FANNIN COUNTY ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATION
CENTRAL COUNTING STATION PLAN
May 26, 2026 Democratic Primary Runoff Election

A. Purpose

The central counting station is the location where ballots are counted, vote totals are accumulated, and the unofficial and official election results are generated.

Section 127.007 of the Texas Election Code requires the *Manager* of the central counting station ("CCS") to "establish and implement a written plan for the orderly operation of the central counting station." This plan must be made available to the public on request not later than 5:00 PM on the fifth day before the date of the election.

Section 127.007(b) provides that a CCS plan "must address the process for comparing the number of voters who signed the combination form with the number of votes cast for an entire election."

This plan includes the dates and times for convening the central counting station, the personnel that will be involved in the operation of the central counting station, and the procedures that will be used in conducting the activities of the central counting station.

Throughout this plan, all references are made to appropriate sections in the Texas Election Code, unless otherwise noted. Any references to the Texas Administrative Code are cited to the relevant section of the "TAC."

B. Location

The Fannin County Central Counting Station will be located at Fannin County Elections Administration Office, located at 800 E. 2nd Street, Bonham, Texas, 75418. The Central Counting Station team will convene at 5:00 PM on Tuesday, May 26, 2026.

Poll watchers should park on 2nd street (Bonham, Texas) and proceed to the Elections Administration Office. Please check in with law enforcement in the building; they will direct you to the County Clerk, who is the Central Counting Station Manager.

All Central Counting Station (CCS) personnel should park in the middle parking lot, which is the opposing side of the fence where employees typically park.

C. Dates and Times for Convening

The central counting station will convene based on the size and type of election as determined by the Central Counting Station Manager and the Presiding Judges.

In accordance with Sec.127.093 of the Texas Election Code, the second test of tabulating equipment will be conducted prior to beginning the process to count early voting ballots; logic and accuracy testing will take place at 3:00 PM.

The central counting station will convene at 5:00 PM on Tuesday, May 26, 2026.

The Early Voting Ballot Board (EVBB) will convene at 1:00 PM to count late-arriving mail ballots and provisional ballots on Tuesday, May 26, 2026**.** Tabulation is expected to commence once the final Reconciliation Log is completed.

D. Notice Procedures

Before the central counting station convenes, notice will be provided on the Election Administrator's postings at www.co.fannin.tx.us/page/fannin.elections.

Convening on Election Day

The Central Counting Station Manager will provide notice to the Presiding Judges of the early voting ballot boards of the time and place where ballots will be delivered to the central counting station on Election Day.

Convening After Election Day

The Central Counting Station Manager will provide notice to the Presiding Judges of the early voting ballot boards if the central counting station will reconvene after Election Day, and will provide notice of the date and time that the central counting station will reconvene. (1 TAC 81.37). The notice will be posted at least 24 hours prior to the time that the central counting station will convene. (1 TAC 81.37)

E. Central Counting Station Personnel

The following individuals will be present each time that the central counting station convenes:

- The Central Counting Station Manager will manage the overall administration of the station and supervision of personnel, as well as operate the automatic tabulation of equipment. (Sec. 127.002 and Sec. 127.003)
    - Jenny L. Garner, County Clerk, is designated as the Central Counting Station Manager.

- Stephanie Hawes is designated as the Central Count Station Supervisor, to assist with supervision of personnel and office operations.

- Responsibilities of the CCS Manager include verifying procedures for logic and accuracy testing, printing Zero Reports, scanning ballots by mail and assuring all media from Controllers, Scanners, Limited Ballot Scanner and Central Scan have been entered into Count; observing procedures at paper and equipment intake as time allows; administering the Hashtag Test after the post-count Logic and Accuracy Test has been performed.

- Presiding Judges will serve to maintain order at the Central Counting Station, administer oaths, resolve questions of voter intent, and receive ballots to be counted. The Alternate Judge will serve as the Presiding Judge if the Presiding Judge is unavailable, otherwise the Alternate Judge will perform other duties as needed at the central counting station. (Sec. 127.005)

  - Michael Evans will serve as the Presiding Judge for the Democratic Party.

