

**Calculation of 2012 Presidential Election Results by Congressional District
Statement of Methodology**

Daily Kos Elections

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Version 1.1

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I. Introduction

This document provides the methodology used by Daily Kos Elections in its calculation of 2012 Presidential Election results by Congressional District (“CD”). The overview discusses the treatment of several issues affecting multiple states. Individual states are discussed in subsequent sections.

II. Definitions

This document uses the term “precinct” to refer to the smallest geographic unit presented in election results.¹ “Non-standard” precincts refer to precincts that do not correspond to a specific geographic area, such as presidential-only precincts and absentee-only precincts in states that do not allocate such votes to “standard” precincts. Unless otherwise qualified, the term “precinct” will refer to standard precincts.

“Limited” ballots refer to ballots containing only certain races and do not contain a full slate of contests.² For example, Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (“UOCAVA”) ballots are often limited to federal races only.

In almost all states, elections are administered at the county or county-equivalent level.³ In many states, precincts will conform to county subdivisions. These county subdivisions are referred to by a variety of names depending on state, including borough, city, town, township, and village. The term “county subdivision” is used to refer to any such first-level subdivision of a county or county-equivalent, regardless of name.

III. Overview

A. *Split Precincts*

In many states, a given precinct may lie in multiple CDs. Votes for each candidate in these “split” precincts are allocated proportionally across the CDs in which that precinct lies, based on the proportion of the precinct that is in each CD. Therefore, regardless of proportion, voting patterns within each precinct are assumed to be uniform. No rounding is applied after vote totals are allocated; as a result, vote totals calculated will not necessarily be integers. The incidence of split precincts is summarized in **Table 1**.

The proportion used depends on the data available; in descending order of preference, these proportions are:

¹ Different jurisdictions apply different names to this concept, e.g., precincts are referred to as “election districts” in New York, “divisions” in certain jurisdictions in Pennsylvania, and “wards” in Wisconsin. The term “precinct” is used to simplify this terminology.

² “Limited” ballots are most often limited to presidential-only, statewide-only (no district-based contests), or federal-only races (President, Senate if applicable, and House).

³ The following are considered county-equivalents: boroughs and census areas in Alaska, all parishes in Louisiana, Baltimore City in Maryland, St. Louis City in Missouri, Carson City in Nevada, and the independent cities in Virginia.

- **Ballots cast in each part of the precinct.** This method includes all overvotes, undervotes, and write-in votes in the Congressional race,⁴ which most accurately reflects the number of votes cast in each part of the precinct. (Overvoting and undervoting patterns are, therefore, also assumed to be uniform within the precinct.) The proportions used are directly calculated based on ballots cast. Consider, for example, a precinct that is split between CD 1 and CD 2, where 60 ballots were cast in the CD 1 part of that precinct and 40 ballots were cast in the CD 2 part of that precinct: (Figures highlighted in gray indicate figures that would be taken from underlying data.)

CD	Ballots Cast	Allocation Proportion
1	60	60.0%
2	40	40.0%
Prec. Total	100	100.0%

60 percent of each candidate’s votes would be allocated to CD 1 and the remaining 40 percent of each candidate’s votes would be allocated to CD 2.

- **Notes for Congress cast in each part of the precinct, adjusted for undervoting.** If unadjusted, votes for Congress would not reflect undervoting patterns. For each CD within a given jurisdiction, an undervote factor is calculated based on precincts that are not split between CDs. The proportions used are calculated using the votes for Congress cast, adjusted upward by the undervote factor.⁵ Consider again the hypothetical precinct divided between CD 1 and CD 2, but instead of data on ballots cast, only data on votes cast for the congressional contests are available. Assume that 45 votes were cast in the CD 1 contest and 36 votes were cast in the CD 2 contest. Assume further that in all precincts not split between CDs in that jurisdiction, the undervoting rate is 30 percent in the CD 1 contest and 20 percent in the CD 2 contest:

CD	Cong. Votes	Undervoting Rate	Undervote Factor	Adjusted Cong. Votes	Allocation Proportion
1	45	30.00%	70.00%	64.3	58.2%
2	37	20.00%	80.00%	46.3	41.8%
Prec. Total	82			110.6	100.0%

58 percent of each candidate’s votes would be allocated to CD 1 and the remaining 42 percent of each candidate’s votes would be allocated to CD 2.⁶

⁴ This terminology also varies across jurisdictions. Other terms include “cards cast” or “whole number [of voters.” Again, “ballots cast” is used uniformly to simplify terminology.

