seattle <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	<b>Proposition No. 1</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Approved</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	
<b>Hospital District Commissioner, Position #1</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Isaac Stevens</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Mary Wilson <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	<b>End of ballot. Thank you for voting!</b>	



This is a multiple page ballot.

**Pattern of  
Similar Marks**  
Rule B

---

Please turn page for Rule B, One Mark on a Ballot.

---

Rule B

**One Mark on a Ballot**

When a voter returns a ballot having marked only one race or measure, the act of returning a ballot indicates the voter wished to cast a vote in that race or measure. Because a pattern cannot be established when a voter marks only one race or measure, marks made on a single race or measure must be considered a vote if the voter's intent can be determined.

For Rule B, **Pattern of Similar Marks**, see page 18.

**Pattern of  
Similar Marks**

Rule B, One Mark  
on a Ballot

---

**Rule B, One Mark on a Ballot, Examples 1a–d**

Each example shows one mark on a ballot and a valid vote for 'Yes.'

In the following examples from different ballots, the voters marked only **one race or measure** and a pattern cannot be established. Marks made on a single race or measure must be considered a vote if the voter's intent can be determined.

1a

**Proposition No. 1**

Yes

No

1b

**Proposition No. 1**

Yes

No

1c

**Proposition No. 1**

Yes *Trang Nguyen*

No

1d

**Proposition No. 1**

~~Yes~~

No

---

## Rule B, One Mark on a Ballot, Examples 2a–d

Each example shows one mark on a ballot and a valid vote for 'Approved.'

In the following examples from different ballots, the voters marked only **one race or measure** and a pattern cannot be established. Marks made on a single race or measure must be considered a vote if the voter's intent can be determined.

2a

**Proposition No. 1**

Approved *approved*

Rejected

2b

**Proposition No. 1**

Approved

Rejected

2c

**Proposition No. 1**

Approved

Rejected

2d

**Proposition No. 1**

Approved

Rejected



**Pattern of  
Similar Marks**

Rule B, One Mark  
on a Ballot

---

**Rule B, One Mark on a Ballot, Examples 3a–d**

Each example shows one mark on a ballot and a valid vote for Teddy Roosevelt.

In the following examples from different ballots, the voters marked only **one race or measure** and a pattern cannot be established. Marks made on a single race or measure must be considered a vote if the voter's intent can be determined.

3a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

3b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt *yes*

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

3c

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

~~Teddy Roosevelt~~

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

3d

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt *X*

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

---

## Rule B, One Mark on a Ballot, Examples 4a–b

Each example shows one mark on a ballot and a valid vote for the choice marked.

In the following examples from different ballots, the voters marked only **one race or measure** and a pattern cannot be established. Marks made on a single race or measure must be considered a vote if the voter’s intent can be determined. If the mark is not the only mark on a single race or measure, see Rule C, Corrected Votes.

4a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="radio"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<del>William Henry Harrison</del>
<input type="radio"/>	Write-in
_____	

4b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<del>Abigail S. Adams</del>
<input type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write-in
_____	

**Pattern of  
Similar Marks**


Rule B, One Mark  
on a Ballot


**Rule B, One Mark on a Ballot, Example 5**

The only mark on the ballot is a valid vote for May Hutton / Isaac Stevens.

In the following example, the voter marked only **one race or measure** and a pattern cannot be established. Marks made on a single race or measure must be considered a vote if the voter's intent can be determined. See also Rule E, Written Instructions.

Official Ballot – Sample County, WA  
General Election November 6, 2222 Page 1 / 2

oters: Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this:   
 taker: Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: ~~George Washington~~  
 option of making another choice if you wish.

<p><b>Measure No. 1</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p><b>United States President / Vice President</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> May Hutton / Isaac Stevens</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Robert Gray / John R. Rogers</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Lara Hall Peters / Peter Puget</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Juan de Fuca / Chief Seattle</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>
<p><b>Measure No. 2</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>Continue voting next side </p>
<p><b>Measure No. 3</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	
<p><b>Measure No. 4</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	

Official Ballot – Sample County, WA  
General Election November 6, 2222 Page 2 / 2

<p><b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	<p><b>Fire District Commissioner, Position #1</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Belle Reeves</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>
<p><b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Wing Luke</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	<p><b>Proposition No. 1</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Approved</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Rejected</p>
<p><b>Port Commissioner Position #1</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Sacagawea</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	<p><b>End of ballot. Thank you for voting!</b></p>
<p><b>Port Commissioner Position #2</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	



This is a multiple page ballot.

