

RETURN TO HAND COUNTING

Missouri Method Hand Count Process

Myth-Debunking Workbook

FINDING:

Due Diligence Required to
Ensure Continuity of Government

Linda Rantz



Note on Links:

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Page numbers correspond to page locations in the full eManual, available in paperback or hardcover from Amazon.com, or downloadable from ReturntoHandCounting.com/eManual

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ISBN: 9798264460395 (Paperback)

ISBN: 9798264610059 (Hardcover)

Independently published
September 2025, Linn, Missouri

The hand-counting process and commentary in this manual reflect a layperson’s interpretation of Missouri statutes and rules by someone not qualified as a legal authority. This content is not offered as legal advice and should not replace advice from a licensed attorney. Readers are encouraged to consult a licensed attorney for legal guidance on Missouri’s (or other states’) laws, statutes, and rules, and to verify compliance with local election regulations before applying these methods. The author has made every effort to ensure the information in this book was correct as of August 2025. However, the author does not assume, and hereby disclaims, any liability for loss, damage, or disruption caused by errors, omissions, misuse of this manual, or unauthorized alterations, whether resulting from negligence, accident, or any other cause.

Names appearing on sample forms are fictional. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or deceased, is purely coincidental.



FINDING: DUE DILIGENCE
REQUIRED TO ENSURE
CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT



Myth: Counties Using Voting Machines Don't Need to Consider Any Hand Count Processes

Many clerks may feel they already know all they need to know about hand counting because they conduct the 2% to 5% post-election audit of machines. These audits are done days after an election in the clerk's office or facility. Most jurisdictions select a few races from the ballot – they do not recount the entire ballot. A common complaint is that hand counting the audit sampling is already so time-consuming and tedious that the clerk does not want to consider counting all the ballots.

It probably would do no good to argue with a clerk who, when considering hand counting, is looking at it from the perspective of a process they are already using – good or bad.

The reality is that there are federal, state, and local laws regarding the “continuity of government.” Government agencies and offices must be able to conduct business, including elections, in the case of catastrophic events (such as natural disasters, attacks, etc.). Clerks are obligated by the duty of their office to have emergency preparedness plans in place. It may not just be a matter of no power or communication, but it might also be impossible to transport voting equipment to polling locations. Having a “Plan B” for counting ballots is essential.

Emergency Hand Count Guide

Emergency Preparedness for Precinct-Level Ballot Counting

If an emergency occurs during or near an election day, whether a power outage, natural disaster, cyber-attack, or something else, are election authorities prepared with a 'Plan B'? Even under the worst of circumstances, elections must still be conducted. These emergencies could incapacitate voting machines and necessitate hand counting the ballots, so pre-planning is vital.

A Guide is offered as a resource to assist election authorities in proactively planning for emergencies. Since no two states share identical laws regarding counting ballots, the Guide provides considerations and a basic preparation overview. Specific requirements may vary based on local regulations and procedures. The key is to have all necessary materials organized and readily available to conduct an efficient and accurate hand count.

Estimating Quantities of Supplies and Forms to Prepare for Emergencies

Forms and Supplies Prepared in Advance by the Clerk

By calculating the expected turnout at the polling place and the number of candidates and questions, the **Forms and Supplies Estimator** (see page 265) will approximate all forms and supplies that a clerk should prepare as part of an emergency preparedness kit.

Tool: Emergency Hand Count Forms

After the clerk has used the Forms and Supplies Estimator and knows which hand count forms and quantities are needed, download the forms using the tool for **Primary Emergency Forms**.

The core of the hand-counting process presented in this eManual is tallying votes and tabulating the results. The four primary forms in the Missouri Method are the Ballots Tally form, Batches Summary sheet, Results of Polling Place, and Statement of Returns. The hand count process has additional forms, but these four primary forms are recommended as all that would be needed for an emergency.



AUTHOR BIO

Linda Rantz

In October of 2022, in response to Mike Lindell's call to "get rid of machines," Linda Rantz asked herself, "and replace them with what?" She took action to find out, starting with a visit to Louisiana where that team was demonstrating their hand count method. Returning to Missouri, Linda immersed herself in Missouri's laws, learning that not only was hand counting permitted in her state, but the laws dated back to 1977 (and probably even earlier).



Based on Missouri statutes, Linda began to write an 'outline' of the Missouri Method hand count process. It grew into a 300-page eManual, which includes 60 pages of process and a multitude of links to supporting documents and laws, all with the hopes of giving others the information they need to speak with their election officials. The guide, "*Return to Hand Counting*," is available in paperback, hardcover, digitally, and a downloadable PDF at ReturntoHandCounting.com/eManual.

Linda, with her husband Craig Rantz, continues to promote and teach hand counting around the country. Together they have already trained groups, in person or online, in more than half the states, including Georgia, Pennsylvania, Nevada, Oregon, and New York!

Contact Linda Rantz

Email: ContactUs@ReturntoHandCounting.com

X.com: [@CofAMissouri](https://twitter.com/CofAMissouri)

VOCL.com: [@LindaRantz](https://www.vocloud.com/@LindaRantz)

TruthSocial.com: [@LindaRantz](https://truthsocial.com/@LindaRantz)

GETTR.com: [@LindaRantz](https://gettr.com/@LindaRantz)

Website: ReturntoHandCounting.com



Return to
Hand Counting
Website

PERMISSION FOR USE

From the Author, Linda Rantz:

Return to Hand Counting is a resource dedicated to sharing a hand-counting process for elections, based on my layperson's interpretation of Missouri statutes. This eManual, available in print and digitally, is the result of my efforts to design and document a complete hand count process: from opening of polling places to delivering election results to the clerk.

The Missouri Method hand count process is easy to learn, taking less than 60 pages of this publication (Section 5, pages 70 to 128). The other 200 or so pages contain additional commentary, illustrations, and resources.

All hand count forms and instructions provided in this eManual or as downloadable files were created by me, including the distinctive ballot tallying form design with oval-style vote marking. These forms may be printed and used as provided, but they must not be altered in part or in whole (including their design style) or claimed as new works without permission.

To protect the integrity of this work and prevent unauthorized edits that could be misrepresented as my own, the PDF version of this eManual and all downloadable forms are password-protected to allow printing and reproduction but prohibit editing. The Microsoft Word version is not provided for these same reasons. Visit ReturntoHandCounting.com/Copyright for more information.

Election Officials

The Missouri Method is very adaptable and could potentially be used in many other states. If you are an election official interested in using the Missouri Method hand-counting process at no charge for non-commercial election purposes, I invite you to contact me for permission. Please submit a permission request form (available at ReturntoHandCounting.com/Copyright) detailing your intended use and acknowledging the manual's disclaimers. Upon review, I will grant written permission with specific conditions, such as attribution to Linda Rantz and verification of local legal compliance. The permission process ensures the Missouri Method is used responsibly and allows me to offer guidance where needed.

Not Intended as Legal Advice

This work is not legal advice, and readers are encouraged to consult a licensed attorney to ensure compliance with local election laws before applying the process. I have made every effort to ensure accuracy as of August 2025, but I disclaim liability for any errors, omissions, misuse, or unauthorized alterations.

Let's work together to promote transparent elections—feel free to reach out with questions or feedback!