

Communication Services
5334 South Prince Street
Littleton, Colorado 80166-0001
Phone: 303-795-5467
Fax: 303-734-5470
www.co.arapahoe.co.us

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Contact:

NANCY A. DOTY

Clerk and Recorder

Direct: 303-795-4211 or 303-795-4285

E-mail: ndoty@co.arapahoe.co.us

OR

ANDREA RASIZER

Communication Services Director

Direct: 303-795-4284

Mobile: 303-882-1909

E-mail: arasizer@co.arapahoe.co.us

Court rules Arapahoe County to provide provisional ballots to all qualified voters

Ruling follows an unprecedented request for provisional ballots at County polling sites

LITTLETON, CO --- Due to an unprecedented request for provisional ballots at Arapahoe County polling sites, a judge in the 18th Judicial Court ruled Tuesday evening that Arapahoe County must provide a sufficient number of provisional ballots to ensure that anyone who was in line at 7 p.m. at a polling place would be allowed to vote by provisional ballot.

Late Tuesday afternoon, Arapahoe County polling precincts were getting an overwhelming demand by voters to cast their ballots provisionally. A provisional ballot is a ballot that is issued when the voter has previously been sent a mail-in ballot and appears at a precinct to vote, when the eligibility of the voter has not yet been determined or when the County Elections Official issues a ballot to a voter who resides in another county.

After learning about the shortages, Arapahoe County Clerk and Recorder Nancy Doty, prior to the court ruling, began delivering pre-printed provisional ballots out to the precinct locations requesting the additional provisional ballots.

Polls closed at 7 p.m. but anyone standing in line at the polling place was able to cast their vote.

"Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our volunteers and staff, we spent the afternoon working to provide additional provisional ballots to the necessary locations and we were able to make sure that any person in line at 7p.m. this evening was able to cast their vote," said Arapahoe County's Clerk and Recorder Nancy A. Doty.

In preparation for this year's election, the County printed more than 6,500 provisional ballots, using 2008 statistics as an indicator, since the 2008 election was a heavily attended election. This was higher than the 3,895 provisional ballots cast in 2006, which would have been expected to be a more comparable election year for 2010.

Arapahoe County has until Nov. 16 to count the provisional ballots. For election results, visit our web site at www.arapahoevotes.com.

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