

# THE UNIVERSITY *of* NEW MEXICO

## ASSESSING ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE IN NEW MEXICO USING AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

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# 2012 Bernalillo County Election Administration Study Executive Summary

The 2012 New Mexico Election Administration Report represents a systematic examination of Bernalillo County, New Mexico's November 2012 General Election. It is the fourth election report in a series that we began unintentionally in 2006 with our academic partners R. Michael Alvarez, professor at the California Institute of Technology, and Thad E. Hall, associate professor at the University of Utah. To our knowledge no other state has had the kind of sustained and independent analysis over multiple elections. But New Mexico is a unique environment culturally, politically, and electorally, and county clerks, especially Bernalillo County Clerk Maggie Toulouse Oliver, project partners, the Secretary of State's office, and the broader electoral community, made up of a variety of activist organizations, have supported and encouraged our efforts. Moreover, feedback on our work from regular voters and poll workers, as well as responsiveness by local election administrators, has made our efforts productive and helpful as New Mexico continues to reform and improve its electoral processes.

In this report, we combine qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the New Mexico election landscape.<sup>1</sup> The key to improving elections is to use a data driven approach that systematically examines a variety of measures to determine election performance deficiencies and strengths.<sup>2</sup> For the 2012 study we collected and analyzed data on the experiences of Bernalillo County voters and poll workers and independently observed Bernalillo County Election Day and early voting.<sup>3</sup> Together these data, along with a comparison of data from previous elections, provide a portrait of the election experience from which problems and successes can be identified and confirmed from multiple players. Our research design is a multi-pronged evaluation strategy. Combining data from different electoral actors provides multiple perspectives from key players and groups to assess how well the election was run and how the management of the election can be improved in future elections.

In 2007, we released our first research report on New Mexico entitled the *New Mexico Election Administration Report*.<sup>4</sup> At the beginning of 2010, we released our 2008 Ecosystem

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<sup>1</sup> See our work, R. Michael Alvarez, Lonna Rae Atkeson, and Thad Hall, 2012, *Evaluating Elections: A Handbook of Methods and Standards*, Cambridge University Press. For another example of an ecosystem approach see: Steven F. Huefner, Daniel P. Tokaji, & Edward B. Foley with Nathan A. Cemenska, 2007, *From Registration to Recounts: The Election Ecosystem of Five Midwestern States*, (The Ohio State University Michael E. Moritz College of Law), available at: <http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/electionlaw/joyce/index.php>.

<sup>2</sup> See R. Michael Alvarez, Lonna Rae Atkeson and Thad E. Hall 2012, *Evaluating Elections: A Handbook of Methods and Standards*, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Evaluating the fairness and accuracy of democracies is an important international and national question, see, for example, Heather K. Gerken (2009), *The Democracy Index*. Princeton: Princeton University Press and Jorgen Elkitt and Andrew Reynolds, 2005, "A Framework for the Systematic Study of Election Quality," *Democratization* 12 (2):147-62.

<sup>4</sup> R. Michael Alvarez, Lonna Rae Atkeson and Thad E. Hall, 2007, *The New Mexico Election Administration Report: The 2006 November General Election*, (University of New Mexico), available at: <http://www.unm.edu/~atkeson/newmexico.html>.

report.<sup>5</sup> In early 2011, we released our 2010 New Mexico Election Administration Report.<sup>6</sup> The 2006, 2008 and 2010 reports provide points of comparison for how the system has evolved since the implementation of a statewide optical scan paper ballot system in 2006. We use these data wherever possible to assist us in determining where improvements or deteriorations have occurred.

Part 1 of this report examines Election Day and Early Voting observations in Bernalillo County and poll worker training. We found that voting went smoothly and largely without complications, and that overall election officials did a good job in preparing for implementing the 2012 general election and in implementing the Vote Center Model for the first time on a full scale. The new methods of training, which focused on poll worker specialization, improved the consistency and uniformity of the voter experience across vote centers. Nevertheless, our observations produce a number of recommendations to: improve poll worker training, the uniformity of voter identification across vote centers, ballot security, voter privacy, the sort procedure, the My Vote app, as well as general polling place policies and procedures.

Part 2 of this report examines the attitudes and experiences of a sample of poll workers in Bernalillo County, New Mexico. The goal of the survey was two-fold: first, to determine how poll workers generally view the election process in New Mexico, and second, to examine specific electoral issues and questions. Therefore, we analyze the characteristics of poll workers, their recruitment and training, an assessment by poll workers of their polling locations, the use of voter identification, problems that occurred at the polls, their training experience and suggestions for improvement, their attitude toward the vote centers, an evaluation of election procedures, the use of provisional balloting, voter privacy, contact with the county clerk, job confidence and satisfaction as well as attitudes toward election reform and fraud.

Part 3 of this report turns to the attitudes and experiences of a random sample of Bernalillo County voters. The report examines factors associated with the voting experience, experience with the ballot, the polling site, voter interaction with poll workers, voter confidence, voter identification, voter identification attitudes, attitudes toward the new vote center model, toward election administration, and voter satisfaction. This survey gives corroborating evidence supporting the findings from our Election Day observations and poll worker reports as well as providing additional information about how the public reacts to and feels toward the election process.

The combined report provides a multifaceted profile of the election landscape in Bernalillo County, New Mexico. Most importantly, our analysis shows a system that is fundamentally working, where voter problems are infrequent, and where voter and poll worker confidence is generally high. For example, voters indicate that their confidence in their

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<sup>5</sup> Lonna Rae Atkeson, R. Michael Alvarez and Thad E. Hall, 2010, *Assessing Electoral Performance in New Mexico Using an Ecosystem Approach*, (University of New Mexico), available at: <http://www.unm.edu/~atkeson/newmexico.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Lonna Rae Atkeson, R. Michael Alvarez, Alex Adams and Lisa Bryant, The 2010 New Mexico Election Administration Report (University of New Mexico), available at: <http://www.unm.edu/~atkeson/newmexico.html>

vote being counted correctly is quite high with almost half of voters (49%) saying they are very confident and about three in five voters (38%) somewhat confident. Poll worker confidence is much higher with over eight in ten poll workers (83%) saying they are very confident that votes are counted correctly, and another 13% are somewhat confident. Only about 3% of poll workers indicated that they were not very confident and no poll workers indicated that they were not at all confident. Thus, poll workers strongly believed that the vote tabulating machine, the ES&S M100, and hand counting methods produced accurate results of the election. Voters rated the overall performance of their poll workers very high with almost all voters (96%) indicating their poll workers were very helpful (75%) or somewhat helpful (21%). Using a 10-point scale, we also had poll workers evaluate the overall performance of each position. These data also show very high evaluations of poll workers. Fully 75% of poll workers rated the overall performance of their presiding judge 7 or higher, 78% gave their exceptions judge a 7 or higher, 83% gave their floor judges a 7 or higher, 86% gave their floaters a 7 or higher, 94% gave their system clerks a 7 or higher, 88% gave their machine judge a 7 or higher and 80% gave their student clerks a 7 or higher.

Equally important, the early and Election Day observations revealed a variety of strengths and weaknesses in the election system leading to a series of policy recommendations. For example, Election Day observations showed vast improvements in the implementation of voter identification laws compared to 2006, 2008, and 2010, but a few vote centers on Election Day were still incorrectly processing voters, and one vote center started requesting hard forms of identification, such as drivers licenses, to process voters more quickly due to long lines. In general, however, the training was clearly improved. The new process emphasized uniformity by having the poll worker ask identical questions of each voter. Continued emphasis during training on the uniformity of this method and its importance for a consistent and legal voter experience will help to continue to increase compliance with New Mexico's voter identification law.

Based on our findings, we also highlight several areas where improvements could be made in voter education as well as poll worker training and vote center preparations. Although most polling locations had the supplies and workers they needed, one in five poll workers reported that their vote center was missing supplies. We noted in our observations that some vote centers were very busy with very long lines, while other vote centers had very short waits. We suggest that the number of poll workers and the amount of equipment available for processing voters be based upon the history of Election Day turnout, the vote center's location relative to the density of nearby voters and workplace locations, as well as the amount of voters living nearby who have already voted early or by absentee. Given that this was the first general election in which the vote center model was implemented the county had little solid information to use in determining the best locations for larger quantities of human and equipment resources. Future elections will reap the benefits of information gathered here in this regard.

In the case of supplies, we recommend that checklists be developed to ensure each precinct has all the necessary supplies to perform its Election Day operations and that poll judges review their supplies before election morning to ensure that they are prepared.

In addition to these issues, each part of our report identifies key areas where voters could be better served including issues related to voter privacy, and whether voters should be encouraged to have their ballot hand counted if they over voted or if their ballot did not print properly so that it was unreadable by the M100. We also often provide specific recommendations to enhance the efficiency and general quality of the voting experience.

Although we identify some issues in the implementation of the 2012 election, relative to previous elections, this election was generally problem-free and the most well run election we observed since we began observing elections in Bernalillo County in 2006. However, as critical problems in the election are addressed, it is important that election officials remain aware of other issues that arise and could become larger problems if left unattended. This report should, therefore, be read as one in a series of observations and recommendations on how to improve an already improving process.

The recommendations contained in the report are primarily administrative in nature and in many cases the Secretary of State may want to issue administrative rules to obtain uniformity across counties and precincts or vote centers, rather than deal with these issues at the local level. Alternatively, the County Clerk may want to use the information to create new vote center procedures. However, there are three recommendations that could require legislative action to be effectively addressed.

First, the multi-layered voter identification law in New Mexico helps to create an uneven implementation environment. Though we have seen huge administrative improvement to address this problem and the county is making great strides in poll worker training that is significantly improving the historically uneven implementation of this law, the problem, in part, may lie with the statute itself. Although the lawmakers were attempting to promote easy access to the polls, the flexibility in the identification process creates a chaotic environment where poll workers can easily go outside of the law because the law offers so many alternatives. This, in turn, creates uneven implementation across and within voting locations. Although poll worker training and voter education is helping to solve the problem and the improvement this year were quite large, more serious measures may be necessary to remedy the problem completely.

Second, the legislature passed legislation allowing for a vote center or precinct based election model. Vote centers allow voters to vote anywhere in their county. In 2012, many voters were confused and did not realize they needed to be in their county to vote and thought that they could use any vote center statewide. Given the frequent travel between Bernalillo, Sandoval, Los Alamos, Santa Fe, San Miguel, Rio Arriba, Taos, Torrance, and Valencia counties it would benefit voters to be able to use any vote center in the state to cast their ballot. Therefore, the legislature may want to consider providing voters opportunities to vote across county lines.

Third, the existing law requires that poll workers party identification be included on their nametags. We recommend that legislators reconsider this statute. The party identification of the poll worker may be seen as a form of electioneering by voters in the polling place. Polling place electioneering is not allowed by statute and voters are not allowed to wear

buttons, shirts or other items that may be construed as electioneering. If the intent of the law is to ensure voters that poll workers from different parties are running the vote center then this information could be better achieved through other reporting means. Some voters may feel intimidated by having, for example, a Democratic poll worker assist them with their ballot if they are mostly voting for Republicans.

Finally, we wish to make clear that our work would not have been possible without the assistance of many individuals throughout New Mexico who we thank throughout this report. We also relied upon the direct research support of many students and colleagues, and in each part of the report below we indicate those individuals who assisted with the research and analysis. This is especially true for the Election Day observations where graduate and undergraduate students observed voting as part of their class assignments. Funding for these projects came from a contract with the Bernalillo County Clerk, the Department of Political Science at the University of New Mexico, and the Center for the Study of Voting, Elections and Democracy at the University of New Mexico. Of course, all of the conclusions and recommendations made within this report are ours and do not reflect the views of any of these individuals or entities.

## **Summary of Key Recommendations:**

### **Recommendations Regarding Poll Worker Training**

- Bernalillo County revamped their training in 2012, making it more hands on and focused on specific jobs. For example, systems clerks went to one training session while presiding judges went to another. This was a good change. Overall, poll workers were better trained to fulfill their duties. Bernalillo County should continue to train poll workers for specific tasks.
- Several open ended responses in our survey indicated there were specific areas where training could be improved through introducing scenario-based or role playing training, where election workers are presented with various problems that may occur on Election Day and then taught how to address them. This could include more experiential techniques such as situational analysis, role-playing, and using probing techniques to elicit responses and discussion among the participants.
- More training needs to be done to prepare poll workers for the paperwork related to closing the polls and the ballot reconciliation process. Going over specific examples of how to put all the pieces together to have a smooth closing would save time at the end of Election Day when poll workers are exhausted.
- Although we strongly agree with the compartmentalization of training, there needs to be some general overview of the election administration processes in each training so that all poll workers know who they should talk to when a problem or question arises.

## Recommendations Regarding Staffing and Polling Place Set Up

- Although the county prescreened and tested poll workers to determine their computer literacy level, we suggest any testing of poll workers capabilities also consider their level of comfort and previous work experience with such equipment, as well as their general capability. Poll workers in key positions, such as the systems clerk, can increase or decrease the rate of processing a voter significantly. Giving locations with high turnout better assignment of the right type of poll worker, in the right job, could significantly impact the smooth operation, quick voter through put and overall functioning within a polling site.
- Continue the use of large banners to help identify polling locations. Keep signage for polling place locations as far away from candidate signage as possible.
- If the location of the VCC within the school or community complex is not obvious, put up additional signage from the various parking locations to assist voters in finding the voting area.
- Polling places that are located in difficult-to-find locations (especially those that are not near major roads or intersections) should have additional signage to help identify them. Poll workers should have clear and possibly site specific instructions about where to put signage outside of the polling place. Poll workers should be instructed to periodically check the signs to make sure that they are still present throughout Election Day, and that they are accurately placed in a visible location. This might be a good job for one of the floaters.
- Given the number of signs or posters required at each VCC, such as the “Voter’s Bill of Rights,” “How to Complete a Ballot,” etc., we suggest that one large poster be created that combines most of the required signage. This larger sign could include a prominently placed county logo or Secretary of State logo and be larger than all of the other posters nearby, allowing it to stand out. Signs should be placed near the front of the entrance to the VCC and where voters can easily observe and read the information. It was noted that the Voter’s Bill of Rights was unreadable in many of the VCCs due to placement. If possible, in some locations, two posters would be preferred, one to display inside the polling place and one to hang where voters are waiting in line, so that they know their rights before entering the voting location.
- If a major road way is under construction in front of a planned VCC, the VCC should be relocated if at all possible. Additionally, the county should notify the city in advance of all voting locations, requesting that minor work, such as pothole repair, be conducted at a time other than on Election Day.
- Spread experienced poll workers from early voting locations around on Election Day so that other VCCs have the benefit of their experience and knowledge.

- In VCCs with heavy traffic consider adding more printers, computers, and systems clerks since the bottleneck happens almost exclusively at this station.
- Having the County set up polling places in advance made for a good voter flow in many voting locations and appeared to increase voter privacy. Continue centralizing this aspect of the VCC. Some locations were hampered, however, because of the building shape. Replace lower quality locations that have poor flow due to building shape.
- Incidents or unusual activities that occur during Election Day, early voting or in the counting of absentee ballots should be recorded by poll workers in an incident log and returned to the county clerk's office for review.
- In off years, local election officials should discuss with school officials before Election Day how to handle normal student activity so that it does not interfere or hinder the voting process.

### **Recommendations Regarding Opening Procedures**

- A second poll worker, perhaps the exceptions judge, needs to be designated as the poll worker in charge when the presiding judge does not show up on time. The designated second-in-command poll worker needs to be provided with instructions on what to do if the presiding judge does not show up on time. They need to be provided with the central location number to report the problem so that the presiding judge can be contacted to determine the nature of the problem and whether the county needs to find a replacement.
- A checklist should be created that enumerates all of the equipment needed at a VCC and should be checked off when equipment is delivered to ensure that all of the necessary equipment is available to open the polls on time.
- A checklist should also be created for the presiding judge so that he or she can check off that each VCC has all necessary supplies before they open. This should be the first step when opening the polls. Any supplies not delivered should be called in to county officials immediately, so that they can arrive as soon as possible.

### **Recommendations Regarding the Ballot on Demand System**

- The systems clerks should not be responsible for issuing a new ballot to voters whose ballot was spoiled due to problems with ballot printing or voter error. This slowed down the processing of voters substantially. Perhaps a computer and printing station should be set aside for all spoiled ballots at each location, that would be available to the presiding and exceptions judges or another party who is familiar with the system (including the ballot clerk –the poll worker who printed out sample ballots and was one of the least busy poll workers).

- The frequency of problems with the ballot on demand system should be tracked to determine on-going problems with certain hardware or software. In particular, problems such as ballots that do not print correctly and are not readable by the M100 need to be enumerated.
- Develop procedures for how to handle technical problems related to the ballot-on-demand system.

## **Recommendations Regarding Voter Privacy, Photos and Movie Cameras**

- Voter privacy was significantly increased during the 2012 election. Continued training on the importance of voter privacy will likely yield additional compliance. Therefore, poll workers should offer the voter privacy sleeve consistently across all VCCs and to all voters. Discuss in training the importance of voter privacy and that voters may vary in their use of such an item, but for those voters who feel their privacy is at stake, this item may be important for their comfort and security.
- Presiding judges and poll workers should be discouraged from noting a voter's status as a new or repeat voter, party affiliation, or any other personal voter information out loud. Such identification may make the voter feel uncomfortable.
- Any taping of the voting process by a news agency or other movie producer should be cleared directly by the Clerk's Office. This ensures that the movie producer is a legitimate filmmaker and places the control of these observers in the hands of the local election official. Local officials can provide the movie producer with the rules governing their activities and clear the time of this activity with the presiding judge, since they have many other obligations to attend to during voting and likely cannot be bothered much with additional activities.
- The addition of signage telling voters to turn off their cell phones was helpful, however, signage is easily overlooked. Therefore, voters should be encouraged by a poll worker, the greeter, to turn off their cell phones when entering a voting location. In locations, where the greeter informed voters that they should turn off their cell phones we saw much greater compliance with this request.
- Voters should not be allowed to take photographs of their ballot or other people's ballot at the voting booth or anywhere inside the VCC at any stage of the process. This is disruptive and may make some voter's feel their voter privacy is at risk. If photographs in the VCC are allowed for some legal reason, clear policies need to be formulated that defines where, how, and by whom photographs can be taken.

## **Recommendations Regarding Over Voted, Spoiled Ballots and Ballot Design**

- The machine judge should inform voters who spoil their ballots and want them hand counted that they need to be sure that the over voted office is clearly marked so that hand counting can determine a preference.
- Having a specialized position for spoiled and other non-regular ballots is a great innovation to keep the polling place running smoothly. The exception judge needs to be certain that the privacy of any voter they work with is maintained at all times.
- Given the amount of time it takes to hand count ballots, along with the fact that hand counted ballots are more likely to contain errors than machine counted ballot, and the fact that voter confidence is reduced when voters do not observe their ballot being counted, the county may want to revisit when it encourages voters to put their ballot into the hand counting bin.
- Some voters prefer using the straight party option, no doubt because it reduces their time with a long and arduous ballot. The Secretary of State should consider allowing this option again.

## **Recommendations Regarding Distributing Voters to M100s and the Stack Procedure**

- The machine floor judge should encourage voters to insert their ballots into alternating machines to ensure a roughly even distribution of ballots across M100s.
- A new chain of custody method needs to be developed to ensure that M100s opened to reorganize or stack ballots does not disrupt the voting process or make it awkward for voters. We suggest a two-person process, where one poll worker watches the other to ensure that all the ballots are organized and placed in their proper location. This activity should be logged with time and initials of the poll worker stacking and watching.
- Machine judges must observe that the counter on each machine is turning appropriately as each ballot is inserted. If there is so much voter activity that the machine's judge cannot perform this duty, he or she should engage the assistance of a floater until such time that the machine judge can handle this part of the job himself or herself.

## **Recommendations Regarding Food and Beverages**

- Continue to identify a specific location where poll workers can keep and eat their food.
- Poll workers should log any instances of food or beverages being provided by candidates, candidate campaigns, or other elected officials.

## **Recommendations Regarding Identification Badges**

- We recommend that poll workers continue to wear badges identifying them as official poll workers, which includes their name, title and party identification, as currently required by law. Because the existing law requires that their party identification be included, we recommend that legislators revisit this statute and consider whether or not such presentation is a form of electioneering in the polling place that should not be allowed. Information on party diversity in the polling place could be better achieved through other reporting means.
- County workers and temporary employees working with the county, such as runners, should wear name badges so presiding judges, other poll workers and voters know that they are official election administrators.

## **Recommendations Regarding Voter Identification**

- Maintain a strict training system for voter check-in that encourages poll workers to obey the voter identification law.
- In training, explain to the poll workers that they cannot adjust the voter identification process in order to process and check-in voters more quickly. Even though this may create more efficiency it is breaking the law and reducing the uniformity across election locations. These are critical factors that contribute to the overall quality of the election and must be maintained.

## **Recommendations Security Procedures, Security Procedures Related to Assisted Voting**

- Training needs to include an emphasis on logging instances of assisted voting, including the name of the person giving assistance and the name of the voter, especially if the assistant is a poll worker.
- Training needs to emphasize that although poll workers can assist voters in the voting process, including the reading of the ballot, they should refrain from a discussion about the merits or deficiencies of individual candidates or issues, even if asked.
- The floater in charge of observing voting in the voting booths should be responsible for observing and recording instances of voter assistance.
- A method other than voter permits should be considered for logging instances of assisted voting.

## **Recommendations Regarding Provisional Voting**

- Monitor the incidence of provisional voting at each polling place. Relatively large differences between polling locations in the proportion of voters who voted provisionally may suggest training problems with particular presiding judges.
- Training should emphasize that voters have the right to vote a provisional ballot and it is the obligation of the presiding judge to provide a provisional ballot if requested, even if the presiding judge believes that the voter is ineligible.
- The local election official should make a policy decision on when to encourage provisional voting and should train presiding judges to follow those policies to create uniformity in administering of provisional ballots in polling places.
- Advertising of the VCC needs to emphasize that voters can vote at any VCC within their county.
- If presiding judges confirm that a voter is not on the voter registration list through the county election officials, we recommend allowing the voter to vote provisionally so that they have a second opportunity for their voter qualification to be examined and the potential to appeal any decision.
- Provisional voters should be provided with an explanation sheet that defines their status, the criteria used to qualify the ballot, how the provisional voter will be contacted regarding the final disposition of the ballot, and the fact that a provisional voter may appeal the disqualification of their ballot.

- State legislators may want to consider allowing provisional votes to be accepted across county lines. We note that HB 92, proposed in the 2013 legislative session, would have allowed cross-county voting.

### **Recommendations Regarding Equipment Problems**

- The County needs to monitor incidences of problems with the M100s to determine when equipment needs to be replaced. Any equipment changes should consider how changes in election administration might make certain features of particular machines more appropriate and appealing for county voters and poll workers.
- Move non-working tabulators away from the voting process so that voters do not try and insert their ballot into the machines or insert their ballot into the hand counting door. If possible cover the printer or put a sign on it indicating that it is inoperable.
- If possible remove non-working machines from polling locations. Non-working machines create problems for the flow of voters and take away needed space in many of the polling locations.

### **Recommendations Regarding Bernalillo County My Vote Center App and Long Lines**

- The systems clerk should not be responsible for counting the number of voters in line to assist the My Vote Center App in accurately reflecting the amount of time necessary to vote at any given location. We suggest that the poll worker responsible for printing sample ballots be responsible for this job. They have access to a computer and given that their job is the least demanding, it allows them to count the number of voters in line and insert that information into the system.
- Make a policy on whether or not poll workers can inform voters of nearby locations that are less busy and communicate that policy to poll workers in training so that there is uniformity on this issue.
- Create signs that can be hung in waiting areas advertising the app so that voters in line can check for additional locations while waiting. This may encourage some of them to find an alternate location on their own.

### **Recommendations Regarding Bilingual Poll Workers**

- Ensure that every VCC has at least one poll worker who speaks both Spanish and English fluently.
- The bilingual poll worker should not be in a critical position, such as a systems clerk, presiding judge or exceptions judge that could stop the flow of voting if they are needed for assistance.

### **Recommendations Regarding Post –Election Procedures and Treatment of Election Observers**

- Poll workers should be aware that challengers, watchers, and election observers may be present and that they are an important component to the perceived legitimacy and fairness of the election process.
- Specific, step-by-step instructions on how to efficiently close and balance multiple M100's should be covered in training, possibly in scenario based fashion, and in the procedure manuals.

### **Recommendations Regarding Voter Privacy**

- Continue training on the importance of voter privacy. Expand the use of the privacy sleeve in all locations.
- Training should cover specific procedures for inserting ballots into the machines that were put into the M100 unread ballot slot due to machine failures or voter error. Voter privacy should be maintained and poll workers should not examine or discuss the ballots or the votes on the ballots while they are engaged in this activity.
- Election officials should use the step-by-step checklists provided for closing operations. In training, the poll workers should be walked through how to complete this checklist, preferably in a closing simulation exercise.
- Poll worker training should emphasize to poll workers that they are not allowed to dismantle the polling location early, or even after 7:00 pm if voters are still voting.

## Summary of Key Findings from Voter and Poll Worker Surveys:

### Poll Worker Survey Findings

- When we asked poll workers why they were poll workers, the three statements most poll workers strongly agreed with were (1) “it is my duty as a citizen,” (2) “I am the kind of person who does my share,” and (3) “I wanted to learn about the election process.”
- Eighty-nine percent of poll workers said they are either very likely (60%) or somewhat likely (29%) to be a poll worker again
- Using a 10-point scale we also had poll workers evaluate the overall performance of each position. These data also show very high evaluations of poll workers. Fully 75% of poll workers rated the overall performance of their presiding judge 7 or higher, 78% their exceptions judge 7 or higher, 83% their floor judges 7 or higher, 86% of their floaters 7 or higher, 94% of their system clerks 7 or higher and 88% of their machine judge 7 or higher and 80% of their student clerks 7 or higher
- On average, about 5% of poll workers felt intimidated by poll watchers or challengers at one point or another exactly the same as in 2010.
- Over half of poll workers agreed that the training was more thorough than previously.
- Over 96% of poll workers received training materials at their training and about seven in ten (69%) of the poll workers indicated they read all of the materials before Election Day.
- 44% of poll workers sought the job on their own, 22% responded to an advertisement in the local media, and about 16% were recruited by another poll worker.
- Over half (51%) of poll workers strongly agreed that they were confident in their ability to do their job.
- Almost seven in ten poll workers strongly agreed that the training sessions were hand on and not just a lecture.
- Over six in ten (63%) of poll workers thought that the instructions for opening the polls were very clear, while two in five (42%) poll workers thought that the procedures for closing the polls were clear.
- Almost three in five (59%) of poll workers thought that the instructions for securing the ballots during and after the election were clear.

- One of the weakest areas, where the instructions were thought to be least clear, was the procedures for reconciling the number of ballots cast and the number of voters who voted. Only two in five (40%) of poll workers said that those instructions were clear; this item was rated lowest among all of the areas we examined.
- Nearly half (42%) of poll workers indicated there was a problem with their AutoMARK and about two in five reported problems with at least one optical scan reader. The AskED system was more reliable with 71% of poll workers indicating it worked all day, 76% indicating the Internet connection worked all day and 81% reported that they had plenty of paper for their printer.
- Over seven in ten (72%) of poll workers said that they called the county election office during the day. However, only one in five (21%) indicated it was easy to get through and just over half (56%) indicated they were very responsive.
- About one in five (21%) of poll workers reported that some supplies were missing.
- Nine in ten (90%) poll workers reported that voters from other counties tried to vote at their vote center.
- Nine in ten (92%) indicated that someone in their vote center was fluent in Spanish.
- Almost all poll workers were very satisfied (77%) or somewhat satisfied (18%) with their performance as a poll worker.
- Approximately 65% of the poll workers were very confident and another 28% were somewhat confident that the votes were counted accurately in their polling place.
- About three in five (62%) of poll workers indicated that they requested the name, address and birth year of the voter for voter authentication. Only 3% of poll workers indicated that they asked for a photo id very often.
- About one quarter (27%) of poll workers indicated that they helped a voter find a problem with their ballot.
- Almost three in ten (31%) of poll workers stated that they looked at a voter's completed, spoiled, or provisional ballot, suggesting voter privacy may be a problem.
- The survey found that 18% of poll workers helped a voter complete a ballot.
- The median number of voters reported in line at close was 10, the mean was 28, but the range was 0 to 500.
- The mean number of ballots counted by hand at closing was 30, but the range was 0 to 365.

- The median time it took to close was about 3 hours.
- Poll workers reported that the average time it took to complete a ballot was about 10 minutes.

## **Voter Survey Findings**

- Bernalillo County Election Day voters, on average, reported waiting 16 minutes in line to vote during the 2012 presidential election. The range of Election Day voter wait times was between 0 and 120 minutes.
- Bernalillo County Early voters, on average, reported waiting about 4 minutes in line to vote during the 2012 presidential election. The range of early voter wait times was between 0 and 30 minutes.
- Very few (2%) voters reported problems filling out their paper ballot.
- Seventy-one percent of absentee voters indicated it was very easy to follow the instructions and an additional 27% indicated that it was somewhat easy to follow the instructions. Only about 1.5% of voters indicated they felt the instructions were “somewhat hard” and no one felt they were very hard.
- Over two in five (44%) absentee voters indicated they were somewhat or very concerned that their ballot would not arrive in time to be counted.
- Sixty-five percent of voters who vote absentee do so for reasons of convenience.
- Over nine in ten (96%) of voters agreed that their poll workers were helpful. Only 4% of voters disagreed.
- About 5% of early voters and 2% of Election Day voters strongly or somewhat disagreed with the statement that the location of their voting site was easy to find. This suggests that early voters with many fewer locations to choose from had a slightly harder time locating a vote center than Election Day voters.
- More than 9 in 10 (93%) in-person voters knew before they went to vote that they could vote at any vote center.
- Voters heard about the vote center model through a variety of mediums. Over two in five voters (44%) found out from the letter from the county clerk. Advertising also made a big difference. Nearly two in five (37%) heard about it from a TV commercial, about one-quarter (26%) heard it on the radio, another one-quarter saw it in a newspaper advertisement, and nearly one in eight (12%) saw it on billboards that were strategically situated along the major highways. Over two in ten voters (22%) reported that they looked it up on the county clerks website.

Earned media in the form of newspaper stories and TV news also played an important informational role with 35% of voters hearing about the change through earned media outlets.

- Voters mostly used vote centers that were near their residence. Nearly half (48%) of early voters chose a vote center that was within 1 mile of their home and over half (57%) of Election Day voters chose a similar location.
- Voters also relied on major streets that they use often to locate a vote center. About half (49%) of early voters and 44% of Election Day voters found a vote center on a major street they often use.
- About one in six voters (17%) voted within 1 mile of a shopping center that they use often.
- Another 14% voted within 1 mile of their workplace and about 6% voted within 1 mile of a school they visit often.
- Importantly, about 15% of voters chose to vote outside a radius of 1 mile of their home, workplace, school, or a major street.
- We also found that voters did not feel that they had to go far out of their way to vote with the new vote center model. We asked voters to agree or disagree with the statement, “I had to go far out of my way to vote.” We found that 93% of voters disagreed with this statement and only 7% agreed with it, indicating that they had to travel far to find a voting location.
- About 1 in 6 voters (17%) indicated that it was hard to find a place to park at their vote center. We found no difference in the ethnicity, education, age, or gender of those that indicated they had a hard time finding parking.
- About 6% of voters reported using the My Vote app.
- 97% of in-person voters agreed with the statement that the “voting process was easy.”
- We found a relationship between the perception of length of wait time and preference for the former precinct method of voting. Voters who believed they had to wait a moderate time or a long time were much more likely to indicate that they preferred the former method of voting. Over three-quarters (77%) of voters who indicated they waited “no time at all” or “a short time” disagreed with the statement that, “I preferred to vote at my precinct instead of at the voter center,” while a minority of voters (45%) disagreed with the statement when they perceived their wait time as moderate or long. Obviously, processing time for a voter from entry to exit is a key component to understanding voter attitudes toward their vote experience. Spending time reducing long lines in the next election will reap large

benefits in voter satisfaction with the new model of voting, which is well regarded in many other ways.

- Almost half (49%) of voters were very confident and almost four in ten voters (38%) were somewhat confident that their vote was counted correctly. Thus, nearly 9 out of 10 voters (87%) were very or somewhat confident that their ballot was counted correctly.
- Exactly 1 in 10 voters (10%) were not too confident and only one in 20 voters were not at all confident (5%).
- Over 3 in 5 voters (62.5%) in 2012 rated their voting experience as excellent and another one-third (34.4%) of voters rated their voting experience as good.
- Most favorably, voters in 2012 rated their overall voting experience higher than in any other election cycle in which we have data. In 2006 only a quarter (25%) of voters rated their experience as excellent and over half (57%) rated it as good, with an additional 18% rating it either fair or poor.
- A majority of voters (54%) strongly agree that the ballot is easy to use and another 37% somewhat agree. Overall nine in ten voters (91%) agree that the ballot is easy to use. However, about 9% disagree.
- A slighter larger margin felt confident in using the paper ballot. About two-thirds (66%) of voters strongly agreed with the statement, "I felt confident using the ballot" and more than one quarter (27%) somewhat agreed. Only 6% did not feel confident using the ballot.
- Voters who had a hard time finding a polling location, or had to go far out of their way, or had a hard time finding a place to park were less likely to feel their ballot was easy to use and were less confident interacting with their ballot. However, helpful poll workers increased positive attitudes toward use and confidence in the ballot.
- Voters who perceived their wait time to vote as moderate or long were less likely to feel confident in their ability to use the ballot.
- For absentee voters, perceived easier instructions about how to cast their ballot positively influenced the voters' attitudes toward the ease of use of the ballot, but not their confidence with the ballot.
- Demographic differences among voters, including age, gender, educations, and Hispanic/Latino identification did not matter to a voters' feelings toward their confidence in their ballot or its ease of use.
- Over 9 in 10 voters (93%) agreed that their ballot privacy was protected. Over 3 in 5 (63%) strongly agreed and another and almost another 3 in 10 (30%) somewhat

agreed. This leaves about 7% who disagreed and were concerned about their ballot privacy.

- Similarly over 9 in 10 voters (92%) agreed that they felt the information on their ballot was secure after voting. Just over half (55%) strongly agreed and another 37% somewhat agreed. About 8% of voters, however, did not feel their ballot was secure after voting.
- Voters who had a hard time finding a polling location, or had to go far out of their way, or had a hard time finding a place to park were less likely to feel their ballot was private and secure. Helpful poll workers were also associated with a feeling that a voter's ballot privacy was protected and that the information on his or her ballot was secure after voting.
- Importantly, voters who made a mistake on a ballot were less likely to feel their ballot information was secure after voting.
- Voters who considered the wait time to be longer as opposed to shorter were more likely to feel their ballot information was not secure after they voted, but this did not influence ballot privacy.
- Absentee voters who found the instructions easier were more likely to feel the information on their ballot was secure after voting.
- Importantly, voting mode, absentee, early or on Election Day, did not influence ballot privacy or post vote security.
- For the most part, demographics proved to be unrelated to ballot privacy and security, except in the case of gender. Women are slightly more likely to agree that their ballot is secure after voting, but gender is unrelated to feelings toward ballot privacy.
- A majority (52%) of voters strongly agreed and another 29% somewhat agreed that it is important to have a paper record of their vote. However, 19% of voters disagreed that having a paper record was important.
- Gender, education and Hispanic or Latino identity did not influence attitudes toward the paper ballot as a record of voting. Age, however, did matter. Older voters were more likely to believe that it is important to have a paper record of individual votes.
- About 2 in 5 (42%) voters preferred to be able to use the straight party option.
- Over half of in-person voters (58%) indicate they were identified correctly.

- We asked, “Which is more important ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote or protecting the system against fraud? Our results reversed this year with more voters indicating that it was more important to ensure that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote. Almost three in five voters (59%) thought that protecting voter access was most important and about one-third of voters (33%) thought that preventing voter fraud was more important.
- We asked, “New Mexico’s voter id law requires voters to identify themselves. The minimum identification is to state their address, name, and birth year. Do you think the minimum identification is: too strict, just right, or not strict enough.” We find that about half of voters think the law is just right (49%) and about half think it is not strict enough (50%).
- About two thirds of voters believe that photo identification laws will stop fraud by keeping the ineligible from voting and keep some voters from voting multiple times.
- Voters recognize the inherent tension in these laws and although a majority (58%) disagree with the statement that photo voter ID laws will make it harder for people who are eligible to vote, a substantial two in five (42%) agree that such laws create barriers for citizen participation.
- About seven in ten respondents (69%) believe that support for photo ID is based upon a desire for election integrity, however, about two in five voters also believe that photo voter ID laws are means to suppress voter turnout. This is especially true for Democrats.
- We asked, “How do you think we should elect the President: should it be the candidate who gets the most votes in all 50 states, or the current Electoral College system?” Nearly two thirds (65%) of Bernalillo County voters preferred the candidate who gets the most votes in all 50 states, while about one third (35%) supported the current Electoral College system.
- We found that three in five voters (60%) agreed that voter purges might result in eligible voters getting mistakenly removed from the polls. Two in five voters (40%) disagreed that purges may result in eligible voters getting mistakenly removed from the polls.
- We asked, “How concerned are you that you might be mistakenly removed from the voter list?” We found that 26% of voters were not at all concerned, 42% were not very concerned, 22% were somewhat concerned and 10% were very concerned. Thus, about one-third of voters were concerned that they might be purged inappropriately from the voter rolls.
- About half (56%) of voters agree with the statement that, “Proof of citizenship should be required of each voter at the polls,” and just under half (44%) disagreeing.

