

DEKALB COUNTY VOTE CENTER PLAN



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MESSAGE FROM THE CLERK

Citizens of DeKalb County:

Our election laws and method of precinct voting dates back nearly 150 years and has not changed as people's lifestyles have changed. Imagine if you only had one place where you could bank, there were no multiple branches, and no ATM machines. Hard to imagine in this day and age isn't it? Why should voting be any different? It is time for our elections to keep pace with the rest of the world and move the voting process into the 21st century.

Since the Vote Center model became a reality in Indiana, leaders in DeKalb County have been carefully observing its effect on voters, the election process and on county budgets. Currently thirty-eight (38) counties have implemented the Vote Center model.

The following pages lay out our plan to make Vote Centers a reality in DeKalb County. This concept gives all registered voters in DeKalb County the opportunity to cast their ballot at any Vote Center within the county rather than being restricted to only one polling place on Election Day. In addition to making it more convenient for voters on Election Day, the Vote Center model provides for increased early voting opportunities at certain vote centers that are open prior to Election Day.

The most common questions we receive on Election Day are "Where is my polling place?" or "Why can't I just vote at the polling place near where I work or drop off my kids?" Common complaints we hear are "All the ballots are on the machines for early voting at the Courthouse, why aren't they on Election Day at all the polling places?" or "I work outside of the county and I can't make it to the polling place by 6:00 p.m. on Election Day." Vote Centers address these common concerns by broadening the voter's ability to cast their ballot.

An added benefit of the Vote Center model is the financial impact it will have on the DeKalb County taxpayers. The taxpayers will realize a cost savings over time on items such as poll worker wages, polling site rental, and equipment. By moving to vote centers, voter convenience and flexibility is improved; election administration is streamlined and modernized; and the county's long-term fiscal stance for elections is improved.

I want to thank all the people who have spent hours working in a bipartisan manner on this Vote Center plan. Cheers to all the government entities and organizations that helped circulate our survey and to the voters who completed the survey and provided feedback. Last but not least, a huge thank you to all the locations that are willing to allow us to utilize their facilities as Vote Centers in the upcoming elections; you are helping our local citizens exercise their right to vote!

Sincerely,

Holly A. Albright, Circuit Court Clerk for DeKalb County.

INTRODUCTION

A Vote Center is a polling place where any registered voter in the county may go to vote on Election Day. Instead of traditional precinct-based polling sites on Election Day where voters are restricted to a designated polling location based on their residence; the vote center model gives voters the flexibility to cast their ballot anywhere in the county. Thus, there is no wrong place to vote.

Indiana Secretary of State's Office selected three counties for the Vote Center Pilot Program from 2007-2010. The three counties were: Wayne, Tippecanoe and Cass County. The Pilot Program was a success and in 2011, the Indiana General Assembly passed Senate Enrolled Act 32 and House Enrolled Act 1242 and the Governor signed both pieces of legislation, making vote centers an option for all Indiana counties. Since the Vote Center model became a reality in Indiana there are thirty-eight (38) counties that utilize Vote Centers.

Vote Centers are connected via electronic poll books; through a secure internet connection, the electronic poll book instantaneously updates who signs in to vote, thus, preventing a person from casting their ballot at multiple vote centers. It is exactly the same procedure we currently use that prevents people who have early voted at the Clerk's Office from voting again on Election Day. Electronic poll books have been used in DeKalb County since 2015.

Our plan began with the blessing of the Election Board and resolutions passed by DeKalb County Council and County Commissioners. Both Political Party Chairman appointed members to serve on our vote center study committee and voters had the opportunity to complete a survey and provide feedback about voting in DeKalb County. Sixty-three percent (63%) of voters who took the survey were in favor of vote centers.

The DeKalb County Vote Center Plan provides voters with ten (10) locations where they can choose to cast their ballot on Election Day. Voters will have increased early voting opportunities at certain vote centers that are open prior to Election Day. Furthermore voters still have the option to absentee vote by mail, early vote in person at the Clerk's Office and vote via the Travel Board for "confined" voters.

