



Republic of Liberia

National Elections Commission

**Tally Exception Procedures for the Election of the
President, the Senate and Members of the House of
Representatives of the Republic of Liberia
11 October 2005**

Possible Problems During the County Tally

1. General Principles

There are likely to be cases where a Record of the Count form from a polling place cannot be easily processed during the Tally at the County Tally Centres. Simple problems might include illegible writing and calculation errors in the addition of total number of votes cast. More difficult problems may include Record of the Count forms received from polling places where the VP code is non-existent, etc.

Any change that is made to a Record of the Count must:

- i. be made with the agreement of the Magistrate;
- ii. be completed in red pen (or another colour as to clearly distinguish the original from the change) and in such a manner as to leave the original information visible;
- iii. have the reason for the change noted on the Record of the Count form;
- iv. be signed and dated by the Magistrate and, if available, the Presiding Officer;
- v. noted in a County Tally Journal and included in a report to the National Tally Center.

Progress in the Tally should not be significantly delayed by problematic Record of the Count forms. Problematic Record of the Count forms should be placed aside in a quarantine area (with necessary contacts made to investigate). Properly completed Record of the Count forms should be processed immediately.

2. Solutions to Sample Problematic Record of the Count forms

a. The total number of votes exceeds the number of registered voters?

The electronic County Tally Database will generate an error and will not allow the user to proceed without a justification in the "Remarks" box.

The Tally staff should investigate why the number of votes exceeds the number of registered voters. The Presiding Officers Worksheet and Polling Journal, as well as the Additions to the FRR sheet should be checked for possible explanations. If a justification is found, it should be explained in the provided "Remarks" box and the Record of the Count saved in the Tally Database. If a justification cannot be found at the Tally, the Record of the Count should be quarantined.

b. The total number of votes does not equal the sum of the candidate votes plus invalid votes?

The County Tally Database will not allow the saving of a Record of the Count form if the number of candidate votes plus invalid votes does not equal to the total number of votes.

If there appears to have been a simple error in the calculation of the total votes, the candidate votes should remain the same and the total number of votes should be changed.

If error is not easily identifiable and correctable, the Record of the Count should be quarantined with the possibility of opening the ballot box and recounting considered.

c. Results are not received from a polling place and it is determined that the results from this polling place are irretrievable?

When the Declaration of Preliminary Results is printed and signed by the Magistrate, a cover sheet will need to be written and signed that explains why all planned polling places failed to report results.

d. A Record of the Count form is received from a non-existent polling place (i.e. the County Tally Centre receives results from polling place 5 in a voting precinct with only 4 polling places)?

Neither the manual tally sheet nor the tally database can accept results from a non-existent polling place.

The Record of the Count form should not be processed until it can be determined how the Record of the Count form was mistakenly numbered. If this cannot be established then the Record of the Count form should be quarantined.

e. Senate or House results received from a special Non-Returned IDP polling place

The Tally Database and the Manual Tally Sheet have not been prepared for Senate and House counts from the special non-returned IDP polling places.

The Record of the Count form, in this case, should be quarantined.

f. The 'votes obtained' column for a candidate is left blank?

It should be first assumed that the blanks are zeros and then checked if the sum of the candidate votes plus invalid votes equals to the total votes. If this check is not successful, then the Record of the Count form should be quarantined. If the Presiding Officer is not available to clarify, the Magistrate should consider opening the ballot box and recounting the ballots.

g. Other cases.

The Record of the Count form should be quarantined in case of any suspicions.

3. Quarantine Procedures

- a) The Record of the Count form should be placed back in TEE #3 and placed in a designated quarantine area;
- b) A note should be stapled to TEE#3 that includes at least the following information:
 - i. Which Record of the Count (President, Senate, and/or House) is being quarantined;
 - ii. Why the Record of the Count(s) is being quarantined;
 - iii. Date and name/signature of the person quarantining the form.
- c) The quarantine of the TEE/Record of the Count form should be recorded in the County Tally Journal and added to the "List of Quarantined Record of the Counts" (Form No T07). It is important in both the Tally Journal and T07 that the number of votes and the election that are impacted by this quarantining decision be recorded.
- d) The Presiding Officer and/or other relevant staff should be contacted for necessary clarifications and information needed to allow processing of the Record of the Count form. The records of attempts to contact the Presiding Officer or others related to the quarantine should be added to the cover note attached to the TEE.
- e) If information is provided by the Presiding Officers or others that adequately resolves the problem, then the Record of the Count form can be removed from the quarantine and processed. The removal from quarantine and the justification for removal should be noted in both the County Tally Journal and in T07.
- f) However, if the investigation finds that there were problems that cannot be resolved or improper procedures were followed at the polling place:
 - i. The Record of the Count form should be placed in an area designated for permanent quarantine. The cover sheet should be updated to indicate the decision and that it should not be processed.
 - ii. The decision and the explanation for permanent quarantine should be recorded in T07.
 - iii. T07 should be sent to the National Tally Center for forwarding to the Board of Commissioners.