

# **Recounts**

## **Frequently Asked Questions and Chart (RCW 29A.64.021)**

### ***Q. How do you calculate the percentage of votes between the candidates?***

Add the votes received for the two candidates. Calculate the percentage of the total that each of the candidates received.

### ***Q. What triggers a mandatory recount?***

If the difference between the candidates is less than one half of one percent and also less than 2,000 votes, a recount is required.

Statute does not specify how to conduct the recount (manual or machine), unless the difference between candidates requires a manual recount.

### ***Q. When is a manual recount required?***

In a statewide race, the difference between the candidates is less than one quarter of one percent and also less than 1,000 votes.

For all other offices, the difference between the candidates is less than 150 votes and also one quarter of one percent.

### ***Q. Who calls for a recount?***

The Office of the Secretary of State orders recounts for state offices, state measures and multi-county legislative, congressional and judicial offices.

The County Canvassing Board orders recounts for local offices and single jurisdictions.

### ***Q. When is the recount conducted?***

The County Canvassing Boards determine the date and time of the recount. If the Office of the Secretary of State orders the recount it may require counties to submit results of the recounts on a uniform date.

### ***Q. Can a county prepare by sorting ballots before the official date of the recount?***

Observers need the opportunity to observe the preparation work for the recount. Candidates need to have time to designate observers. For these reasons, a county should wait until the designated day/time before opening storage containers and sorting ballots.

**Q. Are people allowed to observe the process?**

Yes. Observers, appointed by the political parties, and the candidates or their representatives, are encouraged to observe all stages of the recount. They should ask questions to the appropriate person about their observations, but may not disrupt the process. Other members of the public may also be allowed to observe the process. If space is limited, WAC 434-264-030 provides a priority list for viewing space.

**Q. What happens after the recount?**

The County Canvassing Boards certify the results of the recount by submitting an amended abstract of votes. If the recount was for a statewide office, state measure, or multi-county legislative, congressional and judicial offices, County Canvassing Boards submit the results to the Office of the Secretary of State and the Office of the Secretary of State certifies the results.

**Q. When is a recount not conducted?**

There are no recounts for local measures.

There are also no recounts if the first and second candidates are close in a primary election.

<b>Machine Recounts</b>				
All Offices	Less than 2000 votes	and less than	0.5% (.005) of the total votes cast for both candidates.	RCW 29A.64.021(1)
<b>Manual Recounts</b>				
Statewide offices	Less than 1,000 votes	and less than	0.25% (.0025) of the total votes cast for both candidates	RCW 29A.64.021(1)(b)(i)
Regional/Local Offices	Less than 150 votes	and less than	0.25% (.0025) of the total votes cast for both candidates	RCW 29A.64.021(1)(b)(i)
<b>Primary vs General</b>				
Primary	A mandatory recount may be ordered if the results between the 2nd and 3rd place candidates meet the necessary threshold.			
General	A mandatory recount may be ordered if the results between the 1st and 2nd place candidates meet the necessary threshold.			