

FAQ's about the Unisyn OpenElect Voting System

Who is our Voting Equipment vendor?

Loudoun utilizes the OpenElect Voting System from Unisyn Voting Systems, Inc., based in Vista, California. Our account is managed and serviced by Election Services Online which is based in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

What are the components of the Unisyn OpenElect system?

Loudoun uses the OpenElect Freedom Vote Scan (FVS) and the OpenElect Voting Interface (OVI) at the precinct and early voting site. For mail voting the county utilizes an OpenElect Voting Central Scan (OVCS) high speed scanner. The county also uses the OpenElect Central Suite (OCS) to generate early and mail voting results, generate reports, and clean USB drives to DOD standards as required by Virginia Code.

How do the ballot scanners (FVS) and (OVCS) work?

Voted ballots are inserted into the scanner and the ballot is read and voting data stored. A picture of both sides of the ballot is captured. At the close of voting the machines are 'closed' and a results tape is generated. Results cannot be generated until after 7pm on Election Night.

Can ballots be inspected after scanning?

No. Virginia code requires that all counted ballots be placed into sealed containers and delivered into the custody of the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

Who is responsible for the Certification of Voting Equipment?

Voting equipment certification standards are produced by the Virginia Department of Elections and approved by the Virginia State Board of Elections. The Virginia standards are based in part on the 'Voluntary Voting Systems Guidelines' produced by the federal Election Assistance Commission.

Is the Unisyn System Certified?

Yes. The Unisyn OpenElect system is certified at both the state and federal levels.

Is the voting equipment tested prior to each election?

Yes. The office conducts a process called 'Logic & Accuracy' testing (L&A), prior to each election. During this process a bi-partisan team of election officers verifies the programming of each machine and conducts a thorough test to ensure results are calculated correctly. Following testing the election officers sign off on the machine and seal all secure compartments with tamper proof seals. Members of the Loudoun County Electoral Board then review each testing document and piece of equipment to ensure the test was conducted properly and all paperwork completed. Following testing the voting equipment to be used by each precinct is placed into the precinct delivery carts in the elections warehouse. The warehouse is secured by numerous security measures to prevent unauthorized access.

Is the voting equipment verified upon arrival at the precinct?

Yes. As part of the precinct opening process the precinct election officers complete a ‘Seal & Serial Verification Form’ where they verify that the machines, they received were the ones issued to their precinct and that all seals are intact and have not been tampered with. Two election officers sign off on this form prior to setting up any equipment for voter use.

Is the voting equipment connected to the internet?

No. The voting equipment does not contain a modem therefore has no means of internet connectivity.

Are the electronic pollbooks connected to the voting equipment?

No. They are not nor have ever been, nor have the capability to connect.

Is the voting equipment connected to the state registration system?

No.

Is it possible to connect a voter with their ballot after voting?

No. The voting equipment system and the electronic pollbook system operate completely independently of one another.

Ways you can help ensure your ballot was tallied when you vote:

1. Carefully read the instructions on the ballot and ensure you complete the ovals properly.
2. If you make a mistake, feel free to return your ballot and ask for a replacement.
3. Do not leave your ballot unattended while in the polling place.
4. Wait until your ballot goes completely into the machine before leaving.
5. Look for the ‘Public Count’ number on the screen of the scanner, make sure it goes up by 1 after you insert your ballot.