



PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

Prince William County, Virginia Internal Audit Report – Office of Elections: Timekeeping

April 16, 2021



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TRANSMITTAL LETTER



April 16, 2021

The Board Audit Committee of
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Pursuant to the internal audit plan for calendar year (“CY”) 2020 for Prince William County, Virginia (“County” / “PWC”), approved by the Board of County Supervisors (“BOCS”), we hereby present the internal audit of timekeeping processes specific to the Office of Elections (“Elections”). We will be presenting this report to the Board Audit Committee of Prince William County at the next scheduled meeting on July 20, 2021.

Our report is organized into the following sections:

Executive Summary	This provides a high-level overview and summary of the observations noted in this internal audit, as well as the respective risk ratings.
Background	This provides an overview of the function within the process, as well as pertinent operational control points and related compliance requirements.
Objectives and Approach	The objectives of this internal audit are expanded upon in this section, as well as the various phases of our approach.
Observations Matrix	This section gives a description of the observations noted during this internal audit and recommended actions, as well as Management’s response including the responsible party, and estimated completion date.
Process Maps	This section provides a visual depiction of the future state workflow of key processes.

We would like to thank the staff and all those involved in assisting our firm with this internal audit.

Respectfully Submitted,

RSM US LLP

Internal Audit



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Office of Elections (“Elections”) is a Prince William County (“PWC”) general fund supported agency, not under the direct supervision of the Board of County Supervisors. As mandated by Virginia State Code: § 24.2-106 through § 24.2-122, the County Electoral Board and General Registrar operate the Office of Elections. The Office of Elections implements and manages all aspects of the election process in the County. Currently, the County consists of seven election districts and 93 voting precincts.

The General Registrar and Elections staff are responsible for recruiting and paying registered voters to work at election polling centers in each precinct during an election. Temporary Election Officers are retained to execute the tasks and responsibilities associated with conducting elections, while under supervision of regular Elections staff.

The recruited Election Officers are temporary workers, and not categorized as County employees. Election Officers are paid in one of two ways: 1) Election Officers earning \$600 or less during one calendar year are paid through the County’s Financial Management System (Ascend). 2) Election Officers making over \$600 are entered into the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) to facilitate the generation of a W2 for their cumulative wages earned.

While the audit scope related to Accounts Payable and was limited to payments made to Election Officers through Ascend, we looked to utilize information obtained through Ascend reporting to conduct further analytics designed to identify potential issues with vendor payments. However, we found that limitations with Ascend reporting capabilities prevented the receipt of requested data in a usable format. As such, we were unable to conduct further analytics. Due to the Ascend data constraints, we recommend an Internal Audit of the Accounts Payable process related to vendor payments be added to the CY 2022 internal audit plan due to its inherent high-risk.

Fieldwork was performed during January through April 2021.

Objectives and Scope

The primary objective of this internal audit was to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of Elections’ timekeeping processes related to full-time and temporary employees working an election. As part of our internal audit, we performed the following:

- Gained an understanding of Elections temporary employee timekeeping and payroll related processes and internal control structure;
- Gained an understanding of the system(s) utilized in timekeeping and payroll related processes;
- Conducted interviews with process stakeholders to gain further understanding of processes;
- Validated internal controls over timekeeping are appropriately designed and operating effectively;
- Performed testing of temporary employee wages paid during the audit period in an effort to verify compliance;
- Assessed the adequacy of user access / segregation of duties over timekeeping, time entry approval and reporting;
- Determined if records and documentation for timekeeping are sufficient to establish an audit trail for all transactions involving employees’ time;
- Evaluated controls to validate pay is accurately calculated, overpayment situations are identified and payroll data is accurate; and
- Provided recommendations for process improvements, where applicable.

Where applicable, the testing period utilized was January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

Overall Summary / Highlights

The observations identified during our assessment are detailed within the pages that follow. We have assigned relative risk or value factors to each observation identified. Risk ratings are the evaluation of the severity of the concern and the potential impact on the operations of each item. There are many areas of risk to consider in determining the relative risk rating of an observation, including financial, operational, and/or compliance, as well as public perception or ‘brand’ risk.

Summary of Observation Ratings

(See page 3 for risk rating definitions)

	High	Moderate	Low
Office of Elections	3	4	-

We would like to thank all County team members who assisted us throughout this internal audit.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – CONTINUED

Observations Summary

The following is a summary of the observations noted in the areas reviewed. Each detailed observation is included in the observation matrix section of the report. Improvement opportunities have been provided following the detailed observations section. Definitions of the rating scale are included below.

Summary of Observations	
Observation	Rating
1. Supporting Documentation and Record Retention	High
2. Timekeeping, Tracking, Verification, and Authorization	High
3. Review and Approval of New Vendors	High
4. Use of Timesheets	Moderate
5. Safeguarding of Confidential Records	Moderate
6. Mileage Reimbursement Payments	Moderate
7. Dual Payment Systems for Election Officers	Moderate

Provided below are the observation risk rating definitions for the detailed observations.

Observation Risk Rating Definitions	
Rating	Explanation
Low	Observation presents a low risk (i.e., impact on financial statements, internal control environment, brand, or business operations) to the organization for the topic reviewed and/or is of low importance to business success/achievement of goals.
Moderate	Observation presents a moderate risk (i.e., impact on financial statements, internal control environment, brand, or business operations) to the organization for the topic reviewed and/or is of moderate importance to business success/achievement of goals. Action should be in the near term.
High	Observation presents a high risk (i.e., impact on financial statements, internal control environment, brand, or business operations) to the organization for the topic reviewed and/or is of high importance to business success/achievement of goals. Action should be taken immediately.



