



Voting Technology FAQs

Q: Are voting machines safe to use?

A: Absolutely! Voting machines must be certified by the State Board of Elections prior to counties purchasing and using them in elections. Prior to certification, the voting systems are rigorously tested by one of only two federally accredited labs and reviewed by an independent security expert to ensure compliance with all federal and state legal requirements. In addition to technical analysis, prior to certification, the State Board holds multiple demonstrations, reviews and responds to public comments, and publishes testing reports online. The State Board also must certify any upgrades or modifications. Such changes may not be used by a county until certified by the State Board. Testing of machines occurs before, during, and after use to ensure accurate and secure results. Before a county can use new voting machines, the machines must undergo acceptance testing by the State Board. After a voting system vendor delivers any new systems to a county, State Board staff will verify in person that all delivered hardware and software meets State standards. The process is thorough and transparent to ensure New Yorkers that their elections are administered in a fair and secure way.

Q: What about the software used by voting technology?

A: Also very secure! The State Board is the keeper of all certified software used by voting machines, systems, and equipment. This ensures that all counties receive the proper software, and subsequent updates, for their machines from the same official source, and that the “trusted build” of the software has been reviewed and certified for use in New York. Voting system software can only be provided to counties by the State Board (as part of the acceptance testing previously described). County Boards are prohibited from using any software provided to them directly from a vendor.



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Q: Are voting machines connected to the internet?

A: Voting machines in New York State are never connected to the internet. Any claim otherwise is incorrect.

Q: Are the voter registration systems secure?

A: Yes! Voter registration system software is used by County Boards of Elections to maintain and update the database of voter registration records for their county. As the digitized copy of the voter roll for the county, all maintenance is performed at the county level. All new and updated records kept in the county system are then shared with, and stored by, the statewide database known as NYSVoter, which functions as the official statewide list of voters. Voter registration systems must be approved for use by the New York State Board of Elections and once approved, undergo routine functional and security testing to ensure the system remains secure and compliant over time. Voter registration systems do not interface with voting machines in any way.

Q: How are the voter rolls maintained in New York State to ensure they are updated and accurate?

A: County Boards of Elections use approved voter registration systems and software to maintain and update the voter registration records of voters within the county. List maintenance is one of the most important functions of the County Boards of Elections. Voter records are constantly changing as new voters are registered, voters update their records, statuses of voters change, and voters are purged after moving, dying, becoming incarcerated, etc. All list maintenance is conducted by bipartisan teams to ensure the process is fair, accurate, and transparent.



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Q: What are electronic poll books?

A: Electronic poll books are digital alternatives to traditional paper poll books used during elections to manage voter interactions at polling places. These devices, typically laptops or tablets, allow election workers to verify voter eligibility, check-in voters, redirect them to correct polling locations, and even update voter records in real-time. Electronic poll books are often used in conjunction with a ballot on demand printer to avoid waste from unused pre-printed ballots. Just like with voting machines and voter registration systems, electronic poll books must undergo functional and security testing before certification for use. Electronic poll books do not interface with voting machines.

Q: How can a voter be sure our elections are secure?

A: The processes and procedures outlined in New York State Election Law and Regulations ensure that specific steps are taken to keep elections secure, fair, and accessible to all. Whenever a voter has a question about elections, they should reach out directly to the New York State Board of Elections and the County Boards of Elections across the state for answers.

Is there a question we haven't answered?

Feel free to reach out to us by calling
(518) 474-6220