Pennsylvania
Department of State

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Department of State Begins Risk-Limiting Audit of 2026 General Election

Harrisburg, PA – Today, the Department of State began Pennsylvania's statewide risk-limiting election audit (RLA) of the Nov. 3, 2026 general election.

"We have the utmost confidence in RLAs, which remain the gold standard of comprehensive election audits," **Secretary of the Commonwealth Al Schmidt** said. "These audits provide a statistically sound, scientific method for confirming that the reported outcome of the election is accurate, and they are an integral part of our commitment to ensuring the integrity of Pennsylvania's elections."

Ten Department employees took turns rolling 10-sided dice to generate a random 20-digit number, which is used to identify which batches of ballots counties will manually 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.

The race for governor was the only contested statewide race on the ballot, so it is the one being audited in this RLA.

During the audit, county officials will hand-tally the randomly selected ballot batches, then compare those vote counts to the original voting system counts for the selected race. Known as a "batch comparison" RLA, this audit confirms whether counties accurately tabulated paper ballots such that a full hand count would produce the same reported outcome.

The RLA is carried out in addition to the 2% statutorily required audit that all counties must perform after each primary and general election. For that review, county officials must 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 Nov. 19, and they must certify their election results to the Department by Nov. 23.

For more information about RLAs, visit vote.pa.gov/audits.

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