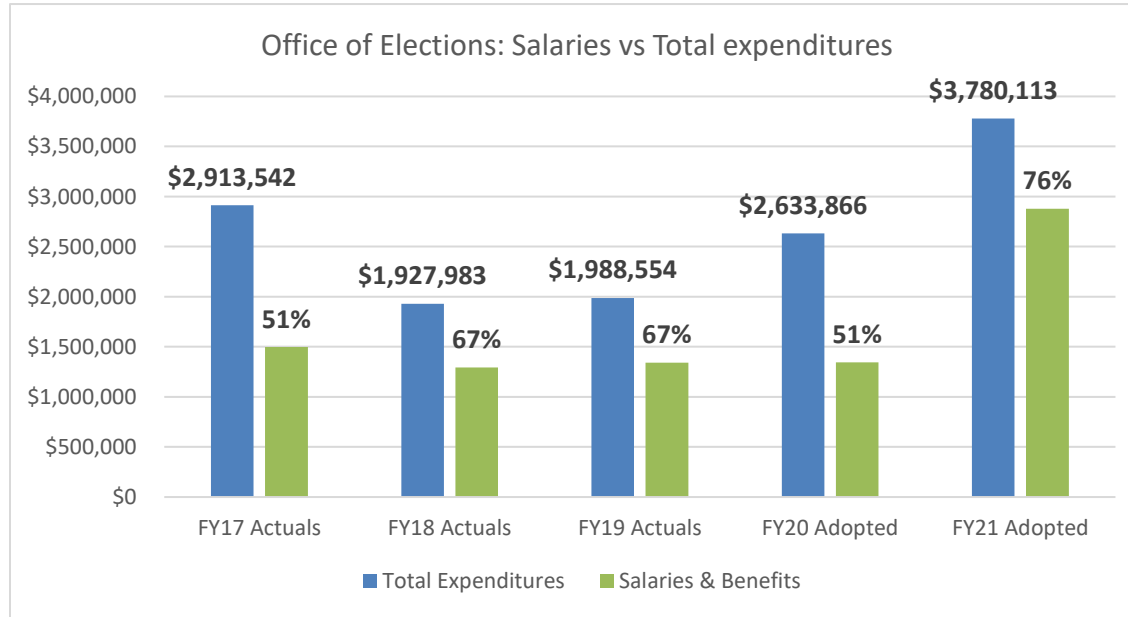
BACKGROUND

Timekeeping Overview

Timekeeping refers to the tracking and documentation of employment related hours for all full-time and temporary Elections personnel. The timekeeping process is inherently high risk, due to the large fluctuations in the required size of the Elections workforce, the volume of transactions, the use of two separate systems (Ascend and HRIS) for payments, limitations of the HRIS system, manual data entry and procedures, and decentralization. The Elections workforce varies throughout the year based on the timing and scope/size of each election. The number of, and types of, elections can also vary year over year, depending on national, state, and local election cycles, as well as special elections conducted to fill seats vacated by death, resignation or off-cycle election to other offices. Elections employees are covered under a variety of work schedules and compensation structures, such as salary, hourly, full-time, part-time, stipend, and seasonal. Pay types include work time, overtime, compensatory time, sick leave time, annual leave time, holidays, shift differentials and other employment related time.

Financial and Other Data

Salary and benefits expenses, as compared to total Elections expenditures, for fiscal year (“FY”) FY17 through FY21 are as follows:



Expenditure by Program	FY17 Actuals	FY18 Actuals	FY19 Actuals	FY20 Adopted	FY21 Adopted
Total Expenditures	\$2,913,542	\$1,927,983	\$1,988,554	\$2,633,866	\$3,780,113
Salaries & Benefits	\$1,498,273	\$1,292,316	\$1,340,964	\$1,343,285	\$2,877,146

Note: The increased salary expenditures associated with FY21 can be attributed to additional staffing and voting centers to support the number of elections held throughout the fiscal year, and No Excuse Absentee/Early Voting associated with the 2020 Presidential election.



BACKGROUND – CONTINUED

Financial and Other Data – continued

Full-time employee headcount remains consistent throughout the year. The number of temporary Election Officers can vary substantially throughout the year depending on Elections' needs to support each election.

CY 2020 Headcount	March Primary	May Towns Election	June Primary	November General Election
Election Day Officers	537	11	468	1,107
Temporary Office Personnel	2	0	2	42
Temporary Early Voting Personnel	7	0	0	160
Full Time Employees	15	15	15	15

Ascend Timekeeping

Each worker, including the on-site Chief Officer, signs a Compensation Claim Form indicating their attendance at the poll location for the day worked. The on-site Chief Officer's signature is relied upon as evidence of review and approval of the workers' attendance for the day; any changes to, or deviations from, the schedule are noted on the Compensation Claim Form. The completed and signed Compensation Claim Forms from each poll location are collected and delivered to a designated employee at the Office of Elections who then enters the attendance information into PollChief. Each Compensation Claim Form includes a unique barcode that is scanned in PollChief to populate the voting location, date and time. The worker's name is then manually entered and the entry represents a full day's work at that voting location. Any changes noted on the Compensation Claim Form by the Chief Officer are appropriately documented in PollChief and copies of the Compensation Claim Forms are retained on file.

After the election, a .CSV file type is exported from PollChief to be uploaded into Ascend. The file is emailed to the County's Department of Finance Financial Systems Services Division (Ascend Vendor Management Team), and the General Registrar is copied on the email. The General Registrar reviews the file at a high level by comparing the total dollar amount to the budgeted amount and forwards an approval via email to the Ascend Vendor Management Team for processing. The Ascend Vendor Management Team returns any errors or rejections to Elections, which are corrected and resubmitted for processing.

HRIS Timekeeping

For full-time employees or temporary Election Officers paid through HRIS, a time sheet is filled out for each pay period worked and signed by the individual. The individual's supervisor confirms that the hours and pay codes on the time sheet are accurate and signs the time sheet as evidence of review and approval. When overtime or additional compensation requests are applicable, a separate designated form is signed by the employee and supervisor and included with the time sheet. The supervisor also completes their own time sheet which is subsequently approved by the General Registrar. All time sheets and additional request forms are forwarded to the Elections department's Payroll Administrator who compiles a master tracking spreadsheet of the total hours worked for each employee and enters the data into HRIS.