⁵ The undervote factor is calculated as one minus the undervoting rate. The undervoting rate is calculated as the number of votes cast for all candidates in the congressional contest divided by the number of votes cast for all candidates in the presidential contest. Adjustment for undervoting reduces the effect of the disparity in undervoting rates between various congressional races. An uncontested race, for example, will generally have higher undervoting rates than a contested race.

⁶ Had unadjusted votes in the congressional contests been used instead, the allocation proportions would have been 56 percent and 44 percent, respectively. The undervoting adjustment, in this example, brings the allocation proportions closer to the “true” 60-40 split in the precinct, even though the undervoting rates in the non-split precincts in that jurisdiction deviate from the undervoting rates in the precinct in question (for CD 1, 25 percent in the precinct compared to 30 percent in the non-split precincts; for CD 2, 7.5 percent in the precinct compared to 20 percent in the non-split precincts). Note that, in all instances in which this method is applied, the “true” split and true undervoting rates for the precinct in question is unknowable.

- **Registered voters.** If no election data from the same election are available, data on registered voters is used instead. The proportions used are directly calculated based on the number of registered voters in each part of the precinct.

CD	Registered Voters	Allocation Proportion
1	90	66.7%
2	45	33.3%
Prec. Total	135	100.0%

67 percent of each candidate’s votes would be allocated to CD 1 and the remaining 33 percent of each candidate’s votes would be allocated to CD 2.⁷

- **Population.** If no election data are available whatsoever, the population as of the 2010 Census is used. The proportions used are directly calculated based on the population, recorded as of the Census, in each part of the precinct.

CD	Census Population	Allocation Proportion
1	135	69.2%
2	60	30.8%
Prec. Total	195	100.0%

69 percent of each candidate’s votes would be allocated to CD 1 and the remaining 31 percent of each candidate’s votes would be allocated to CD 2.⁸

B. *Votes Not Allocated to Specific Precincts (“Block-Unallocated Votes”)*

The term “block-unallocated votes” refers to votes that are presented as a “block” and, therefore, cannot be tied to a specific standard precinct. Block-unallocated votes are most often presented at the county level, but depending on jurisdiction, may also be presented at a county subdivision or other level. Regardless of the level at which block-unallocated votes are presented, if the area associated with block-unallocated votes spans multiple CDs, these votes will always be allocated at the level at which the block-unallocated votes are presented.⁹ Block-unallocated votes are allocated individually for each candidate; the allocation is performed proportionally based on the number of votes received by the given candidate in the standard precincts in that jurisdiction (the “candidate-proportion” method).

For example, consider a county that spans CDs 1 and 2, and where 75 percent of the votes received by candidate A, across all standard precincts,¹⁰ were cast in CD 1, while the remaining 25 percent were cast in CD 2. Under the candidate-proportion method, 75 percent of the block-unallocated votes received by candidate A would be allocated to CD 1 and the remaining 25 percent allocated to CD 2. Assume further that candidate B performed better in CD 1 than in CD 2, and that 80 percent of the votes received by candidate B across all standard precincts were cast

⁷ For the registered voter proportion to be perfectly accurate, turnout rates (based on voter registration) would also need to be uniform within the given precinct.

⁸ This method, in addition to the assumptions made under the registered voter proportion, further requires that registration rates be uniform within the given precinct.

⁹ For example, block-unallocated votes in New Jersey are presented at the county subdivision level. New Jersey’s block-unallocated votes, therefore, are allocated at the county subdivision level based on the standard precinct results for that county subdivision.

