



Pennsylvania Department of State

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Department of State Begins Risk-Limiting Audit of 2025 Primary Election

Harrisburg, PA – Today, the Department of State began Pennsylvania’s statewide risk-limiting election audit (RLA) of the May 20, 2025, primary.

“This is our sixth statewide risk-limiting audit since the 2022 general election,” **Secretary of the Commonwealth Al Schmidt** said. “RLAs are proven to be the highest standard of comprehensive election audits because the RLA process provides a statistically sound, scientific method for confirming, with a high degree of confidence, that the reported outcome of the audited election is accurate.”

Ten Department employees took turns rolling 10-sided dice to deliver the random 20-digit “seed number,” which is used to determine which batches of ballots counties will audit over the next several days.

The livestream of the event continues the **Shapiro Administration’s** commitment to transparency in election administration in the Commonwealth.

A random-selection drawing on May 23, [also livestreamed](#), resulted in the selection of the contest for the Republican nomination for Judge of Commonwealth Court for this RLA.

During the audit, county officials will hand-tally the randomly selected ballot batches, then compare those vote counts to the original machine counts for the selected race. Known as a “batch comparison” type of RLA, this pre-certification audit can confirm whether counties accurately tabulated paper ballots so that a full hand count would produce the same reported outcome.

The RLA will be carried out in addition to the 2% statutorily required review that counties must perform after each primary and general election in Pennsylvania. For that review, county officials are required to conduct a statistical recount of a random sample of at least 2% of all ballots cast, or 2,000 ballots, whichever is fewer.

Counties must complete the RLA by June 5, and they must certify all election results to **Schmidt** by June 9.

History of RLAs in PA

In 2019, the Department convened a post-election audit workgroup. The workgroup researched, discussed, and experimented with different types of RLAs, and it assisted many counties through pilot RLAs over the course of three years. In its [2020 report](#), the workgroup – which included multiple county and state election administrators – recommended that Pennsylvania use this batch-comparison type of RLA.

In September 2022, the Department issued a [directive](#) instructing counties to conduct a pre-certification RLA after every election, beginning with that year's general election.

For more information about RLAs, visit the [Department's website](#).

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