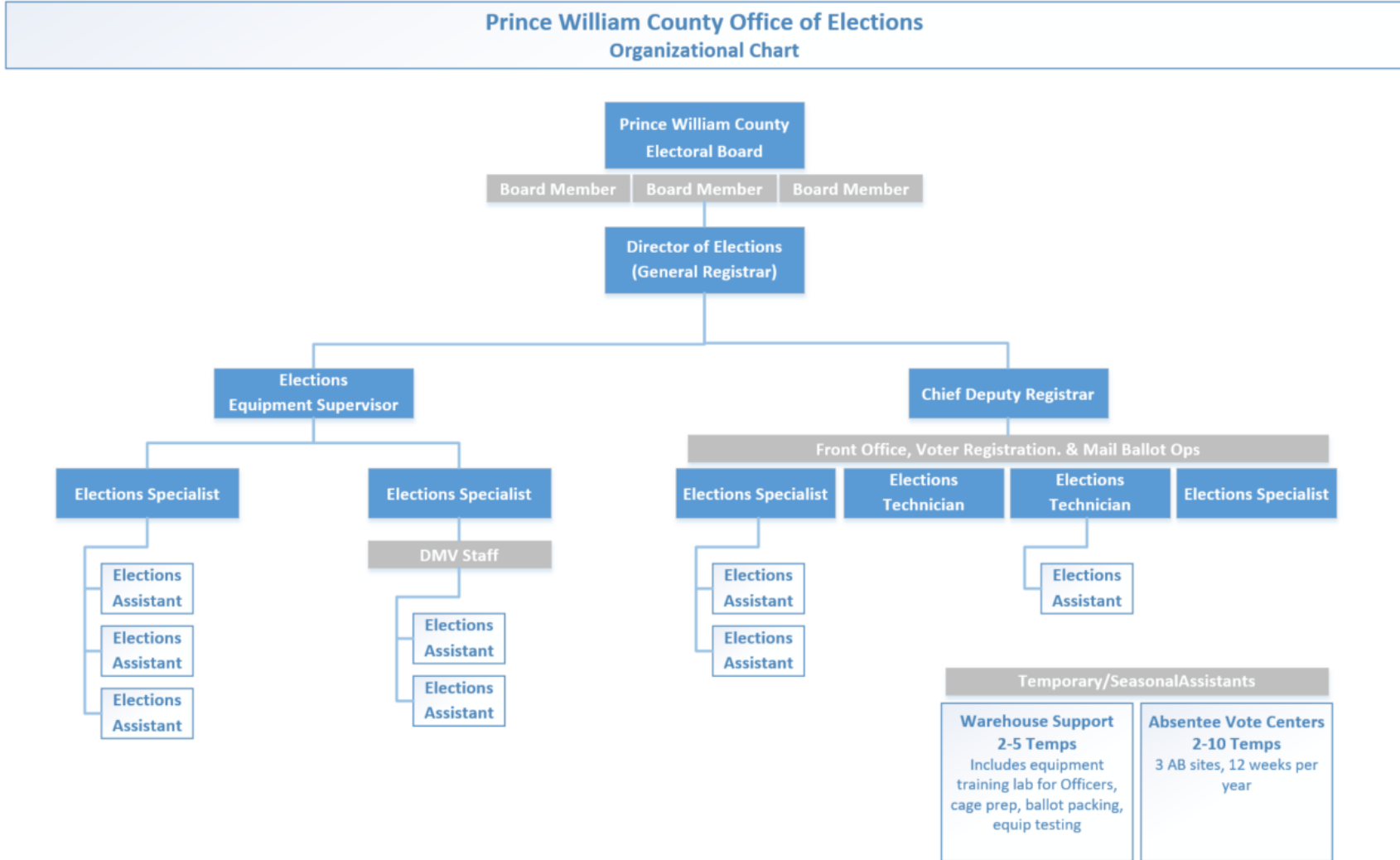
Once all payroll information has been entered into HRIS, the General Registrar reviews the master tracking spreadsheet for the total hours reported per individual to verify the amounts are reasonable, then approves the payroll batch processing and payment. The General Registrar does not perform a review of individual time sheets and relies on the supervisors' approvals to justify payment.



BACKGROUND – CONTINUED

Organization Chart

Full-time staff is retained for regular operations. Temporary Election Officers are also brought on to assist with the increased workload and additional tasks that accompany elections. The Elections full-time staff are organized in the following way:





OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

Objectives

The purpose of the internal audit was to assess the design and operating effectiveness of Prince William County's Office of Elections' timekeeping policies and procedures. The scope of this internal audit encompassed full-time and temporary Elections personnel earning pay from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

Approach

Our audit approach consisted of the following three phases:

Understanding and Documentation of the Process

We conducted interviews with stakeholders from the Office of Elections to discuss the scope and objectives of the audit work, obtained preliminary data, and established working arrangements. We obtained and reviewed 1) applicable Elections timekeeping policies and procedures; 2) copies of financial information; 3) relevant guidance; and 3) other documents deemed necessary; and performed walkthroughs of the process(es) and key controls to gain an understanding of the function and assess the design of the processes/key controls.

Evaluation of the Design and Operating Effectiveness of Process and Controls

The purpose of this phase was to evaluate the design of the process and controls and test compliance of internal controls for operating effectiveness based on our understanding of the processes obtained during the first phase. Testing was conducted utilizing sampling and other auditing techniques to meet our audit objectives. Procedures included the following:

- Gained an understanding of Elections full-time employee and temporary Election Officer timekeeping and payroll related processes and internal control structure;
- Gained an understanding of the system(s) utilized in timekeeping and payroll related processes;
- Conducted interviews with process stakeholders to gain further understanding of processes;
- Validated if internal controls over timekeeping are appropriately designed and operating effectively;
- Performed testing of Election Officer wages paid during the audit period in an effort to verify compliance;
- Assessed the adequacy of user access / segregation of duties over timekeeping, time entry approval and reporting;
- Determined that records and documentation for timekeeping is sufficient to establish an audit trail for all transactions involving employees' time;
- Evaluated controls to validate pay is accurately calculated, overpayment situations are identified and payroll data is accurate; and
- Provided recommendations for process improvements, where applicable.

