

RETURN TO HAND COUNTING

Missouri Method Hand Count Process

Myth-Debunking Workbook

FINDING:

Works in Any County Any Size

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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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: WORKS IN
ANY COUNTY, ANY SIZE



Myth: Hand Counting Only Works in Small Counties

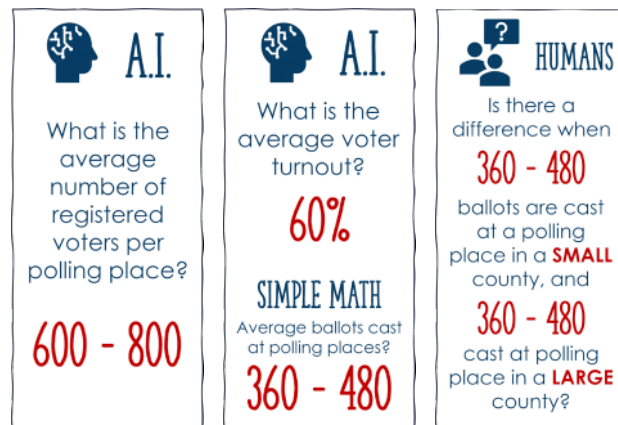
Ironically, I have encountered people who want hand-counted elections but then repeat the talking point that it is probably only for small counties. They have the best intentions and are using what they believe is common sense: that a smaller number of ballots are doable for hand counting, but larger counties will need machines. The first question is how many ballots are cast at any polling place.

Average Number of Ballots Cast at Polling Places = 360 to 480

We used artificial intelligence and asked for the average number of registered voters per polling place across the United States. AI said 600 to 800. Next, we asked for the average voter turnout in the United States. AI said 60%. Simple math that a human can do calculates that the average number of ballots cast at a polling place in the United States is 360 to 480.

Size of the Polling Place is Important, Not the Size of the County

These averages beg the question: Is there a difference when 360-480 ballots are cast in a polling place in a SMALL county versus the same number of ballots cast in a polling place in a BIG county? It doesn't matter where the polling place is located – it matters how many ballots are cast.



312 Visual Aid of AI Providing Estimates of Polling Place Averages

Apple to Apple Comparison of Large vs Small Counties Polling Places

To illustrate, compare Osage County, Missouri, with St. Charles County, Missouri. We will look at turnout for the April 2023 election (the one that was hand-counted in Osage).



313 Example of Voter Turnout at 2 polling places in different Missouri Counties, 1 large county, 1 small county

Osage has under 10,000 registered voters. St Charles has about 292,000 registered voters.

At the Westphalia polling place in Osage, 481 ballots were cast. There was one counting team (4 people), and it took them about 5 hours to count the ballots.

St. Charles has 115 polling places. Of those, **83 polling places had LESS than 481 ballots cast.** LESS than the number of ballots cast in a polling place in a SMALL county. And, of the

remaining 32 polling places in St. Charles, they were all under 1,000 ballots cast. We would have recommended two teams at those polling places. **St Charles could have hand-counted the entire 2023 municipal election in 5 hours.**

