



DLM Survey Portal: Survey Navigation

Office of the State Auditor
Division of Local Mandates

December 10, 2025

Information as of December 10, 2025, and subject to change.
For general informational purposes only; it does not constitute
legal or other professional advice.

Portal Invitation Updates

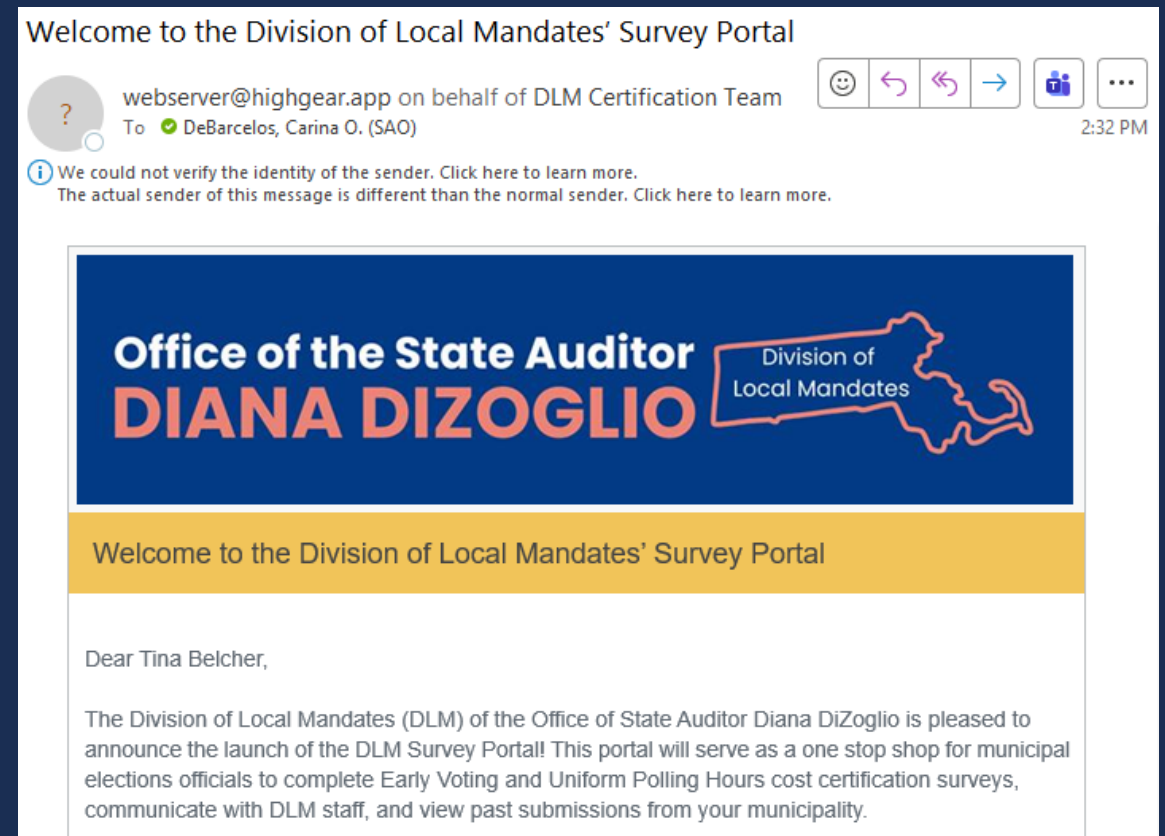
THANK YOU to the 300+ municipal elections officials who have signed up for the portal and updated their contact information!