- We asked voters to agree or disagree with the following statement, "Voters should be able to register on Election Day to vote." The survey results found that about four in ten voters (43%) support moving to an EDR system, but that a majority of voters (57%) do not currently support moving to an EDR system

# **Part 1. Election Observations**

## **1.1 Introduction and Study Background**

We have participated General Election Day observations in Bernalillo County since 2006. Election monitoring has a long tradition and when done systematically, can provide important insights into how elections are implemented on the ground. In addition, there are many benefits of an uninterrupted, repeated experience with observing a series of election contests over time in the same county. First, it has provided us with a long term and linear perspective on election administration. Our teams have the experience, training and knowledge to critique election administration procedures as they present themselves in the vote centers. Second, it has provided us with a unique context for understanding the complexities of implementing changes in election administration, where values of integrity, security, and access are paramount and sometimes in tension. It has also helped us to understand the changing face of election administration, and the nature of change, progress, and the unintended consequences and benefits of innovation. Third, it has created a dynamic and productive relationship with the county and their staff. We observe, listen, and make recommendations and they listen and act, using our insights and on the ground observations as opportunities to improve and/or critique their procedures and methods. They respond, we reexamine. Fourth, over time we have developed better measures to understand and communicate our Election Day experience. Fifth, it has provided us with systematic data over time to make comparisons and to provide strong social science evidence for our conclusions. Sixth, each team does multiple voting locations and has the flexibility to return and stay at a location as long as necessary. This provides us with the cross-sectional knowledge to observe differences across the same space in time across locations, as well as provide a longitudinal perspective to consider how things differ over time.

Since 2006, Bernalillo County has made tremendous progress in administering elections. There is better training and greater consistency across vote centers in terms of treatment of voters, the following of election administration law, the quality of poll worker and voter interactions, and the use of technology. At the same time, there has been innovation to address and solve problems and work to provide for a better and more uniform experience for each voter. Therefore, from our perspective, the most recent 2012 election was both well run and successfully administered. The introduction of vote centers, in most cases, made for better run and higher quality election administration experiences for the voter, poll worker, and local election officials, and by all measures was a success.

Nevertheless, we did see areas where we think further improvements could be made and saw a few vote centers that had poor quality staff that were not following rules and procedures adequately. Although this was not the norm, and there was greater overall consistency than we have ever seen before, where appropriate we will note the inconsistencies, how they compare to previous years, and how improvements can be made. We will also note new challenges presented by the vote center model and unintended

consequences that require adjustments in administration, vote center layout, and/or training.

In 2012, we observed both early and Election Day Voting Convenience Centers (VCC) (see Appendix 1.4 for a list of locations we visited). Faculty, graduate student, and undergraduate student teams were assigned to observe specific VCCs, and fill out an observation sheet/questionnaire on vote center procedures and activities (see Appendix 1.2 for questionnaire and Appendix 1.1 for tabulation of questionnaire results). This year we observed 6 out of 19 early and 48 out of 69 Election Day VCCs. Most of our observers were trained in a special course provided for us by Gabriel Nims, Bureau of Elections Coordinator, on October 22, 2012. Four students took floor judge training at the Siesta Hills training location. Training provided team members with firsthand knowledge of the laws, rules, and administrative processes related to this year's election process and provided insight into the instruction provided to poll workers, which allows for a better overall understanding of what should be occurring during the election.

This part of our report should be read as one component of this systematic analysis of the election process. The Election Observation Report has 5 sections:

- Part 1 describes the background to the study.
- Part 2 discusses the methodology behind the election observation and monitoring process in general.
- Part 3 is an examination of pre-election preparations (e.g., training) and polling place setup.
- Part 4 discusses the observations and systematic data related to Early and Election Day Voting Convenience Centers.
- Finally, in part 5, there is a set of appendices detailing the voting locations the observation teams visited, the names of observation team members, copies of the forms we filled out in each vote center, and the frequency report from those forms based upon our Election Day observations.

## **1.2 Election Observation Methodology**

This is the fourth consecutive federal general election that we have monitored elections in Bernalillo County, New Mexico.<sup>7</sup> Each time, we have refined and improved our efforts so that we can provide better and more complete observation reports to election administrators. In each election, the Bernalillo County Clerk has provided our research teams with independent and unfettered access to polling locations. The research teams

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<sup>7</sup> This includes 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012. We also monitored two City of Albuquerque Elections in 2009 and 2011.

were allowed to monitor and observe polling place operations for as long as team members deemed necessary and to return to polling places multiple times over the course of the day. Thus, the research teams had freedom of mobility and no restrictions on their activities, other than following good rules of behavior and not interfering with the election process in anyway. Such behavior is consistent with US government standards of performance auditing.<sup>8</sup>

Our methodology is similar over time, though we have refined our approach and observation questionnaire. Because of similarities across years in observation techniques, we have the comparability that lets the researchers assess both the current election administration performance, and how procedural, administrative, and legal changes implemented since 2006 may have affected the performance of the electoral ecosystem in 2012.<sup>9</sup> In addition, it allows us to examine how increased familiarity with the paper ballot system, implemented statewide in 2006, both among voters and poll workers, has changed and improved over time.

An important policy change made prior to the 2006 election was that the state adopted the use of optical scan voting for all counties, statewide. This voting technology requires a voter to fill in a circle or “bubble” next to the name of a candidate on a paper ballot as a means of marking their vote choice. If a voter votes using an absentee ballot, these ballots are tabulated at a central location. Bernalillo County tabulates absentee ballots using the high throughput Election Systems & Software (ES&S) Model 650 (M650) ballot tabulator. For voters casting ballots in a Voter Convenience Center (VCC) either during Early Voting or on Election Day, ballots are tabulated on site using the ES&S M100 tabulator. In addition, voters with special needs can use the ES&S AutoMARK, which allows the voter to make vote choices using an electronic touch-screen interface. These choices are then printed onto a paper ballot that can be scanned into the M100.

The most significant policy change in 2012 was that Bernalillo County moved from a traditional precinct based election model, which in 2008 required 423 precincts in 161 locations, to a vote center based election model with 69 vote centers. Vote centers allow voters the opportunity to vote at any voting location in the county. Centralizing the process into a smaller number of voting locations presents certain challenges. Primarily it necessitates larger buildings to accommodate increased voter activity and a larger number of poll workers at each site to facilitate the processing of voters. The process also decreases the overall number of poll workers needed, potentially allowing for better-trained poll

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<sup>8</sup> See Alvarez, Atkeson and Hall, 2012, *Evaluating Elections: A Handbook of Methods and Standards*, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>9</sup> Voter identification laws were relaxed after 2006. Voters in 2008, 2010, and 2012 did not have to provide the last 4 digits of their social security number, while in 2006 they theoretically did. The election audit and recount laws also led some counties to sort ballots by precinct in absentee voting and to a variety of new guidelines for audit implementation. In response to our suggestions, the Secretary of State included signage related to voter identification, which were to be posted in all voting locations. In addition, numerous changes in the training of poll workers and procedural changes to better enhance the election experience for poll workers and voters were completed by Bernalillo County in 2010. In 2012 Bernalillo County implemented Voting Convenience Centers and moved away from traditional precinct based voting.

workers. Finally, decreasing the number of voting locations provides the opportunity for more administrative oversight by county employees.

In 2012, we had 11 teams, with 2 to 4 people on a team for a total of 40 election monitors. We had two Election Day shifts. The first shift observed from 6:00 AM (poll opening) until 10:00 AM and the second observed from 3:00 PM through closing<sup>10</sup>. We visited 48 or 70% of all VCCs on Election Day and 6 out of 19 early voting locations during the early voting period. Information on team members and locations where we observed voting can be found in the appendices at the end of this section.

Observation forms used for the 2012 study were updated based upon our previous experiences and on changes in administration due to the new voting method allowing voters to vote at any location. Observation forms allow us a more systematic and standardized look at VCC activity across all the locations we visited. These forms, along with a frequency of answers to each question, are also located in the appendix and we refer to them throughout this section of the report. There are four operational components of our research design that allow us to create more comparability across our observation teams and systematically study early and Election Day operations:

- First, all of the observation team members attended poll worker training so that they would be knowledgeable about the rules and procedures for precinct opening, closing, and general operations. This proved to be very helpful in recognizing common procedural problems and areas where improvement could be made..
- Second, each team completed an observation form for each VCC visited and special observation forms were developed specifically for observing polling place opening and closing operations (the forms are reproduced in Appendix 1.2). This allowed for systematic comparability of specific early and Election Day VCC across teams. For example, every observation team had to report for each polling place whether certain procedures were being followed, such as the correct application of voter identification laws, and report on several aspects of the polling place's physical quality (e.g. adequate parking, lighting, space for voting booths, etc.) The frequency reports produced from these forms are in Appendix 1.1.
- Third, each team member wrote a 1-3 page Election Day report describing his or her experiences. These reports provided us with a detailed account and record of each observer's experience and helped us determine consistent problems or particular successes. We draw from these anecdotes to highlight key problems or experiences of importance.
- Fourth, most of the observation teams attended a post-election debriefing so that the researchers could compare experiences across the observation teams on areas

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<sup>10</sup> Or until approximately 9:00pm, because in some cases closing was not yet complete two hours after the official closing of the polls at 7:00pm.

of strengths and weaknesses while everyone had these thoughts fresh in their minds.

Because of changes in New Mexico law, [NM Stat § 1-1-3.2, which states](#), “a person registered with the United States Department of State as an international election observer or a person registered with the New Mexico Secretary of State who is an academic engaged in research on elections and the election process...” we were required to register as academic election observers with the New Mexico Secretary of State. The Secretary of State provided us with a form and we wrote a letter identifying all of the students and faculty involved in the project. Both of these items can be found in Appendix 1.3.

Many of those involved in the election observation study had considerable previous experience studying and observing elections in several states, including New Mexico. All of the observers were academics or students, both undergraduate and graduate students, making them independent of the political parties and candidates. Team members were recruited from two political science courses at the University of New Mexico, one at the graduate level (Political Science 512 *Survey Methodology*) and one at the undergraduate level (Political Science 280, *Introduction to Political Science Research Methods*). One middle school student also took part in our Election Day observation units. Additionally, one undergraduate who was familiar with our work and doing research with another faculty member on election administration joined our team. Graduate students and faculty were paired with undergraduate students to create 11 election-monitoring teams. Several observers study elections and campaigns and many of them were very knowledgeable about New Mexico elections and politics. A number of graduate students had worked with us previously and thus had intimate knowledge of the paper ballot system in New Mexico and had direct experience with the vote tabulators and other aspects of New Mexico’s election administration from previous elections and other projects.<sup>11</sup>

Prior to the election, observers were given briefing materials on the purpose of the study, some details on New Mexico election law, including voter identification rules, and state rules on election observation and monitoring. Teams also had Election Day forms, maps of the area, Voting Convenience Center lists, and contact phone lists for the team leader (Professor Lonna Atkeson), her graduate assistant (Alex Adams), and the Deputy County Clerk Roman Montoya. Observers also participated in election monitoring training. Training included information about forms to fill in, voter identification rules, details about rules and laws on voting in New Mexico (e.g. campaigning rules, required vote center signage, opening and closing procedures, etc.), expectations for handling provisional

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<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Atkeson, Lonna Rae, R. Michael Alvarez, Thad E. Hall, Lisa A. Bryant, Yann Kereval, Morgan Llewellyn, David Odegaard. 2008. “The 2008 New Mexico Post Election Audit Report,” available at: <http://www.unm.edu/~atkeson/newmexico.html>.

ballots, expectations for handing spoiled ballots, rules of contact, contact information for observers, etc.

Working in close consultation with the team leader and her assistant, each team of observers was assigned a specific set of VCCs to observe on Election Day. Each team was given 6 or 7 VCCs to monitor, however, teams were not necessarily expected to complete their list, as they were given full freedom of movement, allowing them to visit any location for as long as they wanted and to return to locations observed earlier in their shift if they so chose. Observer independence is an important aspect of election observation. As with other auditing methods the auditor, or in this case the observer, must be free from interference or influence that could improperly limit or modify the scope of the observation process. Therefore, we arranged for complete autonomy in the observation process with no criteria for where we could go and when or how long we could stay. Observers attempted to see a variety of VCCs around the county including those in largely Hispanic areas, poorer areas, high residential turnover areas (e.g. around the universities), and largely immigrant areas. Thus, observers saw a wide range of community VCCs with differing voter characteristics and within different types of facilities. Facilities included community centers, public schools, strip malls, government buildings, churches, and office parks

On Election Day, the observation process consisted of the following three stages:

- First, there were two observation shifts. First Shift teams began their work at selected polling places, arriving at 6:00 AM, the same time as the poll workers and well before the opening of polls, to study the VCC setup process and complete a special opening form that asked questions specific to the opening process. Second Shift teams arrived at one polling place before 7:00 PM to watch closing operations sometimes staying as long as 2 or 3 hours to observe the final voter vote and watch closing.
- Second, observation teams went to other VCCs in the morning or in the afternoon and for each VCC they studied they completed an observation form that asked about the condition of the polling location and activities in it.
- Third, Observation team members participated in a debriefing session after the election and entered the data from their completed observation forms. All data collected were analyzed and the results of these analyses are reported below.

### **1.3. Pre-Election Preparation: Poll Worker Training and Polling Place Setup**

Pre-election training of election workers and the initial set up of polling places are important to setting the stage for an effective Election Day experience for voters. Academic research has shown that the quality of the voter-poll worker experience plays an important

role in shaping voter confidence.<sup>12</sup> This confidence comes from the interaction between voters and poll workers. When voters have a good experience, they are more confident, when their experiences are poor they are less confident. Therefore, election training is critical because it leads to a better functioning polling location, which results in a better experience for voters, boosting their confidence that their vote was counted correctly.

### 1.3.1 Poll Worker Training

In 2012, Bernalillo County completely revamped their training process to better accommodate the needs of voters in high throughput VCCs as well as to be extremely responsive to recommendations made by election observers in past elections. Instead of having two types of training sessions, one longer course for poll judges and one shorter course for poll clerks, training was divided into 8 different types of training sessions to match the reorganization in the VCC model to the following positions: presiding judge, exceptions judge, systems clerk, floor judge, machine judge, student clerk, trouble shooter, and floater. Training times were commensurate with job duties. For example, presiding judge and exception judge training doubled from 2-3 hours to 6-7 hours. For the General Election, the Clerk's staff devised a screening test that prospective appointees were required to take. It was a simple timed and observed exercise using the vendor's software to search for voters. The test was used to measure computer proficiency (e.g., locating the power button, use of mouse, etc.) and the ability to follow a simple set of instructions, such as conducting a basic voter search and selecting the correct voter. Observers completed a scoring sheet and then the hiring team assigned the individual accordingly. The presiding judge (PJ) was head of his/her VCC and responsible for the smooth running of the polling place. They were also, along with the exceptions judge, in charge of processing provisional voters, and keeping track of in-lieu of ballots. Presiding and exceptions judges were trained in all critical areas to run the VCC. The systems clerks were responsible for checking in voters using the AskED system and printing ballots. The floor judge was responsible for greeting the voters and directing them toward the appropriate station. Floor judges had no training on using the computers, printing ballots or processing provisional voters, as their primary job was managing the flow of traffic. The machine presiding judge focused exclusively on the operations of the M100 tabulators. Floaters could do a variety of jobs including floor judge or systems clerk. In many locations student clerks were working the sample ballot desk, but they also received training on a variety of other tasks, such as the AskED system.

In general, training poll workers for their specific job and duties was much more effective and efficient than previous training methods that focused on the overall process. By

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<sup>12</sup> See Lonna Rae Atkeson and Kyle L. Saunders. 2007, "Voter Confidence: A Local Matter?" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 40(October):655-660. Also see: [www.vote2006.unm.edu](http://www.vote2006.unm.edu) and Thad E. Hall, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson. 2007. "Poll Workers and the Vitality of Democracy: An Early Assessment." *PS: Political Science and Society*, 647-654.

focusing on individual duties and expectations, poll workers learned the specific tasks for which they would be responsible. We talked to numerous poll workers in VCCs and many freely commented to us on improvements in poll worker training and more importantly the improvements it made in polling place operations.

The training facility was set up as a simulated VCC location. These changes allowed for more scenario-based training, where election workers are presented with various problems that may occur on Election Day and then discuss how to address them. It also allowed workers the opportunity to work with the computers, the printer, the voting machines, or forms they would encounter on Election Day providing for more hands on or situational education and more opportunity for the poll workers to feel comfortable with their specific tasks and responsibilities. These changes are also responsive to specific recommendations we had made in previous reports including more scenario-based training that includes hands on opportunities for poll workers to experience the process, as well as dividing up training into smaller work units. Placing training in a simulated VCC environment was smart and was a key factor to the overall improvement, consistency and quality of the 2012 election.

We commend the County on these changes and the improvements that were made in the training of poll workers. Overall, the process was more functional, efficient, and effective. Poll workers were better equipped to handle their specific job and focused on performing that job well.

In particular, we found that most early voting sites had especially well trained poll workers who performed their jobs well. The small number of early voting locations (16), and the longer period (approximately 3 weeks) associated with these poll workers service allowed for more oversight and interaction by county employees, as well as greater experience with procedures and equipment by the poll workers, which provided for a better run polling place. We noted that on Election Day these same teams were largely in place, providing the most efficiently run polling sites for voters.

## **Training Recommendations**

Nevertheless, there were 2 main areas where we saw possible problems and room for improvement.

Recommendation 1. Although we strongly agree with the compartmentalization of training, there needs to be some general overview, so poll workers have a general understanding of the entire voting process and who they should talk to when a problem arises. We understand that there was some general overview component, but this may need to be looked at carefully to ensure that there is coverage that emphasizes the needs of the poll workers as they may arise during voting operations.

For example, we found that in one case a floor judge was informing voters that they did not need to write-in a candidate's name on the ballot if they were voting for a write-in candidate. The floor judge understood that there was a radio button or "bubble" to mark

for the write-in candidate and thought that was enough. They did not realize there could be multiple write-ins or that the name of the write-in candidate was required to receive proper credit in the counting of these votes at the end of election night. Because the floor judge did not have a general overview or understanding of the process, he was misdirecting voters on how to complete their ballot.

Therefore, we suggest that training be expanded for some types of poll workers that includes a very short overview of how the processes operate together. The poll workers should understand how the various parts work in concert to produce a well functioning and efficient VCC.

Recommendation 2. Although we understand there was a test to determine which poll workers could do more technologically based activities, such as systems clerk, we found that certain systems clerks were more efficient than others. We found that handling the stress of the voting process was easy for some poll workers, but not for others, and that those poll workers who felt most comfortable with technology were not flustered and were more efficient at processing voters than those who were capable, but not comfortable. In general, we noticed that younger poll workers were exceptionally adept at handling the position of system clerk and the stress associated with the job. Therefore, we suggest any testing of poll workers capabilities consider their level of comfort and previous work experience with such equipment, as well as their general capability. Poll workers in this key position can increase or decrease the rate of processing a voter significantly. Giving locations with high turnout better assignment of the right type of poll worker in the right job, could significantly impact the smooth operation and voter throughput and functioning within a polling site.

### **1.3.2 General Polling Place Issues and Staffing**

VCCs were located in strip malls, shopping plazas, churches, community center, pavilions, government centers, and largely school buildings. VCCs vary in size and shape by location, which can make it difficult to design an adequate polling place that moves voters through the process smoothly and efficiently. In presidential election years, public schools close, which makes some of the problems we report in off election years moot. In the past precinct based voting system, poll workers were largely left to their own devices in terms of setting up a polling place. This led to an inefficient system that often reduced the privacy of the voter, especially for those voters who voted on the AutoMARK. With the change to VCCs and the much lower number of voting locations, the County was able to use staff time designing each VCC to create a circular flow to the voting process. We found this to be a huge improvement over previous years where items were placed somewhat randomly in a location. Out of the 48 locations we observed voting on Election Day, fully 85% of them had a circular motion to the voting process. Those areas that did not were largely prohibited from such a design because of a long and narrow building. Nevertheless, even in these areas that did not have a circular feel to it, the voter flow was much better than in previous elections.

However, it is important to note that while many of the locations did have the circular flow in very busy locations once inside the area where voters lined up to get into the location often caused the entrance to be blocked. In some cases this made it difficult for voters to exit once they voted and difficult for waiting voters to get a sample ballot. Importantly, centralizing this process and having the County design each location was consistent with previous election recommendations on our part and we commend the County for their work in this area. It made for a much better, logical, and more private voting experience.

Another important aspect to a voting location is that it be easily visible and accessible from major streets. In terms of accessibility, VCCs located on major streets or near major work areas are usually the most accessible. However, sometimes road construction creates major challenges in getting in and out of a voting location. For example, we spent over 10 minutes circling about at the early VCC on Juan Tabo and Central because of heavy construction around the building. It made for a frustrating and somewhat dangerous exercise. Similarly on Election Day afternoon, there was road construction on the side street next to the very busy Clerk's Annex VCC, making both parking and getting into the Annex difficult.

This year the County used banners to help identify polling locations as well as the more traditional "vote here" signs. The banners, in particular, were a good innovation and we recommend their continued use. Banners helped to separate a voting location from an abundance of candidate signage making it easier for a voter to identify the site.

However, even when we were able to find a voting location from good signage, sometimes there were problems locating the physical space within the building or property of the VCC. This was particularly true in large high schools. Sometimes the parking lot was quite a long distance from the voting location. This was especially true at Albuquerque High School, where poll workers reported receiving several complaints throughout the day, especially from elderly voters.

There is also important signage located inside the voting location. These include signs such as the "Voter Bill of Rights," "the Voter Ballot Marking Sign" and the "Voter Identification Poster." We have repeatedly found over time that these signs are often small, placed in odd locations, and difficult to discern from other signage found in many spaces, like schools, where posters proliferate. It is important to note that in several locations we found the "Voter Bill of Rights" posted behind the check-in desk and in one location, it was located at least five or six feet behind the check-in desk. Signs placed at this distance make the poster impossible for a voter to read and if a voter were to have problems, it would certainly be uncomfortable to go behind the poll workers to read the sign. It is also worth mentioning that poll workers may not allow voters behind the check-in desk to read the poster while processing voters, given that sensitive information on other voters might be visible.

Compared to the precinct-based model of election administration used in previous elections, the VCC model meant that nearly all locations were continuously busy to one degree or another. Some VCCs were very busy with long lines, and some were not so busy with relatively short lines. In the 48 voting locations we visited, our estimate of average wait times was about 15 minutes with the median wait time at only about 5 minutes, but

some VCCs had lines of up to two hours! During our observations, we noticed that the number of systems clerks, in particular, had an effect on voter wait time before being checked in. We visited several locations that had only two systems clerks and the wait times were relatively long given the number of voters. For example, Albuquerque High School did not have extremely high turnout, but while we were there, voters had about a 30-40 minute wait to check in and receive a ballot. Conversely, the Annex, which had served as an early voting location, had eight systems clerks and voters had a much shorter wait time, only about 5 minutes, even with heavy turnout on Election Day.

Relatedly, we note that poll worker locations that were early voting sites were some of the strongest performers on Election Day. Given that these poll workers had likely experienced Election Day almost daily for several weeks, this is not too surprising. Kinks and problems were worked out early in the process, making Election Day a relatively straightforward operation. Given the vast experience of these poll workers, it may be beneficial to reassign them and separate them from each other as much as possible on Election Day and sprinkle them throughout VCC locations to provide assistance and guidance to those poll workers who are working only on Election Day.

Because we suspect that there will be a lot of similarity across elections and the use of particular VCCs over others, due to location, population density or work place proximity, we suggest that the county model and estimate the expected number of voters at each VCC and use this information to help determine the number of poll workers and amount of equipment needed for an effective and efficient Election Day operation.<sup>13</sup> Our observations suggest that processing voters for check-in was the main problem in creating long lines. Of the 48 VCCs we visited, 92% of them had a line of voters to check in, while only 17% had line of voters waiting for a voting booth to fill in their ballot or to insert their ballot into the M100 tabulator.

## **Polling Place set up and Staffing Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: Continue the use of large banners to help identify polling locations. Keep signage for polling place locations as far away from candidate signage as possible.

Recommendation 2: If the location of the VCC within the school or community complex is not obvious, put up additional signage from the various parking locations to assist voters in finding the voting area.

Recommendation 3: Polling places that are located in difficult-to-find locations should have additional signage to help identify them. Poll workers should have clear and possibly site specific instructions about where to put signage outside of the polling place. Poll workers should be instructed to periodically check the signs to make sure that they are still present

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<sup>13</sup> This is something we have the in-house skills to do and would be happy to help facilitate such an analysis.

throughout Election Day, and that they are accurately placed in a visible location. This might be a good job for one of the floaters.

Recommendation 4: Given the number of signs or posters required at each VCC, we suggest that one large poster be created that combines all of the necessary signs. This larger sign could include a prominently placed county logo or Secretary of State logo and be larger than all of the other posters nearby, allowing it to stand out. Signs should be placed near the front of the entrance to the VCC and where voters can easily observe and read the information. If possible, in some locations, two posters would be preferred, one to display inside the polling place and one to hang where voters are waiting in line, so that they know their voting rights before entering the voting location.

Recommendation 5: If a major road way is under construction in front of a planned VCC, the VCC should be relocated. Additionally, the county should notify the city in advance of all voting locations, requesting that minor work, such as pothole repair, be conducted at a time other than on Election Day. While construction may be unavoidable, it may be possible to work around it, through relocation, or by limiting such activity on Election Day.

Recommendation 6: Spread experienced poll workers from early voting locations around on Election Day so that other VCCs have the benefit of their experience and knowledge.

Recommendation 7: In VCCs with heavy traffic consider adding more printers, computers, and systems clerks since the bottleneck happens almost exclusively at this station. We recognize that it was difficult in this first experience with VCCs to accurately estimate voter volume, but hope to see progress on this dimension in 2014.

### **1.3.3 Early and Election Day Voting**

We visited a number of early and Election Day VCCs. Overall, we were very impressed with the changes that we saw. In particular, the early voting sites seemed well run with less problems and difficulties than in past elections and compared to Election Day operations. This is no doubt due to the fact that the staff are present for a longer period of time, allowing kinks to be worked out, as well as having time for county staff to interact with poll workers more frequently to solve problems and to continue to teach them about the election process. On Election Day, we saw more consistency than in the past across VCCs, which speaks well to the county's preparation of each polling location, as well as the better, more job-specific, and hands on training the county implemented for the 2012 election. However, we still observed a few locations with problems we have seen before as well as some new problems due to changes and unintended consequences. We highlight these below.

### **1.3.4 Opening Procedures**

In general, opening procedures went fairly well. There was one location on Election Day, Central and Juan Tabo, where the presiding judge arrived late, leading to the polls opening about 5 minutes late. This made the poll workers very concerned and frazzled, as they had no idea what to do while waiting for the presiding judge.

In a couple of locations, not all of the equipment was available for opening the polls. At Van Buren Middle School, they did not have the proper power cords needed and had to call the Clerk's Office to get additional equipment delivered. We also noted that some VCCs did not have the outer envelope for provisional ballots in both English and Spanish. Likewise, some VCCs only had voter registration forms in one language.

In another location, they had problems turning on the lights and were concerned about a very dark polling location. This led to a lot of poll workers looking for light switches and generally moving all over the polling location. It also meant that when voting began at 7:00 AM, that some voters voted in the dark. The lights were apparently set on an automatic timer and eventually the lights turned on, a little after 7:00 AM.

### **Opening Procedures Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: A second poll worker, perhaps the exceptions judge, needs to be designated as the poll worker in charge when the presiding judge does not show up on time. The designated second-in-command poll worker needs to be provided with instructions on what to do if the presiding judge does not show up on time. They need to be provided with the central location number to report the problem so that the presiding judge can be contacted to determine the nature of the problem and whether the county needs to find a replacement.

Recommendation 2: A checklist should be created that enumerates all of the equipment needed at a VCC and should be checked off when equipment is delivered to ensure that all of the necessary equipment is available to open the polls on time.

Recommendation 3: A checklist should also be created for the presiding judge so that he or she can check off that each VCC has all necessary supplies before they open polls. This should be the first step when opening the polls. Any supplies not delivered should be called in to county officials immediately, so that they can arrive as soon as possible.

### **1.3.5 Ballot on Demand**

In 2012, each early and Election Day VCC used the ballot on demand systems for ballot delivery and the AskED system's E-Poll book for electronic signatures and access to the

voter registration system. Moving to VCCs and ballot on demand systems, county wide, throughout the election offered many advantages. Primarily, this creates a more secure environment as ballots are not lying around and need not be destroyed at the end of Election Day. In addition, this reduces the likelihood that a voter will get the wrong ballot style. In general, the ballot on demand is more secure, less complex, easier procedurally, more environmentally friendly, more cost-effective, and can be helpful when last minute changes to the ballot are necessary. We commend the County on making the move to VCCs and using a ballot on demand system to provide paper ballots.

The process for early VCCs and Election Day VCCs was the same. A voter entered the election location and was greeted by a greeter who directed them to the first voting station or to the individual providing sample ballots in a friendly way. Having a person greet voters and direct them to the first location was very helpful and helped to create good flow in the voting process. In the few locations where a greeter was absent, voters were more confused about where to begin the process.

Once voters went to the authentication station, they were asked first for their name and then when the record was located in the system were asked additional authentication questions including their address and birth year. This is consistent with voter identification laws in New Mexico. Having the poll worker at the computer and controlling the process helped to limit the number of unnecessary examinations of other forms of identification, though we discuss voter identification in more detail below. After the ballot was printed, in most locations, the voter was given the ballot along with a voter permit and moved to the voting booths, after which voters moved to the tabulators to insert their ballot into the M100s.

We saw several instances where printers had problems printing the ballot, which usually meant that the tick marks did not line up appropriately to identify the ballot when it was inserted into the M100 machine. From our observations, these seemed random in nature, though further study of the ballot on demand system should include an estimate of the frequency of this problem and which printer. When the tick marks did not match up, the voter was provided with a new ballot, had to spoil their old ballot, and basically start the process all over again. This created additional voter back up problems, especially in VCCs where voters were already standing in long lines, because voters were sent back to the ballot on demand station to obtain a new voter ballot and a new permit slip. This meant that a previously processed voter was put ahead of voters who have not been processed. When this occurred, it was generally disruptive to the process and substantially slowed down the processing of voters. These intermittent voter problems meant a different procedure for the systems clerk including calling over the presiding judge to spoil the original ballot and the issuance of a new ballot. It is important to note that this was most disruptive in VCCs that had a small number of systems clerks and printers, but did not cause as many problems in, for example, the Clerk's annex, which was the most well equipped VCC. The Clerk's Annex had one check-in station designated for voter problems, such as these. This idea should be replicated at each VCC.

## Ballot on Demand Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The systems clerks should not be responsible for issuing a new ballot to voters whose ballot was spoiled due to problems with ballot printing. This slowed down the processing of voters substantially. Perhaps a computer and printing station should be set aside for all spoiled ballots at each location, that would be available to the presiding and exceptions judges or another party who is familiar with the system (including the ballot clerk –the poll worker who printed out sample ballots and was the least busy poll worker—or the floater).

Recommendation 2: The frequency of these types of problems and on which machine should be tracked to determine on-going problems with certain hardware or software.

### 1.3.6 Privacy, Photos, Movie Cameras

The institutional act of voting is fundamentally a private activity. Voters are entitled to a private ballot and poll workers are responsible for ensuring the privacy of voters in the polling locations. Voter privacy at the voting booth has long been a staple of American politics to ensure that voters are not coerced into voting for specific candidates because of their relationship with employers or parties.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, a private ballot is seen as a hallmark of a legitimate and fair voting process.<sup>15</sup> Finally, recent research in American politics suggests that as many as 25% of citizens often do not feel that their ballot privacy is maintained by public officials.<sup>16</sup>

This year we saw the implementation of a voting sleeve in some early and Election Day locations, approximately 2 of every 5 voting locations were offering voter privacy sleeves. The voter sleeve was a long legal sized file folder that the voter could place their ballot into when they were moving from station-to-station in the polling location. Voter sleeves were not available in all VCCs and polling judges had varied attitudes toward them, which likely encouraged or discouraged their use and availability. We spoke to several presiding judges about the voting sleeves and some liked them very much and offered them to all voters. They noted that some voters waived their right to the folder, but that others seemed very glad to have them. Other judges noted that not that many voters used them and so took them out of use.

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<sup>14</sup> For a discussion regarding the use of the Australian ballot in American politics see: Eldon Cobb Evans, *A History of the Australian Ballot System in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1917).

<sup>15</sup> For example see Article 25 of the United Nations Civil and Political Covenant discussed in Thomas M. Franck, 'The Emerging Right to Democratic Governance', *American Journal of International Law*, 86 (1992), 46-91, p. 64.

<sup>16</sup> Gerber, Alan S., Gregory A. Huber, David Doherty, Conor M. Dowling, and Seth J. Hill. 2013. "Do Perceptions of Ballot Secrecy Influence Turnout? Results from a Field Experiment." *American Journal of Political Science* (forthcoming; formerly NBER Working Paper w17673).

Presiding judges need to understand that some voters are not as concerned about voter privacy, but other voters are very concerned about such issues. Therefore, they need to see this as an important component of their service and offer voters this option when given their ballot. If voters do not want to use the privacy sleeve, that is fine, but for those voters who do want one having it available enhances the overall voting experience.

During early voting, we saw an instance where someone indicated they were making a movie and wanted access to the polling place to tape voting in progress. Our understanding is that whether such actors are allowed into the VCC is the decision of the presiding judge. Given that cameras and related equipment likely disrupt the act of voting and may increase some voter's privacy concerns, we suggest that any taping of the voting process by a news agency or other movie producer be approved by the County Clerk's office.

We saw huge improvements in privacy and maintaining the general seriousness and etiquette in the VCC in many locations. First, we noted that in many VCCs greeters asked voters upon entering to please turn off their cell phone and notified them that the voting center was a cell phone free zone. Because cell phone calls and conversations can be disturbing and distracting to both the voter on the phone and other voters casting their ballot, we thought this innovation was productive. However, not all VCCs actively participated in this activity. In some VCCs we saw voters talking, texting, and surfing the Internet on their cell phones, especially while standing in line. These activities should be strongly discouraged.

In relation to cell phones, we saw a number of instances where voters were allowed or just took pictures of the polling place or what looked like their ballot in the voting booth. Procedurally, whether photography was allowed in the VCCs was left to the discretion of presiding judges with the understanding that photographs should not be taken of ballots. However, allowing photography generally leads to the misuse of that photography and the taking of pictures that could be misconstrued as privacy invasion or vote selling. We saw some voters taking photos of their ballots while in the voting booth. We also saw several instances where presiding judges allowed photography for a first time voter, allowing them to take pictures of themselves at the M100 or other locations within the VCC. We understand the enthusiasm and excitement that new voters feel when they are first engaging in their civic duty, however, we question the decision to allow photographs, given their potential disruption of the voting process generally and because it may make some other voters uncomfortable. Such voters could be directed, for example, to the vote here sign or the entrance of the polling place. If photographs in the VCC are allowed, clear policies need to be formulated that defines where and how photographs can be taken and voters should never be allowed to take photos of their ballot or other people's ballots at any stage of the process.

Finally, we saw one instance where a poll worker announced each first time voter in a loud and public voice. This led to general clapping and pats on the back for the voter. However, the voter may not feel comfortable with his or her voting history being made public and it may be disruptive to other voters filling out their ballots. Poll workers should be discouraged from making announcements regarding the status of voters they process.

## **Privacy, Photos and Movie Camera Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: Voter privacy was significantly increased during the 2012 election. Continued training on the importance of voter privacy will likely yield additional compliance. Therefore, poll workers should offer the voter privacy sleeve consistently across all VCCs and to all voters. Discuss in training the importance of voter privacy and that voters may vary in their use of such an item, but for those voters who feel their privacy is at stake, this item may be important for their comfort and security.

Recommendation 2: Presiding judges and poll workers should be discouraged from noting a voter's status as a new or repeat voter, party affiliation, or any other personal voter information. Such identification may make the voter feel uncomfortable and/or disrupt the voting process more generally.

Recommendation 3: Any taping of the voting process by a news agency or other movie producer should be cleared directly by the Clerk's Office. This ensures that the movie producer is a legitimate filmmaker and places the control of these observers in the hands of the local election official. Local officials can provide the movie producer with the rules governing their activities and clear the time of this activity with the presiding judges, since they have many other obligations to attend to during voting and likely cannot be bothered much with additional activities. Presiding judges should tell individual who want to tape voting that they need to contact the County Clerk.

Recommendation 4: Voters should be encouraged to turn off their cell phones when entering a voting location. Greeters who provided this information to voters as they walked in had much greater compliance than those who relied simply on posted signs. Encourage greeters to tell voters as they come in that they should turn off their cell phones.

Recommendation 5: Voters should not be allowed to take photographs of their ballot or other people's ballot at the voting booth or anywhere inside the VCC at any stage of the process. This is disruptive and may make some voter's feel their voter privacy is at risk. If photographs in the VCC are allowed for some legal or other reason, clear policies need to be formulated that defines where, how, and by whom photographs can be taken.

### **1.3.7 Over Voted and Spoiled Ballots**

In previous elections, we largely saw voters who spoiled a ballot because of over voting being encouraged, or often required, to fill out a new ballot and turn in it. In this election, we mostly saw voters being discouraged from filling out new ballots and instead simply placing their ballot into the M100 slot (located under the feeder) for hand counting at the end of the evening. More judges appeared to be leaving the decision on whether to spoil the ballot in these circumstances to the voter and we commend the county for making that a voter choice, instead of a poll worker choice. However, we think that the voter needs to understand that a) they need to make their over vote preference clear by marking it in ways consistent with administrative practices for determining a vote choice, b) that voters

understand the implications of not doing so may lead to their vote on those ballot items not being counted, and c) voters should be notified that their ballot will be hand counted instead of counted by machine. Such a process, of course, makes more work for poll workers at the end of the day, which may require them to hand count entire ballots because of problems with one contest. Given that hand counting has a greater error rate than machine counting<sup>17</sup>, it is important to notify the voter of the procedures that will be used to count their ballot at the end of the day.

Moving spoiled ballots to a special poll worker, the exceptions judge, was a good innovation and one that helped to keep the presiding judge focused mostly on the smooth running of the polling place. Mostly we saw instances where the voter's privacy was maintained and the exceptions judge did not touch the spoiled ballot in any way. However, we did observe one instance where the exceptions judge took the spoiled ballot from the voter and processed it him/herself. Importantly, we did not observe any exceptions judge allowing a spoiled ballot to be used by the voter to copy over to their new ballot, which would be a ballot security problem.

