



Uniform Collection of Wait-Time Data

With the passage of HB 19-1278, county clerks around Colorado are now required to collect wait time data at each VSPC open on Election Day. Consistent data gathering methods are essential to providing a real picture of the wait times that voters experience around the state. To ensure that the data gathered is consistent throughout the state, please use the methods outlined in this guide to measure your wait-times. Every effort has been made 1) to ensure that the data gathered is high quality and meaningful, and 2) to simplify the process of data gathering to minimize the burden of this new requirement.

Background of the Method

The method of collecting data outline in this document comes from an April 2018 report published by the Bipartisan Policy Center titled, “Improving the Voter Experience, Reducing Polling Place Wait Times by Measuring Lines and Managing Polling Place Resources.”¹ This same method of measuring wait-time data has been used in over 80 jurisdictions around the country of various sizes, ranging from jurisdictions with under 7,000 voters to jurisdictions with 3 million voters, most of whom vote in person on Election Day. The method of data gathering was designed to be simple enough to not impair election worker’s regular duties while gathering enough data points to be statistically significant. For more information about this method and the background of its development and use, please consult the report referred to in this document.

Collecting the Data

Overview

To collect data uniformly around the state, your election judges will need to collect just two points of data. The first is the number of people in line to check-in at a specific hour of the day and the second is the number of check-in stations your county has available at the VSPC.

¹ JOHN C. FORTIER, ET AL., IMPROVING THE VOTER EXPERIENCE, REDUCING POLLING PLACE WAIT TIMES BY MEASURING LINES AND MANAGING POLLING PLACE RESOURCES (2018), found at: <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Improving-The-Voter-Experience-Reducing-Polling-Place-Wait-Times-by-Measuring-Lines-and-Managing-Polling-Place-Resources.pdf>

This information is only required to be collected on election day during a state-wide election (coordinated, primary, or general). If your county would like to collect data during a different election or on other days during one of these elections you are free to do so. Election judges should collect this data at each VSPC open on election day.

Measuring Lines

To collect uniform data across the state, election judges must measure the check-in line length every hour, on the top of the hour. It is essential that your judges collect this data at these given times to provide an accurate average wait time at each VSPC.

Assign one election judge to count the amount of individuals in line and record that number in one of the following ways:

- Record the wait times on the online form provided by the Secretary of State's office at, <https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/waitTime.html>;
- Record the wait times on the blank data collection sheet included with this document as Appendix A or other appropriate tracking sheet for input into the Secretary of State's online form after Election Day; or
- Record the wait times on the blank data collection sheet included with this document as Appendix A and submit all copies of this form to Sarah Murr at Sarah.Murr@sos.state.co.us.

In the event that an election judge forgets to record the line length at any given time, direct that judge to note this on the sheet or online form and proceed collecting the number in line at the next top of the hour.

Your assigned election judge will also need to collect the number of check-in stations open every hour, on the top of the hour. This is likely to remain constant over the course of election day. However, in the event that a check-in station is added or goes down during the day, your assigned election judge should note this in the online form or sheet attached as Appendix A. At the close of election day, an election judge should note the time that the last voter checked in.

After election day, please ensure that your county has input data from each VSPC into the online form provided by the Secretary of State's office or has submitted the completed data collection sheets (Appendix A) to the Secretary of State's office.

Wait Time Calculation

Once election day is complete and you have provided our office with data from each VSPC, we will calculate the Average Wait Time for each VSPC and for your county as a whole using this formula:

$$\text{Average Wait Time} = \text{Average Line Length} \div \text{Average Arrival Rate}$$

The data that you collect at each VSPC will be used to calculate the "Average Line Length". The "Average Arrival Rate" will be calculated by the Secretary of State's Office by taking the number of voters who checked-in at a VSPC and dividing it by the number of hours each VSPC is open.

Note: Your task following the election is only to input the numbers you received from your election judges on election day. Follow the instructions provided to correctly input these numbers. Once you have input these numbers, the Secretary of State's office will calculate an "Average Wait Time" for your VSPCs. Please contact the Secretary of State's office for the results of your wait time data collection.

Appendix A

Line Length Data Collection Sheet

County Name: _____

VSPC Name: _____

Election Judge: _____

Instructions: Please use this sheet to record the number of people waiting in line to check in at the top of the hour at the indicated times, along with the number of available check in stations. If there is no one in line at the time, please enter a zero.

Time	Line Length	Number of Check In Stations
7:00 AM		
8:00 AM		
9:00 AM		
10:00 AM		
11:00 AM		
12:00 PM		
1:00 PM		
2:00 PM		
3:00 PM		
4:00 PM		
5:00 PM		
6:00 PM		
7:00 PM		

At what time did the last voter check in to vote: _____