OKLAHOMA
State Election Board

Review of the Results Reporting Issues in Cleveland and Comanche Counties

at the

November 3, 2026
General Election

Prepared by the Staff of the Oklahoma State Election Board

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November 13, 2026

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Executive Summary

On the evening of Tuesday, November 3, 2026, unrelated technical issues in Cleveland and Comanche counties delayed reporting of unofficial election results by those two county election boards.

Both counties had successfully tested results reporting prior to Election Day. Neither county's issue on election night involved a delay in counting votes, nor an issue with the validity of the vote count, but rather a delay in the reporting of unofficial election results to the State Election Board's results reporting system and subsequent posting of the results on the public-facing OK Election Results site.

Both matters have been thoroughly reviewed by the State Election Board's technical team, and the findings are provided in this report.

In **Cleveland County**, a security alert on election night triggered security protocols that temporarily prevented the electronic transmission of the county's unofficial election results by the county election board to the State Election Board's results reporting system. The State Election Board's technical team determined the alert to be a non-event and was cleared. The county's full unofficial election results were subsequently transmitted to the State Election Board shortly after 10:00 p.m. on election night.

In **Comanche County**, a technical issue that was ultimately determined to be a hard drive failure with the local tabulation computer prevented the county election board from loading the unofficial election results into the tabulation computer and electronically transmitting its unofficial election results to the State Election Board's results reporting system on election night. The issue was initially diagnosed as a possible software issue with loading and accessing the county's election database. Standard protocols were followed to resolve the issue, but were unsuccessful. In order to ensure that the county's unofficial election results could be loaded into the State Election Board's results reporting system, the county election board, with the assistance of State Election Board staff, worked continuously overnight and into the next day to manually enter the county's election results utilizing printed voting device tapes. Data entry was completed shortly after 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 4, 2026, and the county's unofficial results were fully reported to the State Election Board's results reporting system. A subsequent review by the State Election Board's technical team determined that the technical issue was caused by a hard drive failure on the local tabulation computer, not a software issue as initially thought.

On the afternoon of Friday, November 6, 2026, both county election boards processed eligible provisional ballots. Both counties certified their official election results after 5:00 p.m. the same day as mandated by state law.

Cleveland County Election Board

SUMMARY: In Cleveland County a technical issue involving a security alert on election night (November 3, 2026) triggered security protocols that temporarily prevented the county election board from electronically transmitting its results from Election Day precincts, mail absentee, and early voting to the State Election Board's results reporting system. After a review by the State Election Board's technical team, the alert was determined to be a non-event. The matter was resolved shortly after 10:00 p.m. on election night, and the county's unofficial results were then successfully transmitted to the State Election Board's results reporting system.

DETAILS:

- The technical issue was caused when a file containing early voting results triggered protocols in the State Election Board's security system.

- The security protocols responded appropriately and as designed by automatically stopping the receipt of the county's election results by the State Election Board's reporting system until the issue could be reviewed by the State Election Board's technical team.

- As a precaution, the State Election Board's technical team assisted the county election board in deploying a backup election database to the local tabulation computer, and county election board staff then loaded election results files into the county's local tabulation computer throughout the evening until complete. However, these results could not be transmitted to the State Election Board's reporting system due to the security protocols in place.

- Meanwhile, the State Election Board's technical team conducted a review of the security alert and verified that the issue was a non-event and that there was no security issue with the file that triggered the security protocols. The State Election Board's technical team then used an alternative method to process the file.

- Once that file was processed, the alert was cleared and the security protocols then allowed the remaining unofficial election results files from the county election board's local tabulation computer to be securely transmitted to the State Election Board's results reporting system. Cleveland County's complete unofficial election results were posted on the OK Election Results site shortly after 10:00 p.m. on election night.

- **County election staff conducted an audit confirming that all election results had been loaded into the local tabulation computer and compared precinct**

results from printed voting device tapes to the results on the OK Election Results site to verify the accuracy of the reported results.

- In 2022 a similar issue involving a results file triggering security protocols occurred in Oklahoma and Tulsa counties. In those instances, an Election Day precinct results file in each county triggered the security protocols but were confirmed to be non-events. The team's experience with the 2022 issue led to a speedier diagnosis and resolution of the matter on November 3, 2026.

