Subject: RE: Public Information Act Request (TX-SOS-25-2603) - SOS PIR 25-1112
Date: Thursday, February 12, 2026 at 4:39:28 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: GeneralCounsel
To: AO Records
CC: GeneralCounsel
Category: PRODUCTION, COUNSEL - TX AG
Attachments: 2-12-26 15 Day Letter to Requestor - American Oversight PIR 25-1112.pdf, 2-12-26 15 Day Letter to OAG - American Oversight PIR 25-1112.pdf, 2.12.26 Documents.zip

EXTERNAL SENDER

Good afternoon,

Please see the attached letters and zipped folder containing documents in response to your request for information under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code. The Open Records Division of the OAG generally issues rulings within 45 business days of receipt of the request for a decision. We will provide you with a courtesy copy of that ruling when we receive it.

The responsive documents contain email addresses of the general public. An email address of a member of the public is confidential under section 552.137 of the Texas Government Code. The attorney general authorized all governmental bodies to withhold an email address of a member of the public without first requesting an attorney general opinion in Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009). Thus, this information has been redacted.

In addition, certain information has been redacted from the attached production pending the determination from the Attorney General's Open Records Division on our request for a ruling.

As stated in the attached, we require more time to continue reviewing our records and produce additional responsive information. We will provide you additional responsive documents on a rolling basis—to the extent such information is not excepted from disclosure under state or federal law—with our next production by 5:00 p.m. on March 25, 2026. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 552.221(d).

Kind regards,

Jennifer Williams
Legal Assistant to the General Counsel
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

From: GeneralCounsel <GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Thursday, February 5, 2026 12:31 PM
To: 'AO Records' <records@americanoversight.org>
Cc: GeneralCounsel <GeneralCounsel@sos.texas.gov>

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Christopher McGinn
To: Secretary; Christina Adkins; Kristi Hart; Elections Internet
Subject: Collective Statewide Association TEAM Concerns
Date: Friday, October 17, 2025 9:18:36 AM
Attachments: Collective Association TEAM Concerns.pdf

This Message Is From an External Sender
CAUTION: This email originated from OUTSIDE of the SOS organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are expecting the email and know that the content is safe. If you believe this to be a malicious or phishing email, please send this email as an attachment to Informationsecurity@sos.texas.gov.

Report Suspicious

On behalf of
Shannon Lackey, TACEO - President,
Sandra Roblez, CDCAT - President,
Rick Thompson, CJCAT - Program Director,
Christina McMurray, PCAC - TACA President

Please see the attached letter.

CHRIS

Executive Director, TACEO
executivedirector@txaceo.org
www.txaceo.org
336.804.9565

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

October 17th, 2025

The Honorable Jane Nelson
Texas Secretary of State
P.O. Box 12060
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Secretary Nelson,

On behalf of the Texas Association of County Election Officials, the County and District Clerks Association, the Tax Assessor-Collectors Association of Texas, and the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas, we write to express shared concerns and recommend potential strategies to address implementation challenges with the new statewide election management system (TEAM).

The transition to a new TEAM is a massive undertaking, requiring partnership between counties, the Secretary of State, and Civix, the vendor assisting the state in designing the system. We appreciate the Secretary of State's collaboration and partnership with counties in ensuring Texas continues to be a model for fair and safe elections. However, in rolling out and implementing this new platform, several issues have been identified that directly impact key parts of the election and jury process. These challenges merit immediate action, and counties look forward to working with the Secretary of State and Civix to identify and address each issue.

Key Challenges

1. **Inconsistent System Behavior**
    a. Since the transition to the new TEAM, counties have experienced daily inconsistencies with the core functionality of the system. Necessary processes, including voter registration lookup, ballot issuance status, precinct assignments, and voter history updates, frequently malfunction.

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This lack of functionality materially increases the risk of a voter being issued the wrong ballot, duplicate registrations, and more delays in the polling place.

b. Counties have seen substantial delays in processing voter registration applications and updating registration status. Many election officials have observed TEAM incorrectly generating the voter registration list, which compromises election security by complicating the update of poll books and the identification of voters who have received a mail ballot.

c. Several Smaller Texas counties rely on TEAM to pull their jury list. District clerks have documented the new system solely pulling registered voters as jurors instead of those qualified to serve on a jury. Additionally, the new system lost its functionality to print summons, adding unnecessary delays to the jury process.

Many of these challenges are not reproducible, which prevents local officials from accurately diagnosing and addressing the issues. We understand the difficulty in standing up TEAM, which requires transitioning millions of data points, training counties, and managing a private sector vendor responsible for a significant part of designing the new system, providing technical maintenance, and support. The associations have encouraged counties to diligently track their experiences to provide tangible feedback as issues are addressed.

2. **Statewide Training Gaps**
   a. While training opportunities have been provided, it's concerning that it began so close to the implementation of the new system without there being a significant buffer to prepare for the upcoming constitutional amendment election. Given the technical difficulties and various TEAM updates, election officials are expected to master a rapidly changing system without troubleshooting guidance, which hinders their ability to address system issues.

3. **Insufficient Support Resources and Escalation Protocols**
   a. TEAM representative support is intermittent, under-resourced, and lacks subject-matter continuity. Response times are frequently measured in hours rather than minutes. Furthermore, it is concerning because prompt responses are necessary for time-sensitive issues that arise during early voting and on Election Day.
   b. Escalation procedures are unclear; local election officials cannot reliably identify whom to contact for emergency remediation or rollbacks.