Reporting

At the conclusion of this audit, we summarized our findings into this report. We conducted an exit meeting with the appropriate Management personnel and have incorporated Management's response into this report.



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX

Observation	1. Supporting Documentation and Record Retention
High	<p><u>Ascend</u></p> <p>Temporary Election Officers paid through Ascend are required to fulfill a full day's duties and sign a Compensation Claim Form to be eligible for payment. The on-site Chief Officer's signature is relied upon as evidence of review and approval of the workers' attendance for the day; any changes to, or deviations from, the schedule are noted on the Compensation Claim Form. The completed and signed Compensation Claim Forms from each poll location are collected and delivered to a designated employee at the Office of Elections for processing.</p> <p>Election Officers must attend certain training classes to prepare them for their job responsibilities. Election Officers are permitted to attend as many training classes as desired but are only eligible to receive payment for two training classes per election.</p> <p>We tested 67 samples of payments to Election Officers made through Ascend. Based on our testing, we identified the following instances related to insufficient timekeeping and payroll documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37 instances where partial documentation to support the payment was retained, but did not fully support the amount paid; • Two (2) instances where no documentation to support the payment was retained; • 11 instances where payment was made for more than two training classes pertaining to one single election; and • 47 instances in which payments for training(s) lacked evidence of review and approval of class attendance. <p><u>HRIS</u></p> <p>Full-time and temporary Elections employees, and temporary Election Officers, paid through HRIS are required to sign a timesheet in order to be eligible for payment. Timesheet records for Election Officers include manually completed documents, cloud based collaboration tools, and electronic timesheets. Required signatures and approvals by on-site Supervisors are required to evidence the completion of duties associated with an Election Officer's role for any given day. Timesheets are then compiled and submitted to a regular Election's staff member for processing and subsequent approval.</p> <p>Election Officers must attend certain training classes to prepare them for their job responsibilities. Election Officers are permitted to attend as many training classes as desired but are only eligible to receive payment for two training classes per election.</p> <p>We tested 50 samples of payments to Election Officers processed through HRIS. Based on our testing, we identified the following instances related to insufficient timekeeping and payroll documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 instances where payment was made for overtime hours without evidence of supervisor authorization; • 14 instances where no documentation to support the payment was retained; and • 14 instances where partial documentation to support the payment was retained but did not fully support the amount paid. <p>Without sufficient documentation supporting payments made to temporary Election Officers, including evidence of review and approval, the County risks processing inaccurate payments. This could result in the potential loss of revenue, failure to comply with wage and hour guidance, and the potential reputational risk associated with incorrect payments made to election workers.</p>



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX – CONTINUED

Observation	1. Supporting Documentation and Record Retention – continued
Recommendation	<p>We recommend the implementation of additional controls to verify that payments made to Election Officers are complete, accurate, and supported. To enhance the accuracy and consistency of timekeeping documentation, we recommend creating and maintaining separate electronic workbooks for each election. These workbooks should contain one tab for each position, organized by title or type. For timekeeping purposes, each tab should include the following attributes, where applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee name • Required hours to earn pay • Actual hours worked • Daily or hourly pay rate • Any additional stipends or bonuses to be paid • Number of training classes attended • Total amount to be paid <p>Throughout the elections process, a designated employee from the Office of Elections full-time personnel should be responsible for updating employee hours worked, training classes attended, mileage reimbursements requested, etc. into the workbook on a continual and timely basis.</p> <p>Prior to processing payroll for an election, a full review of the timekeeping workbook should be conducted by an Elections Supervisor or Manager, separate from the individual who creates and maintains the workbook and updates PollChief, who is responsible for reconciling employee payment amounts in the Excel workbook to the payroll batch, related compensatory forms, training attendance sheets, and other documentation that supports the payment. The reviewing Supervisor should evidence their review and approval by signature or email. After the Supervisor’s review is complete, the General Registrar should provide final approval of the payment and retain signature or email evidence that the review was performed. Any variances should be investigated and resolved prior to final approval.</p> <p>Additionally, the timekeeping workbook should be assessed, at a minimum, prior to and immediately after each election, to identify inactive or terminated election workers for removal from the spreadsheet, update data of active election workers, as needed, and add new election workers to their respective position title tab(s).</p>



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX – CONTINUED

Observation	1. Supporting Documentation and Record Retention – continued
Management Action Plan	<p>Response: Following the departure of the designated employee responsible for processing all payrolls, the need for process modifications was realized. We recognize the need for a staff person dedicated to financial matters, to work with the Election Officer Coordinator. The position is being created with the cooperation of PWC Human Resources. Advertising the position will take place immediately upon Human Resources authorization. The position of Fiscal Specialist is recognized as the responsible staff person, in most departments, for the processing of everything financial. Staff has recognized this issue and has already taken appropriate steps to correct.</p> <p>Utilizing their cell phone, staff is able to complete a daily timesheet using Google Forms and submit their time at the end of each day. This then creates a spread sheet that is used to generate time sheets and be processed for payment. The time sheets are signed off and copies sent to the General Registrar. The necessity to adjust this system of time-keeping will be appropriately reviewed with the new hire. This Google Forms daily timesheet form is being used for the Early Voting election officers and will also be used on election in all precincts.</p> <p>Responsible Party: General Registrar/Director of Elections (Acting Director in place 4/26/21) Election Officer Coordinator (VACANT-Position to be filled by new permanent Director), new position Fiscal Specialist (Position Reclassification in process, advertisement forthcoming)</p> <p>Estimated Completion Date: During Fiscal Year 2022</p>



