

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

New Voting System Feedback Report Summary



Montgomery County implemented a new voter-marked paper ballot system beginning with the Primary Election on May 21, 2019. The new system, mandated by the Commonwealth, creates a paper trail which can be used for audits and recounts.

We appreciate your patience and the challenges of training on and working with a new system. As public officials, we have a responsibility to ensure your fundamental right to a free and fair election system that is also easy to use.

During and after the election, Montgomery County officials collected feedback from Election Day through June 26, 2019, from poll workers, voters, the general public, and employees on their experience with the new voting system. The feedback was collected via survey forms, emails, letters, calls, and in-person communications.

The majority of the 700+ responses received fell into three categories: length of voting process, privacy concerns, and instructions and education. The following pages summarize the issues, actions that we've taken, and how these actions will improve the voting experience moving forward.

1. Length of voting process

COMMENTS	ACTIONS	IMPACT
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There were concerns over the amount of scanners at some polling locations.2. Voters and poll workers want additional education on the new voting system.3. Warning messages for undervotes increase wait time and infringe on voter privacy.4. The equipment is difficult to set up and time consuming.5. Some voters felt the need for additional poll workers at some polling locations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Additional scanners will be provided at select precincts based on projected voter turnout.2. Updated instructional videos for poll workers and voters will be rolled out by mid-September and will be posted on the Voter Services web page, Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor, and Instagram. Materials will also be available in municipal offices, libraries, senior centers, and community centers. We also encourage you to share this information with your networks.3. Warning messages for undervotes will be turned off.4. If you are a poll worker, you will receive additional hands-on training on the new voting system with an emphasis on privacy, technical functions, and voter experience.5. We are happy to have your help! If you are interested in being a poll worker, call the Election Board Office at 610.278.3275.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Wait times will be shortened with the strategic placement of additional scanners, and with increased awareness.2. With greater awareness, repetition, and instruction, the voting process will become easier.3. Turning off warning messages will shorten wait times and protect voter privacy.4. If you are a poll worker, improved training will increase your knowledge and voter experience, and decrease wait times.5. Having enough highly trained poll workers will improve the voter experience.

2. Privacy

COMMENTS	ACTIONS	IMPACT
<p>1. Voters had concerns about the amount of privacy booths in some polling locations.</p>	<p>1. The quantity of privacy booths is limited by the space required to give you the highest level of privacy in your polling place.</p>	<p>1. The appropriate number of privacy booths ensures that your privacy will be protected and you are able to exercise your fundamental right to a free and fair election.</p>
<p>2. Voters had concerns about the amount of space in voting areas and the potential lack of privacy.</p>	<p>2. The number of voters allowed into the secure private area will be limited to ensure maximum privacy.</p>	<p>2. Limiting the number of voters in the polling precinct and around privacy booths will ensure that you have enough privacy to cast your vote.</p>
<p>3. More privacy folders are needed.</p>	<p>3. The number of privacy folders will be increased to replace folders that may become damaged or lost.</p>	<p>3. Having additional privacy folders will keep operations efficient in the event a folder is damaged or lost, and minimize wait times.</p>
<p>4. There were concerns about the impact of warning messages on voter privacy.</p>	<p>4. Warning messages for undervotes will be turned off.</p>	<p>4. Turning off warning messages for undervotes will protect your privacy and reduce the amount of time it takes to cast your ballot.</p>

3. Instructions & Education

COMMENTS	ACTIONS	IMPACT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="142 378 602 439">1. Poll workers felt a need for more technical hands-on training.<li data-bbox="142 654 587 753">2. Provide additional ways understand and learn about the new voting system.<li data-bbox="142 1003 523 1065">3. What should be done with spoiled ballots?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="736 378 1180 578">1. If you are a poll worker, you will receive additional hands-on training on the new voting system which will include practicing setting up and taking down the equipment.<li data-bbox="736 654 1180 963">2. Voters can review the simple 3-step voting process video by accessing the Voter Services webpage, the County social media pages, or picking up an instructional card in the nearest municipal government office, library, senior center, or select community organizations.<li data-bbox="736 1003 1193 1203">3. A spoiled (overvote, damaged) ballot will be marked “spoiled” and placed in the spoiled ballot folder. Spoiled ballots will NOT be counted. This will be covered in the updated poll worker video.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1319 378 1760 506">1. Additional training will increase efficiency and your ability to quickly address issues that may arise.<li data-bbox="1319 654 1760 858">2. Increased awareness about the new voting system will help reduce confusion. Poll workers will be there to help you with any questions before you cast your vote.<li data-bbox="1319 1003 1779 1103">3. Clear poll worker spoiled ballot procedures will reduce confusion and increase efficiency.

4. Additional comments

COMMENTS	ACTIONS	IMPACT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="144 378 589 406">1. The ballot font size is too small.<li data-bbox="144 621 589 721">2. The Sharpie pens bleed through the ballots causing doubt about the accuracy of selections.<li data-bbox="144 971 608 1071">3. Collecting the ballots from the scanner once the polls are closed is cumbersome and difficult.<li data-bbox="144 1106 569 1249">4. The new voting system is antiquated and cumbersome. Can we go back to the prior system?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="734 378 1188 578">1. The ballot font size may be increased in future elections depending on the number of candidates running and the type of election. Using the ADA machine is an alternative.<li data-bbox="734 585 1188 928">2. The pens used to fill the ballots are recommended by the voting system manufacturer. The bleed through that sometimes occurs as a result of using the pens will not affect vote selections, since the ballot is designed so that races on one side of the ballot will never line up with races on the other side.<li data-bbox="734 971 1188 1106">3. Additional hands-on equipment training by poll workers will make workers more comfortable with collecting ballots.<li data-bbox="734 1113 1188 1278">4. The Commonwealth has mandated that all counties transition to a voter-marked verifiable paper ballot system by 2020.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1313 378 1767 614">1. Increasing the ballot font size in the future will help expedite the voting process if you experience vision problems. Using the ADA machine may eliminate vision issues, if the ballot font is too small to read.<li data-bbox="1313 621 1767 721">2. Understanding how the scanner reads selections will help eliminate confusion and doubt.<li data-bbox="1313 971 1767 1071">3. The additional hands-on training will reduce the challenges of collecting the ballots.<li data-bbox="1313 1106 1767 1278">4. The new voter-marked verifiable voting system ensures the integrity of each and every vote, so you can feel confident that your vote is counted accurately.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

New Voting System Feedback Report Summary

Thank you again!

We welcome your feedback in an effort to continue to improve the voter experience in future elections.

Please feel free to share your comments via email at voters@montcopa.org.

Look for updated information, instructional videos, FAQs and handouts at www.montcopa.org/voterservices.

If you are interested in being a poll worker, please visit www.montcopa.org/voterservices or contact the Election Board Office at 610.278.3275.