Immediate Recommendations

To protect voters and ensure Texas has the strongest elections possible, we offer the following immediate and long-term recommendations:

1. **Stabilization and Audit**
   a. Halt any further system-wide rollouts or feature changes until a stabilization plan exists or at least until after the completion of this Election Cycle. Many feature changes have led to continued confusion among counties, resulting in TEAM producing incorrect reports and creating uncertainty in fundamental election management processes.
   b. Require the Secretary of State to provide a clear timeline for TEAM bug fixes and system hardening. This can be further addressed by publishing weekly status reports to counties that

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detail both resolved and outstanding issues, ensuring clear communication about the problems that have been solved.

c. Expand the list of eligible jurors to include those who are not just registered voters.

2. Robust Support and Contingency Resources

a. Establish a dedicated incident response team, focused on TEAM, through the duration of early voting and canvass, staffed with technicians authorized to implement emergency remediations, where appropriate, perform controlled rollbacks, and promptly assist counties.

b. Publish an explicit escalation matrix with names, contact information, and response-time commitments for each escalation tier, so counties correctly flag issues with the right entity.

c. Provide model contingency plans and resources for counties to revert to validated manual or alternative electronic workflows (including paper-based backstops) in the event of a critical system failure and supply the necessary materials and instructions immediately.

This collective request is not easy and calls for decisive, immediate action, along with verifiable progress on the issues outlined above. However, without these changes, the current state of the TEAM rollout creates undue risk to voters and the integrity of election officials. Counties are the state's partner and will continue to collaborate constructively on solutions. Election officials recognize the role Civix plays in designing TEAM and offer our round-the-clock support in addressing the outlined challenges.

We stand ready to help undertake exhaustive efforts that ensure the best possible election for all Texans.

Sincerely,

Shannon Lackey
Randall County Election Administrator
TACEO - President

Sandra Roblez
Yokum County District Clerk
CDCAT - President

Rick Thompson
CJCAT - Program Director

Christina McMurray, PCAC
Randall County Tax- Assessor Collector
TACA - President

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Office of Texas Governor Greg Abbott
To: Secretary
Subject: Constituent Referrals
Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 1:40:11 PM
Attachments: McKenzieDeborah20251028.pdf

This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender
You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

Report Suspicious

Enclosed is a copy of correspondence that was sent to the Office of the Governor. I am forwarding it for your review and response to both the constituent and our office. Thank you for your assistance.

--

Best,
Casey Clemens
Correspondence Analyst
Constituent Communication Division
Office of Governor Greg Abbott

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Clerks
Voter reg. Petition

DEBORAH MCKENZIE

3908 KINGSTON COURT, FORT WORTH TX 76109
TEL. (940) 206-6943
E-MAIL: [redacted]

The Honorable Ted Cruz
United States Senator for the State of Texas
167 Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
By regular mail and by certified mail, return receipt requested

RECEIVED
OCT 27 2025
OOG/CCOM

The Honorable John Cornyn
United States Senator for the State of Texas
517 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
By regular mail and by certified mail, return receipt requested

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of the State of Texas
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 12428
Austin TX 78711
By regular mail and by certified mail, return receipt requested

The Honorable Craig Goldman
U.S. House of Representatives
1716 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
By regular mail and by certified mail, return receipt requested

The Honorable John McQueeney
Texas Senate
4521 South Hulen, Suite 122
Fort Worth TX 76109
By regular mail and by certified mail, return receipt requested

The Honorable Phil King
Texas House of Representatives
Nan & Bob Kingsley Building
1710 Martin Drive
Weatherford TX 76086
By regular mail and by certified mail, return receipt requested

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

The Honorable Ken Paxton
Attorney General of the State of Texas
P.O. Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548
By regular mail and by certified mail, return receipt requested

October 21, 2025

Dear Sirs:

Problems exist that, unless immediately corrected, are serious enough to call into question the legitimacy of the upcoming November 2025 elections and ballot initiatives in Texas.

Early voting began yesterday, October 20; Election Day is fast approaching; and thousands of eligible, newly registered voters in Tarrant County may find themselves discouraged from voting or forced to cast provisional ballots or limited ballots. Provisional ballots are often rejected in Texas, and limited ballots can be cast only at county elections offices that often are inconveniently located and with inconvenient hours.

These voters are experiencing these problems because their ' names do not show up on the voter rolls of Tarrant County, despite Tarrant County having approved their applications.

The major problem is in the Secretary of State's office in Austin. A secondary problem appears also to exist for already-registered voters who have moved from Denton County to Tarrant County and have submitted an application to change their residential address from Denton County to Tarrant County so that they can vote in Tarrant County

I am personally familiar with both of these issues.

As a deputy voter registrar in Tarrant County (Badge Number 2025-295), I personally delivered to the Tarrant County Elections office, on September 8, 2025, several new-voter or change-of-address-voter applications. One of them was completed and signed by a young man (who happens to be my grandson) who has moved from Denton County to Tarrant County to attend TCU and who wants to vote in Tarrant County in November.

My grandson has given me permission to share with you his name, birthdate, and address: he is Jackson Dennie; his birthdate is [redacted] and his address is Clark Hall, on the TCU campus, located at 3600 Pond Drive, Fort Worth TX 76109.

As of today, October 21, 2025—the second day of early voting in Texas—Jackson's name still does not appear on the Tarrant County voter rolls, and he has never received his new

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

voter-registration certifiate. According to the Tarrant County Elections office, his application is listed as "PSV," that is, "pending state verification."

He has, however, received by mail a letter from the Denton County Voter Registrar, dated October 10, informing Jackson that his voter registration has been canceled in Denton County.

