



# ALLEGHENY COUNTY

ALWAYS INSPIRING

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 14, 2020

**Contact:** Amie M. Downs  
412-350-3711 (office)  
412-327-3700 (cell)  
[amie.downs@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:amie.downs@alleghenycounty.us)

## **Elections Division Statement on State SURE System Issue Impacting County System Issue Resulting in Duplicate Ballots Being Issued; Safeguards Prevent Double Vote**

**PITTSBURGH** – The Elections Division today issued the following statement regarding an issue impacting the county's use of the state's Statewide Uniform Registry of Electors (SURE) system resulting in duplicate ballots being issued to voters, and what safeguards are in place to prevent anyone from voting more than once:

An issue with the state's SURE system is causing the printing of duplicate labels for mail-in and absentee ballots. The issue with the state's system was just recently discovered and is impacting only Allegheny County at this time due to the successful effort in encouraging the mail-in ballot option with residents. As of this morning, the Elections Division has received 172,439 applications for mail-in or absentee ballots. A total of 32,372 voted ballots have been returned.

Within the state's SURE system, when there is a large volume of labels processed and printed, the SURE system is timing out (meaning that the state server is no longer replying or fulfilling the data request). An error message pops up and, when acknowledged, the queue clears indicating that the labels are being sent to print. All of the labels are printing, but at some point, the system moves the records that were in the queue when the system timed out back into the queue resulting in the labels being printed a second time.

After consultation with the state regarding its system, the Elections office was advised to print labels in smaller batches to prevent the system from timing out. Since this issue came to our attention and we were able to identify what the problem was, we have begun noting the applications in the queue based on time they were processed. That allows employees to identify any records that come back into the queue so they can be manually separated from the system and no duplicate labels printed.

Even if a person receives multiple ballots, only one return ballot can be counted. This is because the barcode on the label that is being used for tracking is exactly the same. When voted ballots are returned to the office, they are scanned. If another ballot was returned from that same voter, it would show as a duplicate vote when scanned and would be rejected by the system. Staff would mark the ballot as rejected. Those ballots are kept but are not sent to the warehouse to be counted or opened.

Voters are asked to only vote and return one ballot and destroy any duplicates they may have received. As noted above, the scan of the barcode will catch and prevent any duplicate ballot from being counted.

###

Jerry Tyskiewicz, Director

**Department of Administrative Services – Division of Elections**

604 County Office Building | 542 Forbes Avenue | Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Phone: 412-350-4500 | Fax: 412-350-5697

[www.alleghenycounty.us](http://www.alleghenycounty.us)

---

**Follow us:** [allegheny alerts](#) | [facebook](#) | [google+](#) | [instagram](#) | [linkedin](#) | [pinterest](#) | [twitter](#) | [youtube](#)