¹⁰ The candidate-proportion method is applied after votes in split precincts are allocated.

in CD 1 (and the remaining 20 percent in CD 2). Under the candidate-proportion method, 80 percent of the block-unallocated votes received by candidate B would be allocated to CD 2 and the remaining 20 percent allocated to CD 2. Consider the following example:

County X CD	Standard Precincts		Percentage of Standard Precinct Votes in Each CD	
	Cand. A	Cand. B	Cand. A	Cand. B
1 (Standard Precincts)	75	80	75.0%	80.0%
2 (Standard Precincts)	25	20	25.0%	20.0%
Block-Unallocated	40	30	-	-
County Tot.	140	130		

CD	Allocation of Block-Unallocated Votes		Total After Allocation	
	Cand. A	Cand. B	Cand. A	Cand. B
1 (Standard Precincts)	30	24	105	104
2 (Standard Precincts)	10	6	35	26
County Tot.	40	30	140	130

The candidate-specific treatment of block-unallocated votes allows the candidate-proportion method to reflect the deviation in the performances of the candidates in the part of the county in CD 1 and the part of the county in CD 2. In this example, Candidate A received 48.4 percent of standard-precinct votes in the CD 1 part of the county (to Candidate B’s 51.6 percent) and 55.6 percent of standard-precinct votes in the CD 2 part of the county (to Candidate B’s 44.4 percent). Candidate A’s stronger performance is also reflected in the allocation of block-unallocated votes, in which he receives 55.6 percent of block-unallocated votes allocated to CD 1 (to Candidate B’s 44.4 percent) and 62.5 percent of block-unallocated votes allocated to CD 2 (to Candidate B’s 37.5 percent).¹¹ As with split precincts, no rounding is performed, which may result in non-integer calculated vote totals.

The relative robustness of the candidate-proportion method across jurisdictions can be quantified. In essence, the candidate-proportion method relies on a “base” of standard precincts that is used to estimate the allocation of block-unallocated votes. A lower ratio of block-unallocated votes to standard precinct votes will result in a more robust estimation.¹² The incidence of block-unallocated votes affecting CD calculations,¹³ and summary statistics on the block-unallocated vote to precinct vote ratio, are also presented in Table 1.

C. *Write-in Votes*

¹¹ Candidate A receives a greater percentage of the block-unallocated votes in each CD part of the county than he received across standard-precinct votes (55.6 percent compared to 48.4 percent in CD 1; 62.5 percent compared to 55.6 percent in CD 2), since he received a greater percentage of the block-unallocated votes across the county compared to standard-precinct votes (57.1 percent compared to 50.0 percent).

¹² This ratio can hypothetically range between zero (for a jurisdiction in which there are no block-unallocated votes) to infinity (for a jurisdiction in which there are no precinct votes, and the candidate-proportion method cannot be applied).

¹³ This excludes, for example, block-unallocated votes in a county that lies entirely within one CD.

Write-in votes, official and otherwise, are not included in the vote totals for any state.¹⁴

D. Federal-Only, Presidential-Only, and Other “Limited” Ballots

Federal-only, presidential-only, and other “limited” ballots, even when presented as block-unallocated votes, are always allocated to the relevant CDs.¹⁵ Even within a state, the treatment of limited ballots may differ between jurisdictions — i.e., some counties may separate limited ballots, while others may not. Therefore, for purposes of consistency, all limited ballots are allocated to CDs. Consequently, the sum of votes across all CDs will total to the statewide total.

IV. States with CD Calculations Provided by Official State-Level Election Authorities

State-level election authorities provide CD calculations in several states. In each instance, an attempt is made to reproduce the results provided by the state authority.

