



Central Counting Station Plan 2026 Joint Primary Election (March 3, 2026)

Purpose: Section 127.001 of the Texas Election Code (“TEC”) allows for the establishment of one or more Central Counting Stations (“CCS”) and requires the Manager of the CCS to “establish and implement a written plan for the orderly operation of the CCS. This plan is made available to the public, on the county website, not later than 5 p.m. on the fifth day before the election.

Location: The San Jacinto County CCS will be located at the Elections Administration building, 51 E Pine Ave, Coldspring, TX 77331

CCS Personnel:

- The Elections Administrator will serve as the CCS Manager to manage the overall administration of the station and supervision of personnel. (Sec. 127.002)
- The EA Assistant will serve as the Tabulation Supervisor to supervise the operations of the automatic tabulating equipment. (Sec. 127.003)
- The part time office clerk will serve as the Assistant Tabulation Supervisor to assist the Tabulation supervisor as needed and so directed.
- The CCS Judge & Co-Judge are responsible for maintaining order in the central counting station, administering oaths and resolving questions on voter intent. The Presiding Judge(s) also confers with and advises the Manager and Tabulation Supervisor on the operation of the central counting station. (Sec. 127.005(c)).
- The CCS Alternate Judge is to assume the role of the Presiding Judge, if the Presiding Judge is unable to serve. (Sec. 127.005)
- EVBB (Early Voting Ballot Board) shall serve in each election to process and qualify early voting mail ballot results from the territory served by the early voting clerk. [Sec. 87.001]. No matter what type of election an entity is having, they must have an early voting ballot board. Generally, the EVBB consists of a presiding judge, an alternate judge, and at least one other member.

Plan:

1. **02/20/2026 4:00 p.m.** - Early Voting Ballot Board Judge or Alternate Judge picks up keys from County Judge @ 1 State Hwy 150, Rm 23, Coldspring, TX 77331.
2. **02/20/2026 4:30 p.m.** - Early Voting Ballot Board meets at Elections Administration to take possession of the Ballot Boxes for BBM/FPCA. Early Voting Ballot Board will transport Ballot Boxes to the Central Count Office – Room A-4, 51 E Pine Ave, Coldspring, Texas to qualify ballots. All chains of custody, seals and locks to be verified. Wireless communication devices and/or any device capable of recording images or sound (phone, wearables, etc.) **MUST** be disabled or deactivated while serving in the Election Administration Building. Permission from the EVBB Presiding Judge to leave the Election Administration Building should be obtained before using such devices.
3. **03/03/2026 5:00 p.m.** - **Law Enforcement will be stationed here at the Central Count. (TEC 127.1232)**
4. **03/03/2026 5:00 p.m.** - Central Counting Station personnel arrive. **NOTE:** Wireless communication devices and/or any device capable of recording images or sound (phone,

wearables, etc.) **MUST** be disabled or deactivated while serving in the Election Administration Building. Permission from the EVBB Presiding Judge to leave the Election Administration Building should be obtained before using such devices. Swear in. Review & accept paperwork.

5. **Run an AUDIT LOG report per Texas Administrative Code Rule 81.62 (this allows for poll watchers to have copies of these specific intervals in the ED processes)**
6. **6:15 p.m.-** Zero Count Machine and complete 2nd Test
7. **6:25 p.m. –** Verify seals and accept ballot boxes-Central Counting Judge signs to take possession from the Ballot Board Judge. CC Judge then will review and confirm or overturn any rejections EVBB made on Absentee Ballots.
8. **6:30 p.m. – Scan absentee paper ballot voters-verify seals and accept ballot boxes (SB1599-1st Convene)** Central Counting Judge signs to take possession from the Ballot Board Judge. Ballots are reviewed by CC Judge to see if any ballots need to be duplicated. **Begin scanning ballots received from ballot board. No tabulation will be done until after 7:00 p.m. and the EVBB completes processing of all BBM/FPCA & Limited Ballots.** CC Judge then will review and confirm or overturn any rejections EVBB made on Absentee Ballots. If it is determined a ballot must be duplicated, the CC Judge must determine the intent of the voter and instruct CCS personnel on duplicating prior to processing. Serial numbers are notated on the original ballot and also on the duplicated ballot for tracking purposes. This process is done with members from differing parties (if applicable) from either CCS or EVBB members.
9. **6:30 p.m. – Compare the number of early votes on the early voting roster/combination form and reports from KNOWiNK to the number of ballots cast.** Close Early Voting machines and run closing tapes. Pull vDrives.
10. **6:35 p.m. –** Process vDrives into Count for early voting, do not tabulate results until 7:00 p.m. (in person voters)
11. **6:35 p.m.-** Process all qualified Ballot by mail ballots through the CC Scanner from EVBB's 2nd Convene. Reconcile numbers, pull and process vDrives into count. Do not tabulate results until 7:00 p.m.
12. **Review Write-In votes-not applicable for this election. Assignment or rejection of "Write-In" votes for Early Voting. This can be a timely process. If the "Write-in" is not one from the "DECLARED" list it is rejected. If the name is not spelled exact and a determination is needed to decipher the voter's intent, it will have to be reviewed. (in accordance with TEC 127.005) This is done with the CCS Judge/Alternate supervision. Each name is individually reviewed and marked as "Assigned" or "Rejected".**
13. **Run an AUDIT LOG report per Texas Administrative Code Rule 81.62 (this allows for poll watchers to have copies of these specific intervals in the ED processes)**
14. **7:15 p.m. -** Give EV results to Central Counting Judge and Alternate Judge. "Unofficial" Results to be shared at the entrance of the EA building (51 E Pine Ave., Coldspring, TX) if deemed necessary by CC Judge and Alternate Judge. Results shared with Election appropriate representatives as applicable. The Joining Political Subdivisions have requested their results be shared via email to:

principal@nexuspolitics.pro; benitakm@outlook.com
15. Numbers for Early Voting are **NOT** entered into Secretary of State's TEAM ENR site for this election.
16. Set up check-in stations in Elections Hall. Check in Judges/supplies as they arrive.
17. **8:00 p.m. – Compare the number of voters (Combination Forms/Voter Count Tally/ePollbook rosters)** Begin processing Voting Boxes into Verity Count as they check into Central Counting Station.
18. **9:25 p.m. – Print out all necessary Reports and obtain signatures on "Unofficial" Precinct by Precinct reports by CC Judge/Alt-Judge/1 CCS Personnel.**
19. **9:30 p.m. -** Release final "unofficial" results to Central count personnel. (This time is contingent on voters in line at locations and upon the arrival and processing in of all voting boxes and supplies)
20. **Run an AUDIT LOG report per Texas Administrative Code Rule 81.62 (this allows for poll watchers to have copies of these specific intervals in the ED processes)**
21. ED numbers are **NOT** entered into Secretary of State's TEAM ENR site for this election.
22. **9:30 p.m. – Central Counting Personnel to Announce "unofficial" final results** at the entrance of the EA building if persons are present for announcements. The reports will be given to each of the representatives as listed and, in the manner shared on line # 14.

23. **10:00 p.m.** - Complete 3rd test. Certify election & Precinct report signed by Central Counting Station Judge in accordance with TEC 127.131. Lock and secure all Elections Material to be maintained in the EA office.
24. **After the CCS completes their Election Day processes, they will complete the "Preliminary Election Reconciliation" form of the Unofficial Totals. This will be posted on the county Election website on the following business day and shared with districts to be made available on their official websites as well.** (signed by CCS Judge/Co-Judge).
25. **Go HOME!!!**
26. **03/12/2026 10:00 a.m. (9th day after Election Day) Late Convening of the Central Counting Station and EVBB (Provisional Ballots, Late-Arriving Mail Ballots, and/or Corrective Action Mail Ballots) all seals and chains of custody reviewed and verified.** The central counting station will generally need to convene again after election day to process late-arriving mail ballots and provisional ballots before the final results of the election are canvassed. There are several deadlines applicable to these categories of ballots that may impact the date on which the CCS convenes for its last meeting to count these categories of ballots. There are five categories of ballots that may require the central counting station to reconvene after election day:
 - A. **Provisional Ballots:** The voter registrar has until the sixth day after election day to complete their review of provisional ballots. After the voter registrar's review, the EVBB will meet to determine whether the provisional ballot will be accepted or rejected. (Sec. 65.051(a))
 - B. **Late-Arriving Domestic Ballots:** Ballots from domestic voters (from non-military voters and from any military voters who submitted an ABBM) will still be considered timely if they are postmarked by 7 p.m. on election day and are received by the early voting clerk by 5 p.m. of the first business day after election day. (Secs. 86.007(a), 87.125(a))
 - C. **Late-Arriving Overseas/Non-Military Ballots:** Ballots that were submitted from outside the United States by voters who applied for the ballot using an ABBM or by non-military voters who applied for the ballot using an FPCA, must be received by the early voting clerk by the 5th day after election day. (Secs. 86.007(d), 87.125(a))
 - D. **Late-Arriving Military Ballots:** Ballots mailed by military voters using an FPCA must be received by the early voting clerk no later than the 6th day after election day. (Secs. 87.125(a), 101.057)
 - E. **Ballots by Mail in Corrective Action Process:** If there is a curable defect on the voter's carrier envelope for a ballot by mail, the voter must correct the defect with the early voting clerk no later than the 6th day after election day. (Secs. 87.0271, 87.0411)
27. **10:30 a.m.** - Zero Count Machine and complete 2nd Test for a second time.
28. **Once EVBB completes their qualifying processes, all are verified by the CCS Judge(s) and then processed and tabulated in the Count Machine for finalization of "Unofficial Election Results"**
29. **Final Election Reconciliation Form** must be completed after the central counting station meets for the last time to process late-arriving ballots by mail, corrective action ballots that were cured after election day, and provisional ballots. The **Final Election Reconciliation Form** is a reconciliation of the final totals for the election that will be presented to the canvassing authority against the total number of voters who voted in the election. The completed Reconciliation Form must be completed before the central counting station concludes its last meeting for the election. The completed Reconciliation Form must be posted on the entity's website on the same page as the election returns and results for that election. (Sec. 127.131)
30. Zero Count Machine and Complete 3rd test for the second time. Certify election & Precinct report signed by Central Counting Station Judge(s) in accordance with TEC 127.131. Lock and secure all Election Material to be maintained in the EA office.
31. **Election Tabulation Complete-results are ready for Canvass Process!!!!**

****This notice will be on the County election website and posted on the EA building/Coldspring-Oakhurst CISD and the City of Shepherd official websites/bulletin boards at the Court House and shared with the CCS Judge/Co-Judge/EVBB Judge/Co-Judge****