---

## Rule C

### **Corrected Votes**

If the voter has followed the instructions for correcting a vote, the stricken vote shall not be counted.

If a second choice is marked, it shall be counted as a valid vote. If a second choice is not marked, the race shall be considered undervoted.

If the voter has marked two target areas and placed an 'X' or slash over one of the marked areas, the choice without the 'X' or slash shall be counted as a valid vote.

---

## Rule C, Examples 1a–b

The vote for William Henry Harrison is the valid vote.

In the following examples from different ballots, the voters followed instructions for correcting a vote.

1a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<del>Teddy Roosevelt</del>
<input type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="radio"/>	Write-in
<hr/>	

1b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<del>Abigail S. Adams</del>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write-in
<hr/>	

---

## Rule C, Examples 2a–b

Each example shows a correction. These marks are not valid votes unless the voter marked only one race or measure on a ballot.

In the following examples from different ballots, the voters followed instructions for correcting a vote. If the voter marked a line through every race or measure throughout the ballot, see Rule B, Pattern of Similar Marks.

2a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="radio"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<del>William Henry Harrison</del>
<input type="radio"/>	Write-in
_____	

2b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<del>Abigail S. Adams</del>
<input type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write-in
_____	

---

## Rule C, Examples 3a–b

The vote for William Henry Harrison is the valid vote.

In the following examples from different ballots, the voters marked two target areas **and** also placed an 'X' over one of the marked areas. The choice without the 'X' is the valid vote.

3a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	

3b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
	Teddy Roosevelt
	Abigail S. Adams
	William Henry Harrison
	Write-in
<hr/>	

---

## Rule C, Examples 4a–b

The vote for Abigail S. Adams is the valid vote.

In the following examples from different ballots, the voter marked two target areas and also placed a slash over one of the marked areas. The choice without the slash is the valid vote.

4a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="radio"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="radio"/>	Write-in
_____	

4b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Write-in
<u>Johnny Law</u>	



---

End of Rule C. Please turn page for Rule D.

---

## Rule D

### **Not a Correction**

If the voter has both marked a choice correctly **and** placed an 'X' in the same target area, but has not marked a second target area, it shall be counted as a valid vote.

Changes made by the voter to wording printed on the ballot will not invalidate votes cast for that race or measure.

---

## Rule D, Examples 1a–d

The following examples from different ballots are valid votes for William Henry Harrison.

1a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1c

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1d

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt  
(States No Party Preference)

Abigail S. Adams  
(Prefers Republican Party)

William Henry Harrison  
(~~Prefers Democratic Party~~)


Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

## Rule D, Example 2

The following ballot contains a valid vote for the proposition.

The voter has both marked a choice correctly **and** placed an 'X' in the same target area, however, the voter has not marked a second target area. Changes made to wording on the ballot will not invalidate the vote.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14	<b>Official Ballot - Sample County, WA General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: 		
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.		
<b>Proposition No. 1 City of Angles School District Capital Projects Technology Levy</b>		
The Board of Directors of the City of Angles School District No. 1235 adopted Resolution No. 12345-11 concerning a proposition to finance <del>educational technology equipment</del> improvements within the District. If passed, Proposition No. 1 would authorize the District to levy the following excess taxes upon all taxable property within the District in order to acquire, install and provide training in connection with <del>educational technology equipment</del> improvements: <span style="float: right; font-size: 2em;">not</span>		
Should this proposition be approved?		
<b>Levy Collection Years</b>	<b>Approximate Levy Rate per \$1,000 of Assessed Value</b>	<b>Levy Amount</b>
2008 / 2009	\$0.46	\$1,635,700
2009 / 2010	\$0.44	\$1,643,248
2010 / 2011	\$0.41	\$1,643,171
2011 / 2012	\$0.39	\$1,642,972
Should Proposition No. 1 be approved or rejected?		
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	LEVY Yes	
<input type="radio"/>	LEVY No	

**Not a Correction**

Rule D

---

End of Rule D. Please turn page for Rule E.

---

## Rule E

### **Written Instructions**

If the voter has attempted to vote or correct a vote by providing written instruction regarding their intent, it shall be counted as the voter instructed. Written instructions can include words, circles, lines, or arrows.

---

## Rule E, Examples 1a–c

The vote for Abigail S. Adams is the valid vote.

Written instructions, including words, circles, lines, or arrows may be used to determine voter intent. In each example, the voter attempted to vote or correct a vote and provided written instructions.