VOTER STATISTICS AND PRECINCTS

According to the 2010 census, DeKalb County has a total population of 42,223. The county is divided into thirty-nine (39) precincts: Butler 1, Butler 2, Concord, Fairfield, Franklin, Grant 1, Grant 2, Grant 3, Jackson North, Jackson South, Keyser 1, Keyser 2, Keyser 3, Keyser 4, Keyser 5, Keyser 6, Newville, Richland, Smithfield East, Smithfield South, Smithfield West, Spencer, Stafford, Troy, Union 1, Union 2, Union 3, Union 4, Union 5, Union 6, Union 7, Union 8, Union 9, Union 10, Union 11, Wilmington 1, Wilmington 2, Wilmington 3, Wilmington 4. These thirty-nine precincts vote at 15 polling locations.

Currently the total number of registered voters in DeKalb County is 27,753; 24,321 active voters and 3,473 inactive voters. This plan will be effective beginning with the May 2020 Primary and thereafter until further notice. Voting absentee by mail and via the Travel Board for “confined” voters are still voting options. Moving to Vote Centers will increase voter flexibility by not restricting them to a single polling location. This plan is designed to make voting more convenient which hopefully will encourage people to vote and improve voter turnout.

VOTE CENTER AND SATELLITE LOCATIONS

Pursuant to IC 3-11-18.1-6, one Vote Center is required per 10,000 active voters; thus DeKalb County is only required to have three (3) Vote Centers. Our plan has ten (10) vote center locations strategically placed throughout the County; one vote center per roughly 2,800 active voters. Eight of the ten locations were polling places in previous elections. The following criteria was used to select our sites: accessibility for individuals with disabilities and the elderly, hence compliant with ADA standards as well as the Help America Vote Act, ease of access, major roads and thoroughfares, ample parking, secure storage space for our equipment, internet availability and connectivity.

Vote Center Locations

Vote Centers will be open from 6 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Election Day per IC 3-11-8-8

1. Ashley Community Building	500 S Gonser Ave	Ashley IN
2. Auburn First United Methodist Church	1203 E 7 th St	Auburn IN
3. Butler American Legion	118 N Broadway	Butler IN
4. Coburn Corners Church of Christ	6813 County Road 64	Saint Joe IN
5. Corunna Fire Station	1111 US Highway 6	Corunna IN
6. Dayspring Community Church of Auburn	2305 N Indiana Ave	Auburn IN
7. Hamilton Life Center	4001 Terry Lake Rd.	Hamilton IN
8. Heritage Community Church	5874 County Road 427	Auburn IN
9. Judy A. Morrill Recreation Center	1200 E Houston St	Garrett IN
10. New Hope Christian Center	900 S Wayne St	Waterloo IN

Early Voting Satellite Locations

The Election Board will have two (2) early voting satellite offices open the two (2) Saturdays prior to Election Day in addition to the Clerk's Office. Early voting satellite offices will also be open the week prior to Election Day with some evening hours in an effort to improve voter flexibility and convenience.

In addition to absentee in-person early voting, applications to vote absentee by mail and travel board will continue to be accepted as required by Indiana Code. In the event a voter misses the deadline for these three voting options they will still have the opportunity to vote in person at one of the vote centers on Election Day. These multiple options give every voter the opportunity to exercise their right to vote. Once accustomed to the concept of vote centers, it is the hope of the Election Board that the voters will utilize them in an efficient and timely manner.

DATES, LOCATIONS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The dates, locations and hours for Election Day voting will be posted in the local newspapers two consecutive weeks prior to Election Day as well as on the County website. In addition, all previous polling sites not being utilized as Vote Centers will have signs posted on Election Day informing voters where the Vote Centers are located along with the Election Board's telephone number. Initially each registered voter will receive a postcard notifying them of the Vote Center locations and hours as well as dates and hours for early voting at the satellite locations.

