# Signature Verification

Once ballots have been scanned into the state voter registration system as received, they are ready to be processed by the Signature Verification judges. Signature verification is the process of comparing the signature on the back of the voter's ballot return envelope with that voter's signatures which are scanned into the state voter registration system database.

Each time that a voter completes a voter registration form, the signature used is captured and scanned into the voter's record. Each time that a voter signs a ballot envelope, that signature is captured and scanned into the voter's record. These are the signatures that are compared against the signature on the current ballot return envelope. This process ensures that only the eligible elector can cast a ballot in an election.

Each signature verification judge is required to take signature verification training prior to being a signature verification judge. Every voter writes differently and no voter signs his/her name exactly the same way twice. This training assists the judges in determining whether or not the signatures are consistent with each other.

The judges analyze both broad characteristics and local characteristics of the two signatures. Does the voter sign using cursive or does the voter use printing? Is the signature slanted forward or backward or is it straight up and down? The speed of writing is analyzed – was is smooth and harmonious or slow and deliberate? The overall size, proportion, and spacing of the letters and letter combinations are examined. Spelling and punctuation are analyzed. In addition, the judges can look at individual characteristics of letters, letter combinations, and the signature. How does the voter dot his "I" or cross his "T"? What is the frequency of pen lifts? What do the beginning and ending strokes look like?
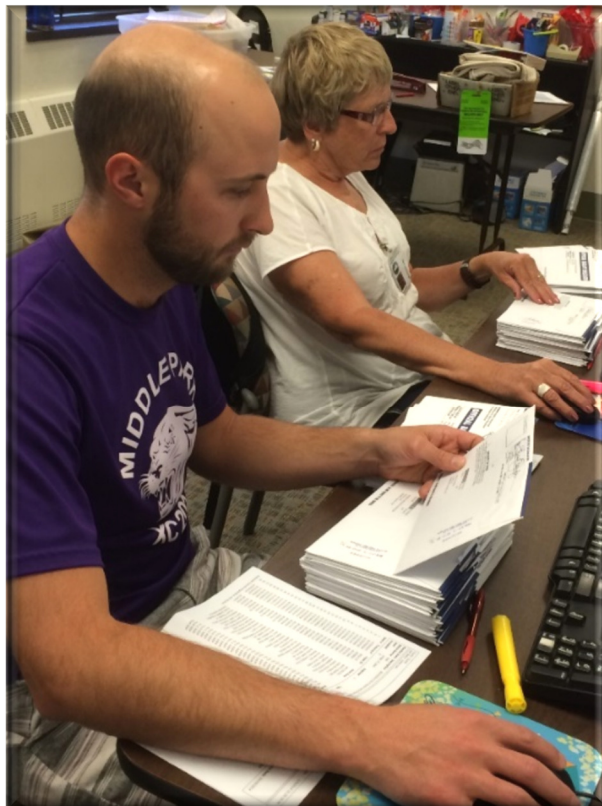

Scott Hicks (Democrat) and Sandra Strickland (Republican) verify ballot signatures

The signature on the ballot envelope is compared against the voter's most recent signature in the state voter registration system by both a Republican citizen election judge and a Democratic citizen election judge. Each judge makes his/her assessment of the signature independently using the signature verification guide and corresponding training.
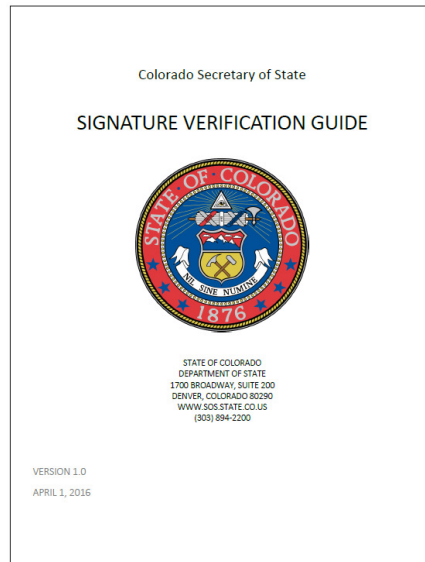
Any signatures deemed discrepant by the individual judges are marked on their individual reports.