## **Over Voted and Spoiled Ballots Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: The machine judge should inform voters who spoil their ballots and want them hand counted that they need to be sure that the over voted office is clearly marked so that hand counting can determine a preference.

Recommendation 2: Having a specialized position for spoiled and other non-regular ballots is a great innovation to keep the polling place running smoothly. The exception's judge needs to be certain that the privacy of any voter they work with is maintained at all times.

### **1.3.8 Distributing Voters to M100s and the Stack Procedure**

VCCs require a larger number of vote tabulators than precinct systems. Given that paper ballots in the M100s stack in unorthodox ways, it is important that the machine judge direct voters to different M100s for processing of ballots.

The machine judge generally did well at observing when machines were becoming too full of ballots, would no longer process ballots well and needed reorganization (stacking) in the ballot holding area of the M100. We saw several instances where presiding judges engaged

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<sup>17</sup> Atkeson, Lonna Rae, R. Michael Alvarez, Thad E. Hall, Lisa A. Bryant, Yann Kereval, Morgan Llewellyn, David Odegaard. 2008. "The 2008 New Mexico Post Election Audit Report," typescript, University of New Mexico."

in the “stacking procedure” to ensure that the M100s would continue to function well. This procedure was designed to make sure this process was transparent, such that voters would understand that there was nothing wrong with the presiding judge opening the ballot containment slot of an M100, removing ballots, stacking them neatly and returning them to the machine. In some instances, we actually observed a presiding judge explain to voters in line what he was doing and ask a voter who was waiting in line to come observe the process as well, for transparency sake. We thought this was a very good addition to the process.

In many circumstances, however, the process was odd and did not work well. One judge told us that yelling out this activity created more distraction and dysfunction in the polling place than simply engaging in the process quietly. Moreover, we saw several judges who declined to participate in this part of the process and opened the machines, sorted, and stacked ballots without following protocol, no doubt because they felt following protocol created more awkwardness than was warranted.

In another instance, during early voting at the University of New Mexico, we saw a presiding judge follow the procedure, for what appeared to be our benefit, but while he had his head in the machine, a poll worker directed a voter to insert their ballot in that machine, leading to the ballot falling on top of the presiding judge’s head. This was very awkward and made the voter, poll worker, and presiding judge look rather silly.

The purpose of the procedure is to maintain the integrity and security of the ballots. Given that voters have little idea regarding the happenings in the polling place, instead of directing the process at them, we think that the process should be internalized and result in a clear chain of custody every time the machine is opened. Therefore, we suggest that two poll workers, perhaps a floater and a machine judge, participate in the process. One poll worker, the machine judge, will be responsible for opening the machine and straightening the ballots. One poll worker, perhaps a floater, would be responsible for observing the presiding judge and making sure that all the ballots stay in the machine and that the presiding judge does not attempt to reprocess or recount some ballots and locks the ballots back up when he or she is finished. Each time this process is done the sorter, the observer and the optical scan machine identification should be logged and recorded. This process ensures that there is an observable chain of custody, which is important to the integrity and legitimacy of the election process, while not disrupting a smoothly running voting location with the appropriate actions of the machine judge.

Given the large number of M100s in each location, it is much harder for machine judges to spend their time taking voter ballots and inserting them into the machines themselves as we have often seen in the past. We saw a reduction in the number of locations that were having poll workers, not voters, insert their ballots. We observed this problem in only 1 in 10 locations we visited in 2012, while in 2010 we observed this problem in twice as many, 2 in 10, locations we visited. It is important to continue to emphasize in training that voters, not poll workers, should insert ballots into the M100.

One problem, however, with having a fair number of M100s available for voter use is that it is much harder for the machine judge to watch each machine and make sure that the

counter turns each time, ensuring that the ballot submitted was counted. We saw numerous examples where the machine judge was not paying attention to the counter because he or she was too busy directing voters to machines and discussing spoiled ballot issues with voters who either over voted or who had “tick” problems with their ballot. However, ensuring that the counter turns is important to ensuring that each ballot is counted. Previous experience shows that sometimes the M100s can over or under count a ballot and therefore it is important that this piece of the administrative process not be lost in the transition to VCCs.<sup>18</sup>

## **Distributing Voters to M100s and the Stack Procedure Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: The machine floor judge should encourage voters to insert their ballots into a variety of machines to ensure a roughly even distribution of ballots across M100s.

Recommendation 2: A new chain of custody method needs to be developed to ensure that M100s opened to reorganize ballots do not disrupt or make the voting process awkward. We suggest a two-person process, where one poll worker watches the other to ensure that all the ballots are organized and placed in their proper location. We suggest that all such openings be logged and initialized.

Recommendation 3: Machine judges must observe that the counter on each machine is turning appropriately as each ballot is inserted. If there is so much voter activity that the machine’s judge cannot perform this duty, he or she should engage the assistance of a floater until such time that the machine judge can handle this part of the job themselves.

### **1.3.9 Food and Beverage**

This election appeared to designate specific areas within each VCC for food, water, and other poll worker needs. This is a good idea and one we applaud. Previously, food was often mixed with the voting process leading to food spillage on ballots and other election material. Specifying a specific location, away from election processes, where food, water, and other beverages can be stored is a welcome change.

In addition, we observed candidate campaigns bringing food and goodies into the VCCs for the poll workers or providing food and beverages to voters waiting in line to check-in. In particular, we observed the Obama campaign bringing in a variety of packaged food products in organized boxes to presiding judges and water to voters in line. It was reported to us that Governor Martinez also participated in providing necessities to voters waiting in long lines.<sup>19</sup> We note that there are no rules that specifically bar candidates, their representatives, or elected officials from bringing food and water to poll workers or

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.abqjournal.com/main/2012/11/08/news/gov-greets-voters-with-pizza.html>

voters. However, we think it could be construed as a form of electioneering and therefore should be discouraged. At the very least, incidents of such activity should be logged so that a record exists of any such activities and their locations. The log should include the name of the person(s) dropping off the consumables, the time, and what campaign they are with or what office they have or are currently running for.

## **Food and Beverage Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: Continue to identify a specific location where poll workers can keep and eat their food.

Recommendation 2: Poll workers should log any instances of food or beverages being provided by candidates, candidate campaigns, or other elected officials. The log should include the name of the person(s) dropping off the consumables, the time, and what campaign they are with or what office they have or are currently running for.

### **1.3.10. Identification Badges**

Last time we noted an increase in the use of identification badges for poll workers that included only their party identification. We recommended that the badges include the poll worker's name. The county adopted our recommendation and included a name and title on poll worker badges. We commend the county for this administrative procedure, which helps to identify polling officials in a crowded polling place and can help voters identify those individuals who can assist them.

However, we, like some voters in New Mexico, do find the party identification part of the badge somewhat problematic. We realize that the purpose of the party identification of the poll worker is to demonstrate to voters that both parties are represented in the administrative process (NM Statute §1-2-18) However, voters do not come in contact with all poll workers and so may instead determine that the VCC was run by Republicans or Democrats. Far more problematic is that some voters may find the party identification more offensive than informative and may see it as a form of electioneering.<sup>20</sup> Given that voters are not allowed to wear campaign buttons or other apparel or accessories that might support specific candidates or parties into the polling place, we are perplexed that badges that indicate partisanship are allowed. We understand that there is a requirement of party diversity, but wonder if party badges in the polling place are functioning in a manner meant by the law.

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<sup>20</sup> See for example the story on KOB-TV, <http://www.kob.com/article/stories/S2820688.shtml>

Finally, we noted that county employees, runners and other county administrators, in many cases do not appear to wear any form of identification. These individuals pick up in-lieu of ballots and interact with poll workers to help solve other problems. These actors should also wear some kind of official identification that identifies them as county employees and part of the local election official's election workers.

### **Identification Badges Recommendation**

Recommendation 1: We recommend that poll workers continue to wear badges identifying them as official poll workers, which includes their name, title and party identification as currently required by law.

Recommendation 2: Because the existing law requires that their party identification be included, we recommend that legislators reconsider this statute and consider whether or not such presentation is a form of electioneering in the polling place that should not be allowed. Information on party diversity in the polling location could be better achieved through other reporting means.

Recommendation 3: County workers should wear name badges so presiding judges, other poll workers and voters know that they are official election administrators.

### **1.3.11 Voter Identification**

Getting poll workers to accurately reflect voter identification laws has been a problem in in-person election administration since we began observing operations in Bernalillo and other counties in 2006. Each year, we report repeated problems and each year the county makes efforts to improve the process. With the changes in procedures for the VCCs the county election administrator has made an even stronger effort to force poll workers to obey the law when asking for voter identification. The overall training for voter identification was the best we have observed so far. In a number of incidences we observed poll workers declining harder forms of voter identification, including driver's license, in favor of following the least intrusive form of voter identification, which requires voters to report only their name, address and birth year. These changes improved the voter identification problems we have seen in the past quite a lot. While in 2010, we observed about one-third of precincts incorrectly administering the voter identification law; this was down significantly to only 3% in the 2012 election.

One polling location that was having problems routinely, and another polling location that had problems for only a short while, asked for voter identification such as driver's licenses to increase their efficiency at processing voters. Because there were long lines in one location, poll workers decided that it expedited the check-in process to obtain a driver's license from voters. This enabled them to quickly type in the voter's name and identify their birth year and possibly their address in one quick motion. The poll watcher or challenger at this location told us that he or she called the local election official, who then told the poll workers to stop this process, which they did. Although the hearts of the poll

workers were in the right place, ad hoc policies cannot be developed to deal with problems that are already mandated by law.

## **Voter Identification Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: Maintain a strict training system for voter check-in that encourages poll workers to obey the voter identification law.

Recommendation 2: In training, explain to the poll workers that they cannot adjust the voter identification process in order to process and check-in voters more quickly. Even though this may create more efficiency it is breaking the law and reducing the uniformity across election locations. These are critical factors that contribute to the quality of the election and must be maintained.

### **1.3.12 Security Procedures, Security Procedures Related to Assisted Voting**

The centralization of the process that happened under the move to VCCs substantially reduced many of the problems related to the physical security of election materials, such as ballots, voting machines, and ballot boxes that we had seen in the past. Designing each polling location at the county level, instead of leaving it to individual poll workers, created more uniformity, consistency, and overall better security and voter privacy than we had seen in 2006, 2008, and 2010. These improvements speak well of the dedication of the county staff as well as their understanding of the issues they faced in centralizing many aspects of the Election Day experience faced by voters.

One problem that we noted this year and in the past involved “assisted voting,” which is both a security and privacy issue. New Mexico election law (NM Statute §1-12-15) allows voters to request assistance at the polls. We observed several instances where poll workers assisted voters, especially non-English speaking voters, with casting their ballot. In two separate cases across different polling places, we witnessed a non-English speaking minority request that a poll worker read the ballot to the voter, sometimes with some discussion about the merits of the different individuals running. In another case, where no bilingual poll worker was present, one of our team members assisted in explaining the voter process to a non-English speaking voter. And, we saw a couple of other cases where family members or friends also assisted voters with the voting process. In all cases, the intention of the poll worker or other voter assistant was helpful and responsive to the needs to the voter. However, when poll workers assist voters they should refrain from commenting on the candidates, ballot initiatives or amendments. This could be interpreted as a form of electioneering, which is not allowed in the polling place. In addition, the law (§ 1-12-15) also requires that “The name of the person providing assistance to a voter pursuant to this section shall be recorded on the signature roster.” Although observers did see instances of “assisted voting,” they did not see any indication that the name of the person providing assistance was recorded in the signature roster or in any other location,

though we understand that poll workers were trained to note this information on the voter permit, however we did not observe this activity. Moreover, although we understand that this method complies with the law, it is not clear how it offers a transparent representation of what happened at the polling location as voter permits are not as easily accessible post-election as the signature file is. Therefore, we argue alternative methods to log these activities are necessary.

## **Recommendations Regarding Security Procedures and Procedures Related to Assisted Voting**

Recommendation 1: Training needs to include an emphasis on logging instances of assisted voting including the name of the person giving assistance and the name of the voter, especially if the assistant is a poll worker.

Recommendation 2: Training needs to emphasize that although poll workers can assist voters in the voting process, including the reading of the ballot, that they should refrain from a discussion about the merits or deficiencies of individual candidates or issues, even if asked.

Recommendation 3: The floater in charge of observing voting in the voting booths should be responsible for observing and recording instances of voter assistance.

Recommendation 4: Using the voter permit to record this activity is not centralized or as easily transparent post election for review. Alternative methods of recording this information should be considered.

### **1.3.13 Provisional Voting**

Provisional voting is an important component of the voting process meant to ensure that administrative issues do not prevent a qualified voter from participating in the election. Provisional voters are largely those who are not found on the voter list or those voters who do not have the proper identification.<sup>21</sup> Although we saw several instances of provisional voting, we also saw presiding judges who simply would not allow voters who were not found on the voter list to vote provisionally. They were simply told to leave.

We also saw an increased instance of voters voting provisionally who were not from Bernalillo County. This was due to the change to VCCs and the related advertising that accompanied this change. The advertising emphasized the ability of voters to vote at any VCC and although there were addendums explaining that this was true only within a county, it is clear that this subtext did not get through to voters.

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<sup>21</sup> Bernalillo County had about 1801 provisional voters who were not qualified to vote in 2012.

## **Provisional Voting Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: Monitor the incidence of provisional voting at each polling place. Relatively large differences between polling locations in the proportion of voters who voted provisionally may suggest training problems with particular presiding judges.

Recommendation 2: Training should emphasize that voters have the right to vote a provisional ballot and it is the obligation of the presiding judge to provide a provisional ballot if requested.

Recommendation 3: The local election official should make a policy decision on when to encourage provisional voting and should train presiding judges to follow those policies to create uniformity in administering of provisional ballots in polling places.

Recommendation 4: Advertising of the VCC needs to clearly delineate that voters can vote at any VCC within their county.

Recommendation 5: State legislators may want to consider allowing provisional votes to be accepted across county lines. We note that that cross-county voting was considered in the 2013 legislative session in HB 92.

### **1.3.14 Equipment Problems**

Over time, we have seen an increase in problems with the tabulators and the AutoMARK. Several instances were reported to us where the tabulators malfunctioned due to paper jams, in producing the zero tape, and missing or malfunctioning data cards. Many poll workers we spoke with saw the M100s as ancient technology that needs to be replaced. Specifically, they did not like the stacking policy that forced presiding judges to regularly open tabulators and stack the ballots so that the machine would not jam. They felt this was disruptive to the voting process and that technology should create tabulating machines or sorters that can stack paper ballots and/or do not jam from use. We also saw problems with the “stacking” procedure and these are identified in section 1.3.8 of this report.

When a tabulator was not working, some presiding judges in the VCC pushed the tabulator aside away from voting process, while others left it where it was. In one early voting location, we asked about a non-working machine that had not worked for days and was pushed aside. The presiding judge did not know why it was not working, why it could not be fixed, or why it remained there after days of non-use.

The AutoMARK, since its inception, has had on-going problems with paper jams and paper feeding issues. When the AutoMARK is working, it provides a seamless way for disabled

voters to be empowered to complete their ballot independently. However, when the AutoMARK does not work, it is frustrating and may reduce voter confidence.<sup>22</sup>

In this election, we also saw problems with the ballot printer. In one case, it could not retain power and in some instances it was producing ballots that were unreadable by the M100.

### **Equipment Problems Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: The County needs to monitor incidences of problems with the M100s to determine when equipment needs to be replaced. Any equipment changes should consider how changes in election administration might make certain features of particular machines more appropriate and appealing for county voters and poll workers.

Recommendation 2: Move non-working tabulators away from the voting process so that voters do not try and insert their ballot into the machines or insert their ballot into the hand counting door. If possible cover the printer or put a sign on it indicating that it is inoperable.

Recommendation 3: If possible remove non-working machines from polling locations. Non-working machines create problems for the flow of voters and take away needed space in many of the polling locations.

### **1.3.15 Bernalillo County My Vote Center App and Long Lines**

Bernalillo County used the My Vote Center App (MVCA) to assist voters in determining which VCC would be the most efficient. However, in busy VCCs the MVCA was consistently inaccurate. The problem with the MCVA was that the systems check-in person would occasionally get a dialogue box asking them to estimate the number of people in line and then the app would calculate the expected wait time. In busy VCCs, the systems clerk could not see the end of the line or the number of people in it and did not have the time to locate the floor judge to take a head count. Many long lines were outside the main voting area—in the halls of schools, for example, and sometimes even extended outside the building in which voting was taking place. Moreover, given how busy the systems clerk is, it does not make sense for him or her to pay attention to the number of people in line, or even wait for a count from a fellow poll worker, when their main job is to process voters in line.

In addition, in several locations we visited, especially towards the end of Election Day, we saw incredibly long lines. Some lines took an additional two hours for the voters to be processed after closing (e.g. Truman Middle School and Rio Grande High School). In these

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<sup>22</sup> Bryant, Lisa A. 2010. "Voter Confidence in Absentee Ballots: Results from Experimental and Survey Data." University of New Mexico.

locations, the poll workers were very aware of the situation and wanted to process voters as fast as possible, but were limited by their equipment and staffing. In some cases, poll workers mentioned to us that they suggested to voters that they try another voting location, only a short distance away that did not have the long lines. However, in other locations poll workers were unsure whether or not to give this instruction because there was no instruction on this issue during training or in their procedures and because they were worried that once voters left their line that they may not find another voting location and simply abstain from voting.

### **Bernalillo County My Vote Center App and Long Lines Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: The systems clerk should not be responsible for counting the number of voters in line to assist the My Vote Center App in accurately reflecting the amount of time necessary to vote at any given location alone or with the floor judge. We suggest that the poll worker responsible for printing sample ballots be responsible for this job. They have access to a computer and given that their job is the least demanding, it allows them to count the number of voters in line and insert that information into the system. We realize they did not in this election have a network connection, but it may be something to provide them with in future elections.

Recommendation 2: Make a policy on whether or not poll workers can inform voters of nearby locations that are less busy and communicate that policy to poll workers in training so that there is uniformity on this issue.

Recommendation 3: Create signs that can be hung in waiting areas advertising the app so that voters in line can check for additional locations while waiting. This may encourage some of them to find an alternate location on their own.

### **1.3.16 Bilingual Poll Workers**

We observed several instances where Spanish-speaking poll workers were needed or would have been helpful. For the most part, it appeared that VCCs were staffed with at least one poll worker who was bilingual and could assist such voters on an ad-hoc basis. The only problem was that sometimes this poll worker was in a critical position and it took away from his/her other duties that, in some cases, had implications for the efficient processing of voters within the polling place.

### **Bilingual Poll Workers Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: Ensure that every VCC has at least one poll worker who speaks both Spanish and English fluently.

Recommendation 2: The bilingual poll worker should not be in a critical position, such as a systems clerk or presiding judge or exceptions judge that could stop the flow of voting if they are needed for assistance.

## **1.4 Post –Election Procedures and Treatment of Election Observers**

The closing of a polling location is a complex final step in the election process. Poll workers are exhausted from a long day of work and some polling locations do not close for hours to accommodate the last voter in line when the polls close at 7:00 PM. In addition, election observers, including challengers and watchers, are often present to observe closing, which can create more stress. Despite this stress, the presence of challengers, watchers, and election observers is critical to the legitimacy of the process and their presence should be welcomed. In one location, Montgomery Crossing, we were initially denied access to the polling place. Indeed, the greeter met our team members outside the VCC and inquired about our intentions more as a bouncer than a greeter. We showed the greeter our credentials and explained our purpose and he told us to wait there and he would talk to the presiding judge. When he returned, he told us, “No dice.” We pushed the issue and were taken to the presiding judge who begrudgingly allowed us entry. Unfortunately, the situation worsened as closing operations began and the presiding judge asked our team to leave. When we indicated we wanted to watch closing procedures, she told our team that we would have to observe from the windows outside the polling location. We called the County Deputy, who called the presiding judge and told her to let us observe closing from inside the polling place.

In general, we noticed that closing the VCCs was a bit more overwhelming than closing precincts. Balancing multiple M100s seemed to cause a significant amount of stress in at least one of the locations we observed. There were disagreements between poll workers on whether to completely close down one machine first and complete the required paper work or to close multiple machines, starting the closing tape process and work on them simultaneously. We have noticed in the poll worker survey (See Part 2 of this report) that the times poll workers reported leaving the VCCs are very late in the evening in this election. Several report leaving after midnight! This is likely a product of the new VCC model, but clearer instructions on closing and balancing multiple M100s may be necessary.

### **Post –Election Procedures and Treatment of Election Observers Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: Although this largely was an anomaly, poll workers should be aware that challengers, watchers, and election observers may be present and that they are an important component to the perceived legitimacy and fairness of the election process.

Recommendation 2: Specific, step-by-step instructions on how to efficiently close and balance multiple M100s should be covered in training and in the procedure manuals.

## **1.5. Conclusions**

In our early and Election Day observations, we generally saw a very smooth operation of polling places. In addition, we saw a bigger increase in the number of improvements within an election cycle than we have ever seen before. Importantly, these improvements were made at a time of enormous election administration change, as the county moved from a traditional precinct environment to one where voters could vote at any Voting Convenience Center. In particular, the move to dedicated poll worker positions and specific training for those individuals, as well as advance design of each polling location, made a huge impact on the quality of the voting experience and the smooth running of those operations. Thus, we commend the hard work and dedication of the Bernalillo County election staff that listened to previous recommendations and anticipated how changes in the new election environment might impact voters. Nevertheless, our report has a number of suggestions for how the county can continue to improve its voting service. We hope these recommendations continue to help to improve the electoral process in Bernalillo.

## Appendix 1.1 Frequency Reports, Election Day Observations

### Frequency Report for Opening Procedures

- 1a. Did the presiding judge show up at the precinct on time? (n = 5)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 80.0% |
| No  | 20.0% |
- 1b. Did all the poll workers show up on time? (n = 5)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 40.0% |
| No  | 60.0% |
- 1c. Did the presiding judge call roll to make sure that everyone was present? (n=5)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 40.0% |
| No  | 60.0% |
2. Did poll workers check to make sure the yellow warehouse slip numbers match the M100 machines? (n = 5)
- |              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| All of them  | 80.0% |
| Some of them | 0.0%  |
| None of them | 20.0% |
3. Did they verify the ballot bins in the M100 machines were empty? (n = 5)
- |              |        |
|--------------|--------|
| All of them  | 100.0% |
| Some of them | 0.0%   |
| None of them | 0.0%   |
4. Was the zero-tape generated for the M100 machines? (n = 5)
- |              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| All of them  | 80.0% |
| Some of them | 20.0% |
| None of them | 0.0%  |
5. Was the zero-tape signed by all the poll workers for each of the M100 machines? (n = 5)
- |              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| All of them  | 60.0% |
| Some of them | 40.0% |
| None of them | 0.0%  |
6. Was the zero-tape left on the machines or was it detached? (n = 4)
- |              |        |
|--------------|--------|
| All of them  | 100.0% |
| Some of them | 0.0%   |
| None of them | 0.0%   |

7. Were there any problems connecting to the Internet? (n = 5)  
Yes 0.0%  
No 100.0%
8. Were there any problems with the computer equipment? (n = 5)  
Yes 0.0%  
No 100.0%
9. Were there any problems with the printers? (n = 5)  
Yes 20.0%  
No 80.0%
10. Did the poll workers have any problems with the passwords they were provided?  
(n = 5)  
Yes 0.0%  
No 100.0%

## Closing Frequency Report

1. Were there any voters still in line waiting to vote when the polls closed? (n= 4)  
Yes 100.0%  
No 0.0%
2. If so, did the presiding judge properly mark the last voter? (n= 4)  
Yes 75.0%  
No 25.0%
3. Did the presiding judge assign floor judges to retrieve exterior signage? (n=2)  
Yes 100.0%  
No 0.0%
4. Did the presiding judge assign floor judges to clean/straighten up the voting area?  
(n=3)  
Yes 100.0%  
No 0.0%
5. Were there any problems with closing four M100 machines at once? (n=1)  
Yes 0.0%  
No 100.0%
6. Did the machine presiding judge sign the chain of custody forms before taking the memory card and original tape to the County Clerk's office? (n=1)  
Yes 100.0%  
No 0.0%
7. Did the poll workers have to hand tally any ballots? (n=1)  
Yes 100.0%  
No 0.0%
8. If so, were there any problems using the sample ballot computer to enter in the number of hand tallied ballots? (n=1)  
Yes 0.0%  
No 100.0%
9. Were there any ballots with write-in candidates? (n=2)  
Yes 100.0%  
No 0.0%
10. Did the poll workers balance the number of voters from the AutoVote report with the M100 tapes? (n=1)  
Yes 0.0%  
No 100.0%

11. Was there a problem balancing the number of voters with the number of ballots cast at closing for each M100 machine? (n=1)
- |     |        |
|-----|--------|
| Yes | 100.0% |
| No  | 0.0%   |
12. Did poll workers place the ballots in each of the ballot boxes? (n=1)
- |              |        |
|--------------|--------|
| All of them  | 0.0%   |
| Some of them | 100.0% |
| None of them | 0.0%   |
13. Were each of the ballot boxes padlocked? (n=1)
- |              |        |
|--------------|--------|
| All of them  | 100.0% |
| Some of them | 0.0%   |
| None of them | 0.0%   |
14. Was there anything other than ballots placed in each of the ballot boxes? (n=1)
- |              |        |
|--------------|--------|
| All of them  | 0.0%   |
| Some of them | 0.0%   |
| None of them | 100.0% |
15. Were the two sets of keys for each of the ballot box locks placed in different envelopes? (n=1)
- |              |        |
|--------------|--------|
| All of them  | 100.0% |
| Some of them | 0.0%   |
| None of them | 0.0%   |
16. Did you see pol workers attempt to feed any uncounted ballots (placed in the emergency slot it the M100 machines) into any of the M100 machines after the polls closed? (n=1)
- |              |        |
|--------------|--------|
| All of them  | 0.0%   |
| Some of them | 0.0%   |
| None of them | 100.0% |
17. Did the poll workers use any chain of custody forms? (n=2)
- |     |        |
|-----|--------|
| Yes | 100.0% |
| No  | 0.0%   |
18. Were the PCMCIA cards removed from each of the M100 machines? (n=1)
- |              |        |
|--------------|--------|
| All of them  | 100.0% |
| Some of them | 0.0%   |
| None of them | 0.0%   |

## Election Day Frequency Report

1. Was the voting location easy to find and clearly marked? (n = 48)  
Yes 79.2%  
No 20.8%
2. Was the polling place readily visible from the street? (n = 48)  
Yes 68.7%  
No 31.3%
3. Was the polling place adjacent to a major street (4 lanes/divided traffic)? (n = 48)  
Yes 62.5%  
No 37.5%
4. Were any signs, flags, or banners visible from outside, such as “vote here”? (n = 47)  
Yes 93.6%  
No 6.4%
5. Was the 100 foot line for campaign materials clearly marked at the voting center? (n = 45)  
Yes 35.6%  
No 64.4%
6. Were all campaign materials located at least 100 feet from the polling location? (n = 46)  
Yes 87.0%  
No 13.0%
7. Were there people holding political signs outside the polling location? (n = 47)  
Yes 42.6%  
No 57.4%
8. Was there adequate parking at the polling location (e.g., could you find a parking space)? (n = 47)  
Yes 85.1%  
No 14.9%
9. Generally speaking, when you visited the precinct, how safe did you feel? (n = 48)  
Very Safe 93.7%  
Somewhat Safe 6.3%  
Not Safe 0.0%

10. Was there adequate outside lighting to make the precinct visible at night? (n = 45)
- |            |       |
|------------|-------|
| Yes        | 40.0% |
| No         | 15.6% |
| Don't Know | 44.4% |
11. Was the accessibility to the voting location easy for voters (esp. handicapped)? (n = 46)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 78.3% |
| No  | 21.7% |
12. Was there only one entrance into the voting location? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 77.1% |
| No  | 22.9% |
13. How many exit polling operations were in place at this location? (n = 46)
- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 0 | 71.7% |
| 1 | 23.9% |
| 2 | 4.4%  |
14. Were you greeted immediately after entering the voting center? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 83.3% |
| No  | 16.7% |
15. What was the gender of the poll worker that greeted you? (n = 44)
- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| Female | 61.4% |
| Male   | 38.6% |
16. What was the ethnicity of the poll worker that greeted you? (n = 44)
- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| Asian  | 2.3%  |
| Black  | 2.3%  |
| Latino | 36.4% |
| White  | 59.1% |
17. What was the age of the poll worker that greeted you? (n = 44)
- |          |       |
|----------|-------|
| Under 40 | 15.9% |
| 40-65    | 56.8% |
| Over 65  | 27.3% |
18. Number of poll workers working at the time you were present: (n = 47)
- |        |      |
|--------|------|
| Mean   | 10.6 |
| Median | 11   |
| Range  | 7-17 |

19. Number of workers that were male: (n = 48)  
Mean 3.4  
Median 3  
Range 1-7
20. Number of workers that were female: (n = 48)  
Mean 7.1  
Median 7  
Range 2-11
21. Number of workers that were white: (n = 48)  
Mean 6.3  
Median 6.5  
Range 0-12
22. Number of workers that were black: (n = 48)  
Mean 0.3  
Median 0  
Range 0-2
23. Number of workers that were Hispanic: (n = 48)  
Mean 3.7  
Median 4  
Range 0-9
24. Number of workers that were Asian: (n = 48)  
Mean 0.1  
Median 0  
Range 0-2
25. Number of workers that were aged under 45: (n = 48)  
Mean 2.1  
Median 2  
Range 0-9
26. Number of workers that were aged 40-65: (n = 48)  
Mean 5.6  
Median 6  
Range 0-13
27. Number of workers that were aged over 65: (n = 48)  
Mean 1.79  
Median 1  
Range 0-8

28. Were the poll workers dressed appropriately? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 95.8% |
| No  | 4.2%  |
29. Was the vote center setup so as to enable a circular flow of voters? (n = 47)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 85.1% |
| No  | 14.9% |
30. Was there a line of voters waiting to check in? (n = 47)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 91.5% |
| No  | 8.5%  |
31. Was there a line of voters waiting to vote? (n = 47)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 17.0% |
| No  | 83.0% |
32. Estimate the amount of time a voter waited to vote – in minutes (n = 48):
- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| Mean   | 14.5  |
| Median | 5.0   |
| Range  | 1-120 |
33. Was it noisy inside the polling location? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 20.8% |
| No  | 79.2% |
34. Was it crowded inside the polling location? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 31.3% |
| No  | 68.7% |
35. Generally speaking, how small or large was the polling place? (n = 47)
- |                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Very small     | 8.5%  |
| Somewhat small | 23.4% |
| Medium         | 12.8% |
| Somewhat large | 25.5% |
| Very large     | 29.8% |
36. Was the ballot marking example sign posted at the vote center and easily visible? (n = 47)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 93.6% |
| No  | 6.4%  |
37. Was the voter identification poster posted at the polling place and easily visible? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 84.4% |
| No  | 15.6% |

38. Was the voter bill of rights posted at the polling place and easily visible? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 8.3%  |
| No  | 91.7% |
39. Generally speaking, was the interior of the polling place well lit for reading? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 97.9% |
| No  | 2.1%  |
40. Were there any other observers or challengers present in the polling location? (n = 46)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 87.0% |
| No  | 13.0% |
41. Were poll workers asking voters for voter identification (such as a photo ID)? (n = 47)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 12.8% |
| No  | 87.2% |
42. Were voters offering identification without being asked? (n = 46)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 84.8% |
| No  | 15.2% |
43. Based on your observations, were they asking for identification appropriately? (n = 33)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 97.0% |
| No  | 3.0%  |
44. Did you see anyone using a cell phone in the voting booth or at the voting location? (n = 46)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 30.4% |
| No  | 69.6% |
45. Did voters have adequate privacy while filling out their ballots? (n = 47)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 95.7% |
| No  | 4.3%  |
46. Were voters being offered a privacy sleeve for their ballot? (n = 46)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 41.3% |
| No  | 58.7% |
47. Were any voters using a privacy sleeve for their ballot? (n = 46)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 39.1% |
| No  | 60.9% |

48. Were ballots being fed into the M100s by voters or poll workers? (n = 44)
- |              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Voters       | 88.6% |
| Poll Workers | 6.8%  |
| Both         | 4.5%  |
49. Did the poll worker examine the ballots as they were fed through the machine in such a way that it could have been a privacy issue for the voter? (n = 44)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 36.4% |
| No  | 63.6% |
50. Were any of the voters talking about the voting centers? (n = 46)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 8.7%  |
| No  | 91.3% |
51. Were the poll workers generally sticking to their positions? (n = 45)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 95.6% |
| No  | 4.4%  |
52. Did you see the presiding judge engage in the stacking procedure? (n = 47)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 14.9% |
| No  | 85.1% |
53. If so, did the presiding judge announce what he was doing? (n = 12)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 25.0% |
| No  | 75.0% |
54. Number of booths available to voters: (n = 47)
- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| Mean   | 43.0  |
| Median | 41    |
| Range  | 15-61 |
55. Number of voting machines that were operable: (n = 48)
- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| 0      | 4.2%  |
| 1      | 0.0%  |
| 2      | 22.9% |
| 3      | 45.8% |
| 4      | 25.0% |
| 5      | 2.1%  |
| Mean   | 2.94  |
| Median | 3.00  |

56. Number of on-demand ballot printers that were operable: (n = 48)
- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| 1      | 4.2%  |
| 2      | 64.6% |
| 3      | 25.0% |
| 4      | 6.3%  |
| Mean   | 2.33  |
| Median | 2.00  |
57. Number of the M100 machines that did not have the the zero tape properly secured so that the voters could not tamper with it: (n = 48)
- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 0 | 83.3% |
| 1 | 6.3%  |
| 2 | 2.1%  |
| 3 | 4.2%  |
| 4 | 4.2%  |
58. Were there any reported problems with the M100 voting tabulators? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 47.9% |
| No  | 52.1% |
59. Was the Automark set up, operational, and available for use? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 89.6% |
| No  | 10.4% |
60. Were there any reported problems with the AskED system? (n = 48)
- |     |        |
|-----|--------|
| Yes | 0.0%   |
| No  | 100.0% |
61. Were there any reported problems wit the printer used to print ballots? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 22.9% |
| No  | 77.1% |
62. Were there any reported problems with the signature pad? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 2.1%  |
| No  | 97.9% |
63. Were there any reported problems connecting to the Internet? (n = 48)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 4.2%  |
| No  | 95.8% |
64. Were there any problems with the computer equipment? (n = 47)
- |     |       |
|-----|-------|
| Yes | 4.3%  |
| No  | 95.7% |

65. MyVote smartphone app estimated wait time upon arrival (in minutes): (n = 48)  
Mean            5.8  
Median          2  
Range           0-43

66. MyVote smartphone app estimated wait time upon departure (in minutes): (n = 48)  
Mean            9.8  
Median          1  
Range           0-157

# Appendix 1.2 Observation Forms

## Early Voting General Observation Worksheet

### 2012 Presidential Election, 10/20/2012-11/3/2012 - Albuquerque

Please fill out a form for each individual vote center. When appropriate, ask poll workers, poll judges or observers for their observations for answers to questions that took place during periods when you were not present or events that are taking place currently. When a situation is different than it should be, please elaborate as much as possible. Always feel free to add notes and other observations. Please write as much as you like about each precinct.