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX – CONTINUED

Observation	2. Timekeeping, Tracking, Verification, and Authorization
High	<p><u>Ascend</u> All Election Officers, including Chief Officers, that work on elections sign a Compensation Claim Form when they arrive at the voting location. The signed Compensation Claim Forms are collected and attendance data is entered into PollChief. To begin Ascend payment processing, a payment file is extracted from PollChief and emailed to the Ascend Vendor Management Team for processing. The General Registrar is included on the email for approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chief Officer’s signature on the compensatory form is relied upon as evidence of review and approval of all Election Officers’ attendance that day. However, the Chief Officer’s signature only indicates their own attendance as a worker on voting day. There is no additional verification or approval of Election Officers’ time worked. Additionally, reliance on the Chief Officer’s signature would mean they are reviewing and approving their own time. • We tested 67 samples of payments processed by the Office of Elections through Ascend. Based on our testing, we identified the following instances related to inappropriate controls over segregation of duties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 19 instances where the selected employee was the Chief Officer at the voting location and approved their own hours worked. ○ Three (3) instances where the required signature of an appropriate approving authority was not included on a time sheet or other payment request form. • There is no independent review performed of the information entered into PollChief for accuracy or completeness. The information entered populates the .CSV file that is sent to the Ascend Vendor Management Team for processing and payment. • The General Registrar’s review of the Ascend pay file is not a detailed review. Rather, the General Registrar reviews the payroll data at an aggregate level for reasonableness. If the total dollar amount being paid is less than the budgeted dollar amount, they respond to the email and provide approval to the Ascend Vendor Management Team for processing. <p><u>HRIS</u> For full-time employees and temporary Election Officers maintained through HRIS, a timesheet is filled out for a specific pay period and signed by the employee. The employee’s supervisor confirms hours on the employee’s timesheet are accurate, signs the timesheet as proof of review and approval, and forwards the timesheets to the payroll administrator to be entered into HRIS.</p> <p>Once entered into HRIS, the General Registrar reviews a master spreadsheet of total hours reported per employee to verify the totals are reasonable, then approves the payroll batch to be sent to the Finance Department’s Payroll & Accounts Payable Office for further processing.</p>



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX – CONTINUED

Observation	2. Timekeeping, Tracking, Verification, and Authorization – continued
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We tested 50 samples of payments processed through HRIS. Based on our testing, we identified the following instances related to insufficient or inappropriate documentation of the review and approval process(es): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seven (7) instances where the required signature of an appropriate approving authority was not included on a timesheet; ○ One (1) instance where an individual signed their timesheet as both the employee and the approving authority, and ○ One (1) instance where the timesheet was signed by an employee prior to the start of the pay period. • The General Registrar’s review of the HRIS master spreadsheet is not a detailed review. Rather, the General Registrar reviews the hours at an aggregate level for reasonableness. <p>Without appropriate reviews and approvals of timesheets, time entry, and pay files, the following risks are increased: insufficient segregation of duties; inaccurate or incomplete payments; timekeeping and pay errors may go undetected; inappropriate payments.</p>
Recommendation	<p>We recommend that the County implement additional controls to provide an adequate level of review and allow for appropriate level of segregation. If additional resources are not available to enable complete segregation of duties, compensating controls should be identified and documented, as required, within the Office of Elections timekeeping process. Specifically, we recommend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A separate reviewer must review, sign, and date each Compensation Claim Form or timesheet prior to submission for processing and payment. The review should include a reconciliation of who worked that day, what title they were assigned to, and how much they earned for the day. • Once the review is complete, the signed Compensation Claim Forms or timesheets should be aggregated and submitted to a designated Elections employee for processing and entering into PollChief or HRIS. • Once entered into PollChief or HRIS, prior to submission for payment, the General Registrar or Deputy Registrar should perform a detailed review of the .CSV payment file (Ascend) or master spreadsheet (HRIS) and, at a minimum, should sample entries for accuracy and completeness and provide evidence of their final detailed review.
Management Action Plan	<p>Response: Following the 2020 Presidential Election, and the departure of the employee responsible for timekeeping, tracking and verification, it was determined that the incumbent employee did not track, collect, and verify the hours worked by the Temporary Election Officers. After the 2020 Presidential Election in November, a new tracking system for hours worked and payments has been created in the form of a daily timesheet Google Forms document as noted in observation one. The new system was implemented prior to the January 2021 Special Election and will be used again in June. The Employee payroll process will have a new SOP created to add additional controls to the process.</p> <p>Responsible Party: General Registrar/Director of Elections (Acting Director in place 4/26/21)/Elections Officer Coordinator (VACANT-Position to be filled by permanent Director), new position Fiscal Specialist (Position Reclassification in process, advertisement forthcoming)</p> <p>Estimated Completion Date: End of Fiscal year 2022</p>



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX – CONTINUED

Observation	3. Review and Approval of New Vendors – Ascend
<p>High</p>	<p>All new temporary Election Officers attend an orientation where they complete onboarding tasks and documents necessary to begin employment. Requirements for employment include being a registered voter in the Commonwealth of Virginia and swearing an oath. Completed documents from orientation are collected and the information is entered into Ascend at which point the individual becomes active and potentially payable in Ascend. Ideally the temporary Election Officer creates their own vendor record. However, based on circumstances (e.g.: lack of computer/internet access, lack of familiarity with technology, etc.) Elections personnel are permitted to create the vendor profile on behalf of the worker.</p> <p>Based on testing and information gathered during the process walkthroughs, we identified departmental processes in which onboarding of new temporary Election Officers lacked formal review and approval.</p> <p>We tested 67 samples of payments processed by the Office of Elections through Ascend. Based on our testing, we identified the following instances related to insufficient or inappropriate controls surrounding the new vendor review and approval process(es):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four (4) instances where payment was made to the incorrect vendor name, resulting from two individuals sharing one vendor name; and • One (1) instance where a payment was made to the incorrect bank account, resulting in overpayment of one vendor and underpayment of another. <p>Without an appropriate review of new vendors entered into the system, the following risks are increased: fictitious or inaccurate vendor creation; misapplication of payments; inconsistency of documentation.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>We recommend that if a designated Elections employee enters new vendors (temporary Election Officers) into Ascend, the population of new vendors should be reviewed and reconciled to source documentation. Additionally, all vendors should be set up in Ascend prior to their first day of work.</p>
<p>Management Action Plan</p>	<p>Response: Following the departure of the designated employee responsible for creating vendor accounts, we have discovered inaccuracies with information entered into Ascend on behalf of temporary Election Officers including: names, banking info, no payments and double payments. Plans exist to modify the method used to enter information during orientation. Addition of the Financial Specialist will also improve the review and maintenance of the process.</p> <p>Responsible Party: General Registrar/Director of Elections (Acting Director in place 4/26/21)/Election Officer Coordinator (VACANT-Position to be filled by permanent Director), new position Fiscal Specialist (Position Reclassification in process, advertisement forthcoming)</p> <p>Estimated Completion Date: End of Fiscal year 2022</p>