In that same letter, the Denton County Voter Registrar told Jackson that he had to "re-register" to vote in his new county of residence. (See Exhibit A, letter from Denton County Voter Registrar, dated October 10, 2025.)

This may be only clumsy wording by the voter registrar, but it is dangerously clumsy, if not downright misleading. There is no legal requirement that any applicant "re-register" to vote after having already submitted a valid change-of-address application. That application accomplishes two things at once: it changes a voter's address in the voter rolls, AND it registers the voter to vote in his new county of residence.

I have made multiple telephone calls to the Tarrant County Elections Administration office, where I have spoken each time to Linda Herod-Rivas, an extraordinarily courteous and helpful person. She assures me that Jackson's application is without defect, that Tarrant County timely submitted it to the Secretary of State, and that the Secretary's office has a backlog of applications that have not yet been processed because of complications caused to the state's "TEAM" voter-registration system by a program update.

I also have made repeated calls to the Secretary of State's Elections Division in order to resolve this problem.

So far, the problem has not been solved, and I believe that this same problem is likely being experienced by thousands of other voter-registration applicants. I fear that the number of eligible new or change-of-address voters whose applications have not been processed is large enough to call into serious question the legitimacy of the November 4 elections and ballot-initiative votes.

Here is a timeline of what has happened – and not happened – with regard to Jackson's application, a description of my communications with Linda Herod-Rivas of the Tarrant County Elections office, with the Secretary of State's elections-division staff, and with staff at the office of the Denton County Voter Registrar.

September 25, 2025 (18 days after I delivered Jackson's application to Tarrant County):

An article appears in The Texas Tribune, reporting on problems with an enormous backlog of unprocessed voter-registration applications in the Secretary of State's office. (See Exhibit B, copy of article published by the Texas Tribune, September 25, 2025).

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On that date, according to this article, there were 13,000 unprocessed applications from Tarrant County backlogged at the Secretary of State's office, 12,000 unprocessed applications from Travis County, and over 40,000 (yes, forty thousand) unprocessed applications from Bexar Couty.

The Tribune article also states:

> The Texas Secretary of State's Office said it anticipated some technical issues with this 'once-in-a-decade upgrade.' Adkins [that is, Christina Adkins, the state's elections-division director] told election officials this month that many of the problems stem from county officials not knowing how to use the updated system.
>
> But several county election officials said the system didn't work well during training sessions earlier this year, which limited opportunities for hands-on testing.
>
> Meanwhile, the unprocessed registration applications keep piling up....

October 9, 2025 (32 days after I delivered Jackson's application to Tarrant County):

Jackson's name does not show up on the online Tarrant County voter-lookup tool, and he has not received his new voter-registration certificate.

I call the Tarrant County Elections office and speak to Linda Herod-Rivas, a staff member there. She tells me that Jackson is, indeed, registered to vote in Tarrant County, but that because of the backlog of applications in the Secretary of State's office his application has not yet been verified by the state. Ms. Herod-Rivas also tells me that she is confident that the Secretary will process Jackson's application within a week or two.

October 15, 2025 (38 days after I delivered Jackson's application to Tarrant County):

Jackson's name still does not show up online in the Tarrant County voter lookup, and he still has not received his new voter-registration certificate

I call the Secretary of State's Elections Division.

That division's Tarrant County representative, Christine Chapa, is not available. So my call is forwarded to her assistant "Tawna" (spelled phonetically here, because I did not ask her to spell her name).

Tawna at first tells me that the Secretary has rejected Jackson's application because his address had been "typed" into the application, and that her office had sent him a notice of this defect.

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I told her that neither of her statements were true. I told her that I had reviewed Jackson's completed application myself, as had the staff at the Tarrant County Elections office, and that he had entered his address (and everything else) by handwriting with an ink pen. I also tell her that Jackson has never received any kind of notice from the Secretary of State's office.

I then ask Tawna to what address their office had mailed this notice. She then says that, upon closer examination, she sees that the notice had been "generated, but never mailed" to Jackson!

As of today, October 21, 2025, he still has received no notice of any kind from the Secretary of State.

Tawna then tells me that someone at the Tarrant County Elections office, rather than Jackson, must have typed in his address. She says that she cannot, herself, correct this defect; rather, that I should contact Tarrant County, because only Tarrant County can correct it.

I immediately call Tarrant County Elections and speak again to Linda Herod-Rivas, who strongly denies that anyone at Tarrant County typed anything into Jackson's application. She also reviews Jackson's application again and confirms to me that it is a completely acceptable application, with no defects. Ms. Herod-Rivas says that she will, herself, contact the Secretary's office and try to solve this problem.

On this same day, Jackson receives by mail a letter from the Denton County Voter Registrar, dated October 10, 2025, in which the voter registrar informs Jackson that his voter registration has been canceled in Denton County and that he needed to "re-register" to vote in the county in which he now lives. This language leads Jackson to believe that he must fill out a second change-of-address/voter-registration application in order to vote in Tarrant County. I inform Jackson that he does not need to "re-register," that his application had both changed his address AND registered him to vote in Tarrant County.

October 17, 2025 (40 days after I delivered Jackson's application to Tarrant County):

Jackson's name is still not showing up online in the Tarrant County voter rolls, and he still has not received a voter-registration card.

I call Linda Herod-Rivas again, at the Tarrant County Elections office. She tells me that Jackson's application is still pending in the backlog of applications that are in the Secretary of State's office. Ms. Rivas says that she expects Jackson's application to clear today.

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October 20, 2025 (43 days after I delivered Jackson's application to Tarrant County):

Jackson name is still not showing up online in the Tarrant County rolls and he still has not received a voter-registration certificate.

