

# Election Audits in South Carolina

The State Election Commission (SEC) requires counties to conduct hand-count and results-verification audits for any federal or state-level election.

## **Hand-Count Audits**

Voters verify their votes on their paper ballot before casting it. The hand-count audit is designed to ensure the votes recorded by the scanners match what was verified by the voters.

### **Hand-Count Audit Steps:**

- Precincts and offices are selected for the audit.
  - The SEC selects the precincts and offices for each county in federal and state-level elections.
  - Local election officials select the precincts and offices for local elections.
- Election officials publicly open the ballot box for the selected precinct(s) and hand count the votes for the selected office on the voter-verified paper ballots.

## **Results-Verification Audits**

A results-verification audit is an independent, automated audit that relies solely on the use of independent software to tabulate ballot images. The results from the independent tabulation are then compared to the tabulation results from the voting system.

The results-verification audit is conducted using ballot images. The use of ballot images allows elections officials to maximize the technological functions of the voting system while minimizing human error and eliminating chain of custody issues by using securely stored ballot images, rather than voted paper ballots.

A discrepancy variance level of 0.5% is established for results-verification audits. If there is a variance between the voting system results and the audit results greater than 0.5% in any given contest and the variance cannot be explained, additional auditing will be performed.

The SEC has contracted with Clear Ballot, a Boston-based elections technology company, to conduct these audits. Clear Ballot offers the ClearAudit software product, which is the only currently available, market-ready software product that can perform a results-verification audit using ballot images from voting systems.

### **Pre-Audit Tasks:**

To prepare for the results-verification audits, the SEC provides Clear Ballot with the following:

- PDF files of all ballot styles for each county's election.
- Pre-election reports for all precincts showing no votes cast.
- Information to assign ballot styles.
- Files needed to process ballots used with ballot-marking devices.

## **Greenville County Audits for 2022 General Elections results follow:**



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Audit Threshold Report

Audit Stage Filter	Write-ins Eliminated	Report Created:
Final	Yes	2022-11-13 09:36

	Contest Name	Sum of Vote Differences (ABS Value) [1]	Sum of Votes Cast by Contest	Audit Ratio [2]
1	Straight Party (Vote for 1)	4	89,534	0.004%
2	Governor and Lieutenant Governor (Vote for 1)	4	177,150	0.002%
3	Secretary of State (Vote for 1)	4	176,028	0.002%
4	State Treasurer (Vote for 1)	4	152,650	0.003%
5	Attorney General (Vote for 1)	4	132,427	0.003%
6	Comptroller General (Vote for 1)	3	133,198	0.002%
7	State Superintendent of Education (Vote for 1)	6	175,873	0.003%
8	Commissioner of Agriculture (Vote for 1)	4	151,220	0.003%
9	U.S. Senate (Vote for 1)	5	176,296	0.003%
10	U.S. House of Representatives District 04 (Vote for 1)	2	107,229	0.002%
11	State House of Representatives District 20 (Vote for 1)	1	11,322	0.009%
12	Solicitor Circuit 13 (Vote for 1)	3	131,302	0.002%
13	Probate Judge (Vote for 1)	4	175,237	0.002%
14	Auditor (Vote for 1)	4	131,680	0.003%
15	County Treasurer (Vote for 1)	5	131,785	0.004%
16	Soil and Water District Commission (Vote for 2)	2	104,547	0.002%
17	School Board 22 Greenville County (Vote for 1)	2	11,846	0.017%
18	Amendment 1 (Vote for 1)	6	154,857	0.004%
19	Amedment 2 (Vote for 1)	4	157,086	0.003%
20	State House of Representatives District 22 (Vote for 1)	0	11,989	0.000%
21	State House of Representatives District 23 (Vote for 1)	0	6,050	0.000%
22	County Council District 23 (Vote for 1)	0	8,791	0.000%
23	State House of Representatives District 24 (Vote for 1)	0	12,038	0.000%
24	School Board 24 Greenville County (Vote for 1)	0	13,216	0.000%
25	State House of Representatives District 25 (Vote for 1)	0	8,968	0.000%
26	State House of Representatives District 10 (Vote for 1)	0	1,318	0.000%
27	School Board 26 Greenville County (Vote for 1)	0	6,248	0.000%
28	State House of Representatives District 19 (Vote for 1)	0	7,841	0.000%
29	State House of Representatives District 17 (Vote for 1)	1	14,115	0.007%
30	County Council District 17 (Vote for 1)	1	15,297	0.007%
31	State House of Representatives District 21 (Vote for 1)	0	13,096	0.000%
32	School Board 20 Greenville County (Vote for 1)	0	10,054	0.000%
33	State House of Representatives District 16 (Vote for 1)	1	8,931	0.011%