Required to activate accounts:

- Municipal elections officials (e.g., head clerks, directors of elections, head election commissioners)

Encouraged to activate accounts:

- Mayors
- City and town administrators
- City and town managers
- Municipal finance officers



DLM Survey Portal: Upcoming Schedule

Coming soon:

- Early voting cost certification survey for **FY 2026 regularly scheduled local elections** available to municipalities

Q1 2026:

- Early voting cost certification surveys available to municipalities:
 - **FY 2026 special local elections**
 - **FY 2026 special state elections**

Later in 2026:

- Uniform Polling Hours cost certification survey available to municipalities for **FY 2028 presidential primary**

Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Regularly Scheduled Local Elections: Survey Deadlines

- For municipalities that do not have a regularly scheduled local election during the fiscal year or that hold a regularly scheduled local election on or before May 31, 2026:
 - 1 week after survey launch or the date of the regularly scheduled local election, whichever is later
- For municipalities that hold a regularly scheduled local election on or after June 1, 2026:
 - 24 hours (or one business day) after the date of the regularly scheduled local election

DLM Survey Portal Link

<https://massosa.forms.highgear.app/portal/DLMPortal>

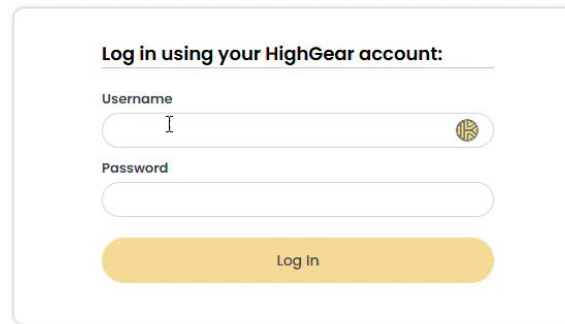
Link provided in the chat.

Please bookmark!

Make sure to whitelist webserver@highgear.app to get all of our survey portal emails!

Logging In

Use your credentials to log in. Reach out to DLM.CostCertification@massauditor.gov if you forget your password or if you are locked out of your account.



The screenshot shows a login form with the following elements:

- Log in using your HighGear account:** A heading with a horizontal line underneath.
- Username:** A text input field containing the letter 'I' and a small circular icon on the right side.
- Password:** A text input field.
- Log In:** A yellow button with the text 'Log In' centered on it.

Portal Home Page

Division of Local Mandates Survey Portal

Sarah Smith (Log Out)

State Auditor Diana DiZoglio welcomes you to the DLM Survey Portal! The Office of the State Auditor's Division of Local Mandates (DLM) has developed this portal to streamline the submission of various surveys sent to municipal officials. This portal will also serve as a one stop shop for municipal elections officials and other leaders to complete Early Voting and Uniform Polling Hours cost certification surveys, communicate with DLM staff, and view cost certification history. Don't forget to reach out to us at DLM.CostCertification@MassAuditor.gov with any questions or concerns you have.



of Records Needing your attention

1

BRIEF DESCRIPTION	ASSIGNEE	STATUS	ID	DUE DATE
FY 2026 Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Regularly Scheduled Local Elections - Townsville (Demo)	Sarah Smith; David Doe	Survey Sent - Not Started	3276	Dec 19 2025 5:00 PM



The only thing you can do in the portal right now is submit a response to the early voting cost certification survey. Later, you will be able to see copies of your original and certified submissions.

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Navigating Survey Sections

Division of Local Mandates Survey

State Auditor Diana DiZoglio welcomes you to the DLM Survey Portal. The Division of Local Mandates (DLM) has developed this portal to streamline the process of submitting survey information to municipal officials. This portal will also serve as a one stop for municipal officials and other leaders to complete Early Voting and Uniform Polling History surveys, view survey results, communicate with DLM staff, and view cost certification history. For more information, please email DLM.CostCertification@MassAuditor.gov with any questions or comments.

of Records Needing your attention: **1**

ID	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
3276	FY 2026 Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Regularly Scheduled Local Elections - Townsville (Demo)

Overview and Instructions | Important Notes - READ BEFORE BEGINNING SURVEY | Online Resources | Section A - Qualifying Questions

Office of the State Auditor - Division of Local Mandates

Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Regularly Scheduled Local Elections - FY 2026 (July 1 2025 to June 30 2026)

The Massachusetts Office of the State Auditor (OSA) manages a certification process for municipalities' early voting costs, first introduced in 2016 as part of the Commonwealth's support for broader voter participation.