- Central Counting Station Clerks may be appointed as needed by the Central Counting Station Manager, the Presiding Judges, and/or the Alternate Judges, to perform various duties at the central counting station that are assigned by the authority that appointed the Clerk. (Sec. 127.006)

  - Stephanie Hawes, Election Deputy Clerk – process paperwork
  - Angie Davies, Election Deputy Clerk – process paperwork
  - Sara Long, Deputy - intake equipment
  - Kristy Ellison, Deputy – intake equipment
  - Belen Leyva, Deputy – intake equipment
  - Walter Goodwater, Parking and Equipment Director
  - Kevin Matthews, Parking/Equipment Transport Assistant
  - Assistant to be named, Parking/Equipment Transport Assistant
  - Assistant to be named Parking/Equipment Transport Assistant
  - Assistant to be named Parking/Equipment Transport Assistant

In the event of extenuating circumstances, an emergency appointment may be made to fill an unexpected vacancy in one of these roles.

F. Procedures for Convening the Central Counting Station

The Central Counting Station Manager, Tabulation Supervisor, Presiding Judges, and Alternate Judges will be present each time that the central counting station convenes.

The Presiding Judges and Alternate Judge will take the constitutional Oath of Office before beginning their duties at the central counting station. (Sec. 62.003)

In all other types of elections that do not contain party affiliation or for primary elections that are conducted separately, the following oath will be administered verbally to all personnel at the central counting station prior to those individuals commencing their duties at the central counting station:

> *"I swear (or affirm) that I will objectively work to be sure every eligible voter's vote is accepted and counted, and that only the ballots of those voters who violated the Texas Election Code will be rejected. I will make every effort to correctly reflect the voter's intent when it can be clearly determined. I will not work alone when ballots are present. I will faithfully perform my duty as an officer of the election and guard the purity of the election."*

Once the Central Counting Station Manager, Tabulation Supervisor, Presiding Judges, and Alternate Judge are present and all personnel have taken the appropriate oaths, the central counting station will begin conducting its duties. (Sec. 127.0015)

G. Security Procedures

A licensed peace officer will be posted when the central counting station is convened to ensure the security of ballot boxes containing voted ballots throughout the period of tabulation, in accordance with the requirements of Section 127.1232 of the Texas Election Code.

H. General Conduct Rules

The Manager has prescribed the following conduct rules for the operation of the central counting station, pursuant to Section 127.002 of the Texas Election Code:

- Wireless communication devices and devices that are capable of recording sound or images are prohibited in the central counting station. These devices may only be used in the central counting station by the Manager, Supervisor, Presiding Judges, Alternate Judge, State Inspector, or Voting System Technician in the performance of their official duties under the Texas Election Code. All other individuals must deactivate these devices when present in the central counting station. If an individual needs to use one of these devices, they must obtain the permission of the Presiding Judge before leaving the central counting station to use the device. (Secs. 33.051(c), 61.007, 127.002, 127.007)

- If a person who is authorized to be present in the central counting station (including poll watchers or central counting station personnel) causes a disruption in the central counting station that impedes the ability of central counting station personnel to perform

their duties, or if the person willfully violates the Texas Election Code, then the Presiding Judge may remove that person from the central counting station. (Secs. 32.075, 127.005)

- Release of results before the time the polls close or the last voter has voted is strictly prohibited and constitutes a criminal offense. Section 61.007 of the Texas Election Code provides that an election officer, watcher, or other person serving in an official capacity commits an offense if before the last voter has voted or the polls close, whichever is later, the person reveals the number of votes that have been received for a candidate or for or against a measure, a candidate's position relative to other candidates in the tabulation of votes, whether a measure is passing or failing, or the names of persons who have voted or not voted in the election. An offense under Section 61.007 of the Texas Election Code is a Class A misdemeanor. (Sec. 61.007)

- News media are not authorized to be present in the central counting station, but may be present in the area designated for the media by the bench outside the building entry. Unofficial results will be made available to the media and to the public as soon as they are available after polls close. (Secs. 127.008, 127.1311)