#### Polling Location Information:

Early Voting Location Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Polling Location (church, school, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Observer: \_\_\_\_\_ Team # \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Arrival: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM Time of Departure: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM

-----

#### OUTSIDE THE POLLING LOCATION

- |  |      |          |          |    |
|--|------|----------|----------|----|
| 1. Was the voting location easy to find and clearly marked?                                  | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 2. Was the polling place readily visible from the street?                                    | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 3. Was the polling place adjacent to a major street (4 lanes/divided traffic)?               | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 4. Were any signs, flags, or banners visible from outside, such as "vote here"?              | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 5. Was the 100 foot line for campaign materials clearly marked at the voting center?         | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 6. Were all campaign materials located at least 100 feet from the polling location?          | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 7. Were there people holding political signs outside the polling location?                   | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 8. Was there adequate parking at the polling location (e.g. could you find a parking space)? | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 9. Generally speaking, when you visited the precinct, how safe did you feel?                 | Very | Somewhat | Not Safe | DK |
| 10. Was there adequate outside lighting to make the precinct visible at night?               | Yes  | No       | DK       |    |
| 11. Was the accessibility to the voting location easy for voters (esp. handicapped)?         | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 12. Was there only one entrance into the voting location?                                    | Yes  | No       |          |    |
| 12a. If more than one, how many entrances/exits? _____                                       |      |          |          |    |
| 13. How many exit polling operations were in place at this location?                         | 0    | 1        | 2        |    |
| 14. Was the line of voters visible from the outside?   | Yes  | No       |          |    |

**INSIDE THE POLLING LOCATION**

15. Were you greeted immediately after entering the voting center? Yes No

16. How many poll workers were working at the time you were present? \_\_\_\_\_

17. How many poll workers were:

Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_  
White: \_\_\_\_\_ Black: \_\_\_\_\_ Latino: \_\_\_\_\_ Asian: \_\_\_\_\_  
Under 40: \_\_\_\_\_ 40-65: \_\_\_\_\_ Over 65: \_\_\_\_\_

18. What was the gender, ethnicity, and age of the poll worker that greeted you?

Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_  
White: \_\_\_\_\_ Black: \_\_\_\_\_ Latino: \_\_\_\_\_ Asian: \_\_\_\_\_  
Under 40: \_\_\_\_\_ 40-65: \_\_\_\_\_ Over 65: \_\_\_\_\_

19. Were the poll workers dressed appropriately? Yes No

20. Was the vote center set-up so as to enable a circular flow of voters? Yes No

21. Was there a line of voters waiting to check in? Yes No

22. Was there a line of voters waiting to vote? Yes No

23. Estimate the total amount of time a voter waited to vote: \_\_\_\_\_ Minutes

24. Was it noisy inside the polling location? Yes No

25. Was it crowded inside the polling location? Yes No

26. Generally speaking, how small or large was the inside of the polling place? (circle best option)

Very Small    Somewhat Small    Medium    Somewhat Large    Very Large

27. What kind of waiting area was present? (circle best option)

None    Small Standing Area    Medium Standing Area    Large Standing Area

28. Generally speaking, was the interior of the polling place well lit for reading? Yes No

29. Were there any other observers or challengers present in the polling location? Yes No

If yes, please indicate role (ex. challenger, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

**PROCEDURES AND VOTER EXPERIENCE**

- 30. Were poll workers asking voters for photo ID? Yes    No
- 31. Were voters offering identification without being asked? Yes    No
- 32. Based on your observations, were they asking for ID appropriately? Yes    No  
     32b. If no, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
     \_\_\_\_\_
- 33. Did you see anyone using a cell phone in the voting booth or at the voting location? Yes    No
- 34. Did voters have adequate privacy while filling out their ballots? Yes    No
- 35. Were voters being offered a privacy sleeve for their ballot? Yes    No
- 36. Were any voters using a privacy sleeve for their ballot? Yes    No
- 37. Were ballots being fed into the M-100s by voters or poll workers? Voters    Poll Workers    Both
- 38. Did the poll worker examine the ballots as they were fed through the machine in such a way that if could have been a privacy issues for the voter? Yes    No
- 39. Were any of the voters talking about the voting centers? Yes    No  
     39a. If so, please briefly describe what they were saying? \_\_\_\_\_  
     \_\_\_\_\_
- 40. Were the poll workers generally sticking to their assigned positions? Yes    No
- 41. Did you see the Presiding Judge engage in the stacking procedure? Yes    No  
     41a. If so, did the Presiding Judge announce what he was doing? Yes    No  
     41b. Generally, what was the vote center reaction to this procedure? \_\_\_\_\_  
     \_\_\_\_\_

**EQUIPMENT**

42. How many polling booths/ were available to voters? \_\_\_\_\_

43. How many voting machines (M-100) were operable? \_\_\_\_\_

44. How many on-demand ballot printers were operable? \_\_\_\_\_

45. How many of the M-11 machines had the zero tape properly secured so that the voters could not tamper with it? \_\_\_\_\_

46a. Were there any reported problems with the M-100 voting tabulators? Yes No

46b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

47. Was the Autemark set up, operational and available for use? Yes No

48. Were there any reported problems with the AskED system? Yes No

48b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

49. Were there any reported problems with the printer used to print ballots? Yes No

49b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

50. Were there any reported problems with the signature pad? Yes No

50b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

51. Were there any reported problems connecting to the Internet? Yes No

51b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

52. Were there any reported problems with the computer equipment? Yes No

52b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

53. **Additional Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Election Day Open Polls Observation Worksheet

2012 Presidential Election, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 - Albuquerque

**(THIS FORM IS FOR OPENING POLLS ONLY!)**

In addition to this form, please fill out a general observation form for this precinct.

Please fill out a form for each vote center. **When appropriate**, ask poll workers, poll judges or observers for their observations for answers to questions that took place during periods when you were not present or events that are taking place currently. When a situation is different than it should be, please elaborate as much as possible. Always feel free to add notes and other observations. Please write as much as you like about each precinct.

### Polling Location Information:

Vote Center Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Polling Location (church, school, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Observer: \_\_\_\_\_ Team # \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Arrival: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM Time of Departure: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM

MyVote Smartphone app estimated wait time at: \_\_\_\_\_ polls open; \_\_\_\_\_ departure

-----

### OPENING INFORMATION

1a. Did the presiding judge show up to the vote center on time?	Yes	No	
1b. Did all the poll workers show up on time? (Please explain any tardiness issues in the comments section of this form)	Yes	No	
1c. Did the presiding judge call roll to make sure everyone was present?	Yes	No	
2. Did poll workers check to make sure the yellow warehouse slip numbers matched the M-100 machines?	All	Some	None
3. Did they verify the ballot bins in the M-100 machines were empty?	All	Some	None
4. Was the zero-tape generated for the M-100 machines?	All	Some	None
5. Was the zero-tape signed by all the poll workers for each of the M-100 machines?	All	Some	None
6. Was the zero-tape left on the machines or was it detached?	All	Some	None
7. Were sample ballots posted at the precinct and easily visible?	Yes	No	



## Election Day Polling General Observation Worksheet

**2012 Presidential Election, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 - Albuquerque**

Please fill out a form for each individual vote center. When appropriate, ask poll workers, poll judges or observers for their observations for answers to questions that took place during periods when you were not present or events that are taking place currently. When a situation is different than it should be, please elaborate as much as possible. Always feel free to add notes and other observations. Please write as much as you like about each precinct.

**Polling Location Information:**

Vote Center Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Type of Polling Location (church, school, strip mall office park etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Observer: \_\_\_\_\_ Team # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Time of Arrival: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM Time of Departure: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM  
 MyVote Smartphone app estimated wait time at: \_\_\_\_\_ arrival; \_\_\_\_\_ departure



**OUTSIDE THE POLLING LOCATION**

- |   |      |          |                |
|---|------|----------|----------------|
| 1. Was the voting location easy to find and clearly marked?                                   | Yes  | No       |                |
| 2. Was the polling place readily visible from the street?                                     | Yes  | No       |                |
| 3. Was the polling place adjacent to a major street (4 lanes/divided traffic)?                | Yes  | No       |                |
| 4. Were any signs, flags, or banners visible from outside, such as "vote here"?               | Yes  | No       |                |
| 5. Was the 100 foot line for campaign materials clearly marked at the voting center?          | Yes  | No       |                |
| 6. Were all campaign materials located at least 100 feet from the polling location?           | Yes  | No       |                |
| 7. Were there people holding political signs outside the polling location?                    | Yes  | No       |                |
| 8. Was there adequate parking at the polling location (e.g., could you find a parking space)? | Yes  | No       |                |
| 9. Generally speaking, when you visited the vote center, how safe did you feel?               | Very | Somewhat | Not Safe    DK |
| 10. Was there adequate outside lighting to make the precinct visible at night?                | Yes  | No       | DK             |
| 11. Was the accessibility to the voting location easy for voters (esp. handicapped)?          | Yes  | No       |                |
| 12. Was there only one entrance into the voting location?                                     | Yes  | No       |                |
| 12a. If more than one, how many entrances/exits? _____  |      |          |                |
| 13. How many exit polling operations were in place at this location?                          | 0    | 1        | 2              |

**INSIDE THE POLLING LOCATION**

14. Were you greeted immediately after entering the voting center? Yes      No
15. What was the gender, ethnicity, and age of the poll worker that greeted you?
- Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_
- White: \_\_\_\_\_ Black: \_\_\_\_\_ Latino \_\_\_\_\_ Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- Under 40: \_\_\_\_\_ 40-65 \_\_\_\_\_ Over 65 \_\_\_\_\_
16. How many poll workers were working at the time you were present? \_\_\_\_\_
17. How many poll workers were:
- Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_
- White: \_\_\_\_\_ Black: \_\_\_\_\_ Latino \_\_\_\_\_ Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- Under 40: \_\_\_\_\_ 40-65 \_\_\_\_\_ Over 65 \_\_\_\_\_
18. Were the poll workers dressed appropriately? Yes      No
19. Was the vote center set-up so as to enable a circular flow of voters? Yes      No
- 
20. Was there a line of voters waiting to check in? Yes      No
21. Was there a line of voters waiting to vote? Yes      No
22. Estimate the total amount of time a voter waited to vote: \_\_\_\_\_ Minutes
- 
23. Was it noisy inside the polling location? Yes      No
24. Was it crowded inside the polling location? Yes      No
25. Generally speaking, how small or large was the inside of the polling place? (circle best option)
- Very Small      Somewhat Small      Medium      Somewhat Large      Very Large
- 26a. Was the ballot marking example sign posted at the precinct and easily visible? Yes      No
- 26b. Was the voter ID poster posted at the precinct and easily visible? Yes      No
- 26c. Was the voter bill of rights posted at the precinct and easily visible? Yes      No
27. Generally speaking, was the interior of the polling place well lit for reading? Yes      No
28. Were there any other observers or challengers present in the polling location? Yes      No

If yes, please indicate role (ex. challenger, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

**PROCEDURES AND VOTER EXPERIENCE**

- 29. Were poll workers asking voters for photo ID? Yes    No
- 30. Were voters offering identification without being asked? Yes    No
- 31a. Based on your observations, were they asking for ID appropriately? Yes    No

31b. If no, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 31. Did you see anyone using a cell phone in the voting booth or at the voting location? Yes    No
- 32. Did voters have adequate privacy while filling out their ballots? Yes    No
- 33. Were voters being offered a privacy sleeve for their ballot? Yes    No
- 34. Were any voters using a privacy sleeve for their ballot? Yes    No
- 35. Were ballots being fed into the M-100s by voters or poll workers? Voters    Poll Workers    Both
- 36. Did the poll worker examine the ballots as they were fed through the machine in such a way that if could have been a privacy issues for the voter? Yes    No
- 37. Were any of the voters talking about the voting centers? Yes    No

38a. If so, please briefly describe what they were saying? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 39. Were the poll workers generally sticking to their assigned positions? Yes    No
- 40. Did you see the Presiding Judge engage in the stacking procedure? Yes    No

40a. If so, did the Presiding Judge announce what he was doing? Yes    No

40b. Generally, what was the vote center reaction to this procedure? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**EQUIPMENT**

- 41. How many polling booths/ were available to voters? \_\_\_\_\_
- 42. How many voting machines (M-100) were operable? \_\_\_\_\_
- 43. How many on-demand ballot printers were operable? \_\_\_\_\_
- 44. How many of the M-100 machines had the zero tape properly secured so that the voters could not tamper with it? \_\_\_\_\_
- 45a. Were there any reported problems with the M-100 voting tabulators? Yes      No
- 45b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

---

- 46. Was the Automark set up, operational and available for use? Yes      No
- 47. Were there any reported problems with the AskED system? Yes      No
- 47b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- 48. Were there any reported problems with the printer used to print ballots? Yes      No
- 48b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- 49. Were there any reported problems with the signature pad? Yes      No
- 49b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- 50. Were there any reported problems connecting to the Internet? Yes      No
- 50b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- 51. Were there any reported problems with the computer equipment? Yes      No
- 51b. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- 52. **Additional Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CLOSING INFORMATION**

49. Were there any voters still in line waiting to vote when the polls closed?	Yes	No	
49a. If so, did the Presiding Judge properly mark the last voter?	Yes	No	
50. Did the Presiding Judge report to the EV Hotline that the polls are closed?	Yes	No	
51. Did the Presiding Judge assign Floor Judges to retrieve exterior signage?	Yes	No	
52. Did the Presiding Judge assign Floor Judges to clean/straighten up the Voting Area?	Yes	No	
53. Was the Machine Presiding Judge the only person to work with the M-100 machines?	Yes	No	
54. Were there any problems with closing four M-100 machines at once?	Yes	No	
54a. If so, please explain the problem and whether or not it was resolved: _____			
_____			
55. Did the Machine Presiding Judge sign the chain of custody forms before taking the Memory Card and Original Tape to the County Clerk's office?	Yes	No	
56. Did they have to hand tally any ballots?	Yes	No	
56a. If so, were there any problems using the "Sample Ballot" computer to enter in the number of hand tallied ballots?	Yes	No	
56b. If so, please explain the problem and whether or not it was resolved: _____			
_____			
56c. How many workers were involved in this process? _____			
56d. How long did the whole process take? _____			
57. Were there any write-in candidates?	Yes	No	
57a. Were there any problems qualifying the write-in votes?	Yes	No	
57b. If so, please explain the problem and whether or not it was resolved: _____			
_____			
57c. How many workers were involved in this process? _____			
57d. How long did the whole process take? _____			
58. Did the poll workers sign a certificate of election completion stating the total number of voters?	Yes	No	
59. Did the poll workers balance the number of voters from the AutoVote report with the M-100 tapes?	Yes	No	
59a. If so, please explain the problem and whether or not it was resolved: _____			
_____			
60. Was there a problem balancing the # of voters with the # of ballots cast at closing for each M-100 machine?	Yes	No	
60a. If so, please explain the problem and whether or not it was resolved: _____			
_____			
61. Did poll workers place the ballots in each of the ballot boxes?	All	Some	None
62. Were spoiled ballots also included in each of the ballot boxes?	All	Some	None
63. Were each of the ballot boxes padlocked?	All	Some	None
64. Was there anything other than ballots placed in each of the ballot boxes?	All	Some	None



# Appendix 1.3 Election Observation Certification Form



Office of the New Mexico Secretary of State  
Dianna J. Duran

## Registration of Election-Related Organizations and Election Observers

*I would like to register with the New Mexico Secretary of State as an:*

- Election Related Organization  
 Election Observer

*If registering as an Election-Related Organization, I intend to: (please check all applicable boxes)*

- Conduct Election Monitoring                       Appoint Watchers  
 Monitor Voter Turnout Activities                       I do not intend to appoint Watchers

Name of Organization or Institution: University of New Mexico

Address: Albuquerque, 87131 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person (in New Mexico, if possible):

Name: Lonna Atkeson

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: atkeson@unm.edu

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10-12-12

<p><i>For official use only: Processed by:</i> _____ <i>Date:</i> _____</p>
---

## **Appendix 1.4 Polling places and precincts studied**

### **Early Voting Locations**

98th & Central Shopping Center  
Caracol Plaza Shopping Center  
Central & Juan Tabo Plaza  
Clerk's Annex  
Conejos Office Park  
Coors Plaza  
Montgomery Crossing  
Paseo Crossing Shopping Center  
Paseo Del Norte Shopping Center  
Sun Country Plaza  
University of New Mexico

### **Election Day Locations**

Team 1:

Albuquerque High School  
Clerk's Annex  
East San Jose Elementary School  
Washington Middle School

Team 2:

Goff Plaza  
Rio Grande High School  
Truman Middle School  
Valle Vista Elementary School

Team 3:

Adobe Acres Elementary School  
Atrisco Heritage High School  
Mountain View Elementary School  
Pajarito Elementary School  
Polk Middle School  
Rio Bravo Senior Meal Site

Team 4:

Bellehaven Elementary School  
Caracol Plaza Shopping Center  
Eldorado High School  
Hayes Middle School  
Ocate Elementary School

Team 5:  
Central and Juan Tabo Plaza  
Manzano High School  
Van Buren Middle School

Team 6:  
Daskalos Center  
McKinley Middle School  
Montgomery Crossing  
Sandia High School  
Zuni Elementary School

Team 7:  
Bandelier School  
Highland High School  
Jefferson Middle School  
Montezuma Elementary School  
Siesta Hills Shopping Center  
University of New Mexico

Team 8:  
Arroyo Del Oso Elementary School  
Conejos Office Park  
Double Eagle Elementary School  
Eisenhower Middle School  
La Cueva High School  
Paseo Crossing Shopping Center

Team 9:  
Montoya Elementary School  
Vista Grande Community Center  
Rio Grande High School

Team 10:  
Cibola High School  
Guadalupe Plaza  
Paseo del Norte Shopping Center  
Raymond G. Sanchez Community Center  
Sun Country Plaza  
Taylor Middle School

Team 11:  
Ventana Ranch Elementary  
Duran Elementary  
Chaparral Elementary  
Volcano Vista  
LBJ Middle School  
Coors Plaza

## Appendix 1.5 Election Day and Early Observation Team Members

Abi Chamlagai	Jonathan Cade
Alan Baron	Julia Hellwege
Alberto Mercado Gonzalez	Kimberly Proctor
Alex Adams	Kris Armstrong
Alexandria Farris	Lisa Bryant
Andre Archuleta	Lonna Rae Atkeson
Andrew Balis	Mixcoatl Miera-Rosete
Anthony Montoya	Moise Munoz
Austin Rasmussen	Nicole Nelson
B Linsten	R. Michael Alvarez
Brittany Ortiz	Rogelio Morales
Christine Lopez	Rory Foye
Daniel J Douglas	Shannon Sanchez-Youngman
Daniel May	Stina Paulsen
Dokyun Kim	Timothy Donahue
Dylan Trujillo	Vernard Miles
Graf Butler	Vickie Ybarra
Isabella Fritsche	William Cary
Jessica Jones	Zac Rachal
John Chavez	
R. Michael Alvarez	Shannon Terry

## **Part 2: Poll Worker Experiences**

After the 2012 general election, we conducted a survey of poll workers in Bernalillo County. The survey had a number of goals: (1) to study how poll workers generally view the election and election process, (2) to examine specific electoral administration issues and questions, (3) to gauge how poll workers implement specific laws, (4) to determine how they view recent changes to state election laws (5) to examine poll worker experiences within the vote center model, and (5) to see if poll worker attitudes have changed over time.<sup>23</sup>

This report has 13 parts:

Part 1 provides background on the study.

Part 2 describes the demographic characteristics of poll workers who responded.

Part 3 provides information on how poll workers reported being recruited and their views about their fellow poll workers.

Part 4 provides information on their training.

Part 5 reviews their perceptions of election procedures.

Part 6 covers polling place supplies and county responsiveness to poll workers.

Part 7 covers problems and successes during the election.

Part 8 examines the condition of polling place facilities.

Part 9 describes the overall level of satisfaction poll workers had with their job and their confidence that the ballots were counted correctly.

Part 10 assesses implementation of New Mexico's voter identification law.

Part 11 examines voter privacy issues.

Part 12 examines attitudes toward the new vote centers.

### **2.1. Background to Study**

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<sup>23</sup> We did similar reports in 2006, 2008, and 2010, which we mention frequently for purposes of comparison. The reports can be downloaded at: <http://www.unm.edu/~atkeson/newmexico.html>.

Every federal election since 2006, we have surveyed poll workers as part of our election ecosystem examination. Over this period, we have altered our survey in response to changes in election administration and based upon observations we made in previous studies or during early and Election Day observations. In 2012, we were especially interested in asking poll workers about the new vote center model and added quite a number of questions on this aspect of the election. We also were interested in how poll workers felt about the new training methodology that trained for specific jobs. We also continued with several traditional pieces of our poll worker survey including demographic characteristics, polling place characteristics, and evaluation of poll worker operations.

In 2012, we conducted a mixed mode survey in which sampled poll workers could respond on paper or choose to take the survey over the Internet. The survey was conducted between November 30, 2012 and January 30, 2013. We conducted a stratified sample of 362 of the 802 (48%) poll workers who participated in the 2012 general election based upon position and location. One hundred and ninety poll workers responded to our survey for a response rate of 52.5%. The sampled poll workers were sent a letter with a copy of the survey on November 30, 2012. The letter described the study and also provided a URL ([pollworkersurvey.unm.edu](http://pollworkersurvey.unm.edu)) where the poll workers could take the survey online. About December 7, 2012 we sent out a reminder postcard asking respondents to return the survey or take it on line. On December 17, 2012 we sent out a reminder letter and an additional copy of the survey. On January 11 we sent out a final reminder postcard to those poll workers who did not respond. A full statement of our methodology can be found in Appendix 2.1 and a full frequency report can be found in Appendix 2.2.

## **2.2. Poll Worker Demographics**

Table 2.1 presents the demographics of the poll workers by position. We see that poll workers in all positions display an average age very close to the overall average age of 54. Interestingly, this is eight years younger than the observed average of Bernalillo poll workers in 2010, which was 62 years old. While almost seven out of ten (69%) poll workers are female, this varies widely by position, from a low of 42% female presiding judges to a high of 81% for systems clerks. Just over half of all poll workers identified as white and a little over one-third of the sample identified as Hispanic. Almost one in five poll workers (18%) stated that they were fluent in Spanish, with floaters being the most bi-lingual (25%) of the groups.

On average, 89% of poll workers had at least some college education and for both presiding judges and systems clerks, almost half were college graduates. As in previous years most of the poll workers were retired (44%), with about 14% working part time, however, this year almost a third of presiding judges (31%) responded that they were employed full time. Election Day was a normal day off for over two-thirds of the poll workers (68%).

Over 84% of all poll workers stated that they were very comfortable with computers. Additionally, four in five poll workers use the Internet once or more per day and 13% use it

a few times a week. These percentages varied quite a bit, however, by position, with the presiding judges reporting the lowest rates of daily Internet usage (69%) and exceptions judges the highest (92%). Given the importance of familiarity with computers for the job of systems clerk, assessments of personal comfort with a computer may be an important pre-job assessment. More comfort with computers may provide the added edge in a high stress job where keeping voters moving through the process is critical.

**Table 2.1: Demographics of Poll Workers by County (in %)**

		PJ	EJ	FL	SC	MJ	Total
Age and Gender	Average Age	56.8	51.5	55.9	54.5	52.7	54.4
	Percentage Female	42.3	59.9	79.3	81.2	58.4	68.6
Race	White	56.7	44.0	55.0	54.3	48.0	52.5
	African American	3.3	4.0	0.0	6.2	4.0	4.4
	Native American	0.0	8.0	5.0	1.2	4.0	2.8
	Hispanic	36.7	36.0	35.0	35.8	40.0	36.5
Spanish Fluency	Yes	24.1	15.4	25.0	15.3	20.0	18.4
	No	75.9	84.6	75.0	84.7	80.0	81.6
Education	High school or less	9.7	4.0	10.0	12.9	12.5	10.8
	Some college	41.9	60.0	65.0	38.8	45.8	45.9
	College degree or more	48.4	36.0	25.0	48.2	41.7	43.2
Employment Status	Full time	31.0	11.5	13.6	18.8	16.0	18.7
	Part time	13.8	19.2	18.2	17.5	16.0	17.0
	Unemployed	10.3	15.4	9.1	15.0	12.0	13.2
	Student	3.4	11.5	4.5	0.0	8.0	3.8
	Retired	37.9	38.5	45.5	46.3	48.0	44.0
	Homemaker	3.4	3.8	9.1	2.5	0.0	3.3
Time Off	Took day off	37.0	28.6	6.7	38.9	22.7	31.8
	Was normal day off	63.0	71.4	93.3	61.1	77.3	68.2
Comfort With Computers	Very comfortable	77.4	92.3	81.0	84.7	80.0	83.5
	Somewhat comfortable	16.1	7.7	14.3	15.3	12.0	13.8
	Not very comfortable	6.5	0.0	4.8	0.0	8.0	2.7
	Not at all comfortable	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Frequency of Internet Use	Once or more a day	68.8	92.3	85.7	79.8	79.2	80.2
	A few times a week	18.8	3.8	4.8	17.9	8.3	13.4
	A few times a month	3.1	0.0	4.8	0.0	4.2	1.6
	Hardly ever	6.3	3.8	4.8	2.4	8.3	4.3
	Never	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5

Note: PJ = Presiding judge, EJ=Elections Judge, FL=Floater; SC =Systems Clerk, MJ=Machine Judge.

Table 2.2 shows there are small differences across positions in the party identification of poll workers. On average half of all poll workers are registered as Democrats (53%), one-

third are registered as Republicans (34%), and a little over one in ten (14%) are registered with an Independent party or are registered as “Declined-to-State” (DTS). These numbers are generally close to partisan representations in Bernalillo County, although both Republicans and Democrats are over represented and DTS are underrepresented. Registered Democrats make up 46% of voters in Bernalillo County, registered Republicans make up 31%, DTS make up 23%.<sup>24</sup> Given that the laws have been replaced that require equity between partisans for poll workers, the county clerk may want to try to use the overall breakdown in party registration as a rough guide to what each voting location should look like.

**Table 2.2. Partisanship and Ideology of Poll Workers by County (in %)**

		PJ	EJ	FL	SC	MJ	Total
Party Identification	Democrat	56.7	50.0	47.6	52.3	56.0	52.6
	Independent	3.3	11.5	14.3	18.2	12.0	13.7
	Republican	40.0	38.5	38.1	29.5	32.0	33.7

### 2.3. Poll Worker Recruitment and Views of Colleagues

How do people become poll workers in New Mexico? Table 2.3 shows that similar to previous studies, in general, most people seek out the job on their own (44%) or are recruited by another poll worker (16%). However, poll workers in this year’s election were twice as likely than in 2010 to have been recruited by an advertisement in the local media (22%). When we asked respondents why they were poll workers, the three options most poll workers strongly agreed with were (1) “It is my duty as a citizen,” (2) “I am the kind of person who does my share,” and (3) “I wanted to learn about the election process.” These statements consistently rank as the primary reasons people chose to become poll workers, however it is important to note that the monetary incentives was indicated as a very important reason for being a poll worker by over two in five poll workers (42%).

<sup>24</sup> These data come from the voter registration report dates September 28, 2012 created by the Secretary of State and available at: [http://www.sos.state.nm.us/uploads/FileLinks/2966cef424224c59b1abaf5b30a91116/STATEWIDE\\_AUG282012.PDF](http://www.sos.state.nm.us/uploads/FileLinks/2966cef424224c59b1abaf5b30a91116/STATEWIDE_AUG282012.PDF), accessed March 11, 2013..

**Table 2.3. Poll Worker Recruitment and Reasons for being a Poll Worker**

<b>How were you first recruited as a poll worker?</b>	
I wasn't recruited by anyone, I sought the job on my own	44.2
Another poll worker	15.8
Some other way	12.1
An advertisement in the local media	22.1
A political party official	0.5
A teacher or professor	0.5
An official job posting by the county	4.7
<b>Why did you decide to be a poll worker?</b>	
I think it is my duty as a citizen	56.8
I wanted to learn about the election process	56.6
I am the kind of person who does my share	50.4
I wanted to make some extra money	42.2
I get to meet new people	33.1
I like to be with people who share my ideals	18.5
I was asked by someone in my political party	6.6

Table 2.4 provides the frequencies, by job assignment, for questions about the likelihood of being a poll worker again and previous elections experience of the poll workers. The survey shows that the 2012 election was the first election for two in five poll workers (42%), which shows that the county was highly successful at recruiting new workers into the system. For example, in 2010 only about 7% of poll workers were new to the job. In addition, the first two rows show that almost 90% of poll workers say they are either very likely (60%) or somewhat likely (29%) to be a poll worker again. However, there is a large amount of variation across positions in those stating they would be very likely to work again, from a high of 81% for exceptions judges to a low of 50% for systems clerks. An examination of the relationship between the likelihood of doing the job again and the number of times they have already worked suggest that those who have worked previously are more likely to indicate that they are willing to work again. Because systems clerks and machine judges were least likely to have worked in a previous election, they are also least likely to indicate that they will likely want to participate again. It does not appear that the poll worker position had anything to do with their preference for working in future elections.

In another question, we gauged the amount of time individuals had been working for the county as poll workers. We found that only 6% indicated they had worked prior to 1990 and another 10% had started working between 1990 and 1999. Another 13% began their tenure between 2000 and 2005, and about 20% started between 2006 and 2010. This leaves over half (51%) of the poll workers starting their position within the last two years. This, along with the much younger average age of the poll workers suggests an overwhelming number of new or recent recruits to this position.

**Table 2.4. Future and Past Elections**

	PJ	EJ	FL	SC	MJ	Total	
Likelihood of Being a Poll Worker Again	Very likely	63.3	80.8	76.2	50.0	54.2	59.8
	Somewhat likely	26.7	11.5	4.8	40.9	25.0	28.6
	Not very likely	6.7	7.7	4.8	5.7	8.3	6.3
	Not at all likely	3.3	0.0	14.3	3.4	12.5	5.3
Number of Previous Elections Worked	0	19.4	34.6	31.8	50.0	57.7	42.0
	1	9.7	30.8	13.6	22.7	15.4	19.7
	2-5	19.4	15.4	45.5	25.0	3.8	22.3
	6-10	12.9	11.5	9.1	2.3	15.4	7.8
	10+	38.7	7.7	0.0	0.0	7.7	8.3

Table 2.5 shows that poll workers rated the overall performance of their colleagues very high.<sup>25</sup> On a 1 to 10 scale, where 1 is very poor and 10 is excellent, all of the positions averaged a rating at or above 7.7. These generally high numbers speak to the overall positive environment in most vote centers during the 2012 general election.<sup>26</sup>

**Table 2.5. Evaluation of Fellow Poll Workers and Poll Watcher and Challenger Intimidation**

	Total	
Average rating of fellow poll workers by position: (1= Very Poor; 10=Excellent)	PJ	7.7
	EJ	7.9
	Floor Judge	8.3
	Floater	8.5
	Systems Clerk	8.9
	Machine Judge	8.6
	Student Clerk	8.3
Did you ever feel intimidated by the poll watchers and or poll challengers?	Yes	5.0
	No	95.0

When we asked poll workers about poll watchers and challengers, we found that overall they do not pose much of a problem. Only 5% of poll workers felt intimidated by poll watchers or challengers at one point or another. This number is what we saw in 2010 (5%) in Bernalillo County. Nevertheless, as stated in previous reports, poll workers should not be intimidated by the actions and activities of poll watchers and challengers. While 5% feeling intimidated could just be due to poll workers discomfort with being watched, and possibly

<sup>25</sup> We do not divide the data by position unless it is of substantive interest

<sup>26</sup> However, we note that presiding judges were rated a full point lower than in 2010. This may be an artifact of our survey, which asked for an overall evaluation of each position in 2012 and not in 2010. This may also reflect systematic changes in evaluation. Future data will help to provide a clearer picture of the meaning behind the differences seen in 2010 and 2012.

judged, future research could be directed to determine the cause of intimidation in the vote center and if the presence of watchers and challengers causes any discomfort for voters. Additionally, in the event that there may be voter intimidation or conflict, clear instructions should be provided to poll judges regarding how to handle problematic poll watchers or challengers.

## 2.4. Training

In Table 2.6, we see that almost all poll workers report that they received training materials at their training session (98%). Furthermore, almost seven in ten poll workers (69%) say they read all of the materials before Election Day. Most importantly, almost all of the poll workers (except those scheduled to work as machine judges) practiced with the AskED system during training. In fact, over half of all floor judges (56%), exceptions judges (52%), floaters (57%), and systems clerks (55%) practiced for more than fifteen minutes with the system. This hands-on training is important because it provides experience and confidence that can directly translate into on the job performance. Finally, except for systems clerks, over a majority of poll workers with previous training experience overwhelmingly thought that the trainings in 2012 were more thorough than in the past. Over two thirds of Systems clerks, however, indicated their training was about the same. Given that system clerks thought the training was most similar, and because this was a new position, it might be worthwhile to review the training materials for this groups to see if it was incomplete.

**Table 2.6. Information of Poll Worker Training in Percentages by Poll Worker Position**

		PJ	EJ	FL	SC	MJ	Total
Did you receive any training	Yes	96.8	96.3	100.0	100.0	96.0	98.4
	No	3.2	3.7	0.0	0.0	4.0	1.6
How much of the materials did you read before to	All of them	77.4	81.5	66.7	58.0	84.0	68.8
	Most of them	22.6	14.8	14.3	29.5	4.0	21.4
	I didn't receive any written	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.5
How much time practiced with AskED during training?	No practice	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	58.3	7.9
	1-5 Minutes	9.4	16.0	14.3	11.4	12.5	12.1
	6-10 Minutes	25.0	20.0	14.3	19.3	4.2	19.9
	11-15 Minutes	9.4	12.0	9.5	14.8	22.7	8.3
	16-20 Minutes	15.6	8.0	14.3	22.7	8.3	16.8
	More than 20 Minutes	40.6	44.0	42.9	31.8	4.2	32.6
How was the training compared to previous	Less Thorough	12.0	6.7	7.1	2.4	0.0	5.7
	About the Same	20.0	26.7	28.6	64.3	33.3	41.0
	More Thorough	68.0	66.7	64.3	33.3	66.7	53.3

The critical question when it comes to training is whether or not poll workers felt that their training left them feeling confident in their ability to do their work on Election Day. In Table 2.7 we show the results of a number of training questions. It is important to note that the changes made to training for the 2012 election means that some positions may not have covered some of the items we asked about because they were not necessary for the job. Therefore, the results in Table 2.7 should be read with an eye toward the duties of each assigned poll worker.

In 2012, we see that just over half of poll workers strongly agreed that they were confident in their ability to do their job on Election Day (51%). This is consistent with what we found in the 2010 study. Interestingly, while presiding and exceptions judges attended the same training, they report confidence in their abilities at very different rates (48% of presiding judges reported feeling very confident, while only 36% of exceptions judges were left feeling very confident). In addition, they report very different rates for other training measures as well including handling of spoiled ballots and provisional ballots in which presiding judges appear much more prepared than exception judges and in looking up voters and in printing out ballots in which exceptions judges appear much more prepared than presiding judges. This suggests that despite their identical training that different aspects of their job may have been emphasized in training differently or that slight differences in job duties on Election Day between the two types of judges may be responsible for this difference. Training of these two positions should be carefully examined to ensure that training covers all the jobs that these positions are expected to do equally well. A closer examination of what each of these positions did on Election Day should be examined in future surveys to help shed light on why these differences are so large.

Furthermore, only 29% of machine judges strongly agreed that they were confident in their ability after training, the lowest rate among all positions. This low percentage suggests that these individuals may have been under particular pressure and that the training was not as good at preparing them for the Election Day experience than as it was for other positions. This position is supported by the fact that 4% of machine judges indicated they would have liked more training, higher than any other poll worker position. The training for machine judges should be carefully examined to determine where deficits might exist that helps to undermine their performance on Election Day. We noticed in our Election Day and early observations that many machine judges were not able to watch the voter counters on the machines because they were busy directing people to machines and assisting voters whose ballots had been over voted or would otherwise not be taken by the ES&S 100 counting machine. In a busy vote center these factors may overwhelm a machine judge and prevent him or her from performing all of their obligations.

About 4 in 5 (79%) of Systems clerks, whose job it was to check people in on the AskED system and print ballots, strongly agreed that they were well trained to perform their job. They were not well trained to handle provisional or spoiled ballots, but this was not their general function so this did not matter. That being said, they were likely interrupted to

provide a new ballot to voters who spoiled their ballot and this issue may also be part of the reflection in the low numbers we see here. In our observations, we found that printing out new ballots to those who had already received one slowed down the process and created greater inefficiency. Poll worker training may want to consider best operations for getting these voters new ballots with less disruption to the flow of voters in line. Floaters also appeared well trained to handle looking up voters and the printing of ballots. One of their jobs was to provide relief or assistance for systems clerks, so they appear to believe they were well trained to handle this job. Likely because they were not expected to handle spoiled or provisional ballots, they reported that they did not strongly agree that their training prepared them well for these jobs.

**Table 2.7. Poll Worker Evaluation of Training**

	Percent Answering Strongly Agree					Total
	PJ	EJ	FL	SC	MJ	
After the training, I was confident in my ability	48.1	36.0	61.0	60.7	29.1	51.3
The training was easy to understand	45.0	37.5	62.9	62.7	44.8	54.2
The training was hands on, not just a lecture	45.3	64.1	67.6	80.5	63.1	68.9
The training sessions spent enough time	35.0	36.9	52.5	28.2	33.9	33.9
The training sessions were boring or too long	6.9	0.0	10.7	3.1	4.9	4.4
I would have liked more training	30.8	20.2	22.5	14.5	41.8	22.5
The training prepared me well for handling	62.6	43.9	38.7	30.5	13.7	37.7
The training prepared me well for handling	67.7	50.5	44.8	28.4	21.1	40.4
The training prepared me well for looking up	52.5	75.1	63.9	78.7	0.0	69.1
The training prepared me well for printing	57.8	74.9	71.5	79.8	0.0	71.5

Although overall confidence in poll worker ability remained similar to 2010, Bernalillo County did see improvements in some areas of training. The largest improvement from 2010 is in the percent of poll workers strongly agreeing that the training was hands on, not just a lecture (69% in 2012 compared to 23 % in 2010). This speaks to our observations of the large changes in the training process (see Part 1 of this report). However, even though the training was hands on, poll workers were still more likely to say that they would have liked more training than they did in 2010. On average about 54% of poll works indicated it was easy to understand training, but exception judges were the least likely to strongly agree with this statement at 38% and floor judges and system clerks were most likely to indicate that the training was easy to understand at 63%. On average, about 4% of poll workers indicated that the training sessions were boring or too long and about

## 2.5. Election Day Procedures

Although poll workers are trained before Election Day, on Election Day all poll workers have a set of written instructions and procedures they must follow. In Table 2.8, we see that 63% of poll workers thought that the instructions for opening the polls were very clear while only 42% of poll workers thought that the instructions for closing the polls were clear, however it is important to recognize that closing is a more complex process. That being said, we also observed that closing the polls seemed more challenging and took longer this year than in previous years.

Three-fourths of poll workers thought the instructions for when to ask a voter for his or her identification for voting was very clear and based on our observations, they generally appeared to apply the law correctly. We also see that a majority of poll workers – 59% – said that the instructions for securing the ballots during and after the election were very clear. Only two in five poll workers thought the instructions used for procedural questions or the instructions for reconciling the number of voters and ballots cast were very clear. Finally, a little less than half of poll workers noted that the instructions for when to refer a voter to call the County Clerk’s office were very clear.

Unfortunately, compared to 2010, the percent of respondents answering that the instructions were very clear dropped for all of the questions except when to ask a voter for his or her identification before voting. Further examination of the data suggest that these differences are likely due to the much larger number of new poll workers. New poll workers across all questions regarding the clarity of instructions were less likely to say they were “very clear.” Inexperience, therefore, may be one factor that helps to explain this difference across elections. Nevertheless, reconciling voters and closing the polls are important tasks and materials should be written with an eye toward the least experienced poll worker. As the county continues to refine their poll worker training, they may want to spend more time in assessing the quality of these written materials. We suggest a review of the clarity of the written instructions would be a productive enterprise.