NOTE: Voters from every precinct may vote at any Vote Center locations or Early Voting Satellite location. Every ballot style for each precinct in DeKalb County will be available at each Vote Center and each Early Voting Satellite Location. Depending on the election, the number of ballot styles varies greatly; therefore, this plan does not attempt to provide a specific number of ballot styles.

EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

VOTING MACHINES: DeKalb County will continue to use the MicroVote Infinity Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) for Absentee In-Person and Election Day voting. Each of the machines will be programmed with all the ballot styles and variations and publicly tested by the DeKalb County Election Board in accordance with Indiana Code 3-11-14.5-1. Sample paper ballots will be available at each Vote Center to allow voters to view their ballot prior to casting their vote. Voters who choose to absentee vote by mail or via the Travel Board will continue to use Optical Scan Ballots, which are completed and deposited in secure sealed envelopes and stored in a locked cabinet until tabulation of results begins on Election Day.

ELECTRONIC POLL BOOKS: DeKalb County will continue to use the KNOWiNK Poll Pads. The Poll Pad electronic poll book application software runs on the Apple iPad tablet. The system is currently certified by the Indiana Secretary of State's Office. The operating system holds the highest security certification from NIST-FIPS 140-2. The system interfaces with the Quest Indiana State Voter Registration System as required for certification.

VOTE CENTER POLL WORKERS

Each Vote Center, Early Voting Satellite Center and the DeKalb County Clerk's Office will be connected via the electronic poll books; through a secure internet connection. There will be a minimum of two (2) electronic poll books at each location.

Each Vote Center will run smoothly with the Precinct Election Board as follows:

One (1) Inspector - Political party of Indiana Secretary of State

Four (4) Judges - Two (2) from each major political party

Two (2) Clerks - One (1) from each major political party

NOTE: The number of Judges and/or Clerks may be modified at some locations as deemed necessary.

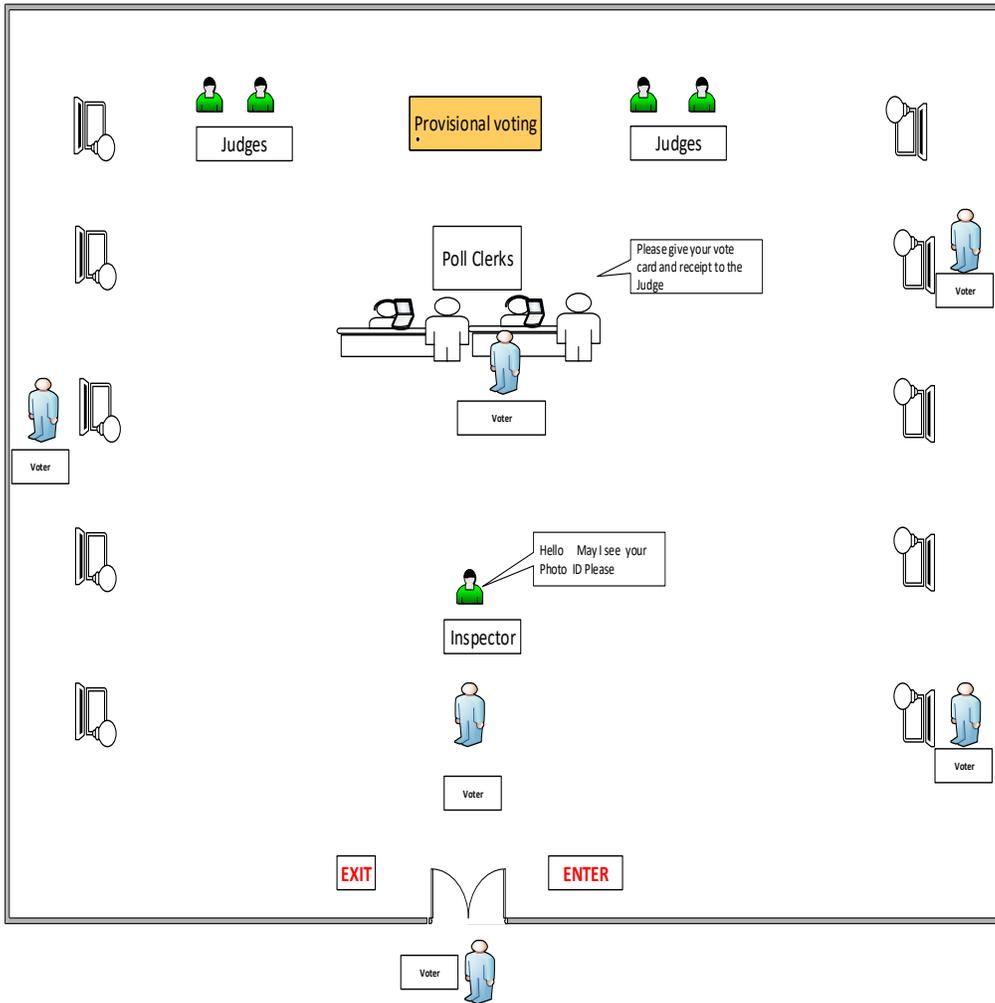
Early Voting Satellite Office will run smoothly with the Absentee Board as follows:

Two (2) Judges - One (1) from each major political party

Two (2) Clerks - One (1) from each major political party

The Inspector will serve as a greeter and welcome each voter to the Vote Center and verify they have a valid government issued photo ID. The voter will proceed to the Poll Clerk's table to check-in to vote. Using the government issued photo ID, the Clerk will retrieve the voter's registration information and verify the voter's date of birth and residence address to confirm the voter's registration information is accurate and up to date. The voter will sign the electronic poll book affirming that their information has been verified/updated through the electronic poll book, as required by state statute. A receipt documenting that the voter has signed in will print and the blue vote card will be encoded by the electronic poll book with the voter's correct ballot. Next, the Judge will receive the printed receipt and blue vote card and will proceed to the Infinity voting machine with the voter. The Judge will activate the MicroVote Infinity DRE machine by inserting the blue vote card and the voter's correct ballot will automatically appear on the screen. The Judge will confirm with the voter that the appropriate ballot is shown and the voter will proceed to vote in the same manner as always. The Judge will deposit the printed receipt into an envelope which serves as hard copy documentation (the poll list) that the voter has voted in addition to the electronic information.

VOTE CENTER PLAN LAYOUT



ELECTION RESULTS

The results will be tabulated in the Clerk's Office in the DeKalb County Courthouse on Election Day. Absentee Voting by mail and traveling board will be by optical scan ballots, followed by Infinity DRE machines of absentee in-person early voting in the Clerk's office and the early satellite voting at the Vote Centers. As Vote Centers close on Election Day they will deliver the voting equipment to the Court House where we will tabulate the results on a first come first serve basis. Results will be tabulated by precinct and released to the public in a timely manner.

VOTER OUTREACH EFFORTS

Initially each registered voter will receive a postcard notifying them of the Vote Center locations and hours as well as dates and hours for early voting at the satellite locations. We plan on issuing press releases to our local newspapers and radio stations. In addition we will use our county website (www.co.dekalb.in.us), the state's website (www.indianavoters.in.gov) and collaborate with our two major political parties to use their social media outlets to inform our voters of this exciting new way of casting their ballot.

SECURITY PLAN

The voting machines and the electronic poll books are stored in a locked room in the DeKalb County Office Building. The keys to the room are kept in a secure area and the only people who have access to the keys are the Clerk and Election Deputy. Each voting machine and electronic poll book is secured with a numbered zip tie seal and each one has a log sheet denoting access and action. When the equipment is accessed the log sheet will note the date, the current tag number, who accessed the equipment, the reason, and the new tag seal number. The equipment will be delivered by a bipartisan team to each vote center and stored in a locked room until the precinct election board arrives to set up the equipment for voting. The electronic poll books are password protected and cannot be accessed until the clerk from each major political party enters their password. Reconciliation of the electronic poll book and voting equipment occurs to verify that the number of voters who signed in to vote on the electronic poll book matches the number of votes cast on the voting equipment.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS AND DISASTER PLANNING