I. Poll Watchers

A poll watcher serving at a central counting station may be present at any time the station is open for the purpose of processing or preparing to process election results until the election officers complete their duties at the station. (Sec. 33.055)

A poll watcher is entitled to observe any activity occurring at the location at which the watcher is serving, and is entitled to inspect the returns and other records prepared by the election officers at the location at which the watcher is serving. This includes the ability to request audit logs from the central accumulator before any votes are tabulated, after early voting results are tabulated, and immediately following the completion of the vote tabulation. (Sec. 33.056; 1 TAC 81.62)

A poll watcher may call the attention of an election officer to an occurrence that the watcher believes to be an irregularity or violation of law. The officer may refer the matter to the Presiding Judge. Once the Presiding Judge has been notified, the watcher may not discuss the occurrence further with the subordinate officer unless the Presiding Judge invites the discussion. (Sec. 33.058)

The procedures for acceptance of a poll watcher are outlined in Section 33.051 of the Texas Election Code:

- A poll watcher who is appointed to serve at a central counting station must present a valid certificate of appointment and a certificate of completion of the poll watcher training to

the Presiding Judge at the time the watcher reports for service at the central counting station. The certificates provided by the watcher will be retained with the records of the central counting station. (Sec. 33.051(a))

- When the poll watcher reports for service and presents their certificates to the Presiding Judge, the Presiding Judge shall require the watcher to countersign the certificate of appointment to ensure that the watcher is the same person who signed the certificate of appointment. (Sec. 33.051(b))

- A watcher may not be accepted for service if the watcher has possession of a device capable of recording images or sound unless the watcher agrees to disable or deactivate the device. The CCS Presiding Judge may inquire whether a watcher has possession of any prohibited recording device before accepting the watcher for service. (Sec. 33.051(c))

- A watcher who presents himself or herself with the required certificates at the proper time shall be accepted for service unless the person is ineligible to serve, the watcher refuses to disable or deactivate a prohibited recording device, or the number of watchers to which the appointing authority is entitled have already been accepted for service. (Sec. 33.051(b))

- Before accepting a watcher for service, the CCS Presiding Judge shall require the watcher to take the following oath, administered by an election officer:

  "*I swear (or affirm) that I will not disrupt the voting process or harass voters in the discharge of my duties.*" (Sec. 33.051(h))

- If the watcher is accepted for service, an election officer will provide the watcher with a form of identification that must be worn by the watcher in the central counting station. (Sec. 33.051(f))

- If the watcher is not accepted for service, the certificates shall be returned to the watcher with a signed, written statement of the reason for the rejection. (Sec. 33.051(e))

- An election officer commits a Class A misdemeanor if the officer intentionally or knowingly refuses to accept a watcher for service when acceptance of the watcher is required by the Election Code. (Sec. 33.051(g))

The Presiding Judge has the responsibility to maintain order, prevent breaches of the peace, and prevent violations of the Election Code in the central counting station, and has the power of a district judge in the performance of those responsibilities. If a poll watcher causes a disruption in the central counting station that impedes the ability of central counting station personnel to

perform their duties, or if the watcher willfully violates the Election Code, then the Presiding Judge may remove the watcher from the central counting station. (Secs. 32.075, 127.005)

Political Action Committees for a measure on the ballot do not apply for Primary elections. (TEC 33.005(b))

J. Intake of Ballots, Electronic Media, and Supplies

Sections 129.051 and 129.052 of the Texas Election Code require the general custodian of election records to develop certain procedures related to inventory control and chain of custody of voting system equipment and electronic media associated with this equipment, providing for verification of equipment identifiers, verification of seals, and verification of chain of custody.

1. Upon receipt of the election records, ballots, and/or electronic media, Stephanie Hawes and Angie Davies shall give a signed receipt for materials delivered to one of the delivering officers.

2. CCS personnel shall verify that all locks and seals are properly affixed to the equipment and/or transfer cases.

3. CCS personnel shall inspect the equipment or transfer cases to determine if the serial number on the seal corresponds to the serial numbers on their records.

