

Johnson County Election Office



Increasing Efficiency in Election Administration

Using Automation to Generate Personalized Election Worker Letters

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to NACRC as a

2007 Election Administration Best Practice

by Brian D. Newby

Johnson County, KS Election Commissioner

Increasing Efficiency in Election Administration: Using Automation to Generate Personalized Election Worker Letters

In Johnson County Kansas, voter registration doubled between 1986 and 2006, requiring more polling places and more election workers to operate the polls. The number of Election Office staff members has remained the same, making increased efficiency essential.

For a Presidential election, we assign up to 1800 workers to staff nearly 300 polling places. Workers at each location include the Supervising Judge, a Designated Driver or a Relay Driver, one or more Election Workers, and a student worker (at most locations).

By law, every election worker must complete training prior to working at the polls on Election Day. In November 2006 we coordinated 15 sessions for workers, ranging from refresher courses for veterans who have worked one or multiple previous elections, to hands-on training for "newbies" who are working for the first time. Experienced workers may substitute an on-line class for an in-person class no more than once a year.

Supervising Judges, who are in charge of the polls, attend a regular training class **plus** a specialized session on Saturday or Sunday before the election.

Previous Procedure: In the manual process for assigning workers, we created basic letters by position, personalized them with an address label for the worker and another label for the polling place, and enclosed additional sheets with other information. Opportunities for error were abundant, proofing was difficult, sorting and stuffing was tiring, requiring an average of four people for three days to complete the project.

Efficiency Improvement: The automation solution was a team effort. A staff member with database experience analyzed the information available and developed a series of queries, while the staff member who manages election workers created templates for letters. Finally, letters and query results were merged to generate personalized letters for each election worker based on their own location assignment, position assignment and training information.

Labels and sorting were eliminated, proofing was simplified, and the time required for the project dropped literally from days to hours.

Procedure: Annually, we send an 'Election Availability Questionnaire' to all election workers in our database and record their responses.

Upon completion of the election worker assignment process for a given election, we send notification letters to all **assigned** workers who have indicated they are available for that election. Each letter indicates the polling place and position assignment, and includes a return page for the worker to either confirm acceptance of the assignment and to choose a training session, OR to decline the assignment. A postage paid return envelope is included.

In an alternate procedure, used in smaller elections, assignments are made by telephone. A follow-up letter confirms the polls assignment and the selected training session.

Letters are formatted to fit a window envelope, eliminating the need for an address label. The return page includes the worker's name and address, plus polling place and position codes for use by election office staff for ease of recording the returned response page.

Drivers and Supervising Judges receive a supplementary letter about a week before the election with instructions and maps for returning election results and supplies. The same basic automation process is utilized to print these letters for the selected individuals requiring this informational mailing.

As a follow-up to the assignment letters, we find that reminder phone calls the day before each training session reduces the number of no-show cancellations and the need to reschedule workers to other sessions. Anyone who is not trained cannot work the election.

Sample letters are attached.

Johnson County Election Office



Brian D. Newby
Election Commissioner

Patriotic Citizen
1234 Main Street
Spring Hill, KS 66083

Johnson County Election Office



Brian D. Newby
Election Commissioner

Patriotic Citizen
1234 Main Street
Spring Hill, KS 66083

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EP 206 - EW

KEEP THIS COPY FOR YOUR REFERENCE PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!!

You have been selected to work at the 2006 Fall General Election on Tuesday, November 7, 2006.

Your polling place assignment and address is listed below:

Spring Hill Civic Center
401 N Madison St
Spring Hill, KS 66083

Your position assignment is: **Election Worker**

Your Refresher Training Class is scheduled for **Saturday, _____, 9am-12noon.**
(Write the date you select from page 2)

Your Refresher Training Class will be conducted at
Olathe North High School
600 E. Prairie St.
Olathe, Kansas

NO FOOD OR DRINK ALLOWED IN THE AUDITORIUM!!!!

PLEASE NOTE: All election workers need to arrive at your assigned polling place at **6 am** on Election Day. Be certain to take enough food and drinks for the entire day. All workers are required to remain at the polling place until the polls close at 7pm and assist with closing.

If you have any questions, you may call 715-6836 (24 hours / 7 days).

If no one is available at the time of your call, leave a message and someone will return your call. Please respond by completing Page 2 of this letter and return it to the Election Office in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible but no later than **September 15, 2006.**

2101 East Kansas City Road, Olathe, KS 66061 (913) 782-3441 Fax: (913) 791-1753
Website: www.jocoelection.org E-mail: election@jocoelection.org

Exhibit 1: Assignment letter to worker who has served before – with refresher training option return page

RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE ELECTION OFFICE BY SEPT 15

Step 1 Yes, I accept this assignment. _____
No, I am not able to accept this assignment. _____

(If you indicated you are unable to accept this assignment you may skip step 2, sign and mail)

Step 2 Please circle the date you wish to attend your Training Class:
(circle only one date)

Saturday October 14 9 am -12 noon	Saturday October 21 9 am -12 noon
-----------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------

Both classes will be conducted at:
Olathe North High School
600 E. Prairie St.
Olathe, Kansas

- State law requires that everyone attend a training class prior to every election.
- Seating is limited. Training sessions will be assigned first come, first served.
- You will be contacted only if the session you selected is full.
- Please mark your calendar accordingly! (Write your choice on page 1 of this letter).