The bipartisan team of judges then reviews the reports for the differences between the judges. The team can then re-review and re-assess those particular signatures. Additional signatures for the voter will be examined.
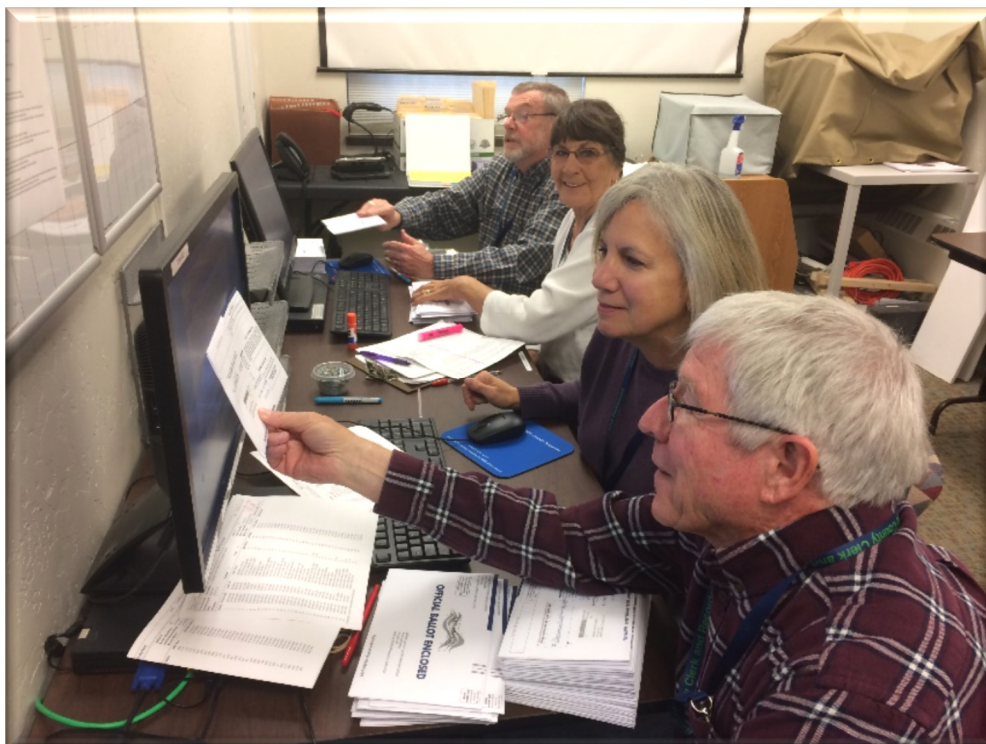
Bill Heffron (Democrat), Judith Dickson (Republican), Barbara Heffron (Democrat) and Gary McGraw (Republican) resolve signature verification issues

If the bipartisan team of judges decide that the signatures match, the voter's ballot is accepted and the state voter registration system is updated to indicate such.

Mail Ballot Status

Election Name	Election Date	Ballot Status
2016 Grand County General Election	11/08/2016	Your county accepted your ballot, and it will be counted

www.govotecolorado.com shows your ballot status

If the bipartisan team of judges deems that the signatures do not match, additional signatures from the voter's record may be accessed for additional comparison. If the bipartisan team of judges still feels that the signatures do not match, the ballot is rejected for signature discrepancy and a letter is generated to the voter.

The related ballot is removed from the batch and placed in a separate container for signature discrepant ballots. All ballot envelopes are returned to a secure ballot box or storage container until the next process.
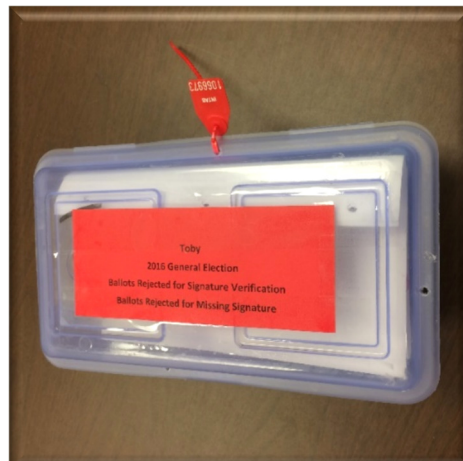
A voter who receives this letter and who did sign his/her ballot must complete and return the Signature Affidavit Form and return a copy of an approved form of identification. If the voter does this by the deadline, the ballot will be accepted and moved on in the process. If the voter does not do this by the deadline, the ballot will be rejected and a copy of the ballot envelope will be provided to the District Attorney for investigation. A log of all signature discrepancy is kept. The log includes the reason the signature was found discrepant and how many signatures were reviewed for that voter.

Signature Verification Tracking Log

Election Type _____ County _____ Election Date _____

Voter name	Tracking number (Voter ID)	Reason code 1-7 (see list below)	Number of research documents found	Date letter sent	Date letter returned and did it include a copy of an ID? Yes	Date letter returned and did it include a copy of an ID? No	Counted Yes	Counted No
(Sample Line) Jerry Lewis	123456	1	2	10/11/05		10/14/05	X	

1. An obvious change in the slant of the signature
2. A printed name on one document and a cursive signature on another document
3. Differences in the size or scale of the signatures
4. Differences in the individual characteristics of the signatures, such as how the "t"s are crossed, "i"s are dotted, loops are made on "y"s or "j"s
5. Differences in the voter's signature style, such as how the letters are connected at the top and bottom
6. Ballots or envelopes from the same household have been switched
7. Other

Signature Verification Judge's Signatures

_____   _____
Printed Name   Signature

_____   _____
Printed Name   Signature

CRS 1-7.5-107.3, SOS Rule 7.8
Revised 9.28.2015