The OSA's Division of Local Mandates (DLM) will certify expenses related to **vote-by-mail and in-person early voting for regularly scheduled local elections** held in a given fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). While the statute references "municipal elections," this survey uses the commonly understood term "local elections," and references to regularly scheduled local elections should be understood to include preliminary local elections, if any. Promptly providing the early voting expense information requested in this survey will ensure your municipality's costs are considered for certification.

PLEASE BE ADVISED that DLM is responsible solely for certifying costs and does not handle the disbursement of funds. **Certification does not guarantee reimbursement.** Municipalities are urged to exercise fiscal responsibility and proactively manage the incurrence of costs. DLM may ask for additional information and supporting documentation in connection with any expenses submitted for certification.

Instructions

[Submit](#) [Save and Exit](#) [Message DLM](#) [Close](#)

Navigating Survey Sections

Overview and Instructions

Important Notes - READ BEFORE BEGINNING SURVEY

Online Resources

Section A - Qualifying Questions



Office of the State Auditor - Division of Local Mandates

Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Regularly Scheduled Local Elections - FY 2026 (July 1 2025 to June 30 2026)

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The OSA's Division of Local Mandates (DLM) will certify expenses related to **vote-by-mail and in-person early voting** for **regularly scheduled local elections** held in a given fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). While the statute references "municipal elections," this survey uses the commonly understood term "local elections," and references to regularly scheduled local elections should be understood to include preliminary local elections, if any. Promptly providing the early voting expense information requested in this survey will ensure your municipality's costs are considered for certification.

Navigating Survey Sections

Overview and Instructions

Important Notes - READ BEFORE BEGINNING SURVEY

Online Resources

Section A - Qualifying Questions



Important Notes - PLEASE READ BEFORE BEGINNING THE SURVEY

1. Survey Launch Schedule: This survey is estimated to launch annually in September and will remain open through the end of the fiscal year.

2. Survey Deadline: Municipalities will have **1 week after survey launch or the date of their regularly scheduled local election, whichever is later**, to submit a response. Municipalities with elections in June will have 24 hours (or one business day) after the date of their regularly scheduled local election to submit a response. Municipalities with elections in June will have **24 hours (or one business day) after the date of their regularly scheduled local election** to submit a response.

Each municipality must submit a response to the early voting cost certification survey for regularly scheduled local elections. Even if your municipality did not hold an election during the applicable period, or did not incur costs beyond incidental expenses, you must still submit a survey response; the survey will automatically advance past inapplicable questions based on your responses.

Navigating Survey Sections

Overview and Instructions

Important Notes - READ BEFORE BEGINNING SURVEY

Online Resources

Section A - Qualifying Questions



Online Resources

Use the following links to access our online resources as you navigate the cost certification survey; a new window will open.

[Early Voting Cost Certification FAQs](#)

[M.G.L. c. 54, § 25B - Early Voting Law](#)

[VRIS Instructions: Retrieving VBM/IPEV Ballot Data](#)

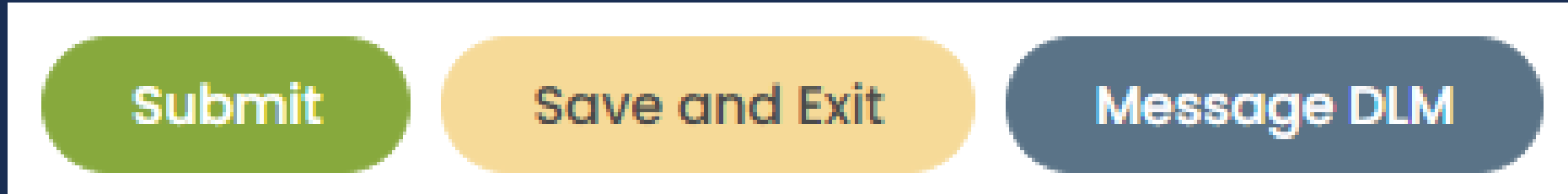
[Additional Compensation Examples](#)

