

Alternative Verification Options Pilot Project



King County Elections—November 2024

King County Elections is applying to participate in the Alternative Verification Options Pilot Project during the April 22, 2025, Special Election.

KCE proposes implementing an alternative verification method allowing voters to provide an identification number—a Washington State driver's license number, a Washington State ID number, or the last four digits of their Social Security number—which would be compared to the corresponding number in their voter registration record in VoteWA.

Under the proposed system, whatever ID number a voter provides must match exactly with the corresponding number in VoteWA to be accepted. If a voter's record in VoteWA does not contain a specific ID number, the voter may not use that ID to verify their ballot.

How a voter submits their ID information will depend on how the voter is accessing their ballot.

MAIL BALLOT

Voters using a mail ballot, including a ballot issued at a Vote Center, will be able to use an online tool we are developing with Democracy Live. Democracy Live is currently reviewing our proposed plans and system requirements.

What follows is a description of the proposed tool, including draft processes, system requirements, and rationales. To proceed to each next step, every prior step must be successful.

1. Voter logs in to the tool using their name and date of birth.
 - This prevents non-eligible voters from accessing the tool.
 - This allows the tool to look up the specific voter in a database that KCE will upload to the tool.
2. Voter enters the ballot ID number printed on the return envelope for the ballot they are trying to verify.
 - This ensures that the alternative verification method is verifying a specific ballot (not just verifying a voter generally).
 - The tool will compare the number entered by the voter to a ballot ID number uploaded to the tool by KCE. Only the most recently issued ballot ID from VoteWA will be uploaded, which will prevent a voter from verifying multiple ballots.
 - The tool will not allow the voter to proceed unless the information the voter enters matches the ballot ID number from VoteWA. For security reasons, if an incorrect number is entered three times, the voter will be locked out of the tool. We will ask Democracy Live for the ability to have select KCE staff unlock records.
3. Voter is shown the ballot declaration and asked to read and attest to the declaration.
4. Voter is asked to provide a Washington State driver's license number, Washington State ID number, or the last four digits of their Social Security number.
 - The tool will compare the number entered by the voter to the relevant ID information for the voter in VoteWA based on information uploaded to the tool by KCE. Democracy Live handles ID information for many of the other states they provide services for, including Colorado, Delaware, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, and West Virginia. We are confident in the security measures they have in place to protect their data.

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- The tool will not allow the voter to proceed unless the number matches. For security reasons, if an incorrect number is entered three times, the voter will be locked out of the tool. We will ask Democracy Live for the ability to have select KCE staff unlock records.
5. Once the voter has submitted a matching ballot ID number, attested to the ballot declaration, and submitted their matching identification information successfully, they receive a prompt to return their ballot by USPS or ballot drop box.

KCE will export information from the tool on the voters and ballots that have been successfully verified and upload that information to our sorter. This will allow the sorter to out-sort any pre-verified ballots before they get to signature verification and will allow us to upload them in groups to VoteWA as “Accepted.”

We are still working on a process for documenting in VoteWA that a ballot was verified via the alternative verification method and not signature verification.

ONLINE BALLOT

Voters accessing and printing ballots using the Online Ballot Marking Program will be given the option to include ID information—their Washington State driver’s license number, Washington State ID number, or the last four digits of their Social Security number—on the ballot declaration page that prints out with the rest of their ballot packet. If a voter chooses to include ID information and does not also include a matching signature, KCE will check to see if the ID information included matches the information for the voter in VoteWA. If it does, the ballot will be marked as “Accepted” and move forward in the process. If it does not, the ballot will be challenged as if it had a missing signature.