



Maryland Association of Election Officials

Representing the Local Election Boards of the State of Maryland

Senator Nancy J. King, Chair
Maryland Senate Reapportionment & Redistricting
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

January 18, 2022

RE: SJ0002/SJ0003/HJ0001/HJ0002

Information only

Chair King and Members of the Committee:

My name is Katherine Berry. I represent the Maryland Association of Election Officials (MAEO) as the legislative liaison and I am also the election director for the Carroll County Board of Elections. Today, I am here to express MAEO's concern for the implementation process of redistricting.

Typically, the process of redistricting and to prepare for an election take approximately **3-18 months**. As stated earlier, it is ideal to have all maps implemented at the same time, so this process is only done once. If the maps cannot be implemented at one time, this process will have to be repeated which will cause voter confusion and additional time for local boards to implement. If there are many changes to all maps, the local boards of elections will be required to manage all of these tasks within weeks of a gubernatorial primary election. Factors such as staff overtime, amounts of staff and resources must be taken into consideration for every stage of the process. Pending litigation against any of the maps and the election calendar deadlines must be taken into consideration.

Redistricting has multiple layers:

1. Congressional
2. Legislative
3. Local

The easiest way to explain the process is to think about three maps drawn individually. To implement the proposed lines, all three maps need to be laid on top of each other to determine if any of the new lines match. If they do not match, this creates new precincts within election districts. It is not ideal to have maps approved at different times because the local boards of elections cannot complete a solid analysis of how many precincts are required until all maps are overlaid. This is an administrative challenge because there are not enough hours in the day to complete all steps of the process of implementing consolidated precincts or adding new precincts.

Step 1: Approval of all maps

The approval of all maps are completed by the General Assembly and by the county delegation for counties with charter governments. **This is the first time in Maryland where the maps must be approved so close to a primary election.** In 2010, there was a gubernatorial election, but the election was held in September. In 2000, there was a presidential election, so local and legislative districts were not as critical.

Step 2: Outsource mapping/GIS department assistance

Some counties will outsource the mapping that is required because of the various census methods used during redistricting. This is the ideal solution because other election preparations are being managed at the same time such as election judge training and processing mail-in ballot applications. Mail-in ballot applications are being sent to voters in February which is when we expect to have some information as it pertains to legislative redistricting. In larger jurisdictions such as Anne Arundel County, outsourcing mapping that is needed could cost around \$200,000. This solution may not be needed if the new maps do not make drastic changes to current election district and precinct lines.

Step 3: Manual review of street information

The statewide voter registration database street file must be reviewed in each local board of elections. This includes a manual comparison of the data that is returned from the outsourced company or GIS department. **Each street number** and address must be reviewed to make sure that no change is needed to any district. This is a very time-consuming process that will be done concurrently to processing voter registration applications and election judge training.

Step 4: Determine the number of voters in an election district

New precincts can be implemented basically in one of two ways.

1. An entirely new location (precinct) for a group of voters to vote; or
2. Consolidate a precinct that might fall in the same election district as another precinct into the same location.

Step 5: Determine whether new polling places are needed

There are two ways to manage new polling places. Again, this includes a new physical location or consolidation of a location. If a new location is needed, the local board of elections must identify potential physical locations, perform site surveys and ADA surveys, provide a contract or MOU with the facility, and secure each location. Due to deadlines in the Election Law concerning mailing notification to voters and establishing new polling places, it is less costly and time consuming to consolidate locations.

A new polling place requires:

- A physical location – If the new polling place is a private facility, there are fees involved. This is not feasible for 2022 because the timeframe to find, evaluate, and reserve a location is too short.
- Additional voting equipment, ancillary items, and supplies
- Additional election judges

A consolidated location would mean:

- A larger number of voters going to one location, so the facility must be large enough to meet the expected capacity.
- Double the amount of ballot styles in that location. Each precinct requires its own set of ballot styles as required by the State Board of Elections. This would be conducted like an early voting center.
- Additional election judges

Step 6: Consider number of ballots required

- More ballot styles will be required if more polling places are created because there is one ballot style per polling place.

- Some counties are currently managing up to 800 different ballot styles at an early voting center for the 2022 Gubernatorial Primary Election. In a primary election, each polling place must have a Democratic, Republican and, in some counties, a Non-Partisan ballot. In Carroll County, there are currently (without any maps or redistricting being completed) 36 polling places. There are 3 ballot styles per polling place. Currently, there are a total of 108 ballot styles that election judges must have at early voting centers. Large counties will have nearly 1,000 ballot styles at early voting centers.
- It may take the State Board of Elections at least three weeks to create all of the ballot styles required.
- Factors such as space, storage and transportation at early voting centers and polling places must be considered as new polling places are added.

Step 7: Consider current or future candidate filings

Candidates will be placed into the proper districts so that ballots can be produced. The deadline to file as a candidate will be February 22, 2022. The deadline for ballot production is April 25, 2022. This is a particular challenge because candidates who have already filed may be redistricted and may result in candidates withdrawing. People who are interested in filing will wait until the deadline creating an administrative challenge for the local boards of election offices.

Step 8: Voting equipment, ancillary items, and supplies

Requests for additional voting equipment typically require a 6-12 month notice in advance. Getting additional ancillary items and supplies will be hindered because of supply chain issues. Existing polling places may have less voting equipment and supplies to supplement the new polling places.

Consideration of warehouse and office space to securely store additional transportation equipment, voting equipment, ballot styles, and supplies must be acknowledged. Because election materials are considered critical infrastructure, there are specific guidelines that must be followed to securely store the voting equipment, ballots, and all other election materials.

Step 9: Enter polling place information & connect addresses

New polling place information must be manually entered into the statewide voter registration database. This step is necessary to make sure that voters are accurately assigned to the correct districts.

Step 10: Mail voter notification cards

It is required by Election Law to mail every voter a new voter notification card if when a voter is assigned to a new congressional, legislative, or local district must be sent a voter notification card. It is also required by Election Law to mail a new voter notification card to voters if their polling place changes.

Some counties will outsource this process. Outsourcing could cost between \$8,000 and up to several hundred thousand dollars depending on the size of the county and the number of voters who will have to get a new voter notification card.

Election Law requires this process to be completed by March 29, 2022.

Step 11: Election judges

New precincts require additional election judges to run the polling place. Election judges must be recruited, hired, and trained by the start of early voting in June.

MAEO urges the General Assembly to act as quickly as possible to vote on maps to maximize the amount of time the local boards of elections have to implement the maps, notify voters and allow the candidates adequate time to campaign effectively. The 2022 gubernatorial election is a complex election and redistricting is only **one component** of many concerns that MAEO will be bringing to the attention of the General Assembly in the coming days. If you have any questions, please contact me at katherine.berry@maryland.gov or (410)386-2958.

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