I call Linda Herod-Rivas again at the Tarrant County Elections office. She says that Jackson's application is still "PSV" ("pending state verification").

I call the Secretary of State's Elections division again. The Secretary's Tarrant County representative still is unavailable, so I speak this time with "Maria." I reiterate to Maria the same timeline that I have set forth here and express to her my concern that Jackson will not be able to cast a regular ballot in Tarrant County because of the Secretary's failure to process his application. I also express to her that, while I know that he can cast a provisional ballot, I also know that provisional ballots are often rejected. Maria says that there has been a delay in processing applications at the Secretary's office, but has no advice as to what can be done to speed up that process.

I call the Denton County Voter Registrar's office and speak with "Talie," who tells me that sometime before mailing the letter to Jackson on October 10, the Denton County registrar had received a notice from the Secretary of State that Jackson had changed his residential address.

Apparently, the Secretary had no difficulty in quickly contacting Denton County in order to get Jackson's voter registration cancelled there, but she has failed so far to verify him for registration in Tarrant County.

I express to Talie my discomfort with the Denton County Voter Registrar's instructing Jackson (or any other change-of-address applicant) that he or they need to "re-register," telling her that the language gives the voter the impression that they need to fill out a second voter-registration application in their new county when in fact they do not. I asked Talie to please raise this issue with the Denton County Voter Registrar and ask him to amend his language in letters such as these.

I also call the Texas Election Protection Hotline for Texas and report this problem to the Texas Civil Rights Project. I express my concerns to the lawyers there, saying that I fear that not only Jackson but perhaps thousands of other eligible voters will be unable to vote or be forced to cast provisional or limited ballots in this November 4 election because of the Secretary of State's negligence.

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Conclusion

My grandson, Jackson Dennie, an eligible voter, is currently in voter-registration limbo: unable to vote in Denton County and able only to cast a provisional ballot (or, at best, a limited ballot) in Tarrant County if he is allowed to vote at all.

Provisional ballots, in Texas, are often rejected on the flimsiest of technicalities. No eligible voter should have to cast one.

Casting a limited ballot in Tarrant County requires the change-of-address voter to physically travel to the Tarrant County Elections Administration Office during the early-voting period, which started yesterday. The Tarrant County Elections Administration office is inconveniently located at 2700 Premier St. in Fort Worth, almost ten miles from the TCU Campus, where Jackson lives. Furthermore, its hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., exactly the times when Jackson will be in class at TCU.

This will be Jackson's first time to vote. Exercising his right to vote should not be this complicated for him or for any voter.

I fear that all of the new or change-of-address voters that I registered may be caught up in this same backlog in the Secretary of State's office. It could well be that thousands of new or change-of-address applicants will be so discouraged by the situation in the Secretary of State's office that they will simply not try to vote at all.

I also fear that other change-of-address/voter registration applicants who have applied to change their address from Denton County to Tarrant County may, assuming they receive a letter from the Denton County Voter Registrar that is worded like the one sent to Jackson, be led to believe that they cannot vote in this election. I fear that they will think that in order to vote in Tarrant County, they need to fill out a second voter-registration application. But, knowing that the deadline to register has passed, they will of course think that it is too late to do so.

This is voter suppression, whether by direct design or by inexcusable negligence on the part of the Secretary of State and, possibly, the Denton County Voter Registrar.

I beg you, please address this situation and do everything you can to force the Secretary of State to process Jackson's and all other backlogged applications in time for these new or change-of-address voters to be added to their county's voter rolls during this early-voting period and on November 4.

I also ask that the Denton County Voter Registrar be instructed to amend the language of his letter to omit the sentence that reads, "You will need to re-register in the county of your new address."

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TX-SOS-25-2603-A-000012

If this election proceeds on November 4 with eligible voters denied their right to vote by the problems that I've stated in this letter, then this election should be voided.

Respectfully,

Deborah Boone McKenzie

Deborah Boone McKenzie

Cc:

Jackson Dennie via e-mail to [redacted];

Jane Nelson, Texas Secretary of State, Elections Division, P.O. Box 12060, Austin, TX 78711-2060, via regular mail and certified mail, return receipt requested

Frank Phillips, Denton County Voter Registrar, P.O. Box 1720, Denton, TX, 76202, via regular mail and certified mail, return receipt requested

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21-48
Prescribed by Secretary of State
Sections 16.031(a), 16.036, Texas Election Code
©2023

Name: JACKSON A. DENNIE
VUID: [2220411500]

NOTICE OF CANCELLATION

Notice is hereby given that your voter registration has been cancelled in Denton County on

10/10/2025
(Date)

The reason for cancellation was:

Check one:

_____ Receipt of request to cancel voter registration.

_____ Receipt of abstract of total mental incapacity or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote.

_____ Receipt of abstract of felony conviction.

_____ Receipt of abstract of judgment in an election contest that you were a disqualified voter.

_____ After examination of your registration under Sec. 16.033, Texas Election Code.

_____ Notice was received from the Secretary of State that you are currently registered to vote in another Texas county.

_____ Failure to respond to Notice for Proof of Citizenship.

X I received a change of address which indicated a new address outside this county. You will need to re-register in the county of your new address. Your registration is cancelled in this county.

You may request a hearing on the cancellation of your registration by submitting a written request for such hearing. If you request a hearing, a notice will be mailed to you setting forth the date of the hearing. The hearing will be scheduled within ten (10) days after your request or on a later date if you so request.

If after the hearing, the voter registrar determines that your registration shall remain cancelled, you are entitled to appeal the adverse decision issued by the voter registrar by petitioning for review in district court not later than the 30th day after the adverse decision is issued.

