

For: State and County Offices

2005 County Committee (COC) Make-Up Election

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



1 Overview

A Background

Make-up election procedure has again been established for COC elections. A make-up election differs from the special election process that is currently in place. Ballots will be prepared by the vendor within a specified time frame rather than by the County Office.

A make-up election is an election process designed to enable a County Office to conduct a new election if errors or uncontrollable circumstances occurred during the annual election period, such as, but not limited to:

- incorrect local administrative area (LAA) advertised
- wrong candidate entered on the ballot
- System 36 updates not complete before the regular election cut-off date
- candidate withdrawing their name.

If these or other circumstances occurred during the regular election process, the County Office will need to hold a make-up election.

The make-up election process is designed to provide State and County Offices with an additional tool in completing the COC election process.

B Purpose

This notice instructs County Offices on the procedure and dates for the 2005 make-up election.

Note: See Exhibit 1 for the COC make-up election calendar.

Disposal Date	Distribution
March 1, 2006	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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1 Overview (Continued)

C Contact

For questions about this notice, contact either of the following DAFO employees:

- Ken Nagel, at 202-720-7890 or **Kenneth.Nagel@wdc.usda.gov**
- Deborah Johnson, at 202-720-0067 or **Deborah.Johnson@wdc.usda.gov**.

2 Action

A Publicizing Make-Up Elections

County Offices shall ensure that:

- counties conducting a make-up election publicize COC nomination and make-up election dates
- all producers are adequately and timely informed about COC nomination and make-up election procedures.

B State Office Action

State Offices shall:

- determine which counties will need a make-up election
- provide DAFO employees in subparagraph 1 C with a list of the names of those counties, along with the reason for the make-up election by October 14, 2005
- certify to DAFO employees in subparagraph 1 C that each County Office has adequately and timely publicized the make-up election.

C COC Action

COC's, with the assistance of CED's and County Office staff, shall develop a plan to inform all producers in LAA's involved with a make-up election and the pertinent dates.

Public nomination of eligible producers is the primary method used to obtain candidates for COC elections. COC's are responsible for ensuring that all producers are knowledgeable of the nomination process for the make-up elections. The nomination process is the same for make-up elections as for regular elections. All COC's shall ensure that maximum efforts are made to encourage socially disadvantaged groups to submit nominations.

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2 Action (Continued)

D CED Action

CED's shall:

- take an active role in contacting leaders of socially disadvantaged groups to solicit nominations and ensure that these groups fully understand the role of COC's
- be available to meet with socially disadvantaged groups to fully explain the COC nomination and election procedures
- work with COC to ensure that information and informational meetings are thoroughly publicized to all producers through every available means.

E Nominations and Slate

For COC make-up elections, there is no required minimum number of eligible nominees for the COC slate, unless no FSA-669A's are received for LAA's conducting a make-up election. COC's are required to complete a slate of nominees only if no nominations are received.

If no nominations are received, COC's shall solicit and obtain nominations for at least 2 eligible and willing candidates to complete the slate. At least 1 nominee must be a member of a socially disadvantaged group. COC's shall solicit and include nominees who represent the interests of socially disadvantaged groups. COC's must verify that each individual nominated by COC to fill a slate is willing to serve and meets all eligibility requirements. Nominees must certify their willingness to serve by signing FSA-669A.

County Offices **must** verify that all nominees are recorded in the correct LAA, and have the correct flags in the System 36 name and address file at least 5 working days before entering their nominee data into COC's website.

F Ballot Mailing

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by January 9, 2006, by the contractor. County Offices shall prepare a supply of County Office printed FSA-669B's to provide to voters requesting a ballot.

County Offices shall ensure that:

- COC and LAA data is updated according to 15-AO, paragraphs 67 and 68
- LAA corrections are in effect no later than October 24, 2005.

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2 Action (Continued)

G Voter Names

County Offices shall ensure that:

- voters are listed in their correct LAA's
- all voter names and addresses are correct for each LAA.

H Eligible Voters Lists

County Offices shall update the eligible voters list and make the list available for public view no later **than October 24, 2005**.

COC's must ensure that the correct LAA or LAA's voter lists are prepared for the 2005 election.

COC shall provide a list of names and addresses of eligible voters to any candidate requesting the list.

I Tallying Ballots

The public must be informed of the time and date that ballots will be counted, the exact address of the office where counted, and that counting is open to the public according to the following:

- the public shall be allowed in the room where counting takes place to observe and hear the counting of ballots
- COC's or County Office staff shall not restrict observers from physically inspecting ballots during the counting process.

Note: COC's cannot call an executive session to count ballots.

COC Election Calendar for Make-Up Election

The following table provides the 2005 COC make-up election schedule.

Date	Activity
October 3, 2005 – January 31, 2006	Publicize the make-up election, all nomination information, the election process, and dates.
October 21, 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that nomination forms are available at the County Office. • Make the eligible voters list available to the public. • COC final date to submit plan to SED to ensure that all producers are adequately informed of COC nomination and elections.
December 2, 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final date to accept nomination forms or for forms to be postmarked. • Verify that nominees are in the correct LAA and have appropriate flags.
December 9, 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review nominations. • Complete slates of nominees. • Final date for mailing letter of congratulations to nominees.
December 12-15, 2005	County Offices to enter data to COC eAuthentication application for make-up elections.
December 28, 2005	KC-ADC to consolidate make-up election ballot data for the contractor.
January 9, 2006	The contractor will mail make-up election ballots.
January 17, 2006	County Offices to mail reminder postcards for make-up election.
January 30, 2006	Final date for voters to return completed make-up election ballots or ballots to be postmarked.
February 3, 2006	Final date for counting make-up election ballots.
February 3, 2006	Enter make-up election data in COC election reporting eAuthentication application.