1a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

~~Teddy Roosevelt~~

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

---

1b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

~~Teddy Roosevelt~~ no

Abigail S. Adams yes

~~William Henry Harrison~~ no

Write-in

---

1c

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams ← This one

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

---

---

Rule F

## **Identifying Marks**

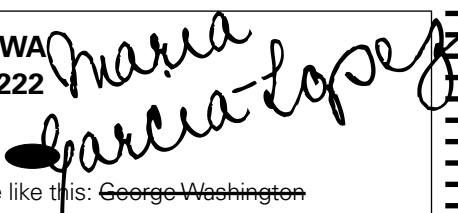
Marks identifying the voter, such as initials, signatures, or addresses, do not disqualify a ballot.



Rule F, Example 1a

The ballot must be accepted.

The following example contains a legible signature, but it will **not** disqualify the ballot.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2022</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this:			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison		<input type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Wing Luke		<input type="radio"/> James Monroe	
<input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input type="radio"/> Sacagawea		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Clara Barton	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	

# Rule F, Example 1b

The ballot must be accepted.

The following example has initials on its face. This will **not** disqualify the ballot.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2222</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="radio"/>			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="radio"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison		<input type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="radio"/> Wing Luke		<del><input type="radio"/> James Monroe</del>	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall		<del><input checked="" type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry</del>	
<input type="radio"/> Sacagawea		<del><input type="radio"/> Clara Barton</del>	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in		<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
		I changed my mind and don't want to vote for water district commissioner. JR	

Rule F, Example 1c

The ballot must be accepted.

In this example, the voter has placed an address sticker or stamp on the ballot. This will **not** disqualify the ballot.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA</b> <b>General Election November 6, 2022</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Teddy <input type="checkbox"/> Abigail S. Adams <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison <input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke <input type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Monroe <input type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry <input type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	

---

## Rule G

## **Overvotes**

Races or issues that have more target areas marked than are allowed are overvotes. No votes for that race or issue shall be counted.

### Exception to Rule G:

Write-in votes for a candidate already printed on the ballot.  
(See Rule I)

---

## Rule G, Examples 1a–b

These are not valid votes for any candidate.

The following examples from different ballots have more target areas marked than are allowed. These are tallied as overvotes, not valid votes for any candidate.

1a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="radio"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="radio"/>	Write-in
_____	

1b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write-in
_____	

---

Rule H

**Write-in: Blank Target Area**

If a name is written on a write-in line, it shall be counted as a valid write-in vote regardless of whether the corresponding target area is marked.

---

## Rule H, Examples 1a–d

All of the following examples are valid votes for Rosa Parks.

In each of the following examples, a name is written on the write-in line and **no other** target area for a candidate printed on the ballot is marked. The write-in vote for Rosa Parks is valid whether the corresponding target area is marked or not.

1a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="radio"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="radio"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="radio"/>	Write-in <u>Rosa Parks</u>

1b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input type="checkbox"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Write-in <u>Rosa Parks</u>

1c

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="radio"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="radio"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Write-in <u>Rosa Parks</u>

1d

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input type="checkbox"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write-in <u>Rosa Parks</u>

---

Rule I

**Write-in: Already on the Ballot**

If the name of a candidate who is already printed on the ballot is written in, that vote shall not be tallied as an overvote, but shall be counted as a valid vote for the printed candidate. This applies even if both target areas are marked or no target areas are marked.



---

## Rule I, Examples 1a–d

All of the following examples are valid votes for Abigail S. Adams.

1a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Abigail S. Adams

1b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Abigail Adams

1c

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
A. Adams

1d

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Abby Adams

---

Rule J

**Write-in: Name Variations**

If a write-in vote is cast for a **declared** write-in candidate using a commonly recognizable nickname or spelling variation, it shall be counted as a valid vote for that candidate.

---

## Rule J, Examples 1a–d

All of the following examples are valid votes for the declared write-in candidate Thomas Smith.

1a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Tommas Smith

1b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Tommy Smith

1c

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Tom Smythe

1d

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Thom Smith

---

Rule K

**Write-in: Blank Line**

If the write-in target area is marked, but no name is written on the line, it shall not be counted as a valid vote, even though it **may** be tallied as a write-in vote by the tabulation system.

---

## Rule K, Examples 1a–d

The following marks are not valid votes and will not count for any candidates.