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX – CONTINUED

Observation	4. Use of Timesheets
<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Through process walkthroughs we noted that County timesheets, Excel spreadsheets, Word documents, and online collaboration tools are each used for Elections timekeeping purposes. Methods were inconsistently applied, varying by election site. Additionally, Request for Leave/Comp & Overtime (OT) Approval forms are required to be completed and signed by the requesting employee and their supervisor prior to any leave or overtime. These approval forms were not applied consistently for each election within the testing scope.</p> <p>Process owners identified, during process walkthroughs, that inconsistent timesheet usage during elections has led to inaccurate payments being made to Election Officers resulting in manual adjustments to correct pay amounts.</p> <p>We tested 26 samples of payments processed through HRIS that included payment for overtime hours and identified the following instances related to inconsistent timekeeping documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 instances where an employee did not submit an OT request form but worked and received payment for overtime. <p>Disparate use of timesheets reduces the consistency, efficiency, and accuracy of the timekeeping process which leads to an increased risk of the following: manual override of payroll; misappropriation of County funds; delayed, inaccurate, or unauthorized payments; and circumvention of existing controls surrounding the timesheet review and approval process.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>We recommend that the standard time sheet and the Request for Leave/Comp & OT Approval form currently used for full-time employees be required for timekeeping for all Elections employees. For all instances of overtime payment, the required OT request form should be completed and signed by both the requesting employee and an appropriate approving authority, prior to the employee working overtime.</p>
<p>Management Action Plan</p>	<p>Response: Time keeping process has improved by staff creation of daily timesheet utilizing Google Forms that is currently in place and will be utilized during the June Primary for all Election Officers. Each Election Officer completes a timesheet form each day that they work. Completed forms populate a spreadsheet that is used to calculate the total pay period hours for payment. Internal processing of time sheets/leave/OT will be part of the main responsibilities of the new Fiscal Specialist</p> <p>Responsible Party: General Registrar/Director of Elections (Acting Director in place 4/26/21)/Election Officer Coordinator (VACANT-Position to be filled by new permanent Director)), new position Fiscal Specialist (Position Reclassification in process, advertisement forthcoming)</p> <p>Estimated Completion Date: End of Fiscal year 2022</p>



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX – CONTINUED

Observation	5. Safeguarding of Confidential Records
<p>Moderate</p>	<p>All new temporary Election Officers attend an orientation where they complete onboarding tasks/ paperwork and provide their personal banking information in the form of a cancelled check. Additional sensitive information gathered during orientation includes their social security number, address, and contact information. The paperwork, including the cancelled check, is scanned and saved to a shared folder before it is entered into Ascend. Original copies are then stored in a filing cabinet in the main office.</p> <p>Information gathered through process walkthroughs indicated that every full-time Elections employee has access to the shared folder containing the scanned documents. Additionally, we were told that the filing cabinet containing the original documents is unlocked. We were provided examples where paperwork or checks were discovered to be missing and/or taken off-site by Elections employees.</p> <p>Risks associated with unsecured confidential records include the following: misplaced or incomplete file documentation; susceptibility to misappropriation of documentation containing sensitive data; identity theft and/or other financial misappropriation; and diminished public perception of the Office of Elections.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>We recommend implementing additional internal controls that restrict shared folder access to appropriate personnel and utilize least privilege access controls to only grant permissions to new users on an as-needed basis. All access requests should be reviewed for validity and approved by the control owner. Documents containing confidential or potentially sensitive information should be properly secured or destroyed in accordance with applicable County retention policies.</p>
<p>Management Action Plan</p>	<p>Response: Following the departure of the designated employee responsible for creating vendor accounts, we have discovered inaccuracies with information entered into Ascend on behalf of temporary Election Officers including: names, banking information, missing payments, and duplicate payments. Additionally, the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) policy requirements to a) not remove PII from the office, and b) secure all PII nightly, was not followed by the departed employee. We believe the elimination of Elections personnel entering vendor information for Election Officers will remediate this issue. The collection of PII and bank account information should not be the responsibility of staff, the responsibility should be placed on the Election Officer/Vendor.</p> <p>Responsible Party: General Registrar/Director of Elections (Acting Director in place 4/26/21)/Election Officer Coordinator (VACANT-Position to be filled by new permanent Director), New position Fiscal Specialist (Position Reclassification in process, advertisement forthcoming) Deputy Director (Vacant-Position to be filled by new permanent Director)</p> <p>Estimated Completion Date: End of Fiscal year 2022</p>