If you should have any questions regarding this cancellation, please contact me at (940) 349-3200.

Frank Phillips
Signature of Voter Registrar

701, Kimberly Dr., Ste. A100, Denton, TX 76208
Address of Voter Registrar

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Exhibit A

Texas counties struggle to process voter registrations using state's new system

Natalia Contreras, The Texas Tribune

September 25, 2025

Sign up for The Brief, The Texas Tribune's daily newsletter that keeps readers up to speed on the most essential Texas news.

This coverage is made possible through Votebeat, a nonpartisan news organization covering local election administration and voting access. Sign up for Votebeat Texas' free newsletters here.

Darcy Hood mailed her voter registration application to the Tarrant County elections department in July, after she turned 18.

Months later, her application still hasn't been processed. And it's unclear when it will be.

With the Oct. 6 deadline to register to vote in November's constitutional amendment election approaching, tens of thousands of Texans are in the same situation, waiting in suspense for their applications to go through, a process that normally takes a few days or weeks.

In interviews, private conversations, and emails, county elections officials from across the state point the finger at the state's voter registration system, known as TEAM, which has long had functionality problems. They say that after the software was overhauled in July, the problems began proliferating: Voters' previous addresses override their new ones, their voting precincts don't populate correctly, and sometimes the registration information doesn't save at all.

"One day it works and we can get stuff done, and the next day it doesn't and nothing gets done," said Pam Hill, the elections administrator in San Patricio County. "That's the trend right now."

...

The executive board of the Texas Association of County Election Officials met on Sept. 2 with Christina Adkins, the state's elections division director, and Deputy Director Kristi Hart to discuss the problems. In an email sent afterward to association members and obtained by Votebeat, the board said it "unambiguously stated the level of frustration from our members" regarding the need for clear guidance and training, the absence of which "has placed unexpected burdens and stress on our members." The board said it would begin offering some training and peer support itself.

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Exhibit B

The Texas Secretary of State's Office said it anticipated some technical issues with this "once-in-a-decade upgrade." Adkins told election officials this month that many of the problems stem from county officials not knowing how to use the updated system.

But several county election officials said the system didn't work well during training sessions earlier this year, which limited opportunities for hands-on testing.

Meanwhile, the unprocessed registration applications keep piling up. Hood's application is one of around 13,000 that Tarrant County election officials say are pending state verification. Travis County says it has more than 12,000 applications that need to be processed, and Bexar County has more than 40,000. A Texas voter whose application was received on time but not processed by the time of the election can still cast a provisional ballot, but there's a risk those ballots won't be counted.

"I hate that our voters are going through this, and it's through no fault of their own," said Clinton Ludwig, the Tarrant County elections administrator. The voters are doing what they're supposed to do, and we're also trying to do what we're supposed to do."

Heather Hood, Darcy's mother, told Votebeat that for weeks she has called Tarrant County and state officials seeking answers about her daughter's application. An official with the Texas Secretary of State's Office told her last week "to be patient."

"It's so frustrating to be placated, and they're telling me to be patient when they are the ones who have put this system into place and it is not working correctly," Heather Hood told Votebeat in a phone interview.

State officials say they're responding to concerns

State officials have pushed back on some of the counties' complaints. "There is a difference between a county saying this doesn't work and a county saying, I don't know how to do this," Adkins, the state election director, said in a Sept. 17 video call with local election officials that was recorded by the state and shared with Votebeat. "We want to really make sure that we're drilling down on the things that are issues versus areas where you need more training."

In statements to Votebeat, the Texas Secretary of State's Office said that the rollout of the updated version of TEAM is a multi-stage process, and that the office has "planned accordingly."

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The task involves "migrating more than 20 million records and training more than 2,500 users," the office said. "Technical issues are to be expected with a rollout of this size, and that is why we chose this constitutional election cycle for this transition."

"We are working long hours to help our counties prepare for the November election and upgrade to a new version of TEAM that will ultimately result in more efficiently managed elections," the office said.

The state and the vendor that developed the system "continue to respond to issues and concerns," the office said.

The Secretary of State's Office has assigned 30 employees to work directly with counties to train them and answer technical questions about the new system, the agency said, three times as many as it had in the previous TEAM update.

"As we are in the middle of a once-in-a-decade upgrade of the state's voter registration system, our focus right now is on supporting counties in preparation for the upcoming election," the agency added. "Any verdict on the new system is far too premature at the moment."

Counties have long had issues with TEAM

TEAM — the Texas Election Administration Management system — has been around since the early 2000s, and earlier iterations prompted many complaints from election officials. The state improved the system over the years and launched a complete overhaul in July, but election officials say it is falling short of the promises that officials from the Texas Secretary of State's Office made to election officials and state lawmakers.

The system was developed by Louisiana-based vendor Civix. All but 15 of the state's 254 counties rely on TEAM to plan elections and maintain their voter rolls. Even counties that use software from one of two state-approved private vendors to manage their voter rolls are required by state law to sync their data with TEAM daily, and have to use TEAM to verify a voter's identity and their eligibility to cast a ballot.

Election officials across the state have been complaining for months about struggles with the latest TEAM iteration, and at least 10 county election officials interviewed by Votebeat said the issues are preventing them from completing essential tasks.

"Some of (the problems) get corrected, and then a few days later, they're not working again," said Hill, the San Patricio County elections administrator.

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

She said her staff in the South Texas county, which has roughly 40,000 registered voters, hasn't been able to process about 600 voter registration applications initially submitted through the Texas Department of Public Safety. To do so, her staff must use the system to make sure the voters are not already registered somewhere else, plus double-check street addresses to ensure the voter gets the correct ballot, among other tasks.