1a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1c

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1d

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Rule L

**Write-in: Blank Line and Candidate**

If a candidate's target area is marked, **and** the write-in target area is marked but no name is written on the line, it shall not be tallied as an overvote, but shall be counted as a valid vote for the printed candidate.

---

## Rule L, Examples 1a–d

The following marks are valid votes for William Henry Harrison.

In each example, the race is not considered an overvote because a candidate's target area is marked, **and** no name is written on the write-in line.

1a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1c

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1d

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

---

## Rule M

### **Write-in: Name Combinations**

If a write-in vote is cast for a candidate with a combination of names already on the ballot, it shall **not** be counted as a vote for either printed candidate. Instead, it shall be counted as a valid vote for the name written.



---

## Rule M, Examples 1a–b

The following marks are valid votes for Teddy Adams.

1a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="radio"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="radio"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Write-in <u>Teddy Adams</u>

1b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input type="checkbox"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write-in <u>Teddy Adams</u>

---

Rule N

**Write-in: Candidate and Write-in  
Response Area**

If a candidate's target area is marked, the write-in target area is also marked, and something other than that candidate's name is written in the write-in response area, it shall be counted as an overvote and not a valid vote for any candidate.

If a candidate's target area is marked and the write-in target area is **not** marked, it shall be counted as a valid vote for the marked candidate.

If the voter's intent cannot be ascertained, the ballot shall be referred to the Canvassing Board.

---

## Rule N, Examples 1a–d

The following marks are tallied as overvotes, and not valid votes for any candidate.

In each example, the voter marked two target areas and wrote something other than the printed candidate's name in the space provided. These examples are tallied as overvotes.

1a

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="radio"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="radio"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Write-in <u>Clara Barton</u>

1b

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Write-in <u>Wonder Woman</u>

1c

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="radio"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="radio"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Write-in <u>Nobody</u>

1d

<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teddy Roosevelt
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Abigail S. Adams
<input type="checkbox"/>	William Henry Harrison
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Write-in <u>Teddy Roosevelt</u>

## Rule N, Examples 2a–d

The following marks are valid votes for the printed candidate, Abigail S. Adams.

In each example, the voter marked a target area for a printed candidate, but did not mark a second target area. The following examples are not tallied as overvotes.

2a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Clara Barton

2b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Wonder Woman

2c

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Nobody

2d

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in  
Teddy Roosevelt

**Write-in: Candidate  
and Write-in  
Response Area**

Rule N

---

End of Rule N. Please turn page for Rule O.

---

## Rule O

### **Write-in: Not Eligible**

A write-in vote for a race not appearing on the voter's ballot shall not be counted.

#### Exception to Rule O:

If a **provisional** ballot has been cast and the voter has written in an office or measure that is not on the ballot, that vote shall be counted if it is determined, based on the voter's registration, that he or she is eligible to vote for that office or measure.

**Write-in:  
Not Eligible  
Rule O**

## Rule O, Example 1

The write-in vote intended for the Seattle Monorail measure is not valid.

The voter has written in a vote for a race that did not appear on the ballot. This voter is not eligible to vote for the Seattle Monorail, and the vote for that race will not count. All other votes on this ballot are valid and will count.

Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14		<b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA General Election November 6, 2022</b>	
<b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the square next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.			
<b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b>		<b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teddy Roosevelt		<input type="checkbox"/> Dolley Payne Madison	
<input type="checkbox"/> Abigail S. Adams		<input type="checkbox"/> Rosa Parks	
<input type="checkbox"/> William Henry Harrison		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	
<b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b>		<b>Wash District 12 Commissioner</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wing Luke		<input type="checkbox"/> James Monroe	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurgood Marshall		<input type="checkbox"/> Elisha P. Ferry	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sacagawea		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clara Barton	
<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in		<input type="checkbox"/> Write-in	

*Handwritten notes on ballot:*  
- A line is drawn through the "Write-in" option in the State Representative District 14, Position #2 column.  
- The words "Seattle Monorail" are written across the line.  
- The word "yes" is written above the "Write-in" option in the Englewood Fire District Commissioner column.  
- The words "no way" are written below the "Write-in" option in the Englewood Fire District Commissioner column.

---

Rule P

**Write-in: Vote in the Wrong Place**

A write-in vote for a race appearing elsewhere on the ballot shall be counted as a valid vote, as long as all other requirements are fulfilled and the office, position number and political party, if applicable, are clearly indicated.