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX – CONTINUED

Observation	6. Mileage Reimbursement Payments
<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Elections personnel are eligible for mileage reimbursement for travel incurred as part of their Elections duties. This mileage should be limited to travel between County and polling locations and should be exclusive of the travel time from their home to their work location, and back. Employees seeking reimbursement for mileage complete a Local Travel Reimbursement Form, which is signed by the employee and a reviewer.</p> <p>We tested five samples that included reimbursement for mileage and identified the following instances related to inconsistent timekeeping documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three (3) instances in which the recalculated reimbursement amount did not agree to the total reimbursement amount on the Local Travel Reimbursement Form; • One (1) instance in which the Local Travel Reimbursement Form was not signed by the employee or the approving authority; • One (1) instance in which the Local Travel Details Form was not signed by an appropriate approving authority; • One (1) instance in which the reimbursement included unallowable miles; and • One (1) instance in which the documentation to support the reimbursement was not retained. <p>Inconsistent enforcement of mileage reimbursement documentation and recovery requirements increases the risks of reimbursing employees for unallowable mileage, and reimbursing employee mileage at an incorrect rate.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>We recommend implementing additional internal controls that enforce the consistent use of the Local Travel Reimbursement Form and require that each form be reviewed by an approver who verifies that all mileage requested for reimbursement is accurate and does not include unallowable mileage. Additionally, the reviewer should evidence their approval by signing the Local Travel Reimbursement Form prior to submitting the mileage reimbursement request for payment.</p>
<p>Management Action Plan</p>	<p>Response: The addition of the Fiscal Specialist will ensure the appropriate review of such documents prior to processing.</p> <p>Responsible Party: General Registrar/Director of Elections (Acting Director in place 4/26/21)/Election Officer Coordinator (VACANT-Position to be filled by new permanent Director), New position Fiscal Specialist (Position Reclassification in process advertisement forthcoming.)</p> <p>Estimated Completion Date: End of Fiscal year 2022</p>



OBSERVATIONS MATRIX – CONTINUED

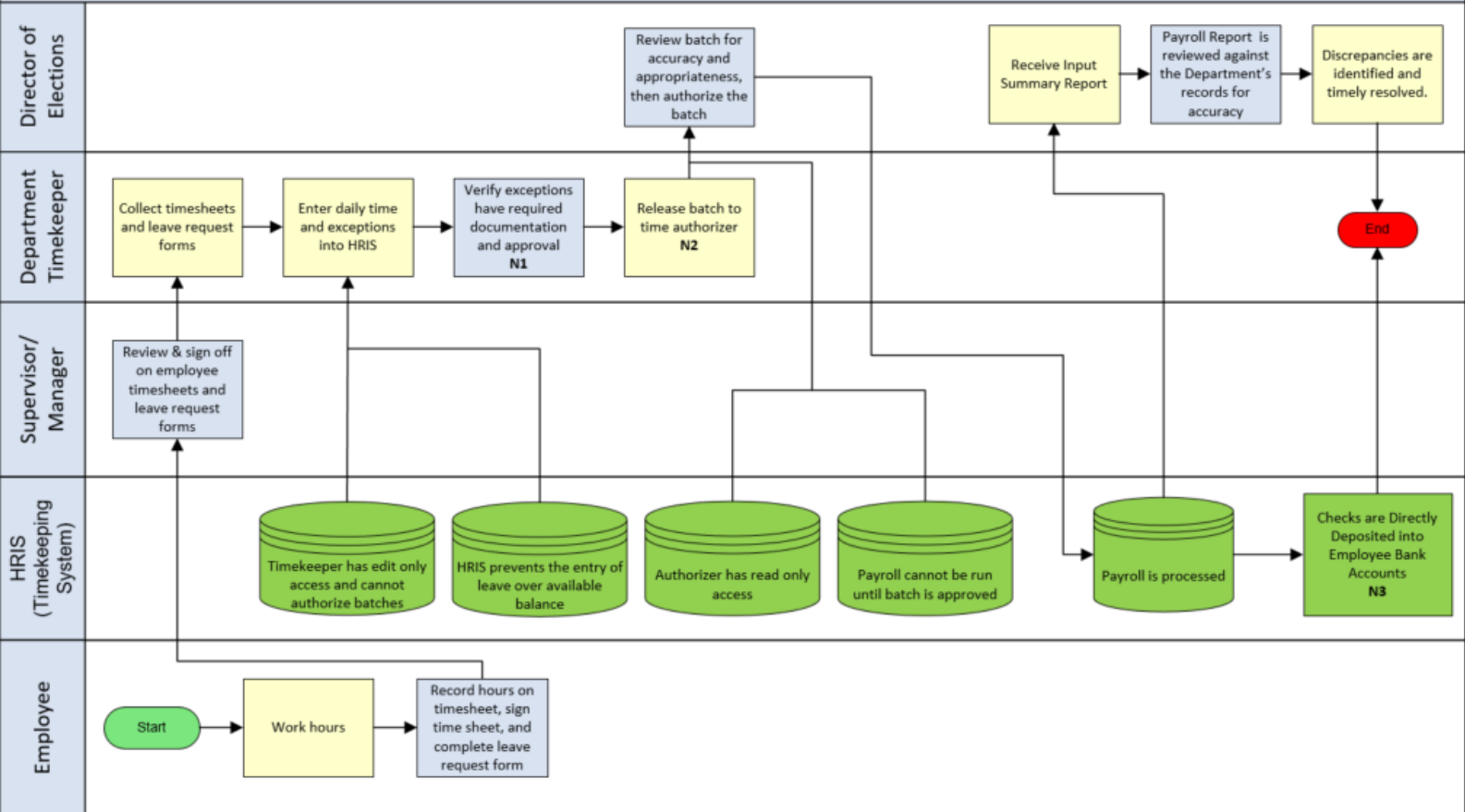
Observation	7. Dual Payment Systems for Election Officers
<p>Moderate</p>	<p>We noted through our review that Elections utilizes two systems for paying temporary Election Officers: Ascend and HRIS. Through walkthroughs we learned that the delineation was intended to differentiate temporary Election Officers that would earn more than \$600 and would require a W-2 (paid through HRIS), from those who would earn less than \$600, and would not require a W-2 (paid through Ascend).</p> <p>We further learned through the County's Payroll & Accounts Payable Office that there is a year-end process to identify anyone paid through Ascend who earned more than \$600 and transfer them into HRIS so they could also be provided with a W-2.</p> <p>From our population of Election Officer payments, we identified the following instances related to Election Officers being paid through the incorrect system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92 instances in which temporary Election Officers making more than \$600 were incorrectly paid through Ascend; and • 24 instances in which temporary Election Officers who made less than \$600 were incorrectly paid through HRIS. <p>Using both Ascend and HRIS to pay temporary Election Officers relies on projecting how much each worker would make, creates additional, unnecessary complexity of dividing the workers into two different groups, results in two separate sets of payroll processes and controls, and adds an additional year-end reconciliation. Using two separate systems for paying personnel increases the risks that: temporary Election Officers may not be paid correctly; unsupported payments could be processed without detection; and workers requiring a W-2 would not be provided with the documentation timely.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>We recommend that Elections continue paying all full-time and temporary Election employees through HRIS, and revise Elections procedures so that all temporary Election Officers are paid through Ascend, while continuing the year-end reconciliation process to facilitate all personnel are provided with W-2s, as appropriate.</p>
<p>Management Action Plan</p>	<p>Response: It is anticipated that the newly created Fiscal Specialist will greatly reduce the problem in segregating the two systems. Using two systems to pay temporary Election Officers is not efficient. The Election Officer Coordinator was not able to accurately project amounts that Election Officers would earn over 12 months. Trying to track payments and managing two different systems for 1200+ Election Officers & Temporary Workers was not an effective process. We recommend using one system (Ascend) to pay all non-employee personnel working for the Office of Elections.</p> <p>Responsible Party: General Registrar/Director of Elections (Acting Director in place 4/26/21)/Election Officer Coordinator (VACANT-Position to be filled by new permanent Director), New position Fiscal Specialist (Position Reclassification in process, advertisement forthcoming)</p> <p>Estimated Completion Date: End of Fiscal year 2022</p>