Navigating Survey Sections

This survey has six sections:

- **Section A: Qualifying Questions**
- **Section B: Vote-by-Mail Expenses**
- **Section C: In-Person Early Voting: General Information, Ballots, and Location**
- **Section D: In-Person Early Voting Expenses**
- **Section E: Consumable Supplies and Durable Equipment for Vote-by-Mail and In-Person Early Voting**
- **Section F: Certification Clause**

Navigating Survey Sections



It is **ESSENTIAL** that you only use these three buttons when working on your submission!



DO NOT use these buttons when working on your submission.

Entering Data in Tables

Division of Local Municipalities Portal

State Auditor Diana DiZoglio welcomes you to the Office of the State Auditor's Division of Local Municipalities portal to streamline the submission of data for local officials. This portal will also serve as a resource for local officials and other leaders to complete certification history. Don't forget to...

of Re...

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

FY 2026 Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Elections - Townsville (Demo)

Overview and Instructions | Important Notes - READ BEFORE BEGINNING SURVEY | Online Resources | Section A - Qualifying Questions

Note: Select "No" if you used a discounted rate from a postage meter.

Yes No

B5 - Review Category

B6a. List how many vote-by-mail ballots were sent to voters and returned to the municipal clerk's or elections office for the election(s). Do NOT include any absentee ballots in your count.

Note: The Secretary of the Commonwealth's office provides instructions on how to retrieve vote-by-mail and in-person early voting turnout data. **Please refer to the [Online Resources](#) tab.** If you haven't already retrieved this data from VRIS, retrieve **Extract 22** for each election as soon as possible. The Secretary's office recommends that clerks and local election officials retrieve reports and extracts **as close to elections as possible** to get the most accurate data.

Election Type	# of Ballots Mailed	# of Ballots Returned	Total Postage
Type to add a row...	Total Ballots Mailed	Total Ballots Returned	Total Postage

B6a - Review Category

B7. If your municipality incurred additional postage expenses for the local election(s), enter your total postage...

[Submit](#) [Save and Exit](#) [Message DLM](#) [Close](#)

Entering Data in Tables

Overview and Instructions | Important Notes - READ BEFORE BEGINNING SURVEY | Online Resources | Section A - Qualifying Questions

Reminder: "election worker" refers to both municipal employees and temporary workers performing election-related duties, unless otherwise specified.

Yes No

B11 - Review Category

B12. * Did your municipality incur any expenses related to temporary workers hired directly and primarily to implement vote-by-mail?

Yes No

B12 - Review Category

B13. * List the hourly rates of pay for temporary workers hired directly and primarily to implement vote-by-mail.

Note: Election workers who receive different rates of pay should be entered on separate lines regardless of title or tasks performed.

Election Type	Hourly Rate	# of Temporary Workers at Specified Hourly Rate	Total Hours Worked (all temporary workers) at Specified Hourly Rate	Total Cost
▼	\$0	0	0	\$0.00

Type to add a row...

B13 - Review Category

Total VBM Temporary Worker Expenses \$0.00

B14. * Did your municipality incur any expenses related to additional compensation paid to hourly employees directly and primarily to implement vote-by-mail?

Yes No

B14 - Review Category

Submit Save and Exit Message DLM Submit Changes Discard Changes

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Messaging DLM in the Survey Portal

To write a message to us, click on the **grey and white** “Message DLM” tab. Use the textbox for your message and send your questions by clicking on the **blue** “Message DLM” button.