**Write-in: Vote in  
the Wrong Place  
Rule P**

**Rule P, Example 1**

The write-in vote for Teddy Roosevelt is valid.

The voter has written a write-in vote for a race that is already on the ballot, but in a different location. This must count as a valid vote for Roosevelt for State Representative District 14, Position 1.

<p>Sample Precinct Ballot Code 4 Leg District 14</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Official Ballot – Sample County, WA General Election November 6, 2222</b></p> <p><b>Instructions to voters:</b> Fill in the oval next to your choice. Vote like this: <input checked="" type="radio"/></p> <p><b>If you make a mistake:</b> Draw a line through the entire candidate's name like this: <del>George Washington</del> You then have the option of making another choice if you wish.</p>	
<p><b>State Representative District 14, Position #1</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> <del>Teddy Roosevelt</del></p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> <del>Abigail S. Adams</del></p> <p><input type="radio"/> William Henry Harrison</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	<p><b>State Representative District 14, Position #2</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Dolley Payne Madison</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Rosa Parks</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Dwight D. Eisenhower</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>
<p><b>Englewood Fire District Commissioner</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Wing Luke</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Thurgood Marshall</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Sacagawea</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>	<p><b>Water District 12 Commissioner</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> James Monroe</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Elisha P. Ferry</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Clara Barton</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Write-in</p>

State Rep Dist 14 Pos 1

Teddy Roosevelt

---

## Rule Q

### **Messy Marks**

When otherwise valid votes marked in a target area partially extend into the response area, it shall be counted as a vote if most of the mark is in the target area and intent can easily be discerned.

---

## Rule Q, Examples 1a–c

The following marks are valid votes for William Henry Harrison.

Even though the marks in these examples partially extend into other target areas, each shows a valid vote for one candidate.

1a

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1b

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

1c

**State Representative  
District 14, Position #1**

Teddy Roosevelt

Abigail S. Adams

William Henry Harrison

Write-in

\_\_\_\_\_

---

## Rule R

### **Pattern of Partisan Voting**

Voter intent in any single contest shall not be determined based on a pattern of partisan voting on the ballot.

#### Exception to Rule R:

On a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) in which the voter has not written in a candidate's name but has written in the name of a political party, the written instructions may be counted as a vote if the canvassing board can discern that a candidate's party preference is consistent with the voter's instructions. The canvassing board shall not count the instructions as a vote if no candidate's party preference is consistent with the voter's instructions, or if multiple candidates' party preferences are consistent with the voters' instructions.

---

**Rule S**

**Anything Else**

Voter intent on questionable marks not covered by the rules in this manual must be determined by County Canvassing Boards according to all applicable laws of the state of Washington and the Canvassing Board manual.

Where more than one rule may apply, the County Canvassing Board has authority to determine which rule is most appropriate.

# Glossary

## **Declared Write-in Candidate**

A candidate whose name is not printed on the ballot, but has filed a declaration of write-in candidacy with the appropriate filing officer no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

## **Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB)**

The FWAB is an alternative ballot for overseas and uniformed services voters. The ballot contains blank lines for the voter to write in candidates' names for any office. If the voter doesn't know the names of candidates, the voter may write in a political party preference.

See Rule R.

## **Overvote**

Votes cast for more than the permissible number of selections allowed in a race or measure.

An overvoted race or measure does not count in the final tally of that race or measure.

Example of an overvote would be voting for two candidates in a single race with the instruction, "vote for one."

## **Pattern of Similar Marks**

A pattern of similar marks on a voted ballot occurs when the same type of mark is made for each office, for each measure, or for each vote cast on a particular page (side) of the ballot. The marks may be inside or outside the target area.

See Rule B.

## **Response Area**

The area on the ballot corresponding to a candidate, write-in line, or choice, including the target area as well as the printed name or response and party information, if applicable.

## **Target Area**

The oval or rectangle corresponding to a candidate, write-in line, or choice on the ballot where the voter is instructed to mark their vote. Tabulation systems read target areas.

## **Undeclared Write-in Candidate**

An undeclared write-in candidate has not filed a declaration of write-in candidacy by the applicable deadline. No votes shall be counted for a write-in candidate who has not properly filed a write-in declaration of candidacy.

## **Undervote**

No selections made for a race or measure.

## **Valid Vote**

A vote which should be counted.

## **Voter Fatigue**

An indication of voter fatigue is when marks made by a voter in target areas on a ballot get smaller with each consecutive race.

## **Write-in Vote**

A vote handwritten on the ballot.