Comanche County Election Board

SUMMARY: In Comanche County, a technical issue that was ultimately determined to be a hard drive failure with the local tabulation computer prevented the county election board from loading the unofficial election results into the tabulation computer and electronically transmitting these to the State Election Board's results reporting system on election night (November 3, 2026). As a result of the technical issue, the county's unofficial election results were manually entered into the State Election Board's results reporting system using printed results tapes from the voting devices.

- On election night, county election board staff received error messages when attempting to load election results files into the county's local tabulation computer.

- The county election board staff contacted the State Election Board's technical team during the 7 o'clock hour to assess the situation and assist with a resolution.

- Initially, the issue was diagnosed as a possible software issue with loading and accessing the county's election database. Standard protocols to resolve the issue were unsuccessful.

- Even before it became evident that a technical fix would not be forthcoming that evening, State Election Board staff began considering alternative methods of transmission of unofficial election results by the county election board to the State Election Board. It was determined that manual data entry of unofficial results, using printed results tapes from voting devices, was the best option to report results, and a plan was finalized. Oklahoma's voting system is paper-based, so paper ballots and printed voting device results tapes can serve as a backup when necessary.

- Printed results tapes from precinct voting devices were used for Election Day votes. However, voting devices used for processing absentee ballots and early voting ballots cannot print tapes with election results because the processing of these occurs before the polls close on Election Day. To obtain a printout of results from the absentee and early ballots, the Sheriff's Department returned these ballots to be rescanned at the county election board, which allowed voting device tapes to be printed with results and used for the manual data entry.

- During the 11 o'clock p.m. hour, the manual data entry process began. The county election board maintained a quorum and remained in a public meeting during this process.

- Comanche County has 40 precincts. Each precinct had three different categories of votes (Election Day, early voting, and mail absentee) that had to be separately

entered one race at a time. This was a time-consuming process that involved nearly 2,600 separate instances of data entry and multiple steps of proofing.

- Continuous updates of unofficial election results were posted on the OK Election Results site as these were manually entered into the State Election Board results reporting system. Election Day and mail absentee results were completed first, followed by early voting results. The process was completed just after 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 4, 2026, after approximately 14 hours of continuous work by county election board and State Election Board staff.

- An audit was conducted on November 5 and 6 to ensure the manual data entry was correct. During the county election board's November 6, 2026, public meeting, corrections to data were made following the manual audit in coordination with the State Election Board staff. Following this, eligible provisional ballots were processed by county election board staff, a results tape was printed, and these were manually added to the vote totals during the county election board's public meeting in coordination with the State Election Board staff. Neither the corrections nor the provisional ballots resulted in a change to the outcome of any elections. The county's election results were certified by the county election board in its public meeting after 5:00 p.m. pursuant to state law.

- While the issue presented symptoms consistent with a software issue involving reading and accessing the database, a subsequent after-action review by the State Election Board's technical team determined that a failure of the hard drive in the local tabulation computer had occurred. While the operating system and software still functioned, the failure of the drive's data storage sectors prevented data from being loaded or accessed on the local tabulation computer.

- A hard drive failure of this kind on a tabulation computer has never been encountered before with the Oklahoma voting system. The State Election Board's technical team will continue to consider possible mitigation options should a similar issue present itself again in the future.

Conclusion

In both instances described in this review, the issue involved the transmission of unofficial election results from a county election board to the State Election Board. **There was no problem or delay in counting votes, nor any issue with the validity of the vote count** – it was a delay in reporting these results to the State Election Board's results reporting system and posting these on the public-facing OK Election Results site.

It is also important to note that, prior to Election Day, all 77 counties in Oklahoma (including Cleveland and Comanche) successfully tested the results reporting system with no issues arising. Oklahoma holds itself to high standards for election administration and took every reasonable precaution to guard against these issues and implemented the backup plans successfully.

In Cleveland County, the security protocols worked as designed, a review ensured the issue was a non-event, and the county's unofficial results were then reported. In Comanche County, the paper-based voting system ensured that the unofficial results could be reported when the technical issues could not be resolved.

The State Election Board's technical team will continue to consider additional mitigation procedures to address similar issues should they appear in the future, but in no way will take actions that would reduce the robust security of Oklahoma's election system.

Reporting results quickly remains a goal of the Oklahoma State Election Board. However, it is the position of the Secretary of the State Election Board that security and accuracy should be prioritized over the rapidity of reporting results. To put the matter in context, even with the delays in reporting two counties' election results, Oklahoma still fully reported complete, unofficial statewide election results more quickly than most states around the country and was among the first to officially certify those results, which occurred on Tuesday, November 10, 2026.