Several types of emergency situations can happen at any time on any day, including Election Day. We have anticipated the following situations and planned accordingly:

LOSS OF POWER: Both the electronic poll book and voting machine have battery backups that last for several hours. This allows a Vote Center to continue functioning during a temporary power outage. If the power remains out for an unreasonable amount of time, the County Election Board will close that location and direct voters to an alternate location.

LOSS OF CONNECTIVITY: Between the electronic poll book and the "internet connection". If the Vote Center location loses connectivity, each site will have a high-speed "hot spot" to connect to use. If the loss is brief, poll workers will communicate with the Election office to confirm the eligibility of the voter.

DISASTER: If a disaster happens in DeKalb County on Election Day, the Election Board will work closely with both County Emergency Management and the Indiana Election Division in determining the appropriate response to the situation.

I.C. 3-11-18.1-4 COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

The following seventeen (17) items are the requirements for a vote center plan as defined in Indiana Code 3-11-18.1-4.

1. The total number of vote centers to be established.
2. The location of each vote center.
3. The effective date of the order.
4. The following information, according to the generated computerized list (as defined in I.C. 3-7-26.3-2) as of the date of the order:
 - (A) The total number of voters within the county.
 - (B) The number of active voters within the county.
 - (C) The number of inactive voters within the county.
5. For each vote center designated under subdivision (2), a list of the precincts whose polls will be located at the vote center consistent with section 13 [IC 3-11-18.1-13 of this chapter.
6. For each vote center designated under subdivision (2), the number of precinct election boards that will be appointed to administer an election at the vote center.
7. For each precinct election board designated under subdivision (6), the number and name of each precinct the precinct election board will administer consistent with section 13 of this chapter.
8. For each vote center designated under subdivision (2), the number and title of the precinct election officers who will be appointed to serve at the vote center.
9. For each vote center designated under subdivision (2):
 - (A) the number and type of ballot variations that will be provided at the voter center, and
 - (B) whether these ballots will be:
 - (i) delivered to the vote center before the opening of the polls; or
 - (ii) printed on demand for a voter's use.
10. A detailed description of any hardware, firmware, or software used:
 - (A) to create an electronic poll list for each precinct whose polls are to be located at a vote center; or
 - (B) to manage data in an electronic poll book through a secure electronic connection between the county election board and the precinct election officials administering a vote center.
11. A description of the equipment and procedures to be used to ensure that information concerning a voter entered into any electronic poll book used by precinct election officers at a vote center is immediately accessible to:
 - (A) the county election board; and
 - (B) the electronic poll books used by precinct election officers at all other vote centers in the county.
12. For each precinct designated under subdivision (5), the number of electronic poll books to be provided for the precinct.
13. The security and contingency plans to be implemented by the county to do all of the following:
 - (A) Prevent a disruption of the vote center process.
 - (B) Ensure that the election is properly conducted if a disruption occurs.
 - (C) Prevent access to an electronic poll book without the coordinated action of two (2) precinct election officers who are not members of the same political party.

14. A certification that the vote center complies with the accessibility requirements applicable to polling places under IC 3-11-8.
15. A sketch depiction of the planned layout of the vote center, indicating the location of:
 - (A) Equipment; and
 - (B) precinct election officers; within the vote center.
16. The total number and locations of satellite offices to be established under IC 3-11-10-26.3 at vote center locations designated under subdivision (2) to allow voters cast absentee ballots in accordance with IC 3-11. However, a plan must provide for at least one (1) satellite office under IC 3-11-10-26.3 on the two (2) Saturdays immediately preceding an election day.
17. The method and timing of providing voter data to persons who are entitled to receive the data under this title. Data shall be provided to all person entitled to the data without unreasonable delay.