# References

## Case Law

Bush v. Gore, 531 U.S. 98, 121 S. Ct. 525, 148 L. Ed. 2d 388 (2000).

## Federal Law: 42 U.S.C. § 15481

(a) Requirements. Each voting system used in an election for Federal office shall meet the following requirements:

(6) Uniform definition of what constitutes a vote. Each state shall adopt uniform and nondiscriminatory standards that define what constitutes a vote and what will be counted as a vote for each category of voting system used in the State.

(d) Effective date. Each state and jurisdiction shall be required to comply with the requirements of this section on and after January 1, 2006.

## State Law: Revised Code of Washington (RCW)

### RCW 29A.36.111

#### Uniformity, arrangement, contents required.

(1) Every ballot for a single combination of issues, offices, and candidates shall be uniform within a precinct and shall identify the type of primary or election, the county, and the date of the primary or election, and the ballot or voting device shall contain instructions on the proper method of recording a vote, including write-in votes. Each position, together with the names of the candidates for that office, shall be clearly separated from other offices or positions in the same jurisdiction. The offices in each jurisdiction shall be clearly separated from each other. No paper ballot or ballot

card may be marked by or at the direction of an election official in any way that would permit the identification of the person who voted that ballot.

(2) An elections official may not enter into or extend any contract with a vendor if such contract may allow the vendor to acquire an ownership interest in any data pertaining to any voter, any voter's address, registration number, or history, or any ballot.

### RCW 29A.60.021

#### Write-in voting—Declaration of candidacy—Counting of vote (SB 6058).

(1) For any office, except precinct committee officer, at any election or primary, any voter may write in on the ballot the name of any person for an office. Votes must be individually tallied for a candidate who has filed as a write-in candidate for the office in the manner provided by RCW 29A.24.311 as long as the requirements of subsection (6), (7), or (8) of this section are met. No write-in vote for a declared write-in candidate may be rejected due to variation in the form of the name if the canvassing board can determine the person and office for which the voter intended to vote.

(2) The total number of write-in votes cast for each office must be recorded and reported with the canvass for the election.

(3) A write-in vote for an individual candidate for an office whose name is printed on the ballot for that same office is a valid vote for that candidate as long as the candidate's name is clearly discernible, even if the voter also marked a vote for that candidate such as to otherwise register an overvote.

## References (continued)

(4) Write-in votes cast for an individual candidate for an office whose name does not appear on the ballot need not be individually tallied unless the candidate has filed a timely declaration of write-in candidacy.

(5) In the case of write-in candidates for a statewide office or any office whose jurisdiction encompasses more than one county, write-in votes for an individual candidate must be tallied when the county auditor is notified by the filing officer for that office that a candidate has filed a timely declaration of write-in candidacy. In all other cases, the county auditor determines, in accordance with this section, whether a candidate has filed a timely declaration of write-in candidacy and thus, write-in votes must be individually tallied. The county canvassing board must certify write-in votes including the vote total received by a candidate that has filed a timely declaration of write-in candidacy if the requirements of subsection (6), (7), or (8) of this section are met. Final results must consolidate the vote total associated with each candidate after the canvassing board has reconciled any variation in the spelling of names for those candidates.

(6) In a primary, if the name of only a single candidate appears on the ballot for an office, and the total number of write-in votes cast for that office exceeds one percent of the total number of votes cast for that office, the individual write-in votes for each candidate who has filed a timely declaration of write-in candidacy must be canvassed and reported. Otherwise, individual tallying of write-in votes is not required.

(7) In a primary, if two or more candidates

appear on the ballot for an office and the total number of write-in votes cast for that office exceeds the number of votes cast for the candidate with the second highest number of votes, then the individual write-in votes for each candidate who has filed a timely declaration of write-in candidacy must be canvassed and reported. Otherwise, individual tallying of write-in votes is not required.

(8) In a general election, if the total number of write-in votes cast for an office exceeds the number of votes cast for the candidate apparently elected to that office, then the individual write-in votes for each candidate who has filed a timely declaration of write-in candidacy must be canvassed and reported. Otherwise, individual tallying of write-in votes is not required.

### **RCW 29A.60.040**

#### **Rejection of ballots or parts—Write-in votes.**

A ballot is invalid and no votes on that ballot may be counted if it is found folded together with another ballot.

