Prevent and Recover from Electronic Pollbook Failures and Outages

☐ Limit or eliminate connectivity to wireless networks whenever possible.

☐ Implement proper security protocols when wireless connectivity is required.
  – Encrypt all communications between e-pollbook units.
  – Adopt new and strong passwords after every election.

☐ Ensure systems are properly patched as part of Election Day preparations.
  – Review and adhere to all guidelines or requirements created by state or local government IT agencies.
  – Use NIST's cybersecurity framework to develop any additional guidelines.

☐ Keep paper backup of electronic pollbooks in the polling place.
  – Send backup paper of electronic pollbooks with other printing materials as part of proper contingency planning to polling places.
  – Evaluate recovery procedures to ensure they will be easy for poll workers to follow.

☐ Provide sufficient provisional ballots and materials for 2-3 hours of peak voting.
  – Allow voters to use regular ballots when possible.
  – Do not deny or delay providing provisional ballots where eligibility or registration is in doubt.
  – Provide a clear list of when to use the provisional ballot envelopes, including on the envelope. Each section of provisional ballot forms should instruct users what to do.

☐ Provide training for poll workers on implementing pollbook contingencies.
  – Include instructions for managing provisional ballots in case of e-pollbook failure.
  – Make sure provisional ballot forms include clear sections for each person to use.
Be Prepared for Voting Equipment Failures

☐ If using DREs, print backup emergency paper ballots for 2-3 hours of peak voting.
  – Make sure emergency paper ballots are in every polling place and poll workers have been trained to use them.
  – Count emergency ballots after the election without any additional scrutiny of voter qualifications.

☐ Print sufficient ballots for 100% of registered voters if using paper ballot voting systems.
  – Develop procedures to deal with equipment failure or malfunction.
  – Provide information to voters about how their ballot will be counted if equipment is not working while they are voting.
  – Remind voters to check their ballots to prevent over votes.
  – Train poll workers on the process for counting ballots, including hand counting ballots.
  – Recalibrate DRE touchscreens and any other necessary voting equipment repairs in full view of observers.
  – Preprint signage that informs voters of equipment failures and include instructions for when to post the signage with other polling place materials.

☐ Take steps to prevent late polling place openings.
  – Train poll workers on how to deal with equipment failures on Election Day morning.

☐ Plan to assist voters with accessible disabilities if voting machines fail.
  – Distribute backup accessible voting equipment — with all ballot styles available — to geographically dispersed areas.
  – Long-term: Provide each polling place with accessible tablets and printers for voters with disabilities in the event of voting equipment failure.

☐ Conduct a post-election manual audit of paper ballots or audit trail to ensure accuracy of software totals.

Prevent and Recover from Voter Registration System Failures/Outages

☐ Establish a 60-day pre-election blackout window for all noncritical updates and patches.
  – Include a process for emergency updates during the blackout window, including who will authorize the emergency update and how it will be tested prior to rollout, in the contingency plan.
Subject the system to independent vulnerability testing on a periodic basis.

- Conduct vulnerability testing on a quarterly basis.
- Be transparent about what entity is conducting the testing and what standards are being used to conduct the review.

Maintain backup copies of digital records offline in case online access is limited.

- In the weeks before the election, download an electronic copy of the voter information daily and store it securely.

Provide tools to voters for looking up their voter registration status online.

- Conduct outreach to urge voters to use the tool in advance of any registration deadline.

Provide tools to voters to look up their polling place information online and have alternative links available.

- Be prepared to provide voters with alternative links, such as those offered by the Voter Information Project, in case of voter lookup tool failure.
- Provide accurate polling place data to backup site in advance of election, and confirm that backup site is working correctly.

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Prevent and Recover from Election Night Reporting System Failures/Outages

- Establish a redundant election night reporting system to be used in case of outage.
- Do not connect election night reporting systems to voting systems or the statewide registration system.

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Develop a Communication Strategy

- Draft, review, and approve a communication plan prior to Election Day.
- Include key staff and contacts in the communication plan.
- Provide a public site for emergency communications prior to Election Day.