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Audit Threshold Report

Audit Stage Filter	Write-ins Eliminated	Report Created:
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	Audit Stage Filter	Write-ins Eliminated	Report Created:
34	State House of Representatives District 35 (Vote for 1)	0	5,960 0.000%
35	County Council District 19 (Vote for 1)	0	7,974 0.000%
36	School Board 18 Greenville County (Vote for 1)	0	7,893 0.000%
37	State House of Representatives District 18 (Vote for 1)	0	14,888 0.000%
38	State House of Representatives District 28 (Vote for 1)	0	14,947 0.000%
39	U.S. House of Representatives District 03 (Vote for 1)	1	17,041 0.006%
40	County Council District 26 (Vote for 1)	0	11,959 0.000%
41	School Trustee District 2 Area 1 02 (Vote for 2)	0	52 0.000%
42	School Trustee District 2 Area 3 02 (Vote for 1)	0	52 0.000%
43	School Trustee District 2 Area 4 02 (Vote for 1)	0	49 0.000%
44	School Trustee District 2 At-Large 02 (Vote for 1)	0	54 0.000%
46	Fire District Commissioner Dunklin (Vote for 3)	0	957 0.000%
47	State House of Representatives District 7 (Vote for 1)	0	333 0.000%
48	Watershed Conservation Dist South Tyger River (Vote for 2)	0	4,171 0.000%
49	School Board 28 Greenville County (Vote for 1)	0	10,446 0.000%
50	Fire District Commissioner Piedmont (Vote for 3)	0	1,744 0.000%
51	Watershed Conservation District Rabon Creek (Vote for 2)	0	1,648 0.000%
52	County Council District 28 (Vote for 1)	0	12,116 0.000%
53	State House of Representatives District 27 (Vote for 1)	0	10,861 0.000%
54	State House of Representatives District 5 (Vote for 1)	0	790 0.000%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>2,743,154 0.003%</b>

Note 1: Using the absolute value prevents positive and negative discrepancies from cancelling each other out

Note 2: Values of the Audit Threshold Ratio exceeding 0.5% would trigger an examination

**From:** Jay Bollenbacher <jay.bollenbacher@clearballot.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 6, 2022 11:41 AM  
**To:** Russell, Carlton  
**Cc:** Belangia, Conway  
**Subject:** Re: Greenville County Audit Discrepancies

Clear Ballot  
Response

**CAUTION: This email is from an EXTERNAL source. Ensure you trust this sender before clicking on any links or attachments.**

It may be easier to discuss this on a call so we can go into more detail but to summarize, small discrepancies are normally caused by ovals being improperly voted on the full face ballot. Here is an example of a vote that we counted but it is likely that the primary voting system did not since the oval was not filled in enough to register as a vote. Not sure if that helps you understand a little more but let me know if you would like to discuss further.



**Jay Bollenbacher**  
Director, Audit Program  
Clear Ballot Group  
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On Tue, Dec 6, 2022 at 9:29 AM Russell, Carlton <[CARUSSELL@greenvillecounty.org](mailto:CARUSSELL@greenvillecounty.org)> wrote:

Hey Jay, I hope you're doing well.

I saw that Clear Ballot uploaded the General Audit to SCvotes and that we had a small number of discrepancies.

While we're still far under that 0.5% threshold, I was wondering if there was any insight on what you believe caused these discrepancies and if it's something we'll be able to fix/lower for our next election. Were these all caused by full faced mail absentee ballots scanning incorrectly? Any information you have would be helpful!

Thank you!

Carlton Russell