4. If there is a discrepancy, CSS personnel shall contact the presiding judge of the polling place to determine the basis for the discrepancy.

5. Any paperwork provided by the authority conducting the election shall be completed indicating that verification has taken place and records are accounted for.

    a. This verification should include verifying serial numbers and completing required chain of custody checks.

    b. This verification should also include verifying the ballot and seal certificate paperwork.

6. Electronic media containing votes shall be delivered to the Presiding Judge Michael Evans, who shall deposit the v-drive into the boxes above the Count Computer tower.

K. Testing Procedures

Before the counting of ballots begins, the Tabulation Manager, Supervisor, and Presiding Judges will perform the Second Tabulation Test to verify that the tabulation equipment is functioning correctly. If the test is successful, the Presiding Judges will certify in writing that the test was

successful and the date and hour the test was completed. This certification and the media and materials from the test will be placed in a sealed container until the Third Tabulation Test is conducted. (Secs. 127.097, 127.099)

After the counting of ballots is completed, the Tabulation Manager, Supervisor, and Presiding Judges will perform the Third Tabulation Test to verify that the tabulation equipment is still functioning correctly. If the test is successful, the Presiding Judge will certify in writing that the test was successful and the date and hour the test was completed. This certification and the media and materials from the test will be placed in a sealed container for the duration of the 22month preservation period, or until another Tabulation Test is performed. (Secs. 127.098, 127.099)

Both tests will be performed on the tabulation computer using the test media that was originally generated during the First Tabulation Test that was performed during the public testing process.

L. Tabulation Procedures

1. Ballots by mail not previously scanned are scanned into the Central Scanner and recorded on a v-drive; then entered into the Count computer;
2. Limited Ballot scanner seals are verified, the v-drive is taken by the Tabulation Supervisors and placed into the designated box above the Count computer tower;
3. Early Voting results are tallied after 7:00 PM;
4. As election judges from precincts arrive and paperwork and equipment have been verified, the v-drives are removed from the controller and scanners by Sarah Long and Kristy Ellison, then handed to the Presiding Judges and the Tabulation Manager;
5. The v-drives each are read and “Tabulated” for counting purposes.

M. Duplication Procedures

Certain ballots that are counted with automatic tabulating equipment may have to be duplicated if the ballot is damaged or cannot be read with the equipment. Those ballots will be duplicated according to the procedures outlined in Section 127.126 of the Texas Election Code.

The Early Voting Ballot Board or Central Counting Station will be responsible for the duplication of ballots that are irregularly marked or damaged. Those ballots will be duplicated to reflect the intent of the voter. (Sec. 87.102) / If CCS: (Sec. 127.126)

If duplication is performed at the Central Counting Station: When the ballots are duplicated, the duplicate ballot will be clearly labeled “Duplicate”, and the serial number of the original ballot will be placed on the duplicate ballot. After the ballot is duplicated and the ballots have been approved for counting by the Manager, the duplicate ballot will be counted using the automatic tabulating equipment. The original ballot and the duplicate ballot will be retained together, and

will be retained with the other voted ballots for the duration of the preservation period. (Sec. 127.126)

N. Resolving Voter Intent

If a voter's ballot contains ambiguous markings that must be adjudicated, if the ballot contains write-in votes that must be assigned to a write-in candidate, or if a ballot requires duplication, then the Presiding Judge will determine the voter's intent and the ballot will be counted according to that intent. The Presiding Judge may be assisted by the Alternate Judge in resolving voter intent based on the standards outlined in Section 65.009 of the Election Code and other specific standards established by the Presiding Judge. (Secs. 65.009, 127.005)

O. Reconciliation

Section 127.007 of the Texas Election Code requires the central counting station plan to address a process for comparing the number of voters who signed the combination form with the number of votes cast for the entire election. The reconciliation procedures for the central counting station are outlined below.

The Tabulation Manager, CCS Supervisor, and Presiding Judge will perform a reconciliation for each category of ballots as follows:

Early Voting in Person

To reconcile the results for early voting in person, Jenny L. Garner, Stephanie Hawes, and Angie Davies will compare the total number of voters that signed in on the combination form or poll book, as applicable, to the total number of votes cast during early voting.