A. California

Election results by county and CD component were obtained from the Supplement to the Statement of the Vote published by the California Secretary of State.¹⁶

An earlier version of CD results was calculated by Daily Kos Elections using the statewide Statement of the Vote, Statements of the Vote obtained from individual counties (which provide subtotals by CD), and precinct results from individual counties.¹⁷ The results in the earlier version do not differ from those calculated by the California Secretary of State, except for discrepancies attributable to the differences between the Statement of the Vote and the Supplement to the Statement of the Vote.¹⁸

B. Idaho

C. Maine

D. Minnesota

Election results by CD were obtained from the Minnesota Secretary of State.¹⁹

Election results by county and CD component were also calculated using election results by precinct, also obtained from the Minnesota Secretary of State.²⁰ Each precinct is contained

¹⁴ Many states distinguish between official write-in votes and unofficial write-in votes, a distinction that is not always preserved by county election administrators. Therefore, for simplicity, write-in votes are categorically excluded in all states.

¹⁵ In instances in which these types of ballots are presented as block-unallocated votes, they are allocated across all CDs that are partially or wholly contained in that given jurisdiction.

¹⁶ <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/sov/2012-general/ssov/pres-by-congress.pdf>

¹⁷ Statements of the Vote that presented results by CD were used for the following counties: Alameda, Glenn, Kern, Lake, Los Angeles, Madera, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sonoma, Tulare, and Yolo. Precinct results, for which results by CD were calculated, were used for the following counties: Contra Costa, Fresno, Nevada, Placer, Solano, and Ventura.

¹⁸ The Supplement to the Statement of the Vote showed 12,363 votes cast for Mitt Romney in Calaveras County, two votes fewer as compared to the Statement of the Vote, which showed 12,365.

¹⁹ <http://minnesotaelectionresults.sos.state.mn.us/ENR/home/1>

within a single CD, and no block-unallocated votes were reported. These calculations match the CD data provided by the Minnesota Secretary of State.

E. *Nebraska*

F. *Virginia*

Election results by CD were obtained from the Virginia State Board of Elections.²¹

Election results by county and CD component were also calculated using election results by precinct, also obtained from the Virginia State Board of Elections.²² While precinct were not always contained within a single CD, results were reported separately for each distinct CD portion of the precinct.²³ Absentee and provisional votes were reported as block-unallocated votes; however, these block-unallocated votes were separated by CD.²⁴ Therefore, no estimation was needed to resolve either the split precincts or block-unallocated votes. These calculations match the CD data provided by the Virginia State Board of Elections.

G. *Washington*

V. States with No Split Counties

In two states, no counties are divided between CDs. Consequently, county-level data are sufficient to perform all calculations; these states are not affected by the precinct-related challenges identified in Section III.

A. *Iowa*

Election results by county were obtained from the Iowa Secretary of State.²⁵

B. *West Virginia*

Election results by county were obtained from the West Virginia Secretary of State.²⁶

VI. States Providing a Centralized Election Results Database

Many states provide a centralized election results database. Results are presented either in a consolidated single statewide file, or at a minimum, in a standardized format across jurisdictions.

A. *Arkansas*

²⁰ <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=12177>

²¹ https://www.voterinfo.sbe.virginia.gov/election/DATA/2012/68C30477-AAF2-46DD-994E-5D3BE8A89C9B/Official/1_d_1323CEA4-0C91-4BA4-BEC1-ECF0B10F499F_s.shtml

²² http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/sbe_csv/ELECTIONS/ELECTIONRESULTS/2012/2012%20November%20General%20.csv

²³ For example, "513 - SAINT ALBANS" in Fairfax County is split between CD 08 and CD 11. Results were reported separately for the CD 08 and CD 11 portions of the precinct.

²⁴ For example, Fairfax County (split between CD 08, CD 10, and CD 11) reported absentee votes separately for the CD 08, CD 10, and CD 11 portions of the county.

²⁵ <http://sos.iowa.gov/elections/pdf/2012/general/canvsummary.pdf>

²⁶ <http://apps.sos.wv.gov/elections/results/download.aspx?year=2012&eid=13>

B. *Arizona*

Election results by county were obtained from the Arizona Secretary of State's Official Canvass.²⁷ Precinct results for all counties divided between multiple CDs²⁸ were also obtained from the Arizona Secretary of State's "Web-Based Reporting System."²⁹ While these results are denoted "unofficial," the vote totals in each county do not differ from those reported on the Official Canvass. Each precinct is contained within a single CD, and no block-unallocated votes were reported.