**Table 2.8. Election Day Procedures by County**

		2012	2010
The instructions for opening the polls	Very clear	63.3	70.2
The instructions for closing the polls at the end of the day	Very clear	42.1	58.1
When to ask a voter for his or her identification before voting	Very clear	75.6	71.8
The printed instruction materials we used when we had	Very clear	41.2	52.9
The instructions for reconciling the number of voters voting and	Very clear	40.0	52.5
Securing the ballots during and after the election	Very clear	58.7	69.3
The instructions for referring a voter to call the County Clerk's	Very clear	48.0	N/A
How different was your training from your experience on Election Day?	Very different	5.3	4.8
	Somewhat different	23.8	25.8
	Not too different	45.5	46.8
	Not at all different	22.2	20.6
	I didn't attend	3.2	2.1

One clear way of evaluating the quality of training is to know if the poll workers perceived their Election Day experiences as being different from the training that they received. Very few poll workers (5%) thought that their election experiences were very different from their training and about two-thirds (67%) of poll workers stated that training was not too or not at all different from their experience on Election Day. These are statistically identical to what we saw in 2010.

## 2.6. Polling Place Supplies and Responsiveness of County Election Office

Overall, the survey shows that polling locations were well stocked and supported to process voters effectively and efficiently. In Table 2.9, we see that over eight in ten poll workers (86%) thought that they had enough poll workers at their polling place and that over ninety percent of poll workers worked in a vote center that had a poll worker who was fluent in Spanish. Furthermore, 81% of poll workers arrived on time, 91% were administered the oath of office, and 21% reported missing supplies at their voting center.

We suggest that checklists be developed by the county and be used to ensure that each vote center has all the supplies they need for the election. Presiding judges, for example, could be required to review their supplies before they open the polls to ensure they are prepared.

In terms of equipment and technology in the vote centers, we find that the percentage of poll workers reporting that the AutoMark worked the whole day declined by 24% (from 76% to 52%) and the percentage reporting the optical scan ballot reader worked the whole day declined by 26% (84% to 58%). We cannot be certain whether these declines are due to the fact that there were more AutoMarks and optical scan ballot readers at each site or if the equipment is starting to break down more frequently as it ages. From our observations and experience in the county and state with the equipment, we believe that the equipment is failing much more frequently and action needs to be taken to make sure we are not in an equipment crisis in the near future.

A more encouraging finding was that the percentage of voters who were tagged as inactive voters who filled out a voter registration form increased 11% (from 58% to 69%), suggesting that poll workers were better trained to suggest updating voter registration to voters who indicated a new address. We also find that over 7 in 10 poll workers responded that the AskED system at their vote center worked all day without problems (71%), that the Internet connection worked all day without problems (76%), and that the printer did not run out of paper (81%). These findings are encouraging as this was the first high-turnout election using the vote center model and the AskED system.

One in 5 poll workers stated that a candidate or campaign brought snacks for the poll workers and 1 in 10 stated the candidate or campaign brought snacks for the voters. Although there is nothing illegal about candidates or their campaigns providing goodies to poll workers, simply put it does not look good. The county or state might want to consider policy or laws that regulate candidate or campaign activity in voting centers.

Finally, and most surprisingly, but in line with our observations, almost 9 in 10 poll workers responded that voters from other counties tried to vote at their vote center. The fact that the message that voters could vote at any vote center was well publicized is great news, but since Bernalillo County is the major media market for most of the state, it is clear that voters in other counties did not understand that this message only applied to Bernalillo County voters. Consequently, this is a serious issue to consider addressing in future high-turnout, high-interest elections utilizing the vote centers because many of those out of county voters voted provisionally and ultimately did not have their vote counted.

As we saw in previous election years, about 1 in 5 poll workers stated that there was some conflict between poll workers in their vote center. Interestingly, the percentage of poll workers needing to call the Clerk's office or the County election office while they were working declined by 15% (from 87% to 72%). Regrettably, of those that called, the percentage of poll workers reporting that it was easy to get through declined from 46% to 21%. Similarly, the percentage of poll workers responding that the county election office was very responsive declined from 83% to 56%. Given that 72% of workers reported that

they needed to contact the Clerk’s office at some point during the workday, it is probably worth the Clerk’s attention to review their procedures and determine why it was difficult for poll workers to get through easily and get the responses they needed. In addition, it might be important in training to emphasize when and when not to contact the County Clerk’s office.

**Table 2.9. Polling Place Supplies and County Clerk Responsiveness**

	Percent Answering "Yes"
	Total
Did your polling location have all of the poll workers you needed?	85.9
Did all of the poll workers arrive on time?	81.0
Did the AutoMARK work the whole day?	51.7
Were you administered the oath of office?	91.2
Did any voters who were tagged as inactive voters fill out a voter registration form?	69.2
Did your optical scan ballot reader work the whole day?	57.8
Were you missing any supplies at your polling location?	21.3
Did the AskED system work all day without problems?	70.6
Did the Internet connection work all day without problems?	75.7
Did you run out of paper to print ballots at your location?	18.2
Did any candidate or campaign bring snacks for poll workers?	20.8
Did any candidate or campaign bring snacks for voters?	8.5
Were any of the poll workers fluent in Spanish?	91.6
Did any voters from another county try to vote at your vote center?	88.9
Were there ever any conflicts between any of the poll workers?	23.7
Did you or another poll worker need to call the clerk or the county election office at	72.2
If yes, was it very easy to get through (% very easy)	21.1
If yes, how responsive was the county election office? (% Very Responsive)	55.6

## 2.7. Problems and Successes on Election Day

In Table 2.10, we see how the poll workers evaluated activities on Election Day. It shows that 81% of poll workers indicated that there were no problems setting up the optical scanners and similar percentages (83%) indicated there were no problems shutting down the optical scanners. These numbers are similar, but down slightly from the numbers in 2010 (91% and 93%). Similarly, we find that many more poll workers had problems setting up the AutoMark compared to in 2010 (38% down from 11% in 2010). Of course, each vote center had many more optical scanners to set up and take down so the incidence rates are, in some ways, not directly comparable. In addition, we know that there were

many more technical problems with the optical scanners and the Automark than reported in previous elections, which is another reason these numbers may have declined. Working equipment is a critical part of an election and resources need to be identified to deal with failing equipment.

Because of the large volume of voters at any particular vote center, there was a large number of counting machines or optical scan machines in use. One problem is that the ES&S 100 backs up the ballots and they do not fall properly into the machine. This led to the county inventing a process to allow the machine judge to open the machine and organize the ballots so it would not back up. However, in some cases, machines still backed up and in open-ended responses some poll workers noted that part of their problem with closing was due to write-in ballot that did not get directed properly to the machines write-in holding bin because of the ballot back-up problem. This technological problem is indicative of the greater failure rates we have seen with these machines as time passes and the need to purchase new technology to ensure the integrity of the process.

In regards to new equipment and specifically the ballot printers, almost seventy percent of poll workers (69%) said that there were no problems with the printers and only 17% reported that the ballot printer printed a ballot that was unreadable by the M100 optical scanner. However, in response to open ended questions about how training differed from the Election Day experience, some poll workers specifically complained about ballot alignment problems with the printer as an issue that was not well covered in training. Because it appears different vote centers handled this problem differently, some requiring the ballot to be spoiled and others allowing the ballot to be hand counted, which substantially increased the number of hand counted ballots at the end of Election Day.

We also see that most poll workers either strongly (17%) or somewhat strongly (62%) agreed that the AutoMARK worked well, but only just over a third of poll workers (35%) encouraged voters who made mistakes and spoiled their ballot to use the machine to cast their second ballot. Similarly, only 1 in 5 poll workers (23%) stated that voters used the AutoMARK frequently. Given that the AutoMARK is present to assist voters, poll worker training should include specific references to when poll workers should encourage voters to use it as an alternative to the normal pen and paper method.

We found that 96% of the poll workers thought that voters were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the optical scan voting system. This is slightly up from 91% in 2010. Though, it is important to note that 1 in 5 poll workers reported that voters required assistance “very” or “somewhat” often. Additionally, 1 in 4 poll workers (26%) agreed that many voters who showed up to vote were not in the system. This, of course, is related to our observation above that a number of voters did not realize that they could not vote and have their vote counted at any voting center in the state.

Finally, poll workers were very complementary about the vote center model. For example, over 95% of poll workers thought that voters seemed to like the new vote centers. A similar number of poll workers (96%) stated that they thought voting centers are more convenient for voters than precincts.

**Table 2.10. Poll Worker Evaluations of Election Day (in %)**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There were problems setting up the optical ballot scanner in my voting location	7.8	11.7	42.2	38.3
There were problems shutting down the optical ballot scanner at the end of the day and reporting the results	5.9	10.8	39.4	43.9
There were problems setting up the AutoMARK in my voting location	13.5	24.0	36.6	25.8
Voters who used the AutoMARK thought it worked really well	17.1	62.1	15.5	5.3
We encouraged voter who spoiled a ballot to vote using the AutorMARK	6.2	28.4	40.4	25.1
Generally speaking voters were satisfied with the paper ballots and optical scan voting process	40.4	55.7	3.6	0.3
There were problems wit the ballot printers	9.8	20.9	37.0	32.3
Many voter who showed up were not in the system	4.8	21.4	48.9	25.0
Voters seemed to like the voting centers	32.3	63.4	4.0	0.3
Voters used the AutoMARK frequently	6.6	16.7	45.5	31.2
The voting centers are more convenient for voters than precincts are	62.1	33.8	2.4	1.6
The ballot printer printed a ballot that was unreadable by the M-100 optical scanner	4.6	12.1	37.2	46.1

## 2.8. Polling Place Facilities

Table 2.11 shows the poll worker evaluations of the quality of the polling places. Here, we see that over 7 out of 10 poll workers rate their polling place as “excellent” or “good” for all of the categories that we examine. This is evidence that the greater control over the vote center locations and set-up provided by the county and the vote center model resulted in better voting environments for voters. Specifically, about 90% of poll workers rated the space to operate the polls, the number of voting machines and the number of voting booths as excellent or good. Furthermore, close to 8 out of 10 poll workers rated the general condition of the facility, the noise level of the facility, the availability of parking at the facility, and the lighting as excellent or good. Twenty to twenty-five percent of poll workers rated the polling locations as fair or poor for some of the physical attributes of the vote centers, such as its accessibility for people with disabilities, the temperature, the layout of

the vote center and the traffic flow for voters. Ranking the lowest in the evaluations were the number of computers and the number of printers available at the vote centers and this is consistent with our observations, where some of the long lines were a result of too few computers to check in voters. Overall, the data indicate that the county did an incredible job choosing convenient locations with a generally good atmosphere. The county should continue to invest time seeking out good locations and replacing lower quality locations with those that allow for a good flow of voter traffic, good atmosphere and where the condition of the facility is very good.

**Table 2.11. Evaluation of Polling Place Facilities by County (in %)**

	Excellent/Good	Poor/Fair
Its accessibility for people with disabilities	76.0	24.0
The general condition of the facility	82.0	18.0
The noise level of the facility	79.8	20.2
The availability of parking at the facility	79.4	20.6
Adequate space to operate the polls	89.4	10.6
The temperature	74.6	25.4
The lighting	83.7	16.3
The layout of the vote center provided a	75.2	24.8
The number of voting machines	90.7	9.3
The number of voting booths	92.5	7.5
The number of computers	70.1	29.9
The number of printers	70.7	29.3

## 2.9. Confidence and Satisfaction

One key bottom line metric for evaluating the experience of poll workers on Election Day is to consider their satisfaction with their own performance as a poll worker and their confidence that the votes in the election were counted accurately. We see in Table 2.12 that, in 2012, over three-quarters of poll workers were very satisfied (77%) or somewhat satisfied (18%) with their performance as a poll worker. These performance ratings are similar to poll worker evaluations from 2010. While the percentage of poll workers stating very or somewhat satisfied is very similar across poll worker positions, there is quite a bit of variation in the proportions between these two categories. For example, the percentage of systems clerks responding very satisfied (89%) was more than 30 points higher than presiding judges (55%). This is likely due to the wide variation in responsibilities between these positions.

To examine poll worker confidence that the votes were counted accurately, we asked three separate confidence questions. First, we asked if the poll workers thought that the votes

were counted accurately *in their voting location*, essentially a measure of their confidence in themselves and how they ran their vote center. Second, we asked if the poll workers were confident that votes were counted correctly in other polling locations in *their county*. Third, we asked the poll workers if they were confident that the votes were counted accurately in *other counties* in New Mexico.

We ask these questions because the implementation of the election process is highly decentralized and, on Election Day, it is the poll workers who implement the election process in precincts or vote centers all across a given jurisdiction. These workers are, in many ways, the best people to evaluate the election process because (1) they can evaluate the experience at the polling place that others cannot easily observe, (2) they have been with other poll workers during early and Election Day voting and have a sense of the quality of workers especially in their own location, and (3) they have a sense of the overall quality of the state laws and procedures that have to be implemented to make elections function well. Given the research on poll worker quality and their role in the voting process—and because they are in a position to evaluate that process—we ask these questions across multiple contexts.

At the level of the poll worker's voting location, there is a high level of confidence among the poll workers. Approximately 93% of the poll workers were very or somewhat confident that the votes were counted accurately in their polling place. Interestingly, the poll workers that were least likely to be involved in the actual process of counting votes, systems clerks, were the least likely to state that they were very confident (54%). Furthermore, those that were most likely to be involved in the process of counting votes, machine judges (76%), and those involved in all aspects of the voting process, presiding judges (83%) were the most likely to respond that they were very confident that the votes were counted accurately. More importantly, it should be noted that there were very few poll workers that stated that they were "not at all" or "not very" confident that the votes in their polling place were counted accurately.

**Table 2.12. Poll Worker Satisfaction in Percentages by County**

		PJ	EJ	FL	SC	MJ	Total
Satisfaction with Performance as Poll Worker	Very Satisfied	54.8	76.0	81.0	88.6	64.0	77.4
	Somewhat Satisfied	38.7	24.0	14.3	10.2	20.0	18.4
	Somewhat Dissatisfied	3.2	0.0	0.0	1.1	12.0	2.6
	Very Dissatisfied	3.2	0.0	4.8	0.0	4.0	1.6
Confidence Votes Counted Accurately in Their Voting Location	Very confident	83.3	66.7	68.2	54.0	76.0	64.9
	Somewhat confident	13.3	29.6	27.3	36.8	16.0	28.3
	Not very confident	3.3	3.7	4.5	5.7	0.0	4.2
	Not at all confident	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.0	1.0
	Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.0	1.6
Confidence Votes Counted Accurately in Other Voting Locations in County	Very confident	34.4	44.4	27.3	36.4	40.0	36.6
	Somewhat confident	50.0	40.7	40.9	35.2	32.0	38.7
	Not very confident	3.1	3.7	4.5	12.5	4.0	7.7
	Not at all confident	3.1	3.7	4.5	0.0	4.0	2.1
	Don't know	9.4	7.4	22.7	15.9	20.0	14.9
Confidence Votes Counted Accurately in Other Counties in New Mexico	Very confident	3.3	15.4	14.3	18.2	23.1	15.7
	Somewhat confident	43.3	53.8	23.8	29.5	38.5	35.6
	Not very confident	13.3	11.5	14.3	25.0	3.8	17.3
	Not at all confident	6.7	3.8	4.8	2.3	0.0	3.1
	Don't know	33.3	15.4	42.9	25.0	34.6	28.3

To tap into other aspects of confidence and allow us to determine how familiarity with the process influences attitudes about the election administration process more generally, we asked a second question: if the poll workers were confident that votes were counted accurately in other polling locations in the county. Here, we see that the likelihood of saying "very confident" drops significantly when compared to their own precinct. Third, we asked the poll workers if they were confident that the votes were counted accurately in other counties in New Mexico. The most common answer among the poll workers was that they were somewhat confident (36%) in vote counting accuracy throughout New Mexico. Just under one in six (16%) of the poll workers said that they were very confident that the votes were counted accurately across the other counties. Though, almost a third (28%) stated that they didn't know if the votes were counted accurately across the other counties.

Clearly, poll workers do not feel confident assessing the quality of other polling locations. This is clearly true given the high number of poll workers who indicate they “don’t know” on questions about other vote centers. The sum of knowledge and familiarity with their own vote center makes them highly confident. The lack of knowledge and familiarity with other vote centers makes them less certain about procedures there and results in lower evaluations and an increase in “don’t know” responses.

## **2.10. Voter Identification Implementation**

New Mexico requires that all voters be identified at the polls (§ 1-12-7.1 (D)). However, there is a range of acceptable forms of identification allowed under New Mexico law (§ 1-1-24).

First, a voter can show a physical form of identification, including a current, valid photo identification, such as a drivers license, with or without an address (if there is an address, it does not have to match the voter rolls and the identification can be either an original or a copy). Identification can also include any of the following physical forms that include both a name and address (again, the address is not required to match the address that appears on the voter rolls): (1) utility bill, (2) bank statement, (3) government check, (4) paycheck, (5) student identification card, or (6) other government documents (e.g. ID issued by an Indian nation, tribe, or Pueblo). Second, a voter can merely provide a verbal or written statement of his or her name, address, and year of birth.

In Table 2.13, we see the ways in which poll workers asked voters to provide identification, assuming that the voter did not approach the poll worker and present identification.<sup>27</sup> According to the statute, poll workers can use many methods for identifying voters. However, it is the voter, not the poll worker, who has the choice of determining the way to authenticate herself to the poll worker. The minimal requirement under law is for the voter to state his/her name, address, and birth year. However, it was more prevalent for voters to be asked for their name or their name and address than the full minimum requirement. Table 2.13 shows the frequency and the average score of requests for different forms of identification. The average score is coded from one (1) through four (4) such that a higher number means more often and the options in the table are ordered from most to least frequent forms of identification used. As Table 2.13 makes clear, poll workers report using the minimum requirement a fair amount of the time (62%) of the time, which is up from 44% in 2010. This is consistent with our early and Election Day observations that voter identification procedures were implemented in a manner consistent with the law in greater numbers than we have seen before. However, similar to previous elections this is less common than having the voter state their name (77%) or having the voter state their name and birth year (87%). Most encouragingly, the use of the AskED system has

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<sup>27</sup> The numbers presented only reflect the responses from presiding judges, exceptions judges, and system clerks since floaters and machine judges were not supposed to be looking up voters.

significantly reduced the use of inappropriate first-level means of identification, including asking for photo identification (from 13% for very often in 2010 to 3% in 2012 and down from 15% for somewhat often in 2010 to 8% in 2012) and registration cards (from 8% for very often in 2010 to 3% in 2012 and from 11% for somewhat often in 2010 to 4% in 2012). Though, interestingly, there were still 2% of poll workers who stated that they identified the voter because they knew them personally “very often”.

**Table 2.13. Poll Workers Reported Use of Voter Identification Methods**

	Very Often	Somewhat Often	Hardly At All	Never	Average
State Name and Birth Year	87.1	8.3	1.4	3.2	3.8
State Name	77.1	9.5	2.3	11.1	3.5
State Name, Address & Birth Year	62.2	18.0	8.9	10.8	3.3
State Name & Address	62.1	12.6	10.4	15.0	3.2
Photo ID	3.1	8.1	31.3	57.6	1.6
Registration Card	2.8	4.2	28.3	64.7	1.5
None, knew the voter personally	2.4	1.0	8.2	88.4	1.2

The lack of consistency in the voter identification process is also confirmed by a follow-up question we asked, “Did you ask a voter for any identification for any of the following reasons?” Table 2.14 shows all the reasons and the percentage of yes responses. Of course, first time voters, by law, have to provide identification that includes their address, so the fact that 64% of poll workers verified the identity of first time voters is consistent with the law and is up from 56% in 2010.

However, one troubling finding is that 36% of poll workers indicated they did not check the identification of first-time voters. All of the other reasons to ask for physical identification are incorrect. If the voter cannot be found in the voter rolls, the voter should move to provisional balloting status but this does not mandate further identification. Lack of recognition of the voter should not influence whether a poll worker asks for ID or not. Likewise, poll workers should be following the law and thus, authenticating voters to “prevent fraud” is inappropriate, but over one-fifth (23%) of poll workers report doing so. Nevertheless, this percentage is down from 31% in 2010, suggesting that poll workers are being taught the photo identification laws better than in the past. More pragmatically, about half of the poll workers (48%) asked for identification because they could not hear well or because it was easier to read the voter’s name from a physical form of identification. Finally, even though we observed very long lines at some of the precincts, only 14% of poll workers stated that they asked for photo identification to process voters more quickly because of long voter lines. Thus, this once again confirms what we saw on Election Day: the voter identification law was not always administered consistently or correctly, but there was a huge improvement from previous years. The county is on-track on this issue

and is heading in the right direction. Overall the improvement is substantial and something in which to be proud.

Of course, one important question is whether certain types of poll workers may be more likely to request a physical form of identification than others. We continue to find that minority poll workers were more likely to ask for a physical form of ID than were white poll workers. We can say conclusively that white poll workers appear to be the least likely to ask for identification.

When we examine some of the reasons for requesting voter identification by political party, we find that Republicans (28%) are more likely than Democrats (18%) and Independents (15%) to believe that voter identification is required to vote. Though, we find that both Democrats (24%) and Republicans (24%) are more likely than Independents (13%) to ask for voter identification to prevent fraud.

**Table 2.14. Reasons for Requesting Voter Identification**

	Percentage Yes
Verify identity of first time voters	64.4
Couldn't find the voter in the rolls	70.5
Verify identity of provisional voter	50.7
Information didn't match the voter rolls	66.5
It's required by law to verify the identity of voters	19.8
To prevent fraud	22.7
Trouble hearing/Easier to read name from ID	48.2
I did not recognize the voter	7.3
To process voters more quickly because of long	13.7

## 2.11. Privacy

A sense of privacy has been found to be important to voters, especially in terms of confidence in the electoral process.<sup>28</sup> In past election observations, we found that privacy was a potential problem in many precincts. This was due to many factors, including the use of an optical scan counting machine and procedures that necessitate that a poll worker watch each voter insert the ballot to ensure that the machine tabulates it. The data we collected from poll workers confirms these observations on a broader scale: voter privacy needs improvement.

<sup>28</sup> See Charles Stewart, R. Michael Alvarez and Thad Hall, 2010, "Voting Technology and the Election Experience: The 2009 Gubernatorial Races in New Jersey and Virginia." VTP Working Paper #99. Accessible through the CalTech/MIT Voting Technology Project <http://vote.caltech.edu/drupal/> and Bryant, 2010, "Voter Confidence and the Use of Absentee Ballots and Electronic Voting Equipment: An Experimental Study," Presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Washington D.C., September 2-5, 2010.

We asked a number of questions to determine how poll workers gauged voter privacy. We asked poll workers if they “strongly agree,” “somewhat agree,” “somewhat disagree,” or “strongly disagree” with the following question: “Voter ballot privacy was NOT compromised when a voter cast his or her ballot.” We found that over nine in ten of the poll workers do not see a problem with voter privacy; about 92% of poll workers strongly or somewhat agreed that voter privacy was not compromised.

However, when we examine specific questions that suggest the privacy of the voter might be at risk, a different picture emerges. We asked three yes/no questions to identify specific problems related to voter privacy that may exist. The responses to these questions are shown in Table 2.15. Each figure is the percent of “yes” responses.

The results indicate that over a quarter (27%) of poll workers helped a voter find a problem with their ballot, which is a steep decline from what we had found in 2010 when it was 49%. Nevertheless it is still a large number of poll workers who could be violating the voter’s privacy unless these voters explicitly asked the poll worker to help in this way. In addition, 31% of poll workers stated that they looked at a voter’s completed, spoiled, or provisional ballot, which is up from 25% in 2010. This finding also suggests that some poll workers may have violated voter privacy. Given these numbers, it is clear that poll workers, for various reasons, are not as aware as they should be about the procedures they should follow to maintain voter privacy. The survey also found that 18% of poll workers helped a voter actually complete a ballot. Such help can be very important if a voter requests such help, but it is critical that the poll worker document these events correctly. All in all, the data suggest that voter privacy is likely a problem in many in person voting locations. Better training and careful consideration of privacy issues with the use of a paper ballot need to be considered.

**Table 2.15. Frequency of Specific Voter Privacy Issues**

	% Yes
Did you ever look at a voter’s completed ballot, a spoiled ballot, or a provisional ballot?	30.6
Did you ever help a voter find a problem with their ballot?	26.6
Did you ever help a voter complete a ballot?	17.7

## 2.12. Implications of Changing to Vote Centers

Table 2.16 provides the minimum, maximum, median, and mean numbers values for number of voters in line at close, the number of ballots counted by hand at closing, the total hours after close that the poll workers stayed at the vote center, the estimated number of minutes that each voter waited in line to check in and get their ballot and the estimated number of minutes it took voters to complete the ballot. Each of these are observable implications of decreasing the total number of voting locations in a high-turnout election. In these numbers we see that, on average, the vote center system generally was a success, but that there are things to work on in the future.

The vote center model inherently means that there are fewer locations at which to vote and subsequently, there will be more voters and equipment at each location. The top three rows of Table 2.16 display the implications of this reality. Our observation, that some vote centers had very long lines at closing, is confirmed in Table 2.16. Specifically, one poll worker estimated that their vote center had 500 voters in line at closing, no doubt an exaggeration that was built on frustration! Fortunately, this was not the norm for all vote centers, as the average reported number of voters in line at closing was 28, and the median, which is less influenced by outliers, was 10. Given the number of write-in candidates in this year's election, we expected the number of hand counted ballots to increase. This is confirmed with an average of 30 hand counted ballots per voting location, although the range went from 0 to 365, with a median of zero. The fact that the median is zero is somewhat troubling, given the number of write-in candidates and the number of times we saw ballot problems, over voting or machine reading problems, therefore we wonder if in some VCCs if poll workers simply chose not to hand count write-in ballots, but instead simply relied on the aggregate optical scan count and attributed all those votes to the write-in candidate. The county should audit the number of scanned write-ins to the actual number of counted write-ins. Hand counted votes should be less than the scanned write-in totals.

The poll workers are unable to leave until all the voters have voted, the number of voters and ballots have been reconciled, and the voting location has been shut down. We see that this process took a very long time at some of the vote centers. Specifically, there was one poll worker who reported that they did not leave the vote center until seven and a half hours after closing. This means that this poll worker (and co-workers) experienced a twenty hour day (6:00AM-2:30AM). Of course, this is an extreme case, as the average poll worker left about three and a half hours after close or around 10:30PM. Regardless, the average poll worker experience still means a sixteen and a half hour long day. This is a cause for concern as these extremely long days may lead to increased mistakes in voter reconciliation issues and/or conflicts between poll workers.

**Table 2.16. Implications of Decreased Numbers of Voting Locations in a High Turnout Election**

	Min.	Max	Median	Mean
Number of voters in line at close	0	500	10.0	28.0
Number of ballots counted by hand at closing <sup>29</sup>	0	365	0.0	30.1
Total hours after close that PW stayed at the VC	0.75	7.5	3.25	3.4
Estimated minutes voters waited in line to vote	0	90	10.0	15.1
Estimated minutes to complete the ballot	0	30	10.0	10.2

<sup>29</sup> These descriptive statistics do not include any values higher than 400 because they seem to be erroneous values due to over exaggeration or misremembering. The omitted cases represent less than 10% of the total sample.

There was a concern that with the increased number of voters at each voting location, voters would have to wait a long time to vote. Table 2.16 confirms our Election Day observations and the voter survey data, that on average voters waited fifteen minutes to vote and that the median time was only ten minutes. This is a testament to how well planned and executed the election was that most voters waited a relatively minimum amount of time. However, we see that in the extreme there were vote centers that had somewhat long wait times. While ninety minutes is much less than the several hours that voters in Florida waited to vote, or those in Sandoval County, New Mexico, it is still a long time and has consequences for voter attitudes (see Part 3 of this report). For this reason it is imperative that each vote center be adequately staffed and equipped to handle the volume of voters in future elections.

An additional implication of long days for poll workers and high numbers of ballots to be counted by hand is that there may be problems balancing the number of voters and ballots cast. Almost 1 in 2 poll workers indicated that their vote center had problems balancing.

Finally, we were curious about what the poll workers did when they could not find a voter in the AskED system. Table 2.17 shows the results. The most common answer was that the poll worker would issue a provisional ballot. The second most common answer was that the poll worker called the County Clerk. As there is little probability that the County Clerk could do anything more than what the poll worker could, this is probably a less than optimal action as it tied up the County Clerk resources. Consequently, the County Clerk may want to come up with specific procedures on how to handle voters who are not on the rolls. For example, voters who are from other counties and whose votes will not be counted should be encouraged to vote in their own county before the polls close. One in twenty poll workers stated that they sent the voter to a new location, which should not have changed the voter's position unless they were an out of county voter. Finally, we were delighted to find that no poll workers reported that they asked a voter to simply leave when they could not find them in the AskED system.

**Table 2.17. Actions When Could Not Find a Voter in AskED**

	Percentage Yes
Issue a provisional ballot	67.5
Call County Clerk	59.1
Send them to new location	4.9
Ask them to leave	0.0

### 2.13. Conclusion

Overall the poll worker data support the conclusion that the election was largely a success. Poll workers did a good and efficient job at processing and guiding voters through the vote

process. Few problems were found in the vote centers and poll workers were successful in their modified positions. Nearly all of the poll workers in our study were confident that the ballots were counted accurately in the election and were satisfied with their experience on Election Day. Although there still appears to be some problems with voter identification implementation, the improvement was considerable. Poll worker training also improved. Training specialization made for more qualified and confident poll workers who were able to perform their job in a professional and efficient way and thus helping to create a good voter experience. Weaknesses in training seemed to center around problem with ballot reconciliation and balancing at the end of Election Day. Equipment problems plagued this election, though it did result in any particular problems for efficiency or the smooth running of election administration in each vote center. Nevertheless, the increasing equipment problems are something that state and local officials need to be attentive to in order to ensure future elections are technically problem free.

## **Appendix 2.1. Poll Worker Methodology**

We received a list of 808 poll workers who worked in the 2012 general election in early and Election Day vote centers. We stratified by vote center and sampled each exceptions judge, presiding judge, machine presiding judge and each floater. We randomly selected 1 systems clerk from each vote center. Our sample consisted of 362 poll workers. Sampled poll workers could respond on paper or choose to take the survey over the Internet. The survey was conducted between November 30, 2012 and January 30, 2013. The sampled poll workers were sent a letter with a copy of the survey on November 30, 2012. The letter described the study and also provided a URL ([pollworkersurvey.unm.edu](http://pollworkersurvey.unm.edu)) where the poll workers could take the survey online. About December 7, 2012 we sent out a reminder postcard asking respondents to return the survey or take it on line. On December 17, 2012 we sent out a reminder letter and an additional copy of the survey. On January 11 we sent out a final reminder postcard to those poll workers who did not respond.

We weighted the data by position. The sampling frame contained 362 sample respondents, 190 sample members responded. The response rate is 52.5% with a margin of error of plus or minus 6.22.

Survey questions asked about their election experience, their demographic characteristics, how they were recruited, why they wanted to be a poll worker, attitudes toward training, understanding and implementation of election procedures, supplies, condition of polling place, election problems, evaluation of poll workers, voter privacy, and confidence in ballot counting.

## Appendix 2.2. Selected Frequency Report for the 2012 Bernalillo County Election Administration Mixed Mode Survey

1. What was your official job title on Election Day or during early voting?
 

Presiding judge	16.0
Exceptions judge	13.8
Systems clerk	45.9
Floater	11.3
Machine Judge	13.0
  
2. Overall, how satisfied are you with your job performance as an election worker in the November 6<sup>th</sup> election?
 

Very satisfied	77.2
Somewhat satisfied	18.6
Somewhat dissatisfied	2.8
Very dissatisfied	1.4
  
3. How confident are you that the votes in the voting location you worked in during the November general election were counted correctly?
 

Very confident	64.8
Somewhat confident	28.2
Not very confident	4.0
Not at all confident	1.1
Don't know/not sure	1.9
  
4. How confident are you that votes in other voting locations in YOUR COUNTY during the November general election were counted correctly?
 

Very confident	36.7
Somewhat confident	38.7
Not very confident	7.6
Not at all confident	1.5
Don't know/not sure	15.5
  
5. How confident are you that votes in OTHER COUNTIES in New Mexico were counted correctly during the November general election?
 

Very confident	15.3
Somewhat confident	35.3
Not very confident	17.7
Not at all confident	3.4
Don't know/not sure	28.3
  
6. How were you first recruited as a poll worker? Were you recruited by:
 

An official job posting by the county	4.3
A political party official	0.3
Another poll worker	16.0
An advertisement in the local media	22.7
A teacher or professor	0.4
I wasn't recruited by anyone, I sought the job on my own	44.3
Some other way	12.0
  
7. Thinking about your decision to be a poll worker, please mark if each of these reasons was very

important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important in your decision to be a poll worker:

7a. I wanted to learn about the election process.	
Very important	56.6
Somewhat important	32.0
Not very important	6.8
Not at all important	4.3
Don't Know/Not sure	0.3
7b. I was asked by someone in my political party.	
Very important	6.6
Somewhat important	8.7
Not very important	8.4
Not at all important	68.2
Don't Know/Not sure	8.1
7c. I like to be with people who share my ideals.	
Very important	18.5
Somewhat important	24.2
Not very important	24.4
Not at all important	31.6
Don't Know/Not sure	1.3
7d. I think it is my duty as a citizen.	
Very important	56.8
Somewhat important	32.5
Not very important	7.2
Not at all important	3.5
Don't Know/Not sure	0.0
7e. I am the kind of person who does my share.	
Very important	50.3
Somewhat important	36.3
Not very important	7.2
Not at all important	5.9
Don't Know/Not sure	0.3
7f. I wanted to make some extra money.	
Very important	42.2
Somewhat important	32.0
Not very important	17.1
Not at all important	8.7
Don't Know/Not sure	0.0
7g. I get to meet new people.	
Very important	33.1
Somewhat important	35.2
Not very important	20.3
Not at all important	11.4
Don't Know/Not sure	0.0
8. How likely are you to work as a poll worker in the next election?	
Very likely	59.9
Somewhat likely	28.3

Not very likely	6.6
Not at all likely	5.2
Don't know/not sure	0.0
9. In what election year did you first work as a poll worker? (If you are not sure, give the best guess possible).	
Pre-1990	6.0
1990-1999	9.5
2000-2005	12.6
2006-2010	20.2
2011-2012	51.7
10. Including the recent 2012 November general election, in how many elections have you worked as a poll worker? (If you are not sure, give the best guess possible).	
1	41.9
2-5	37.8
6-10	10.6
More than 10	9.7
11. Did you receive any manuals, handbooks, or video/DVD at your training session or from your county clerk to help you learn more about the election procedures?	
Yes	98.3
No	1.7
12. How much of the materials did you read prior to Election Day?	
All of them	68.7
Most of them	21.8
Some of them	6.8
None of them	2.3
I didn't receive any materials prior to Election Day	0.4
13. How much time did you spend practicing on the computer with AskEd (the new voter lookup/ballot printing system)?	
1-5 minutes	12.3
6-10 minutes	18.4
11-15 minutes	12.2
16-20 minutes	16.9
More than 20 minutes	32.3
I didn't do any hands on practice prior to the election	7.9
14. Thinking back on your poll worker and presiding judge training, please tell us whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:	
14a. After the training, I was confident in my ability to do my job on election day.	
Strongly agree	51.3
Somewhat agree	44.0
Somewhat disagree	4.1
Strongly disagree	0.6
14b. I would have liked more training.	
Strongly agree	22.5
Somewhat agree	34.1
Somewhat disagree	24.4
Strongly disagree	19.0

14c. The training was easy to understand.	
Strongly agree	54.1
Somewhat agree	36.9
Somewhat disagree	8.4
Strongly disagree	0.6
14d. The training was hands on, not just a lecture.	
Strongly agree	68.9
Somewhat agree	22.1
Somewhat disagree	7.1
Strongly disagree	1.9
14e. The training sessions spent enough time covering election law and procedures.	
Strongly agree	33.8
Somewhat agree	36.5
Somewhat disagree	25.0
Strongly disagree	4.7
14f. The training sessions were boring or too long.	
Strongly agree	4.4
Somewhat agree	12.7
Somewhat disagree	34.8
Strongly disagree	48.1
14g. The training prepared me well for looking up a voter.	
Strongly agree	62.2
Somewhat agree	22.8
Somewhat disagree	4.4
Strongly disagree	0.6
N/A	10.0
14h. The training prepared me well for printing a ballot.	
Strongly agree	64.4
Somewhat agree	21.0
Somewhat disagree	3.8
Strongly disagree	0.8
N/A	10.0
14i. The training prepared me well for handling spoiled ballots.	
Strongly agree	37.4
Somewhat agree	36.9
Somewhat disagree	13.7
Strongly disagree	4.5
N/A	7.5
14j. The training prepared me well for handling provisional ballots.	
Strongly agree	34.5
Somewhat agree	36.9
Somewhat disagree	14.6
Strongly disagree	5.7
N/A	8.3
15. How did this election training compare to training you have received in the past?	
This election's training was much more thorough than in the past	30.2
This election's training was about the same as in the past	23.2

This election's training was much less thorough than in the past	3.4
I have not had previous training	43.2
16. How different was your training experience from your experience on Election Day?	
Very different	4.8
Somewhat different	23.8
Not too different	45.5
Not at all different	22.5
I didn't attend training	3.4
17. Were the instructions and training for the following jobs you performed on Election Day very clear, somewhat clear, not very clear or not at all clear?	
17a. The instructions for opening the polls.	
Very clear	63.3
Somewhat clear	29.8
Not very clear	4.6
Not at all clear	2.3
17b. The instructions on when to refer a voter to the County Clerk.	
Very clear	48.0
Somewhat clear	25.1
Not very clear	20.4
Not at all clear	6.5
17c. When to ask a voter for his or her identification before voting.	
Very clear	75.6
Somewhat clear	17.3
Not very clear	3.3
Not at all clear	3.8
17d. The instructions for reconciling the number of voters voting and the number of ballots cast.	
Very clear	40.0
Somewhat clear	24.0
Not very clear	23.9
Not at all clear	12.1
17e. The instructions for closing the polls at the end of the day.	
Very clear	42.1
Somewhat clear	24.8
Not very clear	22.1
Not at all clear	11.0
17f. The printed instruction materials we used when we had a procedural question.	
Very clear	41.2
Somewhat clear	35.1
Not very clear	18.2
Not at all clear	5.5
17g. Securing the ballots during and after the election.	
Very clear	58.6
Somewhat clear	24.6
Not very clear	11.2
Not at all clear	5.6

18. How would you rate your voting center in regards to the following?

18a. Its accessibility for people with disabilities.	
Excellent	38.7
Good	37.3
Fair	15.1
Poor	8.9
18b. The general condition of the facility.	
Excellent	39.1
Good	42.9
Fair	17.0
Poor	1.0
18c. The noise level of the facility.	
Excellent	31.2
Good	48.6
Fair	15.9
Poor	4.3
18d. The availability of parking at the facility.	
Excellent	40.9
Good	38.5
Fair	14.7
Poor	5.8
18e. Adequate space to operate the polls.	
Excellent	53.8
Good	35.6
Fair	9.9
Poor	0.7
18f. Adequate number of voting machines.	
Excellent	47.8
Good	42.9
Fair	4.9
Poor	4.4
18g. Adequate number of voting booths.	
Excellent	56.4
Good	36.1
Fair	5.4
Poor	2.1
18h. Adequate number of computers.	
Excellent	37.1
Good	33.0
Fair	17.6
Poor	12.3
18i. Adequate number of printers.	
Excellent	33.1
Good	37.6
Fair	17.7
Poor	11.6

18j. The temperature inside the facility.