Early Voting by Mail

To reconcile the results for early voting by mail, the Presiding Judge will compare the number of ballots entered on the "Ballot Transmittal Form" from the EVBB to the number of ballots counted.

Election Day

To reconcile the results for Election Day, the Presiding Judge will compare the number of voters that signed in on the combination forms or poll book, as applicable, to the total number of ballots cast on Election Day.

Final Reconciliation

To reconcile the total results for the election after the central counting station has completed the final tabulation of results after Election Day, the Presiding Judge will compare the total number of voters who are listed as having voted in the election on the combination form or on the poll book and the number of ballots listed on the ballot transmittal form to the total number of votes cast during early voting in person, ballot by mail, and Election Day.

Reconciliation Form – Election Night

The Presiding Judge will provide and attest to a written reconciliation of votes and voters on election night by completing the Preliminary Election Reconciliation Form at the close of tabulation on election night. The completed form will be posted at: https://www.co.fannin.tx.us/page/fannin.Elections. (Sec. 127.131(f))

Reconciliation Form – Final Totals

The Presiding Judge will provide and attest to a written reconciliation of votes and voters at the close of tabulation 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 completed form will be posted at: https://www.co.fannin.tx.us/page/fannin.Elections. (Sec. 127.131(f))

P. Generating Results and Returns

After the counting of ballots has completed, the Presiding Judge will prepare and sign the precinct returns for the election. The returns will include the totals for each candidate and for and against each measure, and will include a tabulation of overvotes and undervotes by office and by proposition. These results will be prepared for each precinct in the election. The Presiding Judge will sign the precinct returns for the election. (Secs. 127.1301, 127.131)

Q. Reporting Results to the Secretary of State

In a special election ordered by the Governor, a primary election, or the general election for state and county officers, the general custodian of election records will report unofficial results on election night to the Secretary of State's Office using the statewide voter registration and election management system. (Secs. 68.001, 68.034)

The Counting Station Manager will enter the data into the Secretary of State, TEAM system with an assistant present to verify the numbers entered.

R. Convening the Central Counting Station for Provisional, Late-Arriving Ballots by Mail, and Corrective Action Mail Ballots After Election Day

The central counting station will convene after Election Day to count any provisional ballots, late-arriving ballots by mail, or ballots by mail that were corrected by voters through the corrective action process after Election Day. (1 TAC 81.37)

The Manager will notify the Presiding Judge of the Early Voting Ballot Board whether the central counting station will reconvene after Election Day, and the date and time that the central counting station will reconvene. (1 TAC 81.37)

The Manager will post notice of the reconvening of the central counting station after Election Day and will post this notice at least 24 hours prior to reconvening. The notice will be posted at the Fannin County Election Administrator's page at:
https://www.co.fannin.tx.us/page/fannin.elections (1 TAC 81.37)

1. Ballots by mail arriving late are under the same procedure as those arriving timely with the Early Voting Ballot Board verifying the postal stamp on the outside of the envelope;
2. Provisional Ballots if approved by the Early Voting Ballot Board are given to the Presiding Judge in the white secrecy envelope to be opened and scanned in the Central Count Scanner;
3. Both ballots by mail and provisional ballots once scanned are loaded to the v-drive and taken to the County computer for tallying.

S. Delivery of Materials to the General Custodian of Election Records

After the central counting station concludes its activities, the ballots, media, returns, and other election records will be delivered to the general custodian of election records. (Sec. 66.051, 127.132)

Election materials are maintained in the Fannin County Elections Administration Office for 22 months. (Texas Election Code SEC. 66.058)

T. Publication and Revision

The central counting station plan will be published at:
https://www.co.fannin.tx.us/page/fannin.Elections

***Early Voting Ballot Board schedule (subject to change)**

Democratic Primary Meeting Notices:
Notice of Early Voting Ballot Board May 7, 2026 at 1:00 PM
Notice of Early Voting Ballot Board May 14, 2026 at 1:00 PM
Notice of Early Voting Ballot Board May 26, 2026 at 1:00 PM