

Administrative Rules Relating to Elections  
City of Saint Paul


Chapter 1    Ranked Voting

1.01    Ballot format.

City general election ballots on which candidates for mayor and council member are elected using the ranked voting process must be prepared using the following format.

- (a)    Below the ballot header, the following instructions to the voters must appear:

Follow these Ranked Voting instructions carefully:

- Select only one candidate for each of your choices
- You are not required to choose more than one candidate
- Do not select the same candidate for more than one choice
- To vote, completely fill in the oval next to the candidate of your choice, like this: 

- (b)    The ballot must include a number of columns equal to the number of candidates for mayor or council member, plus one, not to exceed a total number of six columns.

- (i)    At the top of the first column, the following must appear:

1<sup>st</sup> choice  
Select one

- (ii)    At the top of the second and any additional columns, the following must appear:

\_\_ choice (if any), with the appropriate consecutive ordinal number  
Select one

- (c) If both the city and school district offices appear on the same ballot card, the following instructions must appear at the bottom of the ballot:
  - (i) On the side of the ballot on which the city office appears:  
Turn over ballot to vote on school board offices
  - (ii) On the side of the ballot on which the school district offices appear:  
Turn over ballot to vote on city office

1.02 Manual count procedures.

- (a) In races when no candidate receives a majority of votes cast for the office, counting will resume no later than the Monday following the general election.
- (b) One or more counting teams will use the following process to count and reallocate the votes on each ballot cast for the race in question. Each counting team will consist of:
  - (i) one election official to sort the ballots by candidate,
  - (ii) two or more election judges to count the ballots,
  - (iii) one or more election judges to verify that ballots set aside as inactive have no votes for a viable candidate, and
  - (iv) one election judge to record results.

In addition, one or more election judges may open the ballot transfer cases and orient the ballots in preparation for sorting by candidate.

- (c) The counting and reallocation process is open to the public. The candidates or one designated observer per counting team may sit at or stand near the table where the ballots are being sorted, counted and reallocated, but no one other than the election official or the election judges may touch the table, the ballots or any other election materials on the table. No challenges are permitted during this process.

(d) A counting team will sort the ballots for one precinct at a time. Beginning with the voters' first choice selections, ballots will be sorted into the following set of piles:

- (i) a separate pile for each candidate;
- (ii) a single pile for all valid write-in votes;
- (iii) a single pile for suspended ballots on which there is either an overvote or an undervote; and
- (iv) a single pile for inactive ballots, which will include totally defective ballots.

Two or more of the election judges will watch the ballots as they are placed on the piles to ensure that the sorting is done correctly.

(e) Ballots from successive precincts will be added to the piles until all ballots for a ward are piled. For the mayor's race, the ballots from all the wards will then be combined to determine citywide vote totals.

(f) Once all the ballots for an office have been sorted into piles, the ballots in each candidate pile will be counted into groups of 25 and the total of first choice votes determined. Two or more election judges will watch as the ballots are counted to ensure that the count is accurate. After all ballots have been counted, the vote totals will be recorded on round statement sheets. One of the completed round statement sheets will be placed on top of each of the piles and another is given to the election judge who is recording the results.

(g) If no candidate has reached the threshold, the election official will determine if any of the candidates are mathematically nonviable. Ballots for the nonviable candidates will be examined to determine the voter's next choice. Each ballot will be reallocated to the candidate for whom the next choice vote was made. If the next choice vote is for a nonviable candidate, the counting team will cascade to the voter's next viable choice. When the next choice is an overvote, the ballot will be placed in the suspended pile. If there are no remaining viable choices on the ballot, the ballot will be placed in the inactive pile.

- (h) Suspended ballots will be examined at the start of each round to determine if there is a vote for a viable candidate that can be counted in that round.
- (i) After the reallocated ballots have been placed in the proper piles, the ballots piled in that round will be counted and the results added to the vote totals for each candidate who is still viable.
- (j) This process is repeated in additional rounds of counting until one candidate wins the election.

8-26-11