Excellent	26.2
Good	48.4
Fair	18.8
Poor	6.6

18k. The lighting inside the facility.

Excellent	37.4
Good	46.3
Fair	13.7
Poor	2.6

18l. The layout of the vote center provided a good traffic flow for voters.

Excellent	40.0
Good	35.2
Fair	18.0
Poor	6.8

19. Please answer yes or no to each of the following questions:

19a. Did your vote center have all of the poll workers you needed?

Yes	83.9
No	12.7
Don't know/not sure	3.4

19b. Did all of the poll workers arrive on time?

Yes	74.8
No	17.6
Don't know/not sure	7.6

19c. Were you administered the oath of office?

Yes	89.2
No	8.6
Don't know/not sure	2.2

19d. Did you ever look at a voter's completed ballot, a spoiled ballot, or a provisional ballot?

Yes	30.1
No	68.1
Don't know/not sure	1.8

19e. Did you ever show a voter where a mistake was on their ballot?

Yes	26.4
No	72.8
Don't know/not sure	0.8

19f. Did you ever help a voter complete a ballot?

Yes	17.6
No	81.8
Don't know/not sure	0.6

19g. Did any voters who were tagged as inactive voters fill out a voter registration form?

Yes	43.0
No	19.1
Don't know/not sure	37.9

19h. Did the AskED (ballot on demand) system work all day without problems?	
Yes	64.9
No	27.0
Don't know/not sure	8.1
19i. Did the Internet connection work all day without problems?	
Yes	65.5
No	21.0
Don't know/not sure	13.5
19j. Did the M-100 vote tabulators work all day without problems?	
Yes	45.4
No	33.2
Don't know/not sure	21.4
19k. Did your Automark work all day without problems?	
Yes	36.4
No	34.0
Don't know/not sure	29.6
19l. Did you run out of paper to print ballots at your location?	
Yes	16.9
No	76.0
Don't know/not sure	7.1
19m. Did any candidate bring snacks to the vote center for poll workers?	
Yes	18.0
No	68.8
Don't know/not sure	13.2
19n. Did any candidate bring snacks to the vote center for voters?	
Yes	7.6
No	81.3
Don't know/not sure	11.1
19o. Was at least one poll worker at your vote center fluent in Spanish?	
Yes	72.7
No	6.7
Don't know/not sure	20.6
19p. Were you missing any supplies (paper, signs, pens, etc.) at your location?	
Yes	20.0
No	74.1
Don't know/not sure	5.9
19q. Did any voters from another county try to vote at your vote center?	
Yes	71.1
No	8.9
Don't know/not sure	20.0
20. Did you or another poll worker need to call the clerk or the county election office at any time while you were working?	
Yes	71.8

No	8.5
Don't know/not sure	19.7
20b. If so, how easy was it to get a hold of them?	
Very easy	20.9
Somewhat easy	37.3
Not too easy	22.5
Not at all easy	19.3
20c. And, were they very responsive, somewhat responsive, not too responsive or not at all responsive?	
Very responsive	55.2
Somewhat responsive	30.6
Not too responsive	11.2
Not at all responsive	3.0
21. About how many voters were in line when the polls closed at 7:00PM?	
Mean	28.0
Median	10.0
Minimum	0.0
Maximum	500.0
22. Was there a problem balancing the number of voters with the number of ballots cast at the end of the night?	
Yes	39.2
No	43.8
Don't know/not sure	17.0
23. About how many ballots did you count by hand at closing?	
Mean	136.8
Median	1.2
Minimum	0.0
Maximum	3,200.0
24. How many hours after closing did you stay at the vote center?	
Mean	3.41
Median	3.25
Minimum	0.75
Maximum	7.50
25. On a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is "very poor" and 10 is "excellent" how would you rate the overall performance of your:	
25a. Presiding Judge	
1	4.8
2	2.0
3	3.0
4	4.1
5	7.6
6	5.2
7	6.4
8	16.6
9	14.8
10	35.5
Mean	7.7

25b. Exceptions Judge

1	4.8
3	1.9
4	0.7
5	9.5
6	5.1
7	9.7
8	15.1
9	17.2
10	36.0
Mean	7.9

25c. Floor Judges

1	0.4
3	1.0
4	1.7
5	8.5
6	5.9
7	10.4
8	16.7
9	20.0
10	35.4
Mean	8.3

25d. Floater

1	1.1
2	0.4
3	1.8
4	0.4
5	3.8
6	6.6
7	9.0
8	14.1
9	21.9
10	40.9
Mean	8.5

25e. Systems Clerks

1	0.3
2	0.3
3	1.0
4	0.3
5	2.8
6	1.0
7	7.2
8	16.0
9	23.7
10	47.4
Mean	8.9

25f. Machine Judge

1	0.3
2	0.3
3	0.3
4	4.2

5	3.8
6	3.4
7	7.6
8	15.7
9	22.3
10	42.1
Mean	8.6

25g. Student Clerks

1	0.4
4	3.8
5	10.2
6	5.1
7	8.0
8	16.2
9	19.4
10	36.9
Mean	8.3

26. Were there ever any conflicts between any of the poll workers?

Yes	23.6
No	66.9
Don't know/not sure	9.5

27. Many voters offered a physical form of identification, like a driver's license or voter registration card. How often did this happen at your voting location?

Very often	32.3
Somewhat often	38.4
Hardly at all	13.9
Never	0.8
Don't know/not sure	14.6

28. When a voter approached, how did you identify them?

28a. Asked voters to show their registration card

Very often	2.8
Somewhat often	4.2
Not very often	21.8
Not at all	57.1
Don't know/not sure	14.1

28b. Asked voters to show a form of photo-identification

Very often	3.0
Somewhat often	7.9
Not very often	25.4
Not at all	49.9
Don't know/not sure	13.8

28c. Asked voters to state their name

Very often	67.1
Somewhat often	8.2
Not very often	2.5
Not at all	9.7
Don't know/not sure	12.5

28d. Asked voters to state their name and address	
Very often	54.5
Somewhat often	10.4
Not very often	9.0
Not at all	13.7
Don't know/not sure	12.4
28e. Asked voters to state their name and birth year	
Very often	75.2
Somewhat often	6.9
Not very often	1.1
Not at all	4.4
Don't know/not sure	12.4
28f. Asked voters to state their name, address and birth year	
Very often	54.9
Somewhat often	14.7
Not very often	8.1
Not at all	10.5
Don't know/not sure	11.8
28g. I knew the voter personally and didn't ask for any for of identification	
Very often	2.4
Somewhat often	0.7
Not very often	6.2
Not at all	73.2
Don't know/not sure	17.5
28h. Asked voters to look-up their number in the voter rolls	
Very often	0.5
Somewhat often	0.5
Not very often	2.4
Not at all	77.8
Don't know/not sure	18.8
29. Did you ask a voter for any identification for any of the following reasons	
29a. Trouble hearing/easier to read name from ID	
Yes	41.4
No	47.5
Don't know/not sure	11.1
29b. Verify identity of first time voter	
Yes	55.6
No	31.9
Don't know/not sure	12.5
29c. Verify identity of provisional voter	
Yes	43.4
No	37.3
Don't know/not sure	19.3
29d. It's required by law to verify the identity of voters	
Yes	16.7

No	60.9
Don't know/not sure	22.4
29e. To prevent fraud	
Yes	19.6
No	63.8
Don't know/not sure	16.6
29f. I did not recognize the voter	
Yes	6.2
No	78.7
Don't know/not sure	15.1
29g. The information they gave didn't match the voter rolls	
Yes	58.0
No	28.5
Don't know/not sure	13.5
29h. I couldn't find the voter in the voter rolls	
Yes	62.4
No	25.2
Don't know/not sure	12.4
29i. To process voters more quickly because of long voter lines	
Yes	12.4
No	76.2
Don't know/not sure	11.4
30. Which party members worked as poll watcher or poll challenger at your voting location?	
30a. Democratic	
Poll watcher	38.3
Poll challenger	29.9
30b. Republican	
Poll watcher	20.7
Poll challenger	14.7
31. Did you ever feel intimidated by the poll watchers and/or poll challengers?	
Yes	5.0
No	95.0
32. About how long (in minutes) was the average time a voter waited in line at your vote center?	
Mean	15.1
Median	10.0
Minimum	0.0
Maximum	90.0
33. About how long (in minutes) did the average voter take to complete their ballot?	
Mean	10.2
Median	10.0
Minimum	0.0
Maximum	30.0
34. About how often did a voter have trouble filling out a ballot or require poll worker assistance after	

getting a ballot?	
Very often	0.7
Somewhat often	20.5
Hardly at all	61.0
Never	1.2
Don't know/not sure	16.6

35. Thinking back on your poll worker and presiding judge training, please tell us whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

35a. There were problems setting up one or more of the optical ballot scanners in my voting location.

Strongly agree	6.1
Somewhat agree	9.1
Somewhat disagree	33.0
Strongly disagree	29.9
N/A	21.9

35b. There were problems shutting down one or more of the optical ballot scanners at the end of the day and reporting the results.

Strongly agree	4.7
Somewhat agree	8.6
Somewhat disagree	31.7
Strongly disagree	35.4
N/A	19.6

35c. There were problems with the ballot printers.

Strongly agree	9.0
Somewhat agree	19.2
Somewhat disagree	33.8
Strongly disagree	29.5
N/A	8.5

35d. Many voters who showed up were not in the system.

Strongly agree	4.3
Somewhat agree	19.4
Somewhat disagree	44.3
Strongly disagree	22.6
N/A	9.4

35e. Voters seemed to like the voting centers

Strongly agree	31.4
Somewhat agree	61.5
Somewhat disagree	3.9
Strongly disagree	0.3
N/A	2.9

35f. There were problems with one or more of the Automarks in my voting location.

Strongly agree	11.2
Somewhat agree	19.8
Somewhat disagree	30.3
Strongly disagree	21.4
N/A	17.3

35g. Voters used the Automark frequently.

Strongly agree	5.5
----------------	-----

Somewhat agree	13.9
Somewhat disagree	37.7
Strongly disagree	25.9
N/A	17.0
35h. Voters who used the Automark thought it worked well.	
Strongly agree	12.9
Somewhat agree	46.7
Somewhat disagree	11.7
Strongly disagree	4.0
N/A	24.7
35i. We encouraged voters who spoiled a ballot to vote using the Automark.	
Strongly agree	5.0
Somewhat agree	23.1
Somewhat disagree	32.9
Strongly disagree	20.4
N/A	18.6
35j. Voter ballot privacy was NOT compromised when a voter cast his or her vote.	
Strongly agree	51.2
Somewhat agree	38.8
Somewhat disagree	3.0
Strongly disagree	4.6
N/A	2.4
35k. Generally speaking voters were satisfied with the voting process.	
Strongly agree	40.4
Somewhat agree	55.7
Somewhat disagree	0.0
Strongly disagree	3.6
N/A	0.3
35l. The voting centers are more convenient for voters than precincts were.	
Strongly agree	57.3
Somewhat agree	31.2
Somewhat disagree	2.2
Strongly disagree	1.5
N/A	7.8
35m. The ballot printer printed a ballot that was unreadable by the M-100 optical scanner.	
Strongly agree	4.1
Somewhat agree	10.9
Somewhat disagree	33.5
Strongly disagree	41.7
N/A	9.8
36. How often did you hear voters talking to each other about the new vote centers in the voting location?	
Very often	4.4
Somewhat often	21.5
Hardly at all	36.2
Never	30.2
Don't know/not sure	7.7

37. If someone came in to vote and you could not find him or her in the AskED (ballot-on-demand) system, what did you do most of the time? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)
- |  |      |
|--|------|
| Call the Clerk's office for assistance | 53.2 |
| Send them to another location          | 5.0  |
| Issue them a provisional ballot        | 60.7 |
| Ask them to leave                      | 0.6  |
| Don't know/not sure                    | 19.2 |
38. About how many ballots were spoiled in your voting location
- |         |       |
|---------|-------|
| Mean    | 15.7  |
| Median  | 8.0   |
| Minimum | 0.0   |
| Maximum | 730.0 |
39. About how many provisional ballots were completed in your voting location?
- |         |         |
|---------|---------|
| Mean    | 22.1    |
| Median  | 6.0     |
| Minimum | 0.0     |
| Maximum | 1,200.0 |
40. Below is a list of possible illegal activities that may or may not take place in your community. Please tell me how often you think each event occurs in your **COUNTY**?
- 40a. A voter casts more than one ballot.
- |                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| All or most of the time | 0.4  |
| Some of the time        | 10.3 |
| Not much of the time    | 25.4 |
| Never                   | 39.1 |
| Don't know/not sure     | 24.8 |
- 40b. Tampering with ballots to change votes.
- |                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| All or most of the time | 1.2  |
| Some of the time        | 4.1  |
| Not much of the time    | 11.6 |
| Never                   | 53.9 |
| Don't know/not sure     | 29.2 |
- 40c. Someone pretends to be another person casts a vote for them.
- |                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| All or most of the time | 0.4  |
| Some of the time        | 11.3 |
| Not much of the time    | 27.7 |
| Never                   | 31.3 |
| Don't know not sure     | 29.3 |
- 40d. A non-US citizen votes.
- |                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| All or most of the time | 1.3  |
| Some of the time        | 16.5 |
| Not much of the time    | 17.2 |
| Never                   | 27.7 |
| Don't know not sure     | 37.3 |
41. Below is a list of possible illegal activities that may or may not take place in your community. Please tell me how often you think each event occurs in your **VOTE CENTER**?
- 41a. A voter casts more than one ballot.

All or most of the time	0.4
Some of the time	4.7
Not much of the time	14.4
Never	58.5
Don't know/not sure	22.0
41b. Tampering with ballots to change votes.	
All or most of the time	1.2
Some of the time	2.7
Not much of the time	7.5
Never	65.5
Don't know/not sure	23.1
41c. Someone pretends to be another person casts a vote for them.	
All or most of the time	0.4
Some of the time	7.5
Not much of the time	16.4
Never	42.4
Don't know/not sure	33.3
41d. A non-US citizen votes.	
All or most of the time	2.1
Some of the time	9.6
Not much of the time	9.8
Never	40.0
Don't know/not sure	38.5
42. Age:	
18-30	10.4
31-45	15.5
46-55	18.8
56-65	32.4
65+	22.9
43. Are you male or female?	
Male	31.4
Female	68.6
44. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself to be a(n)?	
Strong Democrat	29.8
Democrat-not so strong	15.8
Independent-closer to Democrat	12.7
Independent	13.0
Independent-closer to Republican	2.8
Republican-not so strong	13.3
Strong Republican	12.6
45. What is the highest grade of education you have completed?	
Less than a High School degree	0.7
High School degree	10.2
Some college	31.7
Completed trade school/associates degree	14.0
College degree	26.2
Some Graduate School	3.6

Graduate degree	12.3
JD/MD/PhD	1.3
46. Not counting religious organizations, how many civic or community organizations, like the Kiwanis Club, PTA, League of Women Voters, do you belong to ?	
0	63.1
1	14.7
2	16.2
3	3.6
4	1.5
5	0.9
47. Did you take time off your job to work at the polls or was Election Day your regular day off?	
I took Election Day off	32.0
Election Day was my normal day off	68.0
48. Are you fluent in Spanish?	
Yes	18.2
No	81.8
49. How would you describe your current employment status?	
Employed full-time	18.3
Employed part-time	17.3
Unemployed/looking for work	13.9
Student	3.8
Retired	43.7
Homemaker	3.0
50. What racial or ethnic group best describes you?	
Black/African American	4.4
Native American/American Indian	2.4
Hispanic/Latino	36.9
Asian	2.3
White/Anglo	52.4
Other	1.6
51. If you indicated Hispanic/Latino, would you describe your Hispanic/Latino origin as:	
Latin American	11.4
Mexican	17.5
Spanish	64.8
Other	6.3
52. Generally speaking, how comfortable do you feel with a computer?	
Very comfortable	84.4
Somewhat comfortable	13.4
Not very comfortable	2.2
Not at all comfortable	0.0
53. How often do you use the Internet?	
Once or more a day	80.9
A few times a week	13.4
A few times a month	1.0
Hardly ever	4.3
Never	0.4

54. Do you have an Internet connection in your home?		
Yes	92.5	
No	7.5	
55. Did you work at an early voting location, on Election Day or both?		
I worked at an early vote center only during early voting		8.3
I worked at an Election Day vote center only on Election Day		59.9
I worked at a vote center during BOTH early and Election Day		31.8

## Part 3: Voter Experiences

This part of our report on the 2012 November, general election in Bernalillo County focuses on the assessments and experiences of Bernalillo County voters with the election process. In 2012, the voter survey included 612 voters, randomly selected from Bernalillo County who answered the survey over the Internet or by US mail after the election. Voters were asked about their voting experience, their attitudes toward the new vote centers, their confidence in the voting process, their attitudes toward voter identification, their attitudes toward poll workers, and their attitudes toward alternative voting methods and requirements. The Internet/mail survey was in the field between November 9, 2012 and January 14, 2013, with 99% of responses completed before the Christmas holidays. The survey employed random sampling from the Bernalillo County voter registration file provided by the County Clerk, Maggie Toulouse Oliver, after the final registration day for the November 2012 election (see Appendix 3.1 for the survey methodology details).

The 2012 survey represents the fourth post election survey of Bernalillo County voters focusing on election administration. Beginning in 2006, we surveyed voters in the First Congressional District, which encompasses 95% of Bernalillo County, and in 2008 and 2010 we surveyed voters statewide. In 2012, we surveyed voters in Bernalillo County only. Nevertheless, this provides us with a continuous cross-section of data on Bernalillo County voters allowing us to compare voter attitudes and experiences over time and provides us with an extended look at a variety of election administration issues. This represents a unique, continuous cross section of an election administration unit and I am unfamiliar with any other such extended examination. The 2012 frequency report can be found in Appendix 3.2. Previous reports can be found at [www.unm.edu/~atkeson/newmexico.html](http://www.unm.edu/~atkeson/newmexico.html).

In 2012, voters in Bernalillo County switched from a traditional precinct model of election administration to a vote center model in which registered voters could vote at any of 69 locations in the county on Election Day and 17 early voting locations during early voting, which went from October 20, 2012 to November 3, 2012. Early voting locations were open Mondays through Saturdays from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Vote centers on Election Day were open from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM.

This report has 7 parts.

- Part 1 examines the voter experience with the election and the election administration process, including average wait times in line to vote, voter-ballot interactions, voter-poll worker interactions, absentee balloting, location of polling places, and differences between voting modes (absentee, Election Day, and early).
- Part 2 examines voter attitudes and experiences with vote centers in early and Election Day voting.
- Part 3 examines voter confidence in their ballots being counted as intended at multiple levels of election administration including the voter's ballot at his vote

center, all of the ballots in the county, all of the ballots in the state and all of the ballots in the nation. We also examine voter confidence and voter satisfaction over time, comparing the current results with data collected in 2006, 2008, and 2010.

- Part 4 examines voters' interactions and attitudes with the ballot, including ballot privacy, security, confidence in using the ballot, importance of having a paper record of each voter's vote, preference for the straight party option on the ballot.
- Part 5 examines voters' reports concerning the implementation of New Mexico's voter identification law.
- Part 6 examines voter attitudes toward photo identification issues.
- Part 7 examines opinions toward alternative election reform proposals, including the Electoral College, voter purges, requiring proof of citizenship to vote, and Election Day voter registration.

### **3.1 The Voter Experience**

Voters are the primary clients, along with candidates, in an election. Assessing voter attitudes toward the election process provides important data on the effectiveness and efficiency of election administration. Voter experiences with the ballot, the quality of the polling site, and the quality of the interaction with poll workers provide important evidence about the voting process and the quality of the election experience. These experiences are the primary means through which election officials influence voter confidence. When voters have problems voting—for example, because the ballot is confusing or too long, or poll workers are unhelpful—they are likely to feel less confident that their vote will be counted.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, this report begins with an examination of attitudes surrounding the voting experience. This will provide a broad look at the overall quality of the vote experience as assessed by Bernalillo County voters.

#### **Wait Times**

Bernalillo County voters, on average, reported waiting about 5.8 minutes in line to vote during the 2012 presidential election. However wait times differ to a large extent on whether the individual voted before the election in early voting, or on Election Day.

- Election Day voters indicated a broad range of wait times from no wait time up to 120 minutes. On average, Election Day voters reported waiting 15.7 minutes to

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<sup>30</sup> See Lonna Rae Atkeson and Kyle L. Saunders, 2007, "Voter Confidence: A Local Matter?" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 40(October):655-660; Thad E. Hall, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson, 2007, "Poll Workers and the Vitality of Democracy: An Early Assessment," *PS: Political Science and Society*, 647-654; Thad E. Hall, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson, 2009, "The Human Dimension of Elections: How Poll Workers Shape Public Confidence in Elections," *Political Research Quarterly* 62(2): 507-522.

vote<sup>31</sup>. This is much longer than in 2010 when Election Day voters in Bernalillo County averaged a very short 2.7 minutes.

- Early voters indicated a much shorter range relative to Election Day voters from basically no wait time to 30 minutes. On average, in the 2012 general election, early voters reported wait times of only 3.7 minutes.<sup>32</sup> This is about 1 minute longer than in 2010.

This pattern is a reversal of what we have seen in previous elections. Previously, early voting had longer wait times on average than Election Day voting. However, with the new vote center model this no longer appears to be the case.

The data also indicate a great deal of variability across vote center locations with some locations accommodating voters very quickly, while other locations experienced long lines and long waits. In general, the range of wait times in early vote centers was manageable for voters, with a maximum wait time of 30 minutes. However, for some Election Day voters the wait time was a full 2 hours. In our survey, voters were asked if they considered their overall wait time to be “no wait time” a “short” wait time, a “moderate” wait time or a “long” wait time. Voters who indicated “no wait time” averaged about 2 minutes with a range of 0 to 15 minutes. Those indicating a “short” wait time averaged about 8 minutes with a range of 0 to 30 minutes. Voters indicating a “moderate” wait time averaged 28 minutes in line with a range of between 0 and 60. Finally, voters indicating a “long” wait averaged 72 minutes in line with a range of between 30 and 120 minutes. These data suggest that wait times under 30 minutes are acceptable to voters and less than 15 minutes are most preferable. Wait times over 30 minutes are clearly seen as a long wait time and administrators should do all that they can to ensure voters do not wait in line to vote this long.

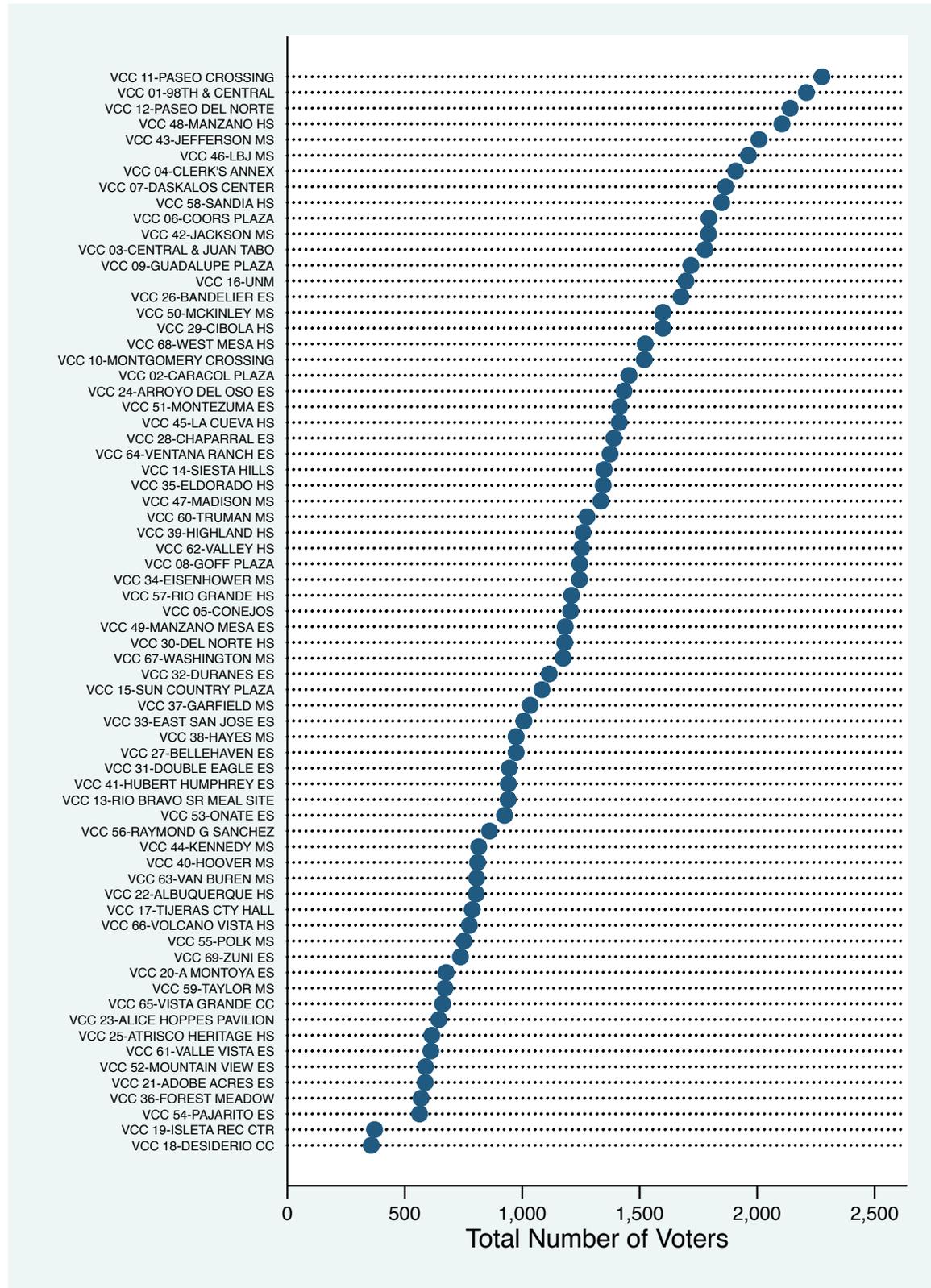
Given that some vote centers had very short lines while others had very long lines, election officials need to study which vote centers attracted more voters, the staffing levels at those locations, and how they can better accommodate those voters at popular voting sites in the future. Figure 3.1 shows the number of voters processed on Election Day at each VCC. The lowest turnout at a VCC on Election Day was only 357 voters, while the highest turnout at a VCC was 2,276 voters, an over six-fold difference.

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<sup>31</sup> The difference in wait times between early and Election Day voters is statistically significant at  $p < .001$ .

<sup>32</sup> Statewide, the increases in wait times in both early and Election Day voting across years is statistically significant at  $p < .001$  using a two-sample t-test.

**Figure 3.1 Frequencies of Number of Voters at Each Vote Center – Election Day Voters**



Over the past several election cycles, early voting has become increasingly popular in New Mexico and especially in Bernalillo County. This is especially true in presidential years when additional resources flow into the state and information about the race is easily available, both of which mobilize voters. Table 3.1 shows the breakdown of voting mode for the last 5 general elections. Over the last two election cycles, absentee voting declined while early voting has substantially increased, with over a majority of voters choosing to vote early in 2012. In both 2010 and 2012, the Bernalillo County Clerk made 17 early voting sites available. Given that early voters were processed quickly in early voting locations, the current number of early voting vote centers appears adequate. However, increased use of early voting facilities in future elections may increase demand and the need for a larger number of early voting sites. Importantly, a study of early voting in Bernalillo County showed that most voters who chose to vote early have an early vote center very close to their place of residence suggesting that increased use of early voting depends a great deal on the location of vote centers.<sup>33</sup> From a policy perspective, this suggests that expanding the number of locations and placing locations in denser residential areas will likely attract a significant portion of voters to vote early and expand the overall number of voters who take advantage of this opportunity. The popularity of early voting and its potential benefits for relieving pressures on Election Day voting makes it an important component of election administration in Bernalillo County and continued efforts should be made to expand early voting.

**Table 3.1 Percentage of Voters Choosing Different Voting Modes in Bernalillo County Over Time**

Year	Absentee Voters	Early Voters	Election Day Voters
2004	23.1	31.0	45.9
2006	25.1	21.0	53.9
2008	26.7	44.2	29.0
2010	18.5	39.6	41.8
2012	14.2	54.7	31.1

### **Voter-Ballot Interaction Issues: Early and Election Day Voters**

Similar to both 2008 and 2010, we find that there were few problems reported by voters concerning their paper ballots. Election Day and early voters were asked if they made a mistake on a ballot and had to get a new one. Very few voters reported problems filling out their paper ballot. In the survey data, only about 1.5% of voters indicated that they had to get a new ballot; half of these voters had made a mistake and over-voted. Of course, it is important to note that 1.5% of early and Election Day voters is almost 3500 people. Even

<sup>33</sup> Bryant, Lisa. 2010. "A Demographic and Spatial Profile of New Mexico's Early Voters in 2008." Presented at the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois, April 22-25, 2010.

though voters who had problems with their ballots make up a fairly small percentage of the total number of voters, it is a relatively large number of voters who are actually affected. Therefore, it is important to consider ways to improve the process.

There are two ways to handle this problem. First, and we observed this several times in both early and Election Day voting, is to explain to the voter that they can clearly mark their choice on their current paper ballot and then put it in the hand tally box. Or, second, encourage greater use of the AutoMARK system, which fills in the bubbles for voters. We saw more frequent use of the AutoMARK in this election, but there were several voting sites where they were still being underutilized. When the AutoMARK works, it is a plus for voters who have a hard time with a long, bubble paper ballot. Of course, when the AutoMARK fails voters are discouraged and less confident. The advantage of the AutoMARK is that it does not increase the costs associated with counting ballots by hand at closing. Both are valid approaches to the over voting problem, depending on the costs and benefits to the voter and the poll workers, and both options should be clearly explored and utilized.

### **Voter-Ballot Interaction Issues: Absentee Voters**

Absentee by mail voters made up 14% of Bernalillo County voters in 2012 and it continues to be an important voting mode, especially for those voters who have health disabilities and for those uniform and overseas voters who no longer live in New Mexico or cannot be present to vote in person. New Mexico provides no-excuse absentee voting, allowing voters to choose the absentee by mail voting option for any reason. However, voters have to request a ballot each election because there is no permanent absentee by mail status in New Mexico. When we asked voters to identify the reasons why they chose the absentee option, we found that about two-thirds of absentee voters indicated that one of the primary reasons they vote absentee by mail is convenience (see Table 3.2). About one-quarter of these voters indicated that they voted absentee by mail because they did not want to have to travel to a vote center. Work and travel obligations were also significant factors to explain this voting mode choice.

**Table 3.2. Reasons for Voting Absentee**

	Percent
Had to work on Election Day	4.9
Did not want to travel to precinct	25.9
Planned to be out of town	9.6
Convenience of doing it at home	65.3
Homebound	4.5
Out of State/Country	12.2

Note: numbers do not add to 100% because respondents were asked to mark all that apply.

Absentee voters had few problems with their ballots. Absentee voters were asked how easy it was to follow the absentee voting ballot instructions.

- 71% of absentee voters indicated it was “very easy,” up 10% from 2010 when only 61% of respondents indicated it was “very easy” to follow the instructions

and an additional 26.9% indicated that it was “somewhat easy” to follow the instructions.

- Only about 1.4% of voters indicated they felt the instructions were “somewhat hard,” compared to a full 6% of absentee voters in 2010. In both years no voter felt the instructions were “very hard.”

Despite the instructions being relatively easy to follow and presumably more easy than in 2010, more absentee by mail voters were concerned that their ballot would not arrive in time to be counted. We asked absentee voters, “how concerned were you that your ballot would arrive at the County Clerk’s office in time to be counted?” More than a majority (57%) of absentee voters were “not at all” (24%) or “not very” concerned (33%) about their ballots arriving on time. However, over one quarter of voters (27%) were “somewhat concerned”, and about one in six voters (17%) were “very concerned” that their ballot would not arrive in time to be counted. In 2010, 11% more voters (or 68%) were “not at all” concerned (36%) or “not very” concerned (32%) that their vote was counted in time and one quarter (26%) were “somewhat” concerned and only 6% were “very” concerned that their ballot would not be received in time to be counted. Although we do not have further contextual data to understand why respondents felt this way, it is problematic that more absentee voters were concerned that their ballot would not arrive in time to be counted than we have seen in the past. Bernalillo County has an online system where voters can track whether their ballot has arrived back at the County Clerk’s office. We do not know the rate at which voters check this system or their awareness of it. The county should consider auditing its absentee ballot process to determine if absentee voters could be better educated on how to determine whether or not their vote has been received. In a future study, we propose expanding our knowledge of why voters are unsure their vote might not get counted and if they were aware of or used the online system to track their ballot.

## **Voter-Poll Worker Interactions**

Poll worker-voter interactions are a key component of election administration and it is important that this interaction be a positive experience for the voter. Election Day and early voters were asked whether they strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, “The poll workers were helpful?” The survey results show that, overall, the poll worker-voter interaction was very positive. Similar to previous election contests we find:

- 75% percent of voters agreed “strongly” and another 21% agreed “somewhat” that their poll workers were helpful.
- Only 4% of voters found their poll workers to be “not too helpful” or “not at all helpful”, which amounts to an estimated 1,467 poor voter-poll worker interactions in 2012.

## 3.2. Voters Attitudes toward Vote Centers

In 2010, we surveyed voters to determine their attitudes toward the establishment of vote centers with the option of voting at any voting location in the county. We presented arguments both for and against vote centers and assessed how these statements altered their attitudes as they learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the vote center model over the traditional precinct method. We found that the arguments presented shifted voters attitudes to a slightly more favorable position toward the vote center model.<sup>34</sup> We also found that voters who had participated in early voting before and those voters in Bernalillo County (as opposed to other parts of the state) were especially open and positive to a vote center model.<sup>35</sup>

In 2012, the county's major innovation and change in election administration was moving from the precinct to the vote center model. This reduced the number of voting locations by 94 (down from 163 locations and 423 precincts in 2008), but allowed anyone to vote at any vote center location in the county. Due to the smaller number of voting locations, the new model provided for better-trained poll workers<sup>36</sup> and more oversight of poll workers at voting locations by county staff.

Voters' response to vote centers was very positive.

- Voters especially liked the ability to vote anywhere. We asked whether respondents agreed or disagreed with, "I liked having the option to vote at any of the vote centers in the city," we found that 94% of respondents found this aspect of the vote center model highly attractive.
- We also asked whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the statement, "Voting at the vote center was better, about the same, or worse than voting at my traditional precinct," and 97% of all voters indicated it was better! 98% of early and 91% of Election Day voters indicated the new method of voting was better. Only 1% of early voters and 8% of Election Day voters indicated the new method of voting was worse.

As a follow up question, we asked voters to describe why it was better or worse. The results indicate that voters liked the convenience of the vote center option, especially the ability to vote anywhere in the county. For example, many voters echoed the following sentiments, "Because I could vote anywhere," or "2 blocks from work, along my usual lunch

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<sup>34</sup> See Atkeson, Lonna Rae.. R. Michael Alvarez. Alex N. Adams, Lisa Bryant. 2011. "The 2010 New Mexico Election Administration Report. Typescript, University of New Mexico. Available at: <http://www.unm.edu/~atkeson/newmexico.html>.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> The county also implemented a new poll worker training program, see section 1 on Early and Election Day Voting.

hour walking route, no wait – it was all on my terms,” or “Convenient, well run,” or “No waiting. I am disabled and have to use the bus. There was a bus stop right in front of the center. This is very important to me,” or “I really like being able to go to any voting center and I like knowing that others will have this opportunity.” The 2% of voters who indicated it was worse preferred their precinct for community reasons. One response, which was echoed by several voters, was, “Voting in my traditional precinct was a community event. I miss the close sense of community from the voting center.” Other reasons included poor parking at the facility or the number of voters and length of time that voters had to wait at the vote center to vote. Given that many voters did not experience long waits, but some did, it is critical that the county focus on ways to provide vote centers with high volumes of voters with more staff to process voters efficiently. Long waits increase dissatisfaction with election administration and the new vote center model. Those Election Day voters who indicated that it was worse waited an average of 57 minutes in line to vote, while those that noted it was better only waited 13 minutes on average.

## **Learning about Vote Centers**

Changing from traditional precincts to vote centers entailed a number of costs to the county to ensure that voters knew about the changes and that their traditional polling place may no longer be available. The county utilized a variety of forms of communication with county voters to ensure that voters knew about the changes and how those changes would affect voters in terms of where they would vote. The county sent out a letter to all registered voters explaining the change and listed the locations of the Election Day vote centers and early voting sites. The county also advertised on billboards, in the newspaper, on television, on the radio, on their website, etc. Overall, the county made a strong effort and did a good job ensuring that voters knew about the changes and their opportunities to vote absentee by mail, early in-person or on Election Day. This is supported by the fact that more than 9 in 10 (93%) of in-person voters knew before they went to vote that they could vote at any vote center. Voters heard about the vote center model through a variety of mediums. Importantly, over two in five voters (44%) found out from the letter from the county clerk. Advertising also made a big difference. Nearly two in five (37%) heard about it from a TV commercial, about one-quarter (26%) heard it on the radio, another one-quarter saw it in a newspaper advertisement, and nearly one in eight (12%) saw it on billboards that were strategically situated along the major highways. Over two in ten voters (22%) reported that they looked it up on the county clerk’s website. Earned media in the form of newspaper stories and TV news also played an important informational role with 35% of voters hearing about the change through earned media outlets.