FUTURE STATE PROCESS MAPS

Prince William County – Timekeeping Process Office of Elections Page 1 of 2

HRIS Timekeeping



Notes:

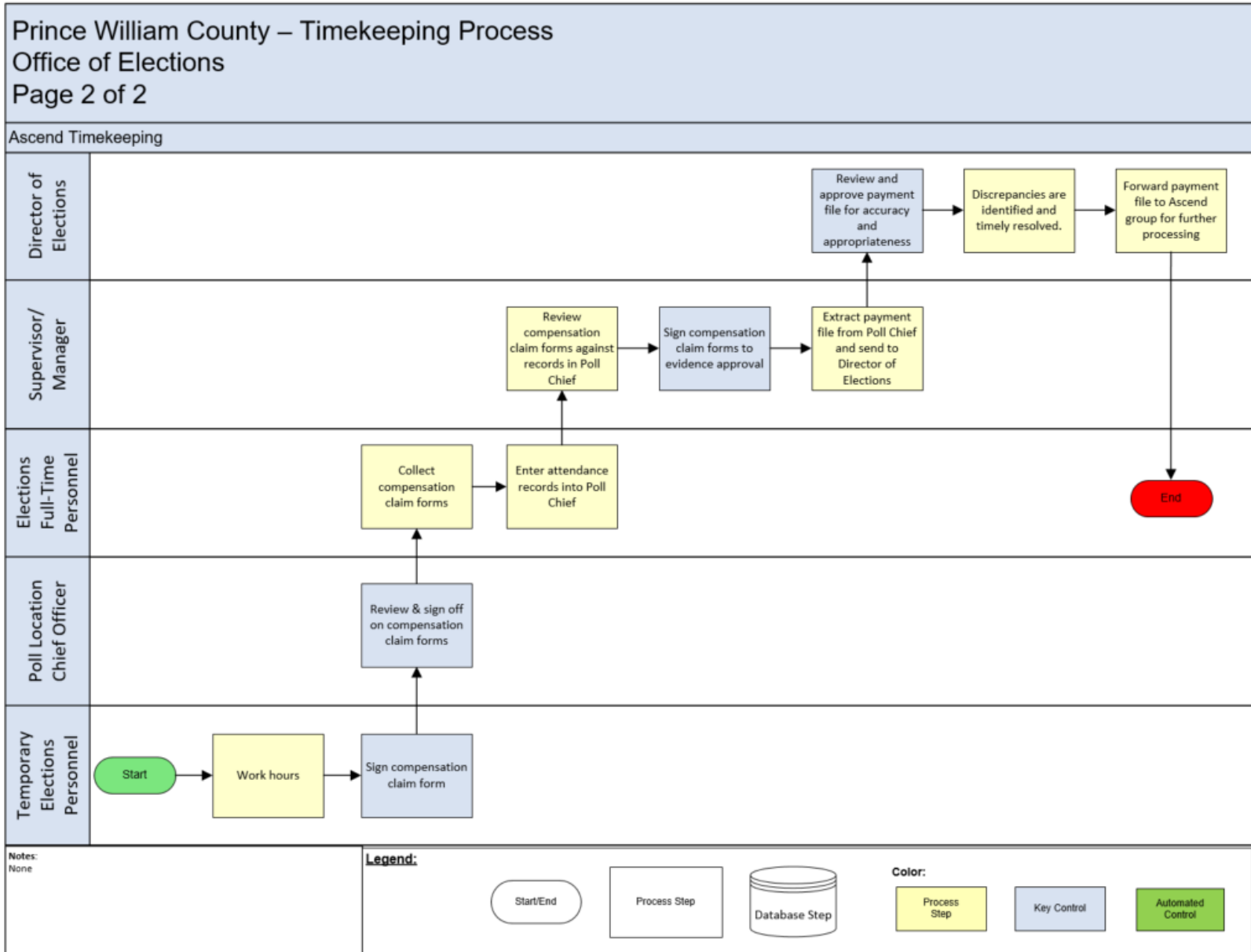
1. "Exceptions" are those hours that the employee does not work (e.g. sick or annual leave) or hours over the employee's normal schedule (e.g. over time). Since the system pre-populates the time based on the employee status (FT or PT) only the exceptions to the hours are entered.
2. "Batch" is all of the time data entered for a department
3. If the employee does not have a bank account on file, a check is mailed instead of directly deposited.


Legend:





FUTURE STATE PROCESS MAPS – CONTINUED





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