The Texas Association of County Election Officials surveyed its members Sept. 2 and found that county officials struggled with the system, but noted that TEAM representatives were helpful and responsive. Around 114 of the association's 600-plus members responded to the survey.

"A substantial portion of users find the TEAM system's core functionalities, particularly Voter Registration and related sub-features, to be difficult or not functioning," says the survey summary, which Votebeat obtained through an open records request.

Chris McGinn, the association's executive director, declined to comment on how the state has responded to complaints about the system. But he said the association is continuing to work with the Secretary of State's Office and that the agency "has been very willing to listen to our concerns and address them as efficiently as they can."

At least two dozen messages from 15 county officials regarding concerns about TEAM were sent to an email list of county election officials between July and September, according to records obtained by Votebeat, though some of those officials say their issues were subsequently fixed.

"Would it help if everyone just logged off until they fix everything? Thoughts?" Harrison County elections administrator Donald Robinette wrote earlier this month.

Civix, the vendor that developed TEAM, declined to comment for this story. According to public records, its contract with the state is for $17 million. The Secretary of State's Office said it's paid by a mix of state funds and federal funds allocated under the 2002 Help America Vote Act, aimed at improving election administration.

Migrating to TEAM from private systems

While the state uses TEAM and counties must sync with it, the local offices can use a state-approved private vendor to maintain voter registration and conduct other vital tasks. But such contracts can be costly, creating an incentive for counties to use TEAM, which is free for them. Some counties switched to TEAM in the last year after becoming concerned about the viability of Votec, one of the two state-sanctioned vendors.

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"Our team is systematically addressing any issues as they arise in support of the 254 counties who are adjusting to the new system," the Texas Secretary of State's Office's statement said. "At the same time, we are attempting to onboard counties whose privately contracted vendor just went out of business, leaving them without a functioning voter registration system. This is an unprecedented situation."

...

The struggles county election officials are having with TEAM have deterred others from making the switch away from outside vendors.

Nueces County used Votec for voter registration until August and considered switching to TEAM. But after hearing from his counterparts around the state, Kevin Kieschnick, the county's tax assessor-collector and voter registrar, said the county decided instead to contract with the other state-approved vendor, VR Systems.

Kieschnick said he concluded that the county wouldn't be able to transfer large files of voter registration applications, voters' signatures, and geographical data of voters' addresses. "There were enough issues that I heard about from a bunch of other counties that made me think, 'Nope, we're not going to do that,'" he said.

The state's contract with Civix requires the Texas Secretary of State's Office to address any poor performance, and by law, it must report information about the vendor's performance to a state tracking system. The office did not respond directly to questions about whether it has reported any problems yet, but said it's working closely with Civix to resolve them.

Hill, the elections administrator from San Patricio County in South Texas, said she believes the state will fix the problems, but she expects it'll take time.

"Six months from now, I might tell you that TEAM is working great and we really like the new TEAM," Hill said. "I hope we get there."

Registering to vote in Texas

The deadline to register to vote in the Nov. 4 constitutional amendment election is Oct. 6.

Check your voter registration status at VoteTexas.gov or contact your local registrar.

If you've registered to vote but your name isn't on the voter rolls at the polling place, ask to cast a provisional ballot.

By law, election officials are required to investigate why your name doesn't appear in the system and will inform you after Election Day whether your provisional ballot was counted.

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If this happened to you, please contact us at community@votebeat.org.

Natalia Contreras covers election administration and voting access for Votebeat in partnership with the Texas Tribune. She is based in Corpus Christi. Contact Natalia at [redacted]

This article first appeared on The Texas Tribune.

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From:	Christina Adkins
To:	Dave Nelson; Adam Bitter; Alicia Pierce; Kristi Hart
Subject:	FW: Collective Statewide Association TEAM Concerns
Date:	Friday, October 17, 2025 9:21:11 AM
Attachments:	Collective Association TEAM Concerns.pdf

See attached.

From: Christopher McGinn
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 9:18 AM
To: Secretary ; Christina Adkins ; Kristi Hart ; Elections Internet
Subject: Collective Statewide Association TEAM Concerns

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Report Suspicious

On behalf of
Shannon Lackey, TACEO - President,
Sandra Roblez, CDCAT - President,
Rick Thompson, CJCAT - Program Director,
Christina McMurray, PCAC - TACA President
Please see the attached letter.
CHRIS
Executive Director, TACEO
executivedirector@txaceo.org
www.txaceo.org
336.804.9565

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

October 17th, 2025

The Honorable Jane Nelson
Texas Secretary of State
P.O. Box 12060
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Secretary Nelson,

On behalf of the Texas Association of County Election Officials, the County and District Clerks Association, the Tax Assessor-Collectors Association of Texas, and the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas, we write to express shared concerns and recommend potential strategies to address implementation challenges with the new statewide election management system (TEAM).

The transition to a new TEAM is a massive undertaking, requiring partnership between counties, the Secretary of State, and Civix, the vendor assisting the state in designing the system. We appreciate the Secretary of State's collaboration and partnership with counties in ensuring Texas continues to be a model for fair and safe elections. However, in rolling out and implementing this new platform, several issues have been identified that directly impact key parts of the election and jury process. These challenges merit immediate action, and counties look forward to working with the Secretary of State and Civix to identify and address each issue.

Key Challenges

1. **Inconsistent System Behavior**
    a. Since the transition to the new TEAM, counties have experienced daily inconsistencies with the core functionality of the system. Necessary processes, including voter registration lookup, ballot issuance status, precinct assignments, and voter history updates, frequently malfunction.

