



NORTH CAROLINA

State Board of Elections & Ethics Enforcement

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NUMBERED MEMO 2017-05

TO: County Boards of Elections
FROM: Kim Strach, Executive Director
RE: Minimum Number of Ballots for Municipal Elections
DATE: August 18, 2017

Previously, regulations required county boards of elections to prepare ballots in a number equal to 100% of the number of registered voters in the primary or election. Earlier this year, these regulations expired, and accordingly the following instructions are provided for county boards of election to ensure that a sufficient number of ballots to be prepared in advance of municipal elections.

For municipal primaries and elections, county boards of elections are now required to prepare ballots in a number at least equal to 50% of the number of registered voters in the county immediately prior to that election or primary. If a second primary or runoff is necessary, the county board shall prepare and distribute ballots in a number equal to at least twice the number of ballots issued for that particular race in the first primary or election.

Counties that use direct record electronic (DRE) voting systems may request to reduce their required number of ballots by the number of projected DRE ballots to be cast based on previous similar elections. Requests for reduction in the required number of ballots should include the justification for the reduction and any relevant data from previous similar elections. Similarly, if the contests in a county cover only a small portion of the electorate for that primary or election, a county board may request permission to reduce the number of ballots produced accordingly. Any such request should include relevant documentation or data to support the request.

County boards should exercise sound judgment, including reviewing turnout in similar past elections, in determining the number of ballot styles to prepare and the distribution of ballots by ballot styles among voting locations. The distribution of ballots to election-day precincts should take into account the turnout at one-stop locations during that primary or election.