Those parts of a ballot are invalid and no votes may be counted for those issues or offices where more votes are cast for the office or issue than are permitted by law; write-in votes do not contain all of the information required under RCW 29A.60.021; or that issue or office is not marked with sufficient definiteness to determine the voter's choice or intention. No write-in vote may be rejected due to a variation in the form of the name if the canvassing board can determine the issue for or against which or the person and the office for which the voter intended to vote.



## References (continued)

### **RCW 29A.60.100**

#### **Votes by stickers, printed labels, rejected.**

Votes cast by stickers or printed labels are not valid for any purpose and shall be rejected. Votes cast by sticker or label shall not affect the validity of other offices or issues on the voter's ballot.

### **RCW 29A.60.120**

#### **Counting ballots—Official returns.**

(1) All voted ballots must be manually inspected for damage, write-in votes, and incorrect or incomplete marks. If it is found that any ballot is damaged so that it cannot properly be counted by the vote tallying system, a true duplicate copy must be made of the damaged ballot in the presence of witnesses and substituted for the damaged ballot. All damaged ballots must be kept by the county auditor until sixty days after the primary or election or according to federal law, whichever is longer.

(2) The returns produced by the vote tallying system, to which have been added the counts of questioned ballots, and write-in votes, constitute the official returns of the primary or election in that county.

### **RCW 29A.60.125**

#### **Damaged ballots.**

If inspection of the ballot reveals a physically damaged ballot or ballot that may be otherwise unreadable or uncountable by the tabulating system, the county auditor may refer the ballot to the county canvassing board or duplicate the ballot if so authorized by the county canvassing board. The voter's original ballot may not be

altered. A ballot may be duplicated only if the intent of the voter's marks on the ballot is clear and the electronic voting equipment might not otherwise properly tally the ballot to reflect the intent of the voter. Ballots must be duplicated by teams of two or more people working together. When duplicating ballots, the county auditor shall take the following steps to create and maintain an audit trail of the action taken:

(1) Each original ballot and duplicate ballot must be assigned the same unique control number, with the number being marked upon the face of each ballot, to ensure that each duplicate ballot may be tied back to the original ballot;

(2) A log must be kept of the ballots duplicated, which must at least include:

- (a) The control number of each original ballot and the corresponding duplicate ballot;
- (b) The initials of at least two people who participated in the duplication of each ballot; and
- (c) The total number of ballots duplicated.

Original and duplicate ballots must be sealed in secure storage at all times, except during duplication, inspection by the canvassing board, tabulation, or to conduct an audit under RCW 29A.60.185.

# References (continued)

## **State Law: Washington Administrative Code (WAC)**

### **WAC 434-235-040 Processing ballots.**

(1) Any abbreviation, misspelling, or other minor variation in the form of the name of a candidate or a political party shall be disregarded in determining the validity of a federal write-in absentee ballot or a special absentee ballot if the intention of the voter can be ascertained.

### **WAC 434-261-005 Definitions.**

(3) "Readable ballot" is any ballot that the certified vote tallying system can accept and read as the voter intended without alteration, and that meets the standards of the county canvassing board subject to the provisions contained in this title;

(4) "Unreadable ballot" is any ballot that cannot be read by the vote tallying system as the voter intended without alteration. Unreadable ballots may include, but not be limited to, ballots with damage, write-in votes, incorrect or incomplete marks, and questions of voter intent. Unreadable ballots may subsequently be counted as provided by these administrative rules; ...

### **WAC 434-261-120 Referral of questionable ballots to canvassing board.**

Whenever counting center personnel has a question about the validity of a ballot or the votes contained on the ballot that they are unable

to resolve, the ballot shall be forwarded to the canvassing board for review. The facts giving rise to the question of validity must be noted.

Ballots being held for determination of validity or voter's intent shall be provided the same security as regular voted ballots and shall be kept in a secure area when not being processed.

### **WAC 434-261-070 Manual inspection of ballots.**

(1) All voting positions on voted ballots shall be manually inspected on both sides of the ballot to determine whether the ballot is readable by the vote tabulating system. The county auditor must ensure that write-in votes are tabulated correctly, consistent with the voter's intent. Ballots must be inspected for overvotes, undervotes, and write-in votes prior to tabulation. This manual inspection is a required part of processing ballots.