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

This lack of functionality materially increases the risk of a voter being issued the wrong ballot, duplicate registrations, and more delays in the polling place.

b. Counties have seen substantial delays in processing voter registration applications and updating registration status. Many election officials have observed TEAM incorrectly generating the voter registration list, which compromises election security by complicating the update of poll books and the identification of voters who have received a mail ballot.

c. Several Smaller Texas counties rely on TEAM to pull their jury list. District clerks have documented the new system solely pulling registered voters as jurors instead of those qualified to serve on a jury. Additionally, the new system lost its functionality to print summons, adding unnecessary delays to the jury process.

Many of these challenges are not reproducible, which prevents local officials from accurately diagnosing and addressing the issues. We understand the difficulty in standing up TEAM, which requires transitioning millions of data points, training counties, and managing a private sector vendor responsible for a significant part of designing the new system, providing technical maintenance, and support. The associations have encouraged counties to diligently track their experiences to provide tangible feedback as issues are addressed.

2. **Statewide Training Gaps**
   a. While training opportunities have been provided, it's concerning that it began so close to the implementation of the new system without there being a significant buffer to prepare for the upcoming constitutional amendment election. Given the technical difficulties and various TEAM updates, election officials are expected to master a rapidly changing system without troubleshooting guidance, which hinders their ability to address system issues.

3. **Insufficient Support Resources and Escalation Protocols**
   a. TEAM representative support is intermittent, under-resourced, and lacks subject-matter continuity. Response times are frequently measured in hours rather than minutes. Furthermore, it is concerning because prompt responses are necessary for time-sensitive issues that arise during early voting and on Election Day.
   b. Escalation procedures are unclear; local election officials cannot reliably identify whom to contact for emergency remediation or rollbacks.

Immediate Recommendations

To protect voters and ensure Texas has the strongest elections possible, we offer the following immediate and long-term recommendations:

1. **Stabilization and Audit**
   a. Halt any further system-wide rollouts or feature changes until a stabilization plan exists or at least until after the completion of this Election Cycle. Many feature changes have led to continued confusion among counties, resulting in TEAM producing incorrect reports and creating uncertainty in fundamental election management processes.
   b. Require the Secretary of State to provide a clear timeline for TEAM bug fixes and system hardening. This can be further addressed by publishing weekly status reports to counties that

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detail both resolved and outstanding issues, ensuring clear communication about the problems that have been solved.

c. Expand the list of eligible jurors to include those who are not just registered voters.

2. Robust Support and Contingency Resources

a. Establish a dedicated incident response team, focused on TEAM, through the duration of early voting and canvass, staffed with technicians authorized to implement emergency remediations, where appropriate, perform controlled rollbacks, and promptly assist counties.

b. Publish an explicit escalation matrix with names, contact information, and response-time commitments for each escalation tier, so counties correctly flag issues with the right entity.

c. Provide model contingency plans and resources for counties to revert to validated manual or alternative electronic workflows (including paper-based backstops) in the event of a critical system failure and supply the necessary materials and instructions immediately.

This collective request is not easy and calls for decisive, immediate action, along with verifiable progress on the issues outlined above. However, without these changes, the current state of the TEAM rollout creates undue risk to voters and the integrity of election officials. Counties are the state's partner and will continue to collaborate constructively on solutions. Election officials recognize the role Civix plays in designing TEAM and offer our round-the-clock support in addressing the outlined challenges.

We stand ready to help undertake exhaustive efforts that ensure the best possible election for all Texans.

Sincerely,

Shannon Lackey
Randall County Election Administrator
TACEO - President

Sandra Roblez
Yokum County District Clerk
CDCAT - President

Rick Thompson
CJCAT - Program Director

Christina McMurray, PCAC
Randall County Tax- Assessor Collector
TACA - President

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From:	Beauregard Hanley
To:	Dave Nelson; Adam Bitter
Cc:	Amy Phillips; Christina Adkins; Kristi Hart
Subject:	FW: Collective Statewide Association TEAM Concerns
Date:	Friday, October 17, 2025 12:13:37 PM
Attachments:	Collective Association TEAM Concerns.pdf image001.png

Good afternoon everyone,

Please see the email below and the attached letter from Chris McGinn with TACEO, co-signed by others, raising concerns with the TEAM System.

Christina, Kristi, and the elections inbox were among the original recipients, so I'm sure you all may have already heard about this, or they are handling it. Thank you!

Warm regards,

Beau Hanley
Executive Liaison
Office of the Texas Secretary of State
bhanley@sos.texas.gov

SOs Seal

From: Christopher McGinn
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 9:18 AM
To: Secretary ; Christina Adkins ; Kristi Hart ; Elections Internet
Subject: Collective Statewide Association TEAM Concerns

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Report Suspicious

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Please see the attached letter.

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AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

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Many of these challenges are not reproducible, which prevents local officials from accurately diagnosing and addressing the issues. We understand the difficulty in standing up TEAM, which requires transitioning millions of data points, training counties, and managing a private sector vendor responsible for a significant part of designing the new system, providing technical maintenance, and support. The associations have encouraged counties to diligently track their experiences to provide tangible feedback as issues are addressed.

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AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

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Randall County Election Administrator
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Yokum County District Clerk
CDCAT - President

Rick Thompson
CJCAT - Program Director

Christina McMurray, PCAC
Randall County Tax- Assessor Collector
TACA - President

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
To: Natalia Contreras
Subject: Fw: Latest Votec letter to counties
Date: Thursday, September 4, 2025 1:59:28 PM

What has SOS done to make sure counties are in a position to pull off this election? Can you share on record whether the state keeps a snapshot of counties' voter registration data and whether SOS is encouraging counties to move on to TEAM if they so choose?