C. *Colorado*

Election results by county were obtained from the Colorado Secretary of State's Abstract of Votes Cast.³⁰ Precinct results for all counties divided between multiple CDs³¹ were also obtained from the Colorado Secretary of State.³² Each precinct is contained within a single CD. Block-unallocated votes were reported in Douglas County and allocated to CDs using the candidate-proportion method applied county-wide.

D. *Florida*

E. *Georgia*

F. *Hawaii*

Election results by precinct were obtained from the State of Hawaii's Office of Elections.³³ These precinct results contain three non-standard precincts: two for overseas voters divided by Congressional District ("Overseas 1" and "Overseas 2") and one for presidential-only limited votes ("PRES"). The two overseas precincts are unique to each CD and are allocated accordingly. The presidential-only precinct did not contain any votes.

G. *Kansas*

H. *Kentucky*

I. *Louisiana*

J. *Maryland*

K. *Massachusetts*

L. *Michigan*

²⁷ <http://www.azsos.gov/election/2012/General/Canvass2012GE.pdf>

²⁸ The following counties are divided between multiple CDs: Gila, Maricopa, Mohave, Pima, Pinal, Yavapai, and Yuma.

²⁹ <http://results.enr.clarityelections.com/AZ/42050/113875/Web01/en/summary.html>

³⁰ <http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/Results/Abstract/2012/general/index.html>

³¹ The following counties are divided between multiple CDs: Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Douglas, Eagle, Jefferson, and Park. While two census blocks of Weld County containing five residents was assigned to CD 2, Weld County is not considered divided between multiple CDs. No precinct in Weld County is allocated to CD 2, and no votes in the CD 2 race were cast in Weld County.

³² <http://results.enr.clarityelections.com/CO/43032/116650/en/summary.html>

³³ <http://hawaii.gov/elections/results/2012/general/files/media.txt>

M. *Mississippi*

N. *New Hampshire*

O. *New Mexico*

Election results by county were obtained from the New Mexico Secretary of State's Canvass of Returns.³⁴ Precinct results for all counties divided between multiple CDs³⁵ were also obtained from the New Mexico Secretary of State.³⁶ Each precinct is contained within a single CD, and no block-unallocated votes were reported.

P. *North Carolina*

Election returns by precinct were obtained from the North Carolina State Board of Elections' FTP data portal.³⁷ Precincts split between CDs were found in 25 jurisdictions of the 40 divided between multiple CDs;³⁸ votes for Congress cast (adjusted for undervoting) were used to allocate votes from these split precincts in all instances. Block-unallocated votes were reported in 11 jurisdictions and allocated using the candidate-proportion method applied county-wide.³⁹

Q. *Oklahoma*

R. *Rhode Island*

S. *South Carolina*

T. *Tennessee*

U. *Wisconsin*

Election results by precinct were obtained from the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board.⁴⁰ Each precinct is contained within a single CD,⁴¹ and no block-unallocated votes were reported.

³⁴ <http://www.sos.state.nm.us/uploads/files/Pages%20from%20ALLNMG12%20CAN%20STATEWIDE.pdf>
³⁵ The following counties are divided between multiple CDs: Bernalillo, McKinley, Roosevelt, Sandoval, Santa Fe, and Valencia.

³⁶ http://www.sos.state.nm.us/Elections_Data/2012.aspx
³⁷ <ftp://www.app.sboe.state.nc.us/enrs/pritabulation11xx06xx2012.zip>

³⁸ The following counties divided between multiple CDs contained precincts split between CDs: Alamance, Buncombe, Catawba, Chowan, Cumberland, Davidson, Edgecombe, Franklin, Greene, Guilford, Iredell, Lenoir, Martin, Mecklenburg, Nash, New Hanover, Pasquotank, Pitt, Randolph, Union, Vance, Wake, Washington, Wayne, and Wilson. The following counties are divided between multiple CDs, but did not contain precincts split between CDs: Beaufort, Cabarrus, Chatham, Craven, Durham, Forsyth, Gates, Granville, Harnett, Hoke, Orange, Pender, Perquimans, Robeson, and Rowan.