Step 3 Signature _____ Date _____

RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE ELECTION OFFICE BY SEPT 15

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Brian D. Newby
Election Commissioner

Patriotic Citizen
1234 Main Street
Spring Hill, KS 66083

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You have been selected to work at the 2006 Fall General Election on Tuesday, November 7, 2006.

Your polling place assignment and address is listed below:

Spring Hill Civic Center
401 N Madison St
Spring Hill, KS 66083

Your position assignment is: **Election Worker**

Your Training Class is scheduled for _____
(Write the date and time you select from page 2)

Your Training Class will be conducted at the **Johnson County Election Office**
2101 E. Kansas City Road
Olathe, Kansas

PLEASE NOTE: All election workers need to arrive at your assigned polling place at **6 am** on Election Day. Be certain to take enough food and drinks for the entire day. All workers are required to remain at the polling place until the polls close at 7pm and assist with closing.

If you have any questions, you may call 715-6836 (24 hours / 7 days).
If no one is available at the time of your call, leave a message and someone will return your call.

Please respond by completing Page 2 of this letter and return it to the Election Office in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible but no later than September 15, 2006.

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Exhibit 2: Assignment letter to new worker – with training option return page

Johnson County Election Office



Brian D. Newby
Election Commissioner

Patriotic Citizen
1234 Main Street
Spring Hill, KS 66083

RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE ELECTION OFFICE BY SEPT 15

Step 1 Yes, I accept this assignment.

No, I am not able to accept this assignment.

(If you indicated you are unable to accept this assignment you may skip step 2, sign and mail)

Step 2 Please circle the date / time you wish to attend your Training Class:
(circle only one date / time)

<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>
October 24	October 18	October 21	October 21
9 am - noon	1 pm - 4 pm	9 am - noon	9 am - noon
		October 28	October 28
		9 am - noon	9 am - noon
		October 28	October 28
		2 pm - 5 pm	2 pm - 5 pm

All training classes will be conducted at the **Johnson County Election Office**
2101 E. Kansas City Road
Olathe, Kansas

- State law requires that everyone attend a training class prior to every election.
- Seating is limited. Training sessions will be assigned first come, first served.
- You will be contacted only if the session you selected is full.
- Please mark your calendar accordingly! (Write your choice on page 1 of this letter).

Step 3 Signature _____ Date _____

RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE ELECTION OFFICE BY SEPT 15

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Election Commissioner

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1234 Main Street
Spring Hill, KS 66083

**KEEP THIS COPY FOR YOUR REFERENCE
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!!**

You have been confirmed to work at the 2007 Spring General Election on **Tuesday, April 3, 2007.**

Your polling place assignment and address is listed below:

Spring Hill Civic Center
401 N Madison St
Spring Hill, KS 66083

Your position assignment is: **Election Worker (Designated Driver)**

Your Refresher Training Class is scheduled for **Saturday March 10, 2007 9am-12noon**

Your Refresher Training Class will be conducted at
**Overland Park Church of Christ
119th and Plummer Rd.
Overland Park, KS**

NO FOOD OR DRINK ALLOWED IN THE AUDITORIUM!!!!!!

As Designated Driver for your location, a packet of information with the details of your "drop-off location" will be mailed to you under separate cover.

PLEASE NOTE: All election workers need to arrive at your assigned polling place at **6 am** on Election Day. Be certain to take enough food and drinks for the entire day. All workers are required to remain at the polling place until the polls close at 7pm and assist with closing.

If you have any questions, you may call 715-6836 (24 hours / 7 days).

If no one is available at the time of your call, leave a message and someone will return your call.

HAVE A GREAT DAY AT THE POLLS

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Exhibit 3: Confirming telephone assignment as Driver

Johnson County Election Office



Brian D. Newby
Election Commissioner

Patriotic Citizen
1234 Main Street
Spring Hill, KS 66083

**KEEP THIS COPY FOR YOUR REFERENCE
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!!**

You have been confirmed to work at the 2007 Spring General Election on **Tuesday, April 3, 2007.**

Your polling place assignment and address is listed below:

Spring Hill Civic Center
401 N Madison St
Spring Hill, KS 66083

Your position assignment is: **Supervising Judge**

Your Refresher Training Class is scheduled for **Saturday March 10, 2007 9am-12noon**

Your Refresher Training Class will be conducted at
**Overland Park Church of Christ
119th and Plummer Rd.
Overland Park, KS**

NO FOOD OR DRINK ALLOWED IN THE AUDITORIUM!!!!!!

Your mandatory Supervising Judge meeting is scheduled for **Saturday March 31, 2007 9am-12noon** at the **Johnson County Election Office** in Olathe.

You will receive a packet of information at your SJ meeting with the details of your "drop-off location".

You may pick up your Supervising Judge supply suitcase on **Monday, April 2, 2007 between 2pm-5pm.**

If you have any questions, you may call 715-6836 (24 hours / 7 days).

If no one is available at the time of your call, leave a message and someone will return your call.

HAVE A GREAT DAY AT THE POLLS!!

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Exhibit 4: Confirmation letter to Supervising Judge