Voters were assisted in learning about the new process because these messages were offered through multiple means. Efforts should be continued to advertise locations and times of early and Election Day voting. Feedback from voters clearly indicates that they use multiple means to learn about changes in election administration and respond to those messages. Indeed a close look at voting habits on Election Day produced, at least, one negative consequence, as some voters who live in other counties thought they could vote locally near their work, regardless of the county in which they were registered. The state

legislature should consider making it easier for voters to vote anywhere in the state. Given the large driving distances between the most populated counties in the state and the fact that many people commute to a different county for work, facilitating voting across county lines could be beneficial to greater voter participation, ease of voting, and voter satisfaction.

## **Finding Polling Places**

Despite fewer polling sites, voters were not inconvenienced in terms of voting locations. Both early and Election Day voters reported that they easily found their voting location. These voters were asked to strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement, “The location was easy to find.”

- Almost 8 in 10 (77%) voters indicated that they “strongly agreed” with the statement that their voting location was “easy to find” and another 18% “somewhat agreed” with that statement. Thus, 95% of voters indicated that they easily found their voting location.
- Only 4% of early and Election Day voters “strongly” or “somewhat disagreed” with the statement that the location of their voting site was easy to find.
- However, about 5% of early voters, compared to only 2% of Election Day voters indicated they disagreed with the statement that their voting location was easy to find. This suggests that early voters, with many fewer locations to choose from, had a slightly harder time locating a vote center than Election Day voters.
- These numbers are fairly comparable to the precinct based model in which a mere 2% of voters in Bernalillo County in 2010 indicated they found it somewhat hard or very hard to find their polling place.
- There were no differences between first-time voters and repeat voters, between men and women, across different education groups, between Hispanics and non-Hispanics, younger and older voters, and across voters who were contacted and encouraged to vote.

It appears that, overall, most voters were able to locate a voting facility easily. Additional attention may be needed to advertise early locations, since they were slightly harder to find.

Moreover, the increase in voting choices led voters to vote at locations different from where they used to.

- Voters mostly used vote centers that were near their residence. Nearly half (48%) of early voters chose a vote center that was within 1 mile of their home and over half (57%) of Election Day voters chose a similar location.
- Voters also relied on major streets that they use often to locate a vote center. About half (49%) of early voters and 44% of Election Day voters found a vote center on a major street they often use.

- About one in six voters (17%) voted within 1 mile of a shopping center that they use often.
- Another 14% voted within 1 mile of their workplace and about 6% voted within 1 mile of a school they visit often.
- Importantly, about 15% of voters chose to vote outside a radius of 1 mile of their home, workplace, school, or major street.
- We also found that voters did not feel that they had to go far out of their way to vote with the new vote center model. We asked voters to agree or disagree with the statement, “I had to go far out of my way to vote.” We found that 93% of voters disagreed with this statement and 7% agreed with it, indicating that they did not have to travel far to find a voting location. This is consistent with other findings we have presented.

These data suggest that about 85% of voters voted within 1 mile of a place they visit often (their home, work, shopping center, major street or school), and very few voters felt they had to go out of their way to vote. This suggests that for most voters, locations were easy to find and were easy to incorporate into their daily life. However, we suggest that the county examine where voters voted in relation to their homes and see if additional vote centers need to be placed in locations where it appears voters are traveling larger distances or “going out of their way” to vote. Older voters, for example, were less likely to be within a mile of any vote center. However, ethnicity and education were not associated with proximity to a vote center.

## **Parking Problems**

Although most voters did not have problems parking there were problems at some vote centers. Over a set of questions about voters experience at their vote center, parking appears to be one of the larger concerns expressed by voters. About 1 in 6 voters (17%) indicated that it was hard to find a place to park at their vote center. We found no difference in the ethnicity, education, age, or gender of those that indicated they had a hard time parking. What members of this group do share are longer wait lines. Voters, who experience longer wait times, also had parking problems. Given that some lines were 2 hours deep it is not surprising that wait time positively correlates with parking problems. Longer wait times mean more people are at the polling location and more people are trying to use the parking facilities. One in six voters having a parking problem is a problem that needs to be addressed especially because parking problems worsen in off year elections when schools, where many vote centers are located, are not closed.

## **Usage of My Vote Center App**

To assist voters in finding the most efficient place to vote, the county created a smart phone application called My Vote Center App. The purpose of the app was to provide information on line wait times to voters at each voting location. About 6% of voters reported using the app. While we do not have the contextual data to state the reasons for this low usage rate, we do speculate that it is due to both low smartphone use and a lack of advertising. Over time, uses of these types of tools for greater personal efficiency will increase as citizens become aware of the technology and as smart phone ownership increases. Thus, the county should continue providing similar apps in the future, advertise them more, and increase their accuracy (see Part 1).

## **Vote Center Conclusion**

Regardless of small problems in the vote center related to parking problems and similar issues, 97% of in-person voters agreed with the statement that the “voting process was easy.” Overall this is very positive, but we still found that about 25% of early and Election Day voters preferred their precinct method of voting to vote centers. Interestingly, we found this to be equally true between Hispanic and non-Hispanics, young and old, low versus high education, and men and women. We did find a relationship between the perception of length of wait time and preference for the former precinct method of voting. Voters who believed they had to wait a moderate time or a long time were much more likely to indicate that they preferred the former method of voting. Over three-quarters (77%) of voters who indicated they waited “no time at all” or “a short time” disagreed with the statement that, “I preferred to vote at my precinct instead of at the voter center,” while a minority of voters (45%) disagreed with the statement when they perceived their wait time as moderate or long. Obviously, processing time for a voter from entry to exit is a key component to understanding voter attitudes toward their vote experience. Spending time reducing long lines in the next election will reap large benefits in voter satisfaction with the new model of voting, which is well regarded in many other ways.

## **3.3. Voter Confidence**

Voter confidence is a necessary component of a democratic society. Voter confidence represents a fundamental belief in the fairness of the electoral process and ultimately the legitimacy of the government. Even if citizens are unhappy with the choices their leaders make, they should feel confident that the process that placed those individuals into power was fair and honest and that future elections can result in a change of leadership.

This portion of the study focuses on four levels of voter confidence.

- We asked: How confident are you that your ballot, all of the ballots in the county, the state or the nation were counted as the voter(s) intended?" Responses options were very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident and not at all confident.
- The first level, the personal vote, is the most important because it represents how the voter feels about his/her own voting experience and its accuracy.
- The second level is voter confidence in the county's election system. The county is the election administrative unit for the state and is responsible for all matters related to election administration including: poll worker training, logic and accuracy testing of the tabulating machines, the counting of ballots, the qualification of provisional ballots, the county canvass, etc.
- The third level is confidence in the process at the state level and therefore is an aggregation of how voters feel about the election process within their larger administrative unit.
- The fourth level is confidence that all the ballots were counted correctly nationwide is outside of the voter's own community, experiences, and aggregates across many election administration units.
- The results are presented in Table 3.3 and show both the frequency of response and the confidence average across levels of administration and for each voting mode (Election Day, early, and absentee). The variables are coded on a 4-point scale so that a higher average indicates greater confidence. Overall, the results show that voters have very high confidence that their votes were counted correctly.
- Almost half (49%) of voters were very confident and almost four in ten voters (38%) were somewhat confident that their vote was counted correctly. Thus, nearly 9 out of 10 voters (87%) were very or somewhat confident that their ballot was counted correctly.
- About 1 in 10 voters (10%) were not too confident and only about one in 20 voters were not at all confident (5%).

The results also show that, moving up from (1) a personal vote being counted as intended to (2) all the votes in the voter's county being counted as intended to (3) all the votes in the state being counted as intended to (4) all the votes in the nation being counted as intended, voter confidence significantly declines.<sup>37</sup> This result is consistent over time and we have observed the same finding in the last 4 election cycles. As people get further away from the voting process, they become more concerned about its accuracy.

- For example, 49% of voters are very confident that their vote was counted as intended.

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<sup>37</sup> A paired t-test shows that there are significant declines in vote confidence as we move from personal vote to county to state and nation (most of these are  $p < .001$ ). Because of the small sample size of absentee voters, some paired differences are insignificant.

- Only 41% of voters are very confident in the process at the county level.
- Only 35% of voters are very confident in the process at the state level.
- Only 29% of voters are very confident in the process nationwide.

In each case, however, a large majority of voters are either very or somewhat confident that their vote or all the votes were counted as intended and, conversely, a relatively small minority of voters is either not too confident or not at all confident.

**Table 3.3. Frequency and Means of Personal, County, State and National Voter Confidence**

	Your Vote	Votes in your county	Votes in your state	Votes nationwide
<b>Frequency</b>				
(4) Very confident	48.5	40.6	34.8	29.4
(3) Somewhat confident	37.5	42.6	46.5	40.1
(2) Not too confident	9.5	12.0	13.7	19.7
(1) Not at all confident	4.5	4.8	5.0	10.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Averages</b>				
Election Day voters	3.34	3.16	3.13	2.89
Early voters	3.32	3.21	3.11	2.88
Absentee voters	3.14	3.14	3.12	2.90
Overall Mean	3.30	3.19	3.11	2.88

At the bottom of Table 3.3, voter confidence is broken down by voting mode. Previous research has found that voting mode can influence voter confidence.<sup>38</sup> Specifically, studies have noted that absentee voters appear to be less confident than other voters that their ballots were counted correctly. In 2006, absentee voters in New Mexico were significantly less confident than other types of voters. In 2008, however, both Election Day and absentee voters shared the same level of confidence and early voters displayed significantly higher personal voter confidence. In 2010 and in 2012 absentee voters displayed attitudes similar to those in 2006, indicating significantly less confidence than both Election Day and early voters, while Election Day voters and early voters displayed the same level of confidence.<sup>39</sup> Absentee voters' confidence in their personal ballot is the same as their attitudes toward voter confidence at the county level. At the county, state and national level, differences between confidences measures across voting mode are not statistically different by voting mode.

<sup>38</sup> See Atkeson and Saunders, 2007; R. Michael Alvarez, Thad E. Hall and Morgan Llewellyn (2008), "Are Americans Confident Their Ballots are counted?" *The Journal of Politics* 70, 3: 754-766 and Atkeson, Lonna Rae, (2013) "Voter Confidence Ten Years after Bush V. Gore," in *Ten Years after Bush V. Gore*, edited by R. Michael Alvarez and Bernard Gofman, (Forthcoming, Cambridge University Press).

<sup>39</sup> A group t-test indicates that the p value is significant at  $p < .08$  for personal voter confidence between absentee and in-person voters, but  $p > .10$  for all other group comparisons.

## Voter Confidence 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012

As noted above, the repeated surveys of voters over time allows us to make comparisons between voter confidence in 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2012. Table 3.4 shows that on average voters in 2012 were somewhere between very confident and somewhat confident with a slightly lower overall confidence level of 3.30 than in 2010, when it was 3.42, and in 2008, when it was 3.47. Interestingly, about the same percentage of people were very confident in both 2012 and 2010, but a slightly larger percentage were not too or not at all confident this year.

**Table 3.4. Percentage and Average Voter Confidence Over Time**

	2012 Bernalillo County	2010 Bernalillo County	2008 Bernalillo County	2006 First CD
Very Confident	48.5	49.9	54.4	39.4
Somewhat confident	37.5	44.1	39.7	44.9
Not too confident	9.5	3.8	4.4	11.8
Not at all confident	4.5	2.3	1.5	3.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average	3.30	3.42	3.47	3.20

## Voter Experiences, Demographics and Voter Confidence

Experience with the ballot, the polling site, and interactions with poll workers are the objective experiences the voter has with the voting process.<sup>40</sup> These experiences are the core local factors that influence voter confidence. When voters have problems voting such as making a mistake on a ballot, having difficulty understanding the instructions, being unable find their polling place, having to deal with unhelpful poll workers, or perhaps having to wait too long in line, voters are likely to feel less confident that their vote will be counted.<sup>41</sup> Structural differences like these also influence voter confidence and result in some differences across years. Therefore, we examine the possible relationships between voter confidence and these factors.

Because context matters so much in understanding the voter experience, it might be expected that difficulty finding their polling location is associated with voter confidence. However, there is no relationship between the two in the survey data in 2012 or 2010.

<sup>40</sup> See Atkeson and Saunders, 2007. Also see, Hall, Thad E., J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson. 2007. "Poll Workers and the Vitality of Democracy: An Early Assessment. *PS: Political Science and Society*, 647-654 and Atkeson, Lonna Rae, 2013,

<sup>41</sup> Voter confidence is also affected by winning and losing, such that winners are more confident than losers. In some years, voters win and lose elections resulting in changes in confidence between years. In 2008, for example, Democrats won overwhelmingly and won the House of Representatives, a win-win for Democrats. However, they lost the House in 2010 and then Republicans maintained the House again in 2012, despite Democratic gains in the Senate and a win in the White House.

Similarly, it also might be expected that long waits are associated with lower voter confidence, but there is no evidence to support this. When comparing average voter confidence levels between voters who waited above the median wait time, which was 2 minutes, or between voters who waited above the average wait time, which was 5.8 minutes, we find there is no difference in confidence levels. Voters who waited in line very little and voters who waited in line quite a long time do not significantly vary in their voter confidence. Similar to both 2008 and 2010, we find:

- Voters who waited in line above the median wait time had an average confidence level of 3.3 out of 4, about the same voter confidence level as those who waited below the median wait time.
- Voters who waited in line above the average wait time had an average confidence level of 3.2 but those who waited in line below the average wait had an average confidence level of 3.3, a small and insignificant difference.

Even though it is often assumed that long lines suggest potential administrative issues that need to be dealt with, there is little evidence that long lines, in and of themselves, are associated with a decline in voter confidence. However, long lines do appear to influence other attitudes including evaluation of the overall voting experience, and whether or not a voter prefers the new VCC model to the precinct model. This suggests that wait times are important to how voters perceive administrative practices, but it does not appear to affect whether or not voters have confidence that their ballot was counted.<sup>42</sup>

It is also logical to think that voter interactions with their ballots or poll workers might be correlated with voter confidence. The data show that spoiling a ballot, for example, reduced voter confidence. This was not the case, however, in earlier studies. We see one important qualitative difference between earlier studies and 2012. Specifically, in 2012 we observed that many spoiled ballots were placed in the hand counting bin. Experimental evidence and evidence regarding reduced confidence among absentee voters suggest that voters who do not see their ballot processed by the vote tabulator are less likely to be confident that their ballot was counted.<sup>43</sup> Election administrators may be assisting voters - on the one hand - by giving them the option to not redo a ballot, but this may have some consequences to voter confidence. A more careful look at this relationship in the next election needs to be considered.

In addition, as in previous iterations, interactions with the poll workers matter. More helpful poll workers increase voter confidence. However, having a hard time finding a place to park or having to feel like a voter had to go far to vote reduced voter confidence. Feeling like the voting process was easy increased voter confidence. Simply put, a positive experience in the polling place helps to increase voter confidence and, as expected, negative experiences have the reverse effect. Local election officials should do as much as they can to make the local experience a completely positive one for voters.

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<sup>42</sup> See, for example, Heather K. Gerken (2009), *The Democracy Index*. Princeton: Princeton University Press who argues that wait times may be an important factor in a democracy index.

<sup>43</sup> Lisa A. Bryant (2010), Atkeson and Saunders (2007), Alvarez and Hall (2008).

Finally, it is important to consider whether voters' demographic characteristics are associated with higher or lower voter confidence. We found that gender, age, income and whether or not someone identifies as Hispanic or Latino are not associated with different levels of voter confidence in the survey data. In 2012, we did find that education and voter confidence were significantly related. This is something we also found in 2008. Thus, we have found that higher levels of education positively influence voter confidence in 2008 and 2012, but not in 2006 or 2010. This suggests that the relationship between education and voter confidence needs to be explored further in future research to determine when it is and when it is not a mediating effect. One obvious institutional difference is that this affect appears to be a factor in presidential as opposed to non-presidential years.

## Voter Satisfaction

An alternative measure of the voter experience is to ask about voter satisfaction with the voting experience: "How would you rate your voting experience overall?" We found that, overall, voters had a very positive election experience in 2012. The results are shown in Table 3.5. We include parallel information on the First Congressional District (CD1) for 2006 and information on Bernalillo County in 2008 and 2010.

**Table 3.5. How Would You Rate Your Overall Voting Experience**

	Bernalillo County 2012	Bernalillo County 2010	Bernalillo County 2008	Congressional District 1 2006
Excellent	62.5	47.9	51.9	25.1
Good	34.4	45.4	45.7	56.8
Fair	3.0	6.4	2.1	14.3
Poor	.1	0.3	0.3	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average	3.59	3.41	3.49	3.03

- Over 3 in 5 voters (62.5% - see column labeled "Bernalillo County 2012") in 2012 rated their voting experience as excellent and another one-third (34%) of voters rated their voting experience as good.
- This compares very favorably to 2008 and 2010. Even though fewer voters rate their experience as excellent, over nine in ten voters, in all 3 election cycles, rate their experience as "Excellent" or "Good."
- Most favorably, voters rated their experience in 2012 as the best experience over all 4 election cycles. In 2006 only a quarter (25%) of voters rated their experience as excellent and over half (57%) rated it as good, with an additional 18% rating it either fair or poor, suggesting that continued improvements by the County are paying off and continue to improve voter experiences.

### 3.4 Attitudes toward the Ballot

In 2012, in addition to exploring attitudes toward the new vote centers, we also explored voter's attitudes toward their ballots in a variety of ways. For example, we asked if the ballots were easy to use and if voters were confident about using their ballot. Confidence is important because it imparts a feeling of internal efficacy and an ability to interact with the system in an efficient, appropriate, and efficacious way.

- A majority of voters (54%) "strongly agree" that the ballot is easy to use and another 37% "somewhat agree." Overall 9 in ten voters (91%) agree that the ballot is easy to use. However, about 9% disagree.
- A slighter larger margin felt confidence in using the paper ballot. About two-thirds (66%) of voters "strongly agreed" with the statement, "I felt confident using the ballot" and more than one quarter (27%) "somewhat agreed." Only 6% did not feel confident using the ballot.
- Voters who had a hard time finding a polling location, or had to go far out of their way to vote, or had a hard time finding a place to park, were less likely to feel their ballot was easy to use and were less confident interacting with their ballot. Helpful poll workers increased positive attitudes toward use and confidence in the ballot as well.
- Voters who perceived their wait time to vote as moderate or long were less likely to feel confident in their ability to use the ballot.
- For absentee voters, easier instructions related to casting their ballot positively influenced their attitudes toward the ease of use of the ballot, but not their confidence with the ballot.
- Demographic differences between voters, including age, gender, educations, and Hispanic/Latino identification did not matter to a voter's feelings toward their confidence in their ballot or its ease of use.

Confidence in using the ballot and seeing the ballot as easy to use was associated with voters' local experience, and more strongly so than voters' overall confidence that their vote was counted correctly. This suggests that the local contextual environment influences voter's ability to interact with the most important aspect of voting, the ballot.

Local election officials need to have as much of the machinery in place as possible to make the day go well for as many voters as possible. Poor environments for voters, reduces their efficacy in the process and reduces their confidences in their ability to interact with the ballot.

Recent research suggests that some voters are very concerned about their ballot privacy and doubt that their vote is secure and/or private.<sup>44</sup> This election year, in some locations voters were offered a privacy sleeve. Some voters did not care about the privacy sleeve and did not want the added cost of using it, but others appeared grateful to have the extra privacy. In 2012, we asked two statements that voters could agree or disagree with regarding their ballot privacy. One statement was, “My ballot privacy was protected,” and the other was, “I felt that the information on my ballot was secure after voting.”

- Over 9 in 10 voters (93%) agreed that their ballot privacy was protected. Over 3 in 5 (63%) “strongly agreed” and another three in ten (30%) “somewhat agreed.” This leaves about 7% who disagreed and were concerned about their ballot privacy.
- Similarly over 9 in 10 voters (92%) agreed that they felt the information on their ballot was secure after voting. Just over half (55%) “strongly agreed” and another 37% “somewhat agreed.” About 8% of voters, however, did not feel their ballot was secure after voting.
- Voters who had a hard time finding a polling location, or had to go far out of their way to vote, or had a hard time finding a place to park, were less likely to feel their ballot was private and secure. Helpful poll workers were also associated with a feeling that a voter’s ballot privacy was protected and that the information on their ballot was secure after voting.
- Importantly, voters who made a mistake on a ballot were less likely to feel their ballot information was secure after voting. This could be due to their ballot being placed in the hand counting bin, instead of being counted by machine, or because their spoiled ballot, which had many of their preferences on it, went into a special ballot location. Or it could be because a poll worker looked or handled their ballot after the mistake was made.
- Voters who considered the wait time to be longer as opposed to shorter were more likely to feel their ballot information was not secure after they voted, but this did not influence their opinions on ballot privacy.
- Absentee voters who found the instructions easier were more likely to feel the information on their ballot was secure after voting.
- Importantly, voting mode, absentee, early in person or on Election Day, did not influence attitudes toward ballot privacy or post vote security.
- For the most part, demographics proved to be unrelated to ballot privacy and security, except in the case of gender. Women were slightly more likely to agree that their ballot was secure after voting, but gender was unrelated to feelings toward ballot privacy.

As with ballot confidence, ballot privacy and security are related to voter’s local experience. Once again, this suggests that a good voting experience is tied in to multiple aspects of election administration. Performing better in all areas of the election process improves the

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<sup>44</sup> Gerber, Alan S., Gregory A. Huber, David Doherty, Conor M. Dowling, and Seth J. Hill. 2013. “Do Perceptions of Ballot Secrecy Influence Turnout? Results from a Field Experiment.” *American Journal of Political Science* (forthcoming; formerly NBER Working Paper w17673).

quality of the experience for the voter and makes them feel their ballot is private and secure.

In 2006, New Mexico voters statewide moved to a paper ballot to ensure a paper record of each vote. Beginning in 2008, New Mexico added post election audits to check the accuracy of the tabulators and the legitimacy of the election for various contests to its election administration processes.<sup>45</sup> Given these changes, we wondered how many voters preferred having a paper record of their vote. We asked voters to agree or disagree with the statement, “It is important to me that there is a paper record of my vote.”

- A majority (52%) of voters strongly agreed and another 29% somewhat agreed that it is important to have a paper record of their vote.
- However, 19% of voters disagreed that having a paper record was important.
- Gender, education and Hispanic or Latino identity did not influence attitudes toward the paper ballot as a record of voting. Age, however, did matter. Older voters were more likely to believe that it is important to have a paper record of individual votes.

In 2012, the Secretary of State decided not to allow the straight party vote option on the ballot. We know little about the number of people who historically used this vehicle to fill out their bubble paper ballots. We do know that such a method makes it easier for voters to complete a ballot because they have to fill in fewer ovals. We were curious how voters felt about the straight party option, and whether voters would prefer it as an option on their ballot.

- About 2 in 5 (42%) voters preferred to be able to use the straight party option, while nearly three in five voters (58%) did not prefer to use the straight party option.
- Demographic characteristics and experiences in the precinct did not influence voter attitudes toward the straight party option.
- Partisanship and strength of partisanship mattered most strongly to how voters felt about the straight party option no longer being a viable voting method.

Tables 3.6 and 3.7 break down preferences on the straight party option by partisanship (Democrat, Republicans and Independents) and by strength of partisanship (independent-no partisanship, leaning partisans, weak partisans and strong partisans). Democrats, who represent a majority of New Mexico voters, were much more favorable to the straight party option than Republicans, as shown in Table 3.5. This likely reflects the partisan nature of this debate and the fact the Republican Secretary of State decided to forgo this New Mexico norm. Given that Republicans make up less of the voter pie in the state, it makes sense, strategically, to force all voters to bubble in every contest, in the hopes that this will increase the likelihood of a cross party vote. Republicans seem to understand this generally, and over 7 in 10 of them do not prefer the straight party option. Independents, who likely vote for different partisan candidates as they move down the ballot and do not connect themselves to a political party, had the strongest preference for no straight party option. This makes sense, given their ballot behavior is likely consistent with their

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<sup>45</sup> NMSA § 1-14-13.2

worldview. Interestingly, a majority (52%) of Democrats prefer the straight party option, likely for the same reasons that Republicans do not support it.

**Table 3.6 Percent that Preferred Straight Party Option by Partisanship**

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Disagree	48	76	72
Agree	52	24	28
Total percent	100	100	100

We also find that a majority of strong partisans, regardless of their party identification, prefer the straight party option (see Table 3.7). These are the voters most likely to vote a straight party ticket, so this option reduces their voting time and simplifies the voting process for them. The straight party option benefits them and reduces the cost of voting. Independents, who by definition are non-partisan, are least likely to prefer the straight party option. Leaning partisans, those who indicate they are independent but lean toward one party or the other, are slightly more likely than weak partisans to prefer the straight party option (37% versus 28%). Both groups are more likely to engage in cross party voting and consequently are much less likely to avail themselves of the straight party option.

**Table 3.7 Percent that Preferred Straight Party Option by Strength of Partisanship**

	Independent	Leaning Partisans	Weak Partisans	Strong Partisans
Disagree	76	63	72	47
Agree	24	37	28	53
Total Percent	100	100	100	100

Some voters, both Republican and Democrat, clearly like the straight party option on the ballot because it decreases their voting time and increases their voter efficiency. Generally, Democrats prefer this option more than Republicans. Voters who were more likely to vote a straight party ticket anyway, and who felt confident using their ballot (i.e. they likely understood how to use the straight party option), were more likely to prefer this option. This option creates greater efficiency for some voters, and as such, election leaders should carefully consider the arguments for and against it when determining its use in the future.

### 3.5 Voter Identification

Since 2006, survey data showed that the voter identification law was not implemented uniformly. Overall, implementation of voter identification in 2012 was more uniform than in previous election cycles. There was little difference in implementation across demographic categories except that Hispanics reported being asked for physical identification, or simply provided physical identification, at a higher rate than non-Hispanics.

The minimum identification required for voters under state law is for him or her to state their name, address, and birth year. Voters can also choose to show a physical form of identification, such as a voter registration card, driver's license, or utility bill. If the voter opted for a photographic identification, it did not have to contain the voter's address, and if the voter opted for a non-photo form of identification, the document did have to include an address, but it did not have to match the address in the voter registration rolls (§ 1-1-24 NMSA 1978).

In the 2008, 2010, and 2012 surveys, respondents were asked the following two part question: "When you went to vote were you ASKED to show PHOTO-identification, like a driver's license, did you just provide a PHOTO-ID to the poll worker without them asking, or were you identified in some other way?"

Those who said they were identified in "some other way" in response to that first question were asked a follow up question with a list of choices: "If you were not asked to show photo-identification or did not just automatically provide ID to the poll worker, how were you identified at the polls? Did you:

- Show your registration card
- State your name
- State your name and address
- State your name, address, and birth year
- I handed my ID to the poll worker before they asked
- I did so in another way"

These responses were collapsed so that voters were classified as being identified correctly or incorrectly, according to the law. Voters who provided an ID to poll workers, such as a voter registration card, without being asked, as well as those who correctly answered the verbal or written statement were identified as being correctly identified. Those who indicated they were asked to show photo-identification or did not comply with all verbal requirements were counted as being incorrectly identified, according to the law. We asked those who did it another way to explain how they were identified at the polls. With the exception of one respondent who simply stated that the poll worker asked for a birth date to match his list, those who report being identified in some other way report being identified correctly.

The results show an improvement over 2010, but indicate that the law was still often applied incorrectly.

- Over half of in-person voters (58%) were identified correctly
- Less than half of in-person voters (42%) were identified incorrectly
- This was consistent for both early voters and Election Day voters. 57% of early voters and 57% of Election Day voters were identified correctly.

In Table 3.8, we examine how this identification law was applied across Hispanic and non-Hispanic voters. There is evidence that Hispanics were more likely to be incorrectly identified, especially when they were early voters. However, the data on Election Day voting indicated that self-identified Hispanics and non-Hispanics were identified incorrectly or correctly in equal proportions and there were no statistical differences in the application of voter identification. Overall, the disparity of incorrect identification between Hispanics and non-Hispanics still exists, but it was smaller than in 2006 and did not appear to exist in 2010.

- 60% of non-Hispanics were identified correctly
- 52% of Hispanics were identified correctly

**Table 3.8 Frequency of Correct Voter Identification by Ethnicity for Early and Election Day Voters**

	Non-Hispanic	Hispanic
<b>Early Voting</b>		
Correct	59.9%	50.8%
Incorrect	40.1%	49.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Election Day</b>		
Correct	58.2%	57.14%
Incorrect	41.8%	42.86%
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Both Election Day and Early Voting</b>		
Correct	59.6%	52.3%
Incorrect	40.4%	47.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Of course, all voters should have to go through an identification process that complies with the law. The data show general improvement in implementing the New Mexico identification law. The complexities of the New Mexico identification law, which has many options for voters and, hence, many options for poll workers, suggests that a better law would require the same form of identification, either verbal, written, or a stronger form of identification, such as a physical form of identification or photo identification like a driver's license, of all voters and would not allow for so many voter choices.

### 3.6 Attitudes toward Voter ID and Fraud

Voter identification laws have been a topic of hot debate for the last several years. Voter authentication and identification is an important component of election administration because only qualified electors are allowed to vote. The Help America Vote Act established a minimum threshold for voter identification in federal elections. Many states, however, have mandated higher standards, especially for in-person voting. For example, 4 states, including Kansas, Georgia, Indiana and Tennessee have very strict photo identification laws that require government issued photo identification to vote, and another 7 require photo identification, but offer other options for voters who do not have one.<sup>46</sup>

New Mexico has not been exempt from the voter identification law debates. Each legislative session for the past several years, a New Mexico legislator has put forward a voter photo identification bill.<sup>47</sup> These debates have become very partisan as Democratic leaders have focused on voter access and the possibility of disenfranchising some voters, especially the old, young, minority and disabled, who may not have adequate identification, while Republicans have focused on protecting the system against fraud and ensuring only eligible voters get to cast a ballot.<sup>48</sup>

Attitudes toward voter identification are complex and take on different perspectives depending on how the question is framed. Because of the complexities and the nature of the debates going on in the statehouse and among activists, in the 2012 voter survey we expanded our examination of attitudes toward voter identification.

To assess attitudes toward the trade-off between vote fraud and greater access, we repeated a question that we have asked respondent since 2007, “Which is more important, ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote or protecting the system against fraud?” Our results reversed this year for the first time, with more voters indicating that it was important to ensure that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote (see Table 3.9 for a comparison between 2010 and 2012).

- Almost three in five voters (59%) thought that protecting voter access was most important and
- About one-third of voters (33%) thought that preventing voter fraud was more important.

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<sup>46</sup> See the National Conference on State Legislatures website on photo identification laws at: <http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/elections/voter-id.aspx>.

<sup>47</sup> See for example HB 103 in the New Mexico state legislature for the 2013 session. Also see: <http://www.kob.com/article/stories/s2943711.shtml>

<sup>48</sup> Liebschutz, Sarah and Daniel J. Palazzolo. 2005. “HAVA and the State,” *Publius* Fall: 497-514.

**Table 3.9. Voter Attitudes toward Voter Identification?**

Which is more important?	2012	2010
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote	58.6	45.2
Protecting the voting system against fraud	32.6	48.3
Don't know	8.8	6.5

It appears that the large national debates around these and related election reform issue has influenced voter attitudes.

Further analysis shows that partisanship affects attitudes about whether it is more important to ensure that everyone has the right to vote or protecting the system against fraud. The results show that all partisans moved over the last two years into the protecting access response, but that Democrats had the most drastic swing in attitudes. In 2010, almost two thirds of Democratic voters (66.4%) thought protecting voter access was more important than protecting the system against fraud, compared to only three in ten of Republican voters (28.0%). But in 2012 four in five (80%) Democrats chose the protect access response as did over one-third (36%) of Republicans. In 2010, over three in five (63%) Independent voters chose the protecting the system against fraud response, but in 2012, independents reversed their position with a majority (57%) choosing the protect access response.

We find that partisanship is the main determinant of this attitude. Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, or identifying as Hispanic or Latino did not influence responses to this question.

Despite the fact that some voters think that ensuring access is more important than protecting fraud, most voters support voter identification laws when they are asked about them as a specific policy issue. When voters were asked to agree or disagree with the following statement, "Photo identification should be required of each voter at the polls to prevent voter fraud," nearly one-half (49%) of voters "strongly agreed" that photo identification should be required and another quarter (25%) "somewhat agreed." This means nearly 75% of voters agreed that photo identification should be required. However, this is a large change from previous studies, including 2010, where Bernalillo voters overwhelmingly (88%) supported voter identification requirements.

Moreover, most voters already carry some form of identification, like a driver's license, which may influence their opinion on the voter identification questions. We asked, "How often do you carry some kind of government issued identification (for example a driver's license, passport, or state-issued ID card) with you when you leave home every day?" Nearly nine in ten voters (87%) indicated they carry some form of identification "all" or "most of the time" or at least "some of the time". About 13% of voters indicated that they "never" or "rarely" carry identification. Importantly, we found no significant difference between Hispanic and non-Hispanics or between older and younger voters. However, we did find that more educated voters, higher income voters and men were more likely to

carry an ID. These results are somewhat different than we saw in 2008 or 2010, where fewer people indicated they never carry a government issued ID card.

To assess how voters feel about the current New Mexico Voter ID law, we asked, “New Mexico’s voter ID law requires voters to identify themselves. The minimum identification is to state their address, name, and birth year. Do you think the minimum identification is: too strict, just right, or not strict enough.” We find that about half of voters think the law is just right (49%) and about half think it is not strong enough (50%). This again is a large change on this issue from 2010. In 2010, three in five voters (61%) indicated that the New Mexico law was not strict enough and about two in five (38%) indicated it was just right. It appears that the electorate understands photo identification issues differently in 2012 than in previous years.

It is important to note that the 2012 and the 2010 findings about voter attitudes are highly influenced by partisan identification. Table 3.10 shows that Republicans (83%) and Independents (72%) are more likely than Democrats (39%) to state that the law is not strict enough. Thus, the national framing of the debate has influenced individual attitudes on this issue.

**Table 3.10. Voter Attitudes toward New Mexico Voter ID Law By Partisanship**

2012 Is the New Mexico voter ID:			
	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Not strict enough	30.7	52.9	87.6
Just right	68.8	47.1	11.8
Too strict	0.6	0.0	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
2010 Is the New Mexico Voter ID?			
	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Not Strict Enough	38.1	75.0	87.0
Just right	60.3	25.0	13.0
Too Strict	1.6	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

In addition, we asked several question relating to the impact of photo identification requirements on eligible and ineligible voters and what voters think the motivation is for photo identification laws. Because these attitudes are highly partisan, we have broken down the percent agreeing with each statement by party in Table 3.11. About two thirds (64%) of voters believe that photo identification laws will stop fraud by keeping the ineligible from voting and keep some voters from voting multiple times. Voters recognize the inherent tension in these laws and although a majority (58%) disagree with the statement that photo voter ID laws will make it harder for people who are eligible to vote, a substantial number (about two in five,42%) voters agree that such laws create barriers for citizen participation. About seven in ten respondents (69%) believe that support for photo ID is based upon a desire for election integrity, however, about 2 in 5 (41%) voters also

believe that photo voter ID laws are ways to suppress voter turnout. This is especially true for Democrats.

**Table 3.11. Percentage of Agreement with Statement on Photo Identification**

	% Agree	% Disagree	% Agree Democrat	% Agree Independent	% Agree GOP
Photo voter ID laws will stop people who are <b>ineligible to vote</b> from voting.	64	36	52	67	86
Photo voter ID laws will keep people from voting <b>multiple times</b>	66	34	54	77	83
Photo voter ID laws will make it harder for people who are <b>eligible voters</b> to vote.	42	58	60	30	15
Photo voter ID laws are mostly supported by people as a way to keep those who disagree with them from voting in elections.	41	59	60	25	11
Photo voter ID laws are mostly supported by people as a way to keep elections clean and fair.	69	31	51	84	96

In summary, the 2012 survey results echoes sentiments we suggested in our 2010 report. The public wants a fair **and** accessible election process. They want to solve the tension between access and integrity by ensuring every eligible voter has a chance to participate, but also protect the system against fraud.

### 3.7 Attitudes toward Election Reforms

With many election reform proposals being considered in the New Mexico statehouse and in other statehouses across the country, as well as in the US Congress, a section of the survey focuses on voter attitudes toward a variety of election reforms and policies.

#### Electoral College

During the 2011 regular session of the New Mexico State Legislature, the House of Representatives passed House Memorial 56, which called on New Mexico’s Secretary of State to “study and compare the current Electoral College system and the national popular vote system” and present her findings to the New Mexico Legislature.<sup>49</sup> The University of New Mexico Center for the Study of Voting, Elections and Democracy (C-SVED) took this opportunity to educate and assist the public and legislative leaders in understanding the costs and benefits of the proposed national popular vote system and to present its conclusions to those engaged in this national debate.

<sup>49</sup> For an overview of the national popular vote plan go to: [www.nationalpopularvote.com](http://www.nationalpopularvote.com).

C-SVED formed a Citizen Panel that met three times to discuss the current implementation of the Electoral College and how that would change under a national popular vote system. Citizen Panel members included state legislators, election administrators (in particular, county clerks), interest groups focused on election work (including the League of Women Voters, Common Cause, and Verified Voting of New Mexico), prominent members of different New Mexico communities including the Hispanic and Native American communities, and students from the University of New Mexico and New Mexico State University.<sup>50</sup>

In the past, New Mexico has benefited from being a competitive state in presidential elections, which brought candidates and their campaigns to our state. However, in 2012, New Mexico was not considered a battleground state and the presidential election footprint was much smaller. Because of the decreased role New Mexico played in this presidential election, discussion of the Electoral College was not as common as in the past several presidential elections.

