

Colorado Department of State

Quick Reference Guide

Revised 10/23/2013



Recount

The purpose of a recount is to re-tabulate the ballots. A recount occurs only after the canvass board certifies the original vote count.

[Section 1-10.5-101 C.R.S., Election Rule 10]

When is a recount mandatory?

The DEO must conduct a recount when the difference between the highest number of votes cast in an election contest and the next highest number of votes in the same contest is less than or equal to one-half of one percent of the highest vote cast in that election.

Example:

- Candidate #1 – 200 votes
- Candidate #2 – 198 votes

- (1) $200 \text{ votes} - 198 \text{ votes} = 2 \text{ votes}$
- (2) $2 \text{ votes} \div 200 \text{ votes} = .01 \text{ or } 1\%$
- (3) 1% is greater than 0.5%, therefore a recount is not mandated.

If more than one person will be elected in an election contest, the DEO must conduct a recount if the difference between the votes cast for the candidate who won the election with the least votes and the candidate who lost the election with the most votes is less than or equal to one-half of one percent of the votes cast for the candidate who won the election with the least votes.

Example:

- Victorious Candidate #1 – 200 votes
 - Victorious Candidate #2 – 180 votes
 - Victorious Candidate #3 – 160 votes
 - Runner-up #1 – 150 votes
 - Runner-up #2 – 135 votes
- (1) $160 \text{ votes} - 150 \text{ votes} = 10 \text{ votes}$
 - (2) $10 \text{ votes} \div 160 \text{ votes} = .06 \text{ or } 6\%$
 - (3) 6% is greater than 0.5%, therefore a recount is not mandated.

[Sections 1-10.5-101, 1-10.5.102, and 1-10.5-103, C.R.S.]

When may someone request a recount?

When a recount is not required, an “interested party” may request a recount. An “interested party” is:

- the candidate that lost the election;
- the candidate’s political party;
- any petition representative for a ballot issue or question that did not pass the election;
- the governing body that referred a question or issue to the ballot if that question or issue did not pass; or
- the agent of an issue committee that either:
 - supported a ballot question or issue that did not pass the election, or
 - opposed a ballot question or issue that passed the election.

[Section 1-10.5-106, C.R.S.]

Who may be present at the recount?

Watchers, official observers, and media observers may be present during a recount. Any political party or candidate involved in the recount or registered issue committee supporting or opposing a ballot measure involved in the recount may appoint one or more watchers to be present at any time during the recount. Restrictions on candidates and family do not apply in recount procedures.

[Election Rule 8.8]

Recount expenses

Mandatory recount: The entity that certified the candidate, question, or issue to the ballot must pay the cost of conducting the recount.

Requested recount: The interested party that requested the recount must pay the cost of conducting the recount.

[Sections 1-6-115, 1-10.5-101(2), and 1-10.5-106(2), C.R.S.]

Questions?

Contact the Elections Division at 303-894-2200 or elections@sos.state.co.us