(2) The state of Washington is a voter intent state. When a voter's choice or intention can be determined, that vote shall be counted. If the manual inspection process detects any physically damaged ballots, unreadable ballots which might not be correctly counted by the tabulating equipment, or marks that differ from those specified in the voting instructions, such ballots may be duplicated or resolved, if necessary, and counted according to the statewide standards on what is a vote, as provided in WAC 434-261-086. The county canvassing board may authorize the county auditor to duplicate ballots that may be unreadable or uncountable by the tabulating system. Write-in votes without a readable

## References (continued)

mark in the target area must be duplicated or resolved. The county canvassing board shall make the final determination of voter intent for ballots not addressed in the statewide standards on what is a vote.

### **WAC 434-261-075**

#### **Votes on something other than a ballot.**

If the voter returns voting responses by mail on any form other than a ballot, the votes thereon shall be acceptable and tallied provided that:

(1) Only votes for offices or measures for which the voter is eligible are counted.

(2) The candidate or measure response position for which the voter is voting can be clearly identified.

(3) The ballot issued is not returned, or if returned, contains no marks indicating an attempt to vote it.

(4) A valid signature on a ballot declaration is received with the voting responses.

The votes accepted must then be duplicated to a ballot that can be read by the electronic voting equipment.

Votes on a ballot from a previous primary or election cannot be counted for another primary or election. These ballots must be rejected per WAC 434-262-031.

### **WAC 434-261-086**

#### **Statewide standards on what is a vote.**

(1) Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 15481(a)(6) and *Bush v. Gore*, 531 U.S. 98 (2000), the following

standards determine whether irregular marks on a ballot constitute a valid vote that may be counted. ...

(2) The secretary of state shall publish an illustrated version of these standards in each optical scan and digital scan voting system used in the state. The secretary of state shall distribute the illustrated version to each county canvassing board and post it on the web site.

(3) The secretary of state shall periodically review and update the manual as necessary, and seek input from county canvassing boards and other interested parties to ensure that the standards remain current and comprehensive.

### **WAC 434-262-031**

#### **Rejection of ballots or parts of ballots.**

(1) The disposition of provisional ballots is governed by WAC 434-262-032. The county canvassing board must reject any ballot cast by a voter who was not qualified to vote, or for other reasons required by law or administrative rule. A log must be kept of all voted ballots rejected, and must be included in the minutes of each county canvassing board meeting.

(2) Ballots or parts of ballots shall be rejected by the canvassing board in the following instances:

(a) Where a voter has already voted one ballot;

(b) Where two voted ballots are returned together:

(i) If the two ballots are returned with only one valid signature on the ballot declaration, the races and measures voted the same on both ballots may be counted once.

## References (continued)

(ii) If the two ballots are returned with two valid signatures on the ballot declaration, both ballots may be counted in their entirety;

(c) Where a ballot or parts of a ballot are marked in such a way that it is not possible to determine the voter's intent consistent with WAC 434-261-086;

(d) Where the voter has voted for candidates or issues for whom he or she is not entitled to vote;

(e) Where the voter has overvoted;

(f) Where the voter validly transferred out of the county;

(g) Where the ballot was created for a prior election.

(2)(a) If a write-in candidate for partisan office does not file a write-in declaration of candidacy but does qualify for the general election ballot, the candidate has not stated a preference for a political party and therefore shall have "(states no party preference)" printed on the general election ballot.

(b) If a write-in candidate for partisan office files a write-in declaration of candidacy and qualifies for the general election ballot, the party preference stated on the write-in declaration of candidacy, if any, shall be printed on the general election ballot.

### **WAC 434-262-160**

#### **Write-in voting—Voter intent.**

(1) In all cases of write-in votes the canvassing board shall exercise all reasonable efforts to determine the voter's intent. Write-in votes in the general election are not to be counted for any person who filed for the same office as either a regular or write-in candidate at the preceding primary and failed to qualify for the general election. If a write-in declaration of candidacy has been filed, the voter need only write in that candidate's name in order for the vote to be counted; the candidate's party preference does not impact whether the write-in vote shall be counted. If no declaration of write-in candidacy has been filed, the voter must write in the name of the candidate and, if the office or position number cannot be determined by the location of the write-in on the ballot, the office and position number, in order for the write-in vote to be counted.









This publication was produced by the Certification and Training Program, Office of the Secretary of State, in partnership with the Washington State Association of County Auditors and the statewide Voter Intent Committee.

For questions, please contact:

Elections Division  
PO Box 40229  
Olympia, WA 98504-0229  
t. 360.902.4180  
f. 360.664.4619  
[www.vote.wa.gov](http://www.vote.wa.gov)

For the purposes of this manual, political party preference and other ballot format requirements have not been included in the pictorial examples unless specifically relating to the rule.

**Printed 2018**