³⁹ Block-unallocated votes were reported in the following counties: Buncombe, Cabarrus, Catawba, Gates, Guilford, Lenoir, Martin, Mecklenburg, Pitt, Randolph, and Wayne.

⁴⁰ http://gab.wi.gov/sites/default/files/Ward%20by%20Ward_11.6.12.xls

⁴¹ Two precincts in Chippewa County, TOWN OF EAGLE POINT Wards 1 - 5 & 5S and TOWN OF EDSON Wards 1 - 2 & 2 S, appear in CD contest results for both CD 3 and CD 7. However, the former precinct reports zero votes cast in the CD 3 race (and is therefore allocated to CD 7) and the latter precinct reports zero votes cast in the CD 7 race (and is therefore allocated to CD 3).

VII. States Requiring Data Collection from Local Election Authorities

Some states do not provide a centralized election results database with precinct results. Precinct results, when needed, must be collected from local election authorities. Different jurisdictions may apply different standards in reporting.

- A. *Alabama*
- B. *Connecticut*
- C. *Illinois*
- D. *Indiana*
- E. *Missouri*
- F. *Nevada*

Election results by county were obtained from the Nevada Secretary of State.⁴²As the Secretary of State does not provide results at the precinct level, data were also obtained from Clark and Lyon Counties, which are divided between multiple CDs.

1. Clark County

Results by precinct were obtained using the Historical Election Results and Related Data database provided by the Clark County Election Department.⁴³ These results contain eight non-standard precincts: three precincts for UOCAVA votes (9001, 9003, 9004), three precincts for provisional votes (9991, 9993, 9994), one “challenge” precinct (9995), and one precinct for presidential-only limited votes (9996). All other precincts were contained within a single CD.

The six UOCAVA and provisional precincts are unique to each CD and are allocated accordingly. The challenge and presidential-only precincts are treated as block-unallocated votes and allocated using the candidate-proportion method applied county-wide.⁴⁴

2. Lyon County

Results by precinct were obtained via email from the Lyon County Clerk/Treasurer. These results contain two non-standard limited precincts, Precinct 88 and Precinct 99. All other precincts were contained within a single CD. Precincts 88 and 99 are treated as block-unallocated votes and allocated using the candidate-proportion method applied county-wide.⁴⁵

- G. *New Jersey*
- H. *New York*
- I. *Ohio*

⁴² <http://www.nvsos.gov/soselectionpages/results/2012StatewideGeneral/ElectionSummary.aspx>

⁴³ <http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/election/Pages/ElectionHistory.aspx>

⁴⁴ The challenge precinct contained zero votes.

⁴⁵ Precinct 88 appears to be a precinct for presidential-only limited votes. Precinct 99 appears to be a precinct for federal-only limited votes, but contained zero votes.

- J. *Oregon*
- K. *Pennsylvania*
- L. *Texas*
- M. *Utah*

VIII. At-Large States

- A. *Alaska*

Official statewide results were obtained from the Alaska Secretary of State.⁴⁶As elections are not administered at the county or county-equivalent level in Alaska, no county-level detail is presented.

- B. *Delaware*
- C. *Montana*
- D. *North Dakota*
- E. *South Dakota*
- F. *Vermont*
- G. *Wyoming*

IX. Revision History

- A. *Version 1.0 (July 9, 2013)*

Added Introduction, Definitions, and Overview. The following states were also added: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, and New Mexico.

- B. *Version 1.1 (July 23, 2013)*

Added Iowa, Minnesota, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

⁴⁶ <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/results/12GENR/data/results.htm>

SD								
TN								
TX								
UT								
VA	3,847,243	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	-	-	-
VT								
WA								
WI	3,063,064	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	-	-	-
WV	670,438	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	-	-	-
WY								