However, as part of our on-going efforts around this issue we included a question on the voter survey to assess voter preferences for the best method to elect the President and Vice President of the United State of America. We asked, “How do you think we should elect the President: should it be the candidate who gets the most votes in all 50 states, or the current Electoral College system?” Nearly two thirds (65%) of voters in Bernalillo County preferred the candidate who gets the most votes in all 50 states, while about one third (35%) supported the current Electoral College system. We found no significant difference between self-identified Democrats, Republicans or Independents. We did find that women were more likely than men to support the highest vote getter option, but more educated voters were more likely to prefer the current Electoral College system to less educated voters.

## **Voter Purges**

In 2012, the Secretary of State began an aggressive campaign to “cleanup” the voter rolls. In August, Secretary Duran sent out approximately 177,000 postcards to people who had previous mail returned to her office, going back to mailings since 2005. These people were notified in the postcard that they were “inactive” due to the prior returned mailing(s). Indeed, the lead author of this report was identified as an inactive voter, even though her postcard was not returned, the state had her correct address, and she had voted in every statewide and most local elections for over 17 years. In this particular case, the voter had moved in 2005 to a new residence and changed her address with the Secretary of State in the fall of 2006, before the fall general election. Perhaps a notification was sent out for the primary race in 2006 and her postcard bounced at that time and this triggered the 2012 event. According to Secretary of State Duran,

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<sup>50</sup> See Lonna Rae Atkeson, Kim Proctor, and Jim Noel, “Report of the Citizen Panel The Electoral College and the National Popular Vote Plan,” Center for the Study of Voting, Elections and Democracy, Political Science Department, University of New Mexico, available at <http://polisci.unm.edu/c-sved/index.html>

anyone who had a mailer bounce back since 2005 was identified as inactive.<sup>51</sup> This appeared to be regardless of their vote history and regardless of whether they had updated their registration records since the bounce back. In addition to citizens and the author, many political activists were also flagged as inactive. For example, the Executive Director of Common Cause was declared inactive, as well as the wife of a state House member.<sup>52</sup> Obviously, the criteria used for identifying an “inactive” voter was flawed and should be seriously re-examined before similar methods are put in place.

In the case of the lead author of this report, she was shocked to find on Election Day that she was an inactive voter, and poll workers requested that she fill out a new voter register form even though her address was correct.<sup>53</sup> The author explained to the poll workers that she did not need to fill out a voter registration card because she did not meet any of the criteria on the card for doing so. However, the poll worker insisted and so the lead author wrote on the card that everything was correct and that she had been incorrectly identified as an inactive voter and turned it in to the poll worker. The surprising thing about this experience is the amount of anxiety this brought on, along with unnecessary conflict with poorly trained poll workers who did not understand the nuance of the process that if her address was correct and she voted, that the system should automatically return the voter to active status.

In other states, voter purges have also made headlines.<sup>54</sup> As a consequence, we were curious as to whether voters were concerned about voter purges and the idea that qualified voters might be deleted from the polls, or if they were concerned that they might be more likely to be purged from the voter rolls than in the past. Therefore, we asked two questions. In the first question, we asked voters to agree or disagree with the following statement, “Eligible voters get mistakenly removed from the voter lists during purges/cleanup.”

- We found that 3 in 5 voters (60%) agreed that purges might result in eligible voters getting mistakenly removed from the polls.
- Two in 5 voters (40%) disagreed that purges may result in eligible voters getting mistakenly removed from the polls.
- Voters with higher incomes were more likely to disagree with the statement.

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<sup>51</sup> See Steve Terrell, “Secretary of state's voter roll cleanup targets 'shocked' voting rights advocate,” August 9, 2012, Santa Fe New Mexican, Available at:

<http://www.santafenewmexican.com/localnews/081012SOS#.UToLIRmoevU>, accessed March 8, 2013.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. Also see Annie-Rose Strasser, August 12, “**Voters Kicked Off The Rolls In New Mexico Include Voting Rights Activist, Wife Of State Representative**,” available at: <http://thinkprogress.org/justice/2012/08/10/675161/new-mexico-voter-purge/?mobile=nc>, accessed March 8, 2013.

<sup>53</sup> See Lonna Rae Atkeson, November 6, 2012, “Election Blogger Identified as Inactive Voter,” available at: <http://electionupdates.caltech.edu/2012/11/06/election-blogger-defined-as-inactive-at-polls/>, accessed March 8, 2013.

<sup>54</sup> See Lizette Alvarez, September 12, 2012, “After Mistakenly Purging Citizens, Florida Agrees to Let Them Vote” Available at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/13/us/politics/florida-agrees-to-let-citizens-mistakenly-purged-from-rolls-to-vote.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/13/us/politics/florida-agrees-to-let-citizens-mistakenly-purged-from-rolls-to-vote.html?_r=0), accessed March 8, 2013, Pam Fezzler, September 20, 2012, Voter Purges Under Review Ahead of Elections, available at: <http://www.npr.org/2012/09/20/161437481/voter-purges-under-review-ahead-of-election-day>,” accessed March 8, 2013.

- Democrats were more likely to agree that purges may result in qualified voters being removed from the polls.
- Republicans were more likely to disagree that purges would result in any problems for qualified voters.

The second question focused on the voter and asked, “How concerned are you that you might be mistakenly removed from the voter list?” Voters could respond, Very concerned, Somewhat concerned, Not too concerned, Not all concerned.

- We found that 26% of voters were not at all concerned, 42% were not very concerned, 22% were somewhat concerned and 10% were very concerned. Thus, about one-third of voters were concerned that they might be purged inappropriately from the voter rolls.
- We found that older voters were less concerned than younger voters. Younger voters are more likely at risk of removal, given they move more frequently and therefore have to update their registration more frequently.
- Voters with larger incomes were less likely to be concerned that they might be purged from the voter rolls; this could also be related to mobility and the frequency with which they change addresses.
- We also found that Hispanics were more likely than non-Hispanics to be more concerned that they would be purged from the voter rolls. Fully two in five (39%) Hispanics were either somewhat or very concerned that they could mistakenly be removed from the polls.
- Democrats were more likely to be concerned they might be purged from the rolls than Republicans.

Given the surprisingly large number of voters who were concerned that they could personally be removed from the polls, along with the fact that a majority of voters believe that the purges are likely to purge eligible voters, the policies for how purging is accomplished need to be very carefully crafted to ensure that a voter’s right to participate is not infringed. Because poor experiences with election administration lead to reduced confidence in the election administration process and its outcomes, policies also need to consider factors such as whether or not voters have updated their records and whether or not they are regular voters before they are sent information identifying them as an inactive voter. Although the voter in this case is not in jeopardy of an immediate purge that would result in them being denied the right to vote, the action does have implications for how voters feel about the election administration process.

## Proof of Citizenship

In addition to voter identification laws, states have considered other measures to prevent voter fraud. One commonly considered measure is proof of citizenship either at the polls or when registering. This is a very popular measure among the public, with about half of the voters (56%) agreeing with the statement that, "Proof of citizenship should be required of each voter at the polls," and just under half (44%) disagreeing.

This is actually a slight decline in support among Bernalillo County voters in 2010, which agreed with the same statement at a rate of 63%.

Interestingly, Hispanics are more likely to support proof of citizenship, along with Republicans. However, Democrats and more educated voters are more likely to disagree with this statement.

## Election Day Registration

Election Day registration (EDR) is an election reform that allows voters to register on Election Day in a precinct or vote center and many states have successful EDR programs. States that use EDR have increased turnout relative to states that do not have EDR. They also have fewer provisional ballots, since most voters who are not on the voter roster can simply choose to register on-site instead of completing a provisional ballot.<sup>55</sup> We asked voters to agree or disagree with the following statement, "Voters should be able to register on Election Day to vote." The survey results found that about four in ten voters (43%) support moving to an EDR system, but that a majority of voters (57%) do not currently support moving to an EDR system.

Interestingly, younger voters are more likely to disagree with this statement. Given that young people would be the most likely to benefit from this type of electoral reform this is surprising.

Democrats were also more likely to support EDR than Republicans.

We did find that more voters support EDR than in 2010. In 2010, about 30% of voters supported EDR with about 70% disagreeing, so EDR may be a reform that gains traction over time.

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<sup>55</sup> See, for example, R. Michael Alvarez and Stephen Ansolabehere, *California Votes: The Promise of Election Day Registration* (Demos, 2002); R. Michael Alvarez, Jonathan Nagler and Catherine Wilson, *Making Voting Easier: Election Day Registration in New York*, (Demos, 2004); M.J. Fenster, "The Impact of Allowing Day of Registration Voting on Turnout in U.S. Elections from 1960 to 1992," *American Politics Quarterly* 22(1) (1994): 74-87; B. Highton, "Easy Registration and Voter Turnout," *The Journal of Politics* 59(2) (1997): 565-575; Lorraine C. Minnite, *An Analysis of Voter Fraud in The United States* (Demos, 2004), <http://www.demos.org/pubs/Analysis.pdf>; Demos, *Election Day Registration: A Ground Level View* (2007), <http://www.demos.org/pubs/EDR%20Clerks.pdf>; S. Knack, "Election-Day Registration: The Second Wave," *American Politics Quarterly* 29(1) (2001): 65-78.

## **Conclusion**

All in all, the voter part of our study confirms and expands many of the interpretations and findings we presented earlier. Importantly, we find that most voters are confident that their ballots are counted correctly. Almost 9 in 10 voters are either very or somewhat confident that their vote was counted correctly in the 2012 election. And, we see that the level of confidence is substantially higher than what we found in 2006 when we first started examining voter confidence in New Mexico. We also find that compared to previous elections we have examined, that implementation problems with voter identification were much less likely to occur. We also find that voters, broadly speaking, like the vote center model and the fact that they could vote anywhere in the county. However, voters who wait in long lines to vote were slightly less satisfied with the new voting method.

## Appendix 3.1. Select Frequency Report for the 2012 Bernalillo County Election Administration Mixed Mode Survey

1. Did you vote in the 2012 presidential election?	
Yes	100.0
No	0.0
2. How interested were you in the 2012 presidential election?	
Very interested	80.8
Somewhat interested	15.2
Not too interested	3.4
Not interested at all	0.6
3. On average, how many days in the past week did you:	
3a. Watch network or cable TV news (i.e. CBS, NBC, CNN, FOX, etc.)?	
None	15.4
One day	8.7
Two days	7.0
Three days	7.8
Four Days	4.4
Five days	12.8
Six days	6.7
Seven days	37.0
3b. Read a daily newspaper (either online or paper)?	
None	21.1
One day	11.2
Two days	8.3
Three days	6.6
Four Days	5.4
Five days	6.4
Six days	5.4
Seven days	35.5
3c. Read news stories posted on Twitter, Facebook, or other social media?	
None	52.2
One day	7.4
Two days	6.6
Three days	5.6
Four Days	3.8
Five days	3.8
Six days	3.0
Seven days	17.5

3d. Use a smartphone news app?	
None	72.6
One day	3.1
Two days	2.3
Three days	5.2
Four Days	2.6
Five days	2.3
Six days	1.7
Seven days	10.4
3e. Discuss politics with family or friends?	
None	6.0
One day	7.9
Two days	14.2
Three days	15.0
Four Days	14.6
Five days	13.5
Six days	6.3
Seven days	22.6
4. Thinking in political terms, would you say that you are very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?	
Very liberal	21.4
Somewhat liberal	23.3
Moderate	25.7
Somewhat conservative	16.4
Very Conservative	13.2
5. About how often do you engage in the following activities:	
5a. Carry a government issued ID	
All or most of the time	81.2
Some of the time	3.6
Not much of the time	0.9
Never	12.5
Don't know/Not sure	1.8
5b. Vote in federal elections	
All or most of the time	94.2
Some of the time	4.5
Not much of the time	0.0
Never	0.1
Don't know/Not sure	1.2
5c. Vote in state elections	
All or most of the time	75.7
Some of the time	18.8
Not much of the time	3.2
Never	1.7
Don't know/Not sure	0.6

5d. Vote in city elections	
All or most of the time	55.1
Some of the time	24.4
Not much of the time	10.7
Never	8.9
Don't know/Not sure	0.9
5e. Vote in school board elections	
All or most of the time	28.3
Some of the time	25.3
Not much of the time	17.7
Never	23.9
Don't know/Not sure	4.7
6. How confident are you that your ballot, all of the ballots in the county, the state or nation were <b>counted as the voter(s) intended?</b>	
6a. Your vote.	
Very confident	47.8
Somewhat confident	37.0
Not too confident	9.3
Not at all confident	4.4
Don't know/Not sure	1.4
6b. Your county.	
Very confident	40.2
Somewhat confident	42.2
Not too confident	11.9
Not at all confident	4.8
Don't know/Not sure	1.0
6c. Your state.	
Very confident	34.5
Somewhat confident	46.0
Not too confident	13.5
Not at all confident	4.9
Don't know/Not sure	1.1
6d. Nationwide.	
Very confident	28.9
Somewhat confident	39.4
Not too confident	19.3
Not at all confident	10.6
Don't know/Not sure	1.8
7. Did you vote in person at an early voting location, by absentee mail ballot or at your precinct on Election Day?	
Early in person	69.9
Absentee by mail	12.6
On Election Day	17.5

8. [Absentee Voters Only] Overall, how easy was it to follow all the instructions necessary to complete your ballot and return it to be counted?
- |               |      |
|---------------|------|
| Very easy     | 71.1 |
| Somewhat easy | 27.6 |
| Somewhat hard | 1.4  |
| Very hard     | 0.0  |
9. [Absentee Voters Only] How concerned were you that your ballot would arrive at the County Clerk's office in time to be counted?
- |                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| Very concerned       | 16.6 |
| Somewhat concerned   | 26.9 |
| Not very concerned   | 32.6 |
| Not concerned at all | 24.0 |
10. [Absentee Voters Only] Why did you vote absentee – MARK ALL THAT APPLY?
- |                                       |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Did not want to travel to my precinct | 25.9 |
| No longer knew where to vote          | 0.0  |
| Planned to be out of town             | 9.6  |
| Convenience of doing it in my home    | 65.3 |
| Had to work on Election Day           | 4.9  |
| Homebound                             | 4.5  |
| Out of State/Country                  | 12.2 |
11. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] Did you use a pen or pencil to fill out your paper ballot or did you use a touchscreen/Automark?
- |  | Total | Early | Election Day |
|--|-------|-------|--------------|
| Pen or pencil to fill out paper ballot | 98.3  | 97.9  | 100.0        |
| Voter-assisted terminal/Automark       | 1.7   | 2.1   | 0.0          |
12. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] Did you make a mistake on a ballot and have to get a new one?
- |  | Total | Early | Election Day |
|--|-------|-------|--------------|
| No   | 98.5  | 98.3  | 99.1         |
| Yes, because I over voted/chose more than one option for the same race | 1.0   | 1.0   | 0.9          |
| Yes, I voted for the wrong person                                      | 0.4   | 0.5   | 0.0          |
| Yes, other reason  | 0.2   | 0.2   | 0.0          |
13. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] How long did you wait in line (in *minutes*) at your voting center to get a ballot printed (e.g. 0, 5, 10, 60, 90, 120)?
- |                    | Total | Early | Election Day |
|--------------------|-------|-------|--------------|
| Zero/got right in  | 37.9  | 42.0  | 21.2         |
| 1-2 minutes        | 13.5  | 15.4  | 5.8          |
| 3-5 minutes        | 27.2  | 28.0  | 24.0         |
| 6-10 minutes       | 9.5   | 9.5   | 9.6          |
| 11-20 minutes      | 6.7   | 4.8   | 14.4         |
| 21-50 minutes      | 3.6   | 0.2   | 17.3         |
| 51 minutes or more | 1.5   | 0.0   | 7.7          |
| Average            | 5.8   | 3.3   | 16.3         |

14. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] Did you consider the overall wait at the vote center to be:

	Total	Early	Election Day
No wait time	62.5	69.5	34.3
Short wait time	30.7	28.6	39.0
Moderate wait time	5.7	1.9	21.0
Long wait time	1.1	0.0	5.7

15. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] Please answer yes or no to the following questions:

15a. Did you know before you went to vote that you could vote at ANY vote center, countywide, in this presidential election?

	Total	Early	Election Day
Yes	93.0	93.8	89.5
No	7.0	6.2	10.5

15b. Did you check the wait time at the voting center would be using the County Clerk's website or the My Vote Center smartphone app?

	Total	Early	Election Day
Yes	5.7	5.0	8.7
No	94.3	95.0	91.3

15c. After receiving your ballot, did you have to wait for a voting booth to complete the ballot?

	Total	Early	Election Day
Yes	4.2	3.6	6.8
No	95.8	96.4	93.2

16. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] Was the voting center that you voted at within 1 mile of any of the following?

	Total	Early	Election Day
Your residence	49.4	47.5	57.1
Your workplace	14.0	14.0	14.2
School where you or your children attend	6.1	5.9	6.7
Shopping center that you use often	17.1	17.6	15.1
Street that you use often	48.3	49.4	43.8
None	15.2	15.2	15.2

17. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] Voting at the vote center was better, about the same or worse than voting at my traditional precinct?

	Total	Early	Election Day
Better	97.0	98.2	90.7
About the same	0.8	0.8	1.3
Worse	2.1	1.0	8.0

18. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the voting location where you voted?

18a. The location was easy to find.			
	Total	Early	Election Day
Strongly disagree	1.7	1.9	1.0
Somewhat disagree	2.7	3.1	1.0
Somewhat agree	18.3	18.1	19.0
Strongly agree	77.3	76.8	79.0
18b. I had to go far out of my way to vote.			
	Total	Early	Election Day
Strongly disagree	84.1	85.0	80.8
Somewhat disagree	9.3	7.7	15.4
Somewhat agree	4.3	4.6	2.9
Strongly agree	2.3	2.7	1.0
18c. It was hard to find a place to park.			
	Total	Early	Election Day
Strongly disagree	73.4	72.4	77.7
Somewhat disagree	9.3	9.9	6.8
Somewhat agree	14.0	13.8	14.6
Strongly agree	3.3	3.9	1.0
18d. The poll workers were helpful.			
	Total	Early	Election Day
Strongly disagree	1.9	1.9	1.9
Somewhat disagree	2.1	1.9	2.9
Somewhat agree	20.6	19.5	25.0
Strongly agree	75.3	76.6	70.2
18e. The voting process at the vote center was easy.			
	Total	Early	Election Day
Strongly disagree	2.1	2.4	1.0
Somewhat disagree	1.2	0.7	2.9
Somewhat agree	15.2	13.4	22.1
Strongly agree	81.6	83.5	74.0
19. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] Do you feel that poll workers were better trained this year than in the past, worse than in the past or about the same as in the past?			
	Total	Early	Election Day
Poll workers appeared better trained this year	28.2	25.7	38.4
Poll workers appeared to have worse training this year	2.0	1.1	5.8
Poll workers appeared to have about the same training as in the past	69.8	73.2	55.8

20. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] When you went to vote were you **ASKED** to show PHOTO-identification, like a driver's license, did you just provide PHOTO-ID to the poll worker **without them asking** or were you identified in some other way

	Total	Early	Election Day
Asked for Photo-ID	19.3	19.0	20.6
Provided ID without being asked	26.3	25.5	29.4
I was identified in a some other way	54.4	55.5	50.0

21. [Early and Election Day Voters Only who answered "Asked for Photo-ID" or "Provided ID without being asked" in Q20] What type of photo ID did you show?

	Total	Early	Election Day
Drivers license	95.1	96.6	89.8
Passport	0.9	0.6	2.0
State ID	0.4	0.6	0.0
Voter ID	1.3	1.1	2.0
Other	2.2	1.1	6.1

22. [Early and Election Day Voters Only who answered "I was identified in some other way" in Q20] If you were not asked to show photo-identification or did not just automatically provide ID to the poll worker, how were you identified at the polls? Did you:

	Total	Early	Election Day
Show your registration card	6.9	7.1	5.9
State your name	9.1	9.4	7.8
State your name and birth year	10.9	10.3	13.7
State your name and address	22.5	22.3	23.5
State your name, address and birth year	48.4	49.6	43.1
I handed my id to the poll worker before they asked	0.4	0.4	0.0
I did so in another way	1.8	0.9	5.9

23. [Early and Election Day Voters Only] How did you know where to vote? **(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)**

	Total	Early	Election Day
County advertisements	19.8	19.7	20.0
Letter from the County Clerk	36.5	39.4	24.8
Web search	31.4	30.4	35.2
Newspaper	16.3	16.6	15.1
From a friend, neighbor, co-worker or family member	20.5	20.2	21.9
Voted in same location as previous elections	31.3	29.9	36.8
Other	8.3	9.0	5.7

24. How would you rate your voting experience overall?	
Excellent	62.5
Good	34.4
Fair	3.0
Poor	0.1
25. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the ballot you used to vote:	
25a. The ballot was easy to use.	
Strongly agree	54.3
Somewhat agree	37.2
Somewhat disagree	7.2
Strongly disagree	1.3
25b. My ballot privacy was protected.	
Strongly agree	63.4
Somewhat agree	29.5
Somewhat disagree	5.3
Strongly disagree	1.9
25c. I felt confident using the ballot.	
Strongly agree	66.1
Somewhat agree	27.7
Somewhat disagree	4.3
Strongly disagree	1.9
25d. It is important to me that there is a paper record of my vote.	
Strongly agree	51.6
Somewhat agree	29.3
Somewhat disagree	11.5
Strongly disagree	7.6
25e. I would have preferred to be able to use the straight party option.	
Strongly agree	19.5
Somewhat agree	21.5
Somewhat disagree	20.4
Strongly disagree	38.7
25f. I felt that the information on my ballot was secure after voting.	
Strongly agree	54.6
Somewhat agree	37.6
Somewhat disagree	5.7
Strongly disagree	2.1
25g. I chose to vote on only some of the ballot races.	
Strongly agree	16.4
Somewhat agree	18.6
Somewhat disagree	13.4
Strongly disagree	51.5

26. How did you hear that you could vote at ANY vote center countywide? <b>(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)</b>	
TV commercial	37.4
Newspaper ad	25.0
Newspaper story/TV news	35.4
Letter from the County Clerk	43.6
An advertisement in a movie theater	0.8
From a friend/neighbor/co-worker/family member	25.5
Radio spots	25.5
Website	22.0
Billboard	12.0
I didn't hear about it	7.9
Other	3.1
27. [Party Identification Summary]: Generally speaking do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or perhaps something else? Would you call yourself a strong Republican/Democrat or a not very strong Republican/Democrat? Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or closer to the Democratic Party?	
Strong Democrat	33.1
Democrat-not so strong	9.8
Independent-closer to Democrat	15.3
Independent	12.5
Independent-closer to Republican	9.9
Republican-not so strong	6.3
Strong Republican	13.1
28. We are interested in whether you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of how the following are handling their jobs:	
28a. President Barack Obama	
Strongly Approve	31.0
Approve	35.7
Disapprove	10.7
Strongly Disapprove	22.6
28b. Governor Susana Martinez	
Strongly Approve	21.2
Approve	41.5
Disapprove	23.7
Strongly Disapprove	13.6
28c. Senator Tom Udall	
Strongly Approve	23.1
Approve	51.3
Disapprove	15.4
Strongly Disapprove	10.2
28d. The US Congress	
Strongly Approve	2.1
Approve	16.7
Disapprove	34.3
Strongly Disapprove	46.9

28e. Your US House Member	
Strongly Approve	13.7
Approve	47.6
Disapprove	20.7
Strongly Disapprove	17.9
28f. County Clerk Maggie Toulouse Oliver	
Strongly Approve	19.8
Approve	63.1
Disapprove	12.1
Strongly Disapprove	4.9
28g. Secretary of State Diana Duran	
Strongly Approve	5.6
Approve	64.8
Disapprove	20.4
Strongly Disapprove	9.2
28h. NM State Legislature	
Strongly Approve	2.3
Approve	45.3
Disapprove	32.8
Strongly Disapprove	19.6
29. Thinking in political terms, please rate the following political leaders or institutions:	
29a. Barack Obama	
Very Liberal	35.1
Somewhat Liberal	37.8
Moderate	23.0
Somewhat Conservative	3.1
Very Conservative	1.0
29b. Mitt Romney	
Very Liberal	0.6
Somewhat Liberal	1.6
Moderate	6.9
Somewhat Conservative	33.1
Very Conservative	57.9
29c. Susana Martinez	
Very Liberal	0.6
Somewhat Liberal	2.6
Moderate	10.0
Somewhat Conservative	44.7
Very Conservative	42.2
29d. Martin Heinrich	
Very Liberal	30.3
Somewhat Liberal	44.6
Moderate	20.4
Somewhat Conservative	2.9
Very Conservative	1.7

29e. Heather Wilson		
Very Liberal	1.4	
Somewhat Liberal	2.7	
Moderate	10.3	
Somewhat Conservative	31.6	
Very Conservative	53.9	
29f. Tom Udall		
Very Liberal	20.0	
Somewhat Liberal	44.0	
Moderate	28.2	
Somewhat Conservative	5.1	
Very Conservative	2.7	
29g. Michelle Lujan Grisham		
Very Liberal	29.5	
Somewhat Liberal	40.2	
Moderate	25.5	
Somewhat Conservative	2.6	
Very Conservative	2.2	
29h. Janice Arnold-Jones		
Very Liberal	2.1	
Somewhat Liberal	4.1	
Moderate	16.5	
Somewhat Conservative	42.0	
Very Conservative	35.4	
29i. Democratic Party		
Very Liberal	35.9	
Somewhat Liberal	41.8	
Moderate	19.5	
Somewhat Conservative	2.1	
Very Conservative	0.7	
29j. Republican Party		
Very Liberal	0.6	
Somewhat Liberal	0.5	
Moderate	3.6	
Somewhat Conservative	25.0	
Very Conservative	70.2	
30. Did you vote for or against the proposition to increase the minimum wage in Albuquerque?		
For (in favor of increasing minimum wage)	64.0	
Against (opposed to increasing minimum wage)	25.3	
Not an Albuquerque resident	7.8	
Don't remember	2.9	
31. Did someone contact you and encourage you to vote early, to vote absentee or to vote on Election Day? <b>(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)</b>		
Yes, someone contacted me and encouraged me to vote absentee	13.6	
Yes, someone contacted me and encouraged me to vote early		32.2
Yes, someone contacted me and encouraged me to vote at the polls on Election Day	18.3	
Other	52.3	

32. How much of the time do you trust the government in Washington to do what is right?	
All or most of the time	3.5
Some of the time	42.4
Not much of the time	45.0
Never	8.4
Don't know/Not sure	0.7
33. We are interested in how people are getting along financially and about the national and state economy. Compared to a year ago how are each of the following doing?	
33a. You and your family	
Much better	5.1
Somewhat better	22.4
Same	41.7
Somewhat worse	22.3
Much worse	8.4
Don't Know/Not Sure	0.0
33b. National economy	
Much better	2.8
Somewhat better	34.3
Same	18.3
Somewhat worse	19.4
Much worse	23.6
Don't Know/Not sure	1.6
33c. State economy	
Much better	2.1
Somewhat better	22.2
Same	28.9
Somewhat worse	30.3
Much worse	12.8
Don't Know/Not sure	3.8
34. Below is a list of possible illegal election activities that may or may not take place in YOUR COMMUNITY. Please tell me whether you think each event occurs?	
34a. A voter casts more than one ballot.	
All or most	4.8
Some of the time	19.9
Not much	33.0
Never	15.5
Don't Know/Not sure	26.8
34b. Tampering with ballots to change votes.	
All or most	4.2
Some of the time	16.6
Not much	29.9
Never	18.8
Don't Know/Not sure	30.6

34c. Someone pretends to be another person and casts a vote for them.	
All or most	5.5
Some of the time	28.6
Not much	31.1
Never	9.1
Don't Know/Not sure	25.7
34d. A non-US Citizen votes	
All or most	11.7
Some of the time	28.0
Not much	25.6
Never	9.9
Don't Know/Not sure	24.8
35. How concerned are you that you might be mistakenly removed from the voter list?	
Very concerned	10.3
Somewhat concerned	21.6
Not very concerned	42.0
Not at all concerned	26.1
36. If election fraud happens at all, do you think it is more likely to take place with absentee or mail voting or in-person voting in a voting center?	
Absentee or mail voting	59.5
In-person voting in a voting center	9.9
Don't know/Not sure	30.6
37. How do you think we should elect the President: should it be the candidate who gets the most votes in all 50 states, or the current electoral college system?	
The candidate who gets the most votes in all 50 states	65.2
The current Electoral College system	34.8
38. Which is more important?	
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote	61.3
Protecting the voting system against fraud	34.2
Don't know/Not sure	4.5
39. New Mexico has a voter ID law that requires voters to identify themselves. The minimum identification is to state their address, name, and birth year. Do you think the minimum identification is:	
Too strict	0.5
Just right	49.2
Not strict enough	50.4
40. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements requiring voters to show a government-issued photo ID in order to vote.	
40a. Photo voter ID laws will stop people who are <b>ineligible to vote</b> from voting.	
Strongly agree	18.7
Agree	40.0
Disagree	21.5
Strongly Disagree	10.7
Don't know/Not sure	9.2

40b. Photo voter ID laws will keep people from voting <b>multiple times</b> .	
Strongly agree	18.2
Agree	41.4
Disagree	21.7
Strongly Disagree	9.4
Don't know/Not sure	9.3
40c. Photo voter ID laws will make it harder for people who are <b>eligible voters</b> to vote.	
Strongly agree	19.9
Agree	20.4
Disagree	28.5
Strongly Disagree	26.1
Don't know/Not sure	5.2
40d. Photo identification should be required of each voter at the polls.	
Strongly agree	37.4
Agree	23.7
Disagree	15.4
Strongly Disagree	17.9
Don't know/Not sure	5.6
40e. Photo voter ID laws are mostly supported by people as a way to keep those who disagree with them from voting in elections.	
Strongly agree	19.0
Agree	17.4
Disagree	21.2
Strongly Disagree	31.3
Don't know/Not sure	11.0
40f. Photo voter ID laws are mostly supported by people as a way to keep elections clean and fair.	
Strongly agree	30.6
Agree	31.9
Disagree	15.1
Strongly Disagree	13.3
Don't know/Not sure	9.0
41. Do you think election fraud has changed the outcome of any election in which you have participated?	
Yes	28.3
No	41.5
Don't know/Not sure	30.2
42. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each statement.	
42a. I preferred to vote at my precinct instead of at the vote center.	
Strongly agree	9.9
Agree	17.7
Disagree	38.1
Strongly Disagree	34.2
42b. Proof of citizenship should be required of each voter at the polls.	
Strongly agree	36.1
Agree	20.2
Disagree	20.2
Strongly Disagree	23.4

42c. Eligible voters get mistakenly removed from the voter lists during purges/clean up.	
Strongly agree	13.6
Agree	45.9
Disagree	33.1
Strongly Disagree	7.6
42d. Public officials don't care much what people like me think.	
Strongly agree	16.7
Agree	40.9
Disagree	32.1
Strongly Disagree	10.3
42e. I consider myself well qualified to participate in politics.	
Strongly agree	46.1
Agree	43.2
Disagree	8.0
Strongly Disagree	2.7
42f. Voting is a privilege.	
Strongly agree	54.6
Agree	14.2
Disagree	9.6
Strongly Disagree	21.6
42g. Voters should be able to register on Election Day to vote.	
Strongly agree	21.2
Agree	22.1
Disagree	26.9
Strongly Disagree	29.7
42h. I liked having the option to vote at any of the vote centers in the city.	
Strongly agree	73.7
Agree	19.9
Disagree	3.8
Strongly Disagree	2.6
42i. Voting is a right.	
Strongly agree	77.0
Agree	16.4
Disagree	3.7
Strongly Disagree	2.9
43. Age:	
18-30	16.0
31-45	21.3
46-55	19.6
56-65	21.5
65-or more	21.6
44. Are you male or female?	
Male	47.3
Female	52.7

45. What is the highest grade of education you have completed?	
Less than a High School degree	0.9
High School degree	8.1
Some college	21.1
Completed trade school/associates degree	14.7
College degree	27.5
Master's degree	21.1
JD/MD/PhD	6.7
46. Are you a born again Christian?	
Yes	24.3
No	75.7
47. What racial or ethnic group best describes you?	
Black/African American	1.5
Native American/American Indian	0.5
Hispanic/Latino	24.7
Asian	1.3
White/Anglo	59.8
Other	7.2
48. If you indicated Hispanic/Latino, would you describe your Hispanic/Latino origin as:	
Mexican	19.2
Central American	1.6
South American	1.0
Spanish	68.7
Puerto Rican	2.6
Other	6.9
49. What is your current marital status?	
Married	57.3
Living with a partner	8.8
Divorced	10.8
Widowed	5.6
Separated	1.5
Never married/single	16.0
50. To the best of your knowledge, what was your total <b>family</b> income before taxes in 2011, including yourself and all those living in your house?	
Below \$21,000	12.2
\$21,000-\$41,999	21.9
\$42,000-\$59,999	13.9
\$60,000-\$79,999	15.5
\$80,000-\$99,999	8.4
\$100,000 or more	22.5
Don't Know/not sure	5.4

## Appendix 3.2. Survey Methodology

### *Mixed Mode Survey Methodology*

The 2012 New Mexico Election Administration Survey was based on a random sample of registered voters in Bernalillo County, New Mexico. Bernalillo County Clerk Maggie Toulouse Oliver provided the voter registration list after the final registration day for the 2012 general election. On November 9, 2012, we sent out postcards to the sample respondents requesting their participation in our 2012 Bernalillo County Election Administration Survey. The postcard provided sample respondents with a URL ([vote2012.unm.edu](http://vote2012.unm.edu)) and explained that respondents could also request a paper mail survey with a postage paid return envelope by contacting us via a toll free number, by calling us locally or by emailing us. Sampled registered voters who did not respond were re-contacted two times with an additional postcard. The second postcard was sent November 26<sup>th</sup> and the third was sent December 6<sup>st</sup>. The response rate was about 14.7% (n=612) using Response Rate 2 (RR2) calculations, as defined by the American Association for Public Opinion Research.<sup>56</sup> It is important to note that this is the minimum response rate and includes all voters who we tried to contact, regardless of whether we were able to contact them or not. Over eight in ten respondents (82.2%) chose to answer the Internet survey, while the remaining two in ten respondents (17.8%) chose the mail option. The frequency report was weighted by age and ethnicity. The margin of error is plus or minus 3.96%.

Survey questions asked about voters' election experience (voter confidence, voting problems, method of voting, experience with poll workers), their faith in the election process, their attitudes toward the new vote centers, voter record purging, fraud, voter access, voter identification as well as other political attitudes and behaviors including evaluations of the President, the congressional candidates and their local and state election administrators. They were also asked several questions related to the statewide contests (vote choice, candidate evaluation, candidate ideology, etc.) and a variety of demographic information.

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<sup>56</sup> See The American Association for Public Opinion Research. 2011. *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys, 7th edition*. AAPOR, available at: <http://aapor.org/Content/NavigationMenu/AboutAAPOR/StandardsampEthics/StandardDefinitions/StandardDefinitions2011.pdf>.

## **Post Script: 2012 and Beyond**

In 2006, we began a systematic ecosystem examination of the New Mexico election process. This provided many insights and recommendations on ways to enhance and improve the quality of the election experience for the voters and increased efficiency and performance of the election administrator. In 2008, we were able to expand our study and provide additional analyses of New Mexico's first post election audit. In 2010, we had to scale back some of our efforts, but managed to continue our statewide voter survey and poll worker survey in five counties and four of the largest counties in the state (Bernalillo, Dona Ana, Santa Fe, and San Juan, Lincoln). We also did 2010 Election Day observations in Bernalillo County. In 2012, we focused all of our efforts on the biggest county in the state, Bernalillo County. This provides us with 4 successive elections on voters, poll workers, and Election Day and early observations in Bernalillo County. To our knowledge this a unique data set and one that demonstrates the power and value of a data driven approach to election administration. We commend the transparency and commitment of Bernalillo County election officials to this endeavor.

Overall, we found a system that is fundamentally working as designed and where election workers and voters have a high degree of confidence that votes were counted correctly. Over the course of our efforts, we have continued to see improvement in election administration and increasing comfort with the paper ballot system adopted in 2006. New training methods and implementation of new reforms, especially the vote center model, have resulted in better run and well liked elections. That being said, there is always room for improvement and we have made every effort to detail these in this report. As we move into preparation for the 2014 election cycle, and possibly smaller off year local contests, we hope that our report provides useful insights and information to improve the quality of the election experience and create greater uniformity in election administration at vote centers across the county.

Critical to continued improvement of the process is consistent systematic feedback on the process, which Bernalillo County has supported since 2006. We note that our 2006 study provided a baseline from which to examine events of the 2008, 2010 and 2012 elections and that we continue to see improvements in election administration, including poll worker training, that has created a better experience for the poll worker and the voters, resulting in greater confidence and satisfaction with the election. Nevertheless, it is important to continue to monitor the ecosystem to ensure continued progress and responsiveness to a system that is in on-going change due to changes in the law and in administrative guidelines and choices. So, we call for more expanded research in future elections encompassing more counties and once again a statewide voter survey. We also call for more coordination with the county in advance so that we can be a better check on new procedures and be a better reflection of election day efforts. The number of observable counties needs to be expanded, as well as poll worker and voter reports. In addition, an examination of election procedures including the voter registration process, the voter purging process, an audit of the quality and accuracy of the voter rolls, a consideration of processes at the state level, including resource allocation to counties as

well as the counting of absentee and provisional ballots should be added. Each of these dimensions of election administration in New Mexico merit independent study to create a long term analysis that feeds back into the election administration improvement process, which we hope will be facilitated in the 2014 off year federal election and thereafter.

## Appendix A. Acknowledgements

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