The screenshot displays the 'Division of Local Mandates Portal' interface. On the left, a sidebar contains the portal title and a 'BRIEF DESCRIPTION' section for the 'FY 2026 Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Regularly Scheduled Local Elections - Townsville (Demo)'. The main content area features a navigation bar with tabs: 'Overview and Instructions', 'Important Notes - READ BEFORE BEGINNING SURVEY', 'Online Resources', and 'Section A - Qualifying Questions'. Below the navigation bar, the title 'Office of the State Auditor - Division of Local Mandates' is centered, followed by the survey title 'Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Regularly Scheduled Local Elections - FY 2026 (July 1 2025 to June 30 2026)'. The main text explains the certification process and provides instructions. At the bottom, a row of buttons includes 'Submit', 'Save and Exit', 'Message DLM' (highlighted in blue), and 'Close'.

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Messaging DLM in the Survey Portal

BRIEF DESCRIPTION	ASSIGNEE	STATUS	ID	DUE DATE
FY 2026 Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Regularly Scheduled Local Elections - Townsville (Demo)	Sarah Smith	Response from DLM Analyst	3276	Dec 19 2025 5:00 PM

Overview and Instructions | Important Notes - READ BEFORE BEGINNING SURVEY | Online Resources | Section A - Qualifying Questions

Message DLM

Feel free to ask any questions or provide feedback about the cost certification process here. A DLM analyst will get back to you within 1-2 business days.

[following added by Sarah Smith on 12/9/2025 4:16:39 PM (UTC-5:00)]
Hi there! I have a question about the a2.a field. Can you assist?

[following added by Faith Kiser on 12/9/2025 4:22:51 PM (UTC-5:00)]
Hi there yes!

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Editing Your Survey Response

After submitting your response, you can click on the teal “Edit Submission” button to make any changes, but you will only have 1 business day (24 hours) to do so. After the period has passed, you can download a copy of your response in the “Certification Clause” tab.

Sarah Smith (Log Out)


Division of Local Mandates Survey Portal

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of Records Needing your attention

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ID	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	ASSIGNEE	STATUS	DUE DATE	SURVEY SUBMISSION DATE	LAST MUNICIPALITY CHANGE DATE
3276	FY 2026 Early Voting Cost Certification Survey for Regularly Scheduled Local Elections - Townsville (Demo)	Sarah Smith	Survey Submitted - Pre-Verification Window	Dec 19 2025 5:00 PM	Dec 9 2025 4:40 PM	Dec 9 2025 4:34 PM



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DLM Review

Overview and Instructions | Important Notes - READ BEFORE BEGINNING SURVEY | Online Resources | **Section A - Qualifying Questions**

Section A: Qualifying Questions

A1a. * Did your municipality hold a regularly scheduled local election during the fiscal year?

Yes No

Your response to Question A1a needs more clarification. Please use the textbox below to respond to the analyst's request for more information.

A1a - Reason for More Information

Missing data or information

[following added by Carina DiBarcelos - Ver Analyst - Test User on 12/9/2025 7:44:43 PM (UTC-5:00)]
Please answer the following questions.

- After editing your submission, your response will be sent to a DLM analyst for review.
- An analyst will send back your submission to you if they have any questions about your responses.

Certification Letters

- After a DLM analyst has finished reviewing your submission for certification, you will be given one more opportunity to double check all expenses are accounted for.
- You will receive an email with a PDF of your certification shortly after!
- Your certification letter will also be available at any time in the portal.

Upcoming Office Hours

DLM will be hosting virtual office hours to assist clerks with navigating the new DLM survey portal:

- **Wednesday, January 7th from 12-1pm**
- **Wednesday, January 14th from 12-1pm**

Contact Us

Email:

**[DLM.CostCertification@
MassAuditor.gov](mailto:DLM.CostCertification@MassAuditor.gov)**

**Office Number:
(617) 727-0980**

Questions?

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