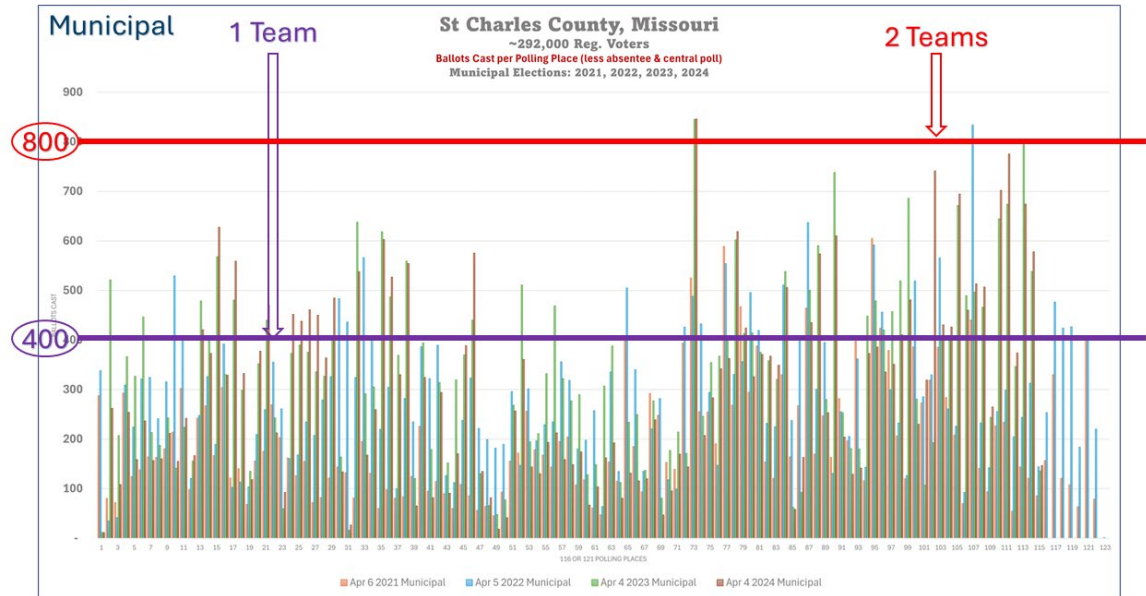
Tool: Visualizations of Voter Turnout

It is sometimes more effective to explain voter turnout and the counting teams needed using a visual aid. Simple bar graphs can illustrate the point using the same historical voter turnout data used in other estimating tools.

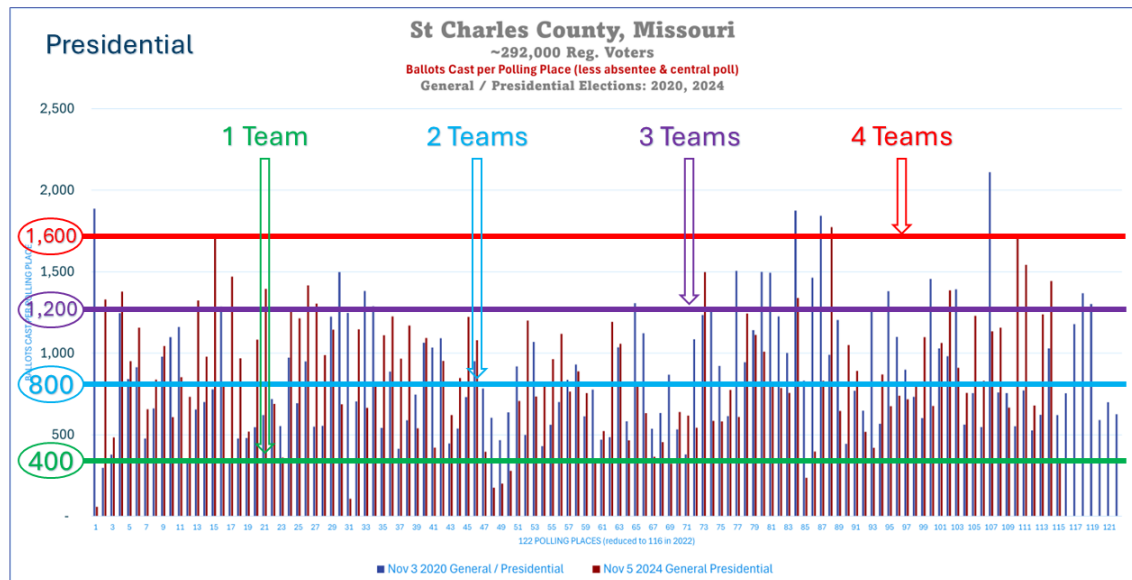


St. Charles County Polling Places Seldom Require More than 1 Counting Team

Municipal elections occur yearly in Missouri, and the first graph shows that very few polling places need two teams. The bottom graph shows turnout for the last two presidential elections (2020 and 2024). The lines indicate a counting team added for every 400 ballots. Download the template from ReturntoHandCounting.com/Tools to create these graphs.



315 Municipal Elections in 2021-2024; typically a municipal could be counted at 100 ballots/hour, but even at 50 ballots/hour all polling places could be counted in 8 hours with 1 or 2 teams at each location



314 Presidential Elections in 2020 and 2024, the majority of polling places need 1 or 2 teams, some need 3 teams and very few need 4 teams; keep in mind these elections happen once every 4 years

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!

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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.

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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!