



HOUSE BILL 834: State Board of Elections Administrative Changes.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Analysis of: S.L. 2026-60

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S.L. 2026-60 (House Bill 834) does the following with respect to the counting of cast ballots and to curing deficiencies in those cast ballots:

- Provides that when an executed mail-in absentee ballot is delivered in person by the voter's near relative or verifiable legal guardian, that individual must complete an affidavit as to his or her eligibility to return the executed absentee ballot to an election official, and requires the State Board of Elections (State Board) to adopt a form affidavit for use by county boards of elections (county boards) for this purpose, effective January 1, 2027.
- Requires county boards to begin counting ballots cast prior to Election Day by early one-stop voting and traditional mail-in absentee voting at the time set by each county board. Each county board must adopt a resolution setting the time to begin counting between 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. on Election Day; the resolution must be adopted at least two weeks prior to Election Day.
- Makes it a Class I felony for any person to knowingly reveal the result of any count of ballots prior to the close of the polls on Election Day.
- Requires a county board to notify a voter of a curable deficiency in a cast ballot no later than the close of business on the next business day following the county board's review of the cast ballot. This notification must be sent by mail, and by telephone and email if available.
- Requires cure documentation for curable deficiencies in cast ballots to be returned to a county board no later than noon on the fifth business day after the election (Tuesday after Election Day) in order for the cast ballot to be counted.
- Provides that when a county board has determined within five business days after the election that there are grounds to believe an affidavit completed by a voter for lack of photo ID is false, the county board must determine whether to count the provisional ballot cast by the voter by the date of the county canvass.
- Extends the time for county boards to announce a tally of all traditional mail-in absentee ballots, other than military and overseas ballots and ballots subject to a challenge, and extends the time to count all provisional ballots cast to no later than the close of business on the fifth business day after the election (Tuesday after Election Day).

In addition, S.L. 2026-60 does the following with respect to conducting elections:

- Requires each county board to ensure all of the following at the end of the early one-stop voting period:
 - Early voting equipment must be rendered unable to receive additional votes.

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- The early one-stop vote count cannot be revealed prior to the close of the polls on Election Day.
 - Paper ballots and electronic records of votes cast must be stored securely and separately from each other.
- Provides that if a cast ballot is challenged based upon the death of the voter, and that challenge is sustained because the voter died between the time the ballot was cast and 11:59 P.M. on the day before the election, no portion of the challenged ballot can be counted.
- Provides that the venue for judicial review of any State Board decision would be either the Superior Court of Wake County or the Superior Court of the county in which the person seeking review resides.
- Provides that when a Class C drivers license is temporarily deemed valid for up to two years after the date of expiration for driving privileges, that drivers license must also be deemed valid and unexpired as photo ID when voting. This section of the act expires on December 31, 2027.

Except as otherwise provided, the act became effective on August 11, 2026.