All county voter data is already in our statewide voter registration system. We have never been in a situation where we don't have voter data. TEAM is the official list of registered voters for the state of Texas. For offline counties, what we don't have is their street level indexing which is used to determine which districts a new voter should be placed in. Every offline county that has asked to roll into the TEAM system is being onboarded into the TEAM system. We have not, and will not, turn anyone away. This is a substantial amount of work for our office, but we are not going to put counties in a situation where they can't run their November elections.

Also, I have been hearing for weeks that counties aren't able to process new voter registration applications and there's a huge backlog - when is that gonna be resolved? Votec counties that go online will need to process these new apps they're getting in TEAM directly.

We would need more specific details on this. All of our online counties are currently processing registrations in TEAM. There are some VOTEC counties that can't process applications because VOTEC counties on their cloud based platform (VEMACS 2.0), can't access VEMACS anymore because VOTEC has shut off access. These are the bulk of counties that are rolling on to the TEAM system.

Can you share the steps that voter registration software vendors go through in order to be approved to do business in Texas?

We do not have a formal certification process for VR vendors. There is no statutory authority for us to look at legal compliance with these offline systems. If a county wants to use an offline vendor, they are responsible for ensuring that the system complies with state law. The only thing the state does is work with the vendor to make sure they can interface with TEAM and exchange data.

Is Votec still a state-approved vendor? Is it still a vendor that per SOS counties should use? Does SOS have any discretion or authority to take action given the problems it has caused for counties?

There are a number of counties that were utilizing VEMACS 1.0 which requires counties have local serves and process everything locally. VOTEC can't shut off access to that system because it is maintained locally. Some of these counties are going to continue to utilize this

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

system to get them through the November election and then evaluate from there what to do. Most of those counties are utilizing local IT staff to assist them with using the system and address any technical issues that may arise. If we remove the approval for the VOTEC product VEMACS, then these counties couldn't continue to utilize the system. This is a short term solution, but we don't want to harm counties that have found a way to make this work. We want to support them through this crisis period while they determine next steps for their county.

Later on down the line, once all of our counties are on solid footing, we will evaluate whether any further action is necessary.

On Fri, Aug 29, 2025 at 12:39 PM Natalia Contreras <[redacted]> wrote:

> Thanks, Alicia!
> It'd be helpful to have some specifics about how the state is responding to this. It's getting really close to November and voters need to know how the state and counties are handling this/and or doing about it. It seems serious, if it's set to affect the election in November, unless your office thinks otherwise, please let me know.
> Is SOS allowing counties to move over to TEAM? or sharing any other advice on this?
> If you're able to share more details by Tuesday (we're closed Monday) that would be helpful.
> Thank you!
>
> On Fri, Aug 29, 2025 at 10:25 AM Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov> wrote:
>
> > We remain in close contact with affected counties.
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **From:** Natalia Contreras [redacted]>
> > **Sent:** Wednesday, August 27, 2025 4:53 PM
> > **To:** Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>; Adam Bitter <ABitter@sos.texas.gov>; Christina Adkins <CAdkins@sos.texas.gov>
> > **Subject:** Latest Votec letter to counties
> >
> > **This Message Is From an External Sender**
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> >
> > Report Suspicious
> >
> > Hi, y'sll. I talked to Alicia about this briefly.
> > John Medcalf has sent another letter to his clients. I have attached it.
> > I wanted to know what your interpretation is of this and what steps your office is taking? How are you advising counties to handle this?
> > Also, has he communicated any of this to your office?
> > If you could share something by Friday afternoon that would be great. Thank you.

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

--
Natalia Contreras
Texas reporter | Votebeat.org
C: 361-695-1553
Twitter, Facebook: @NataliaECG
[redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Beauregard Hanley
Sent: Thursday, July 31, 2025 4:24 PM
To: Adam Bitter
Subject: FW: TEAM 2.0 Deployment Concerns

Good afternoon Adam,

See below for the Hunt County email we texted about. Thank you!

Best,

Beau Hanley
Executive Liaison
Office of the Texas Secretary of State
bhanley@sos.texas.gov

From: Jeannie Ash
Sent: Thursday, July 31, 2025 3:25 PM
To: Christina Adkins ; Kristi Hart ; Jane Nelson
Cc: Bobby W. Stovall ; Becky Landrum ; District2.Money@house.texas.gov; [redacted]; Chair - Larry Davis ([redacted]) [redacted]; Alicia Lopez
Subject: TEAM 2.0 Deployment Concerns

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Report Suspicious

Dear Secretary of State and Officials,

With all due respect, those of us working directly in the counties – with boots on the ground – are feeling increasingly overwhelmed and concerned with the existing launch of the new TEAM 2.0 database. The ongoing system issues, referred to by SOS instructors as "bugs," have left us unsure of how to proceed, and patience is wearing thin.

Many of us are struggling to understand how such a significant statewide transition was implemented without more thorough troubleshooting and testing beforehand. Even more concerning is that the rollout appears to have been incomplete, with key components still currently "under development" as critical deadlines rapidly approach.

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Counties rely heavily on a seamless transition to this new system, particularly during such a critical time. As Elections Administers and Clerks, counties are now expected to identify issues within a system that we are still trying to navigate and understand ourselves. This expectation has created a deep sense of frustration and anxiety.

We are now just 19 days away from finalizing the November election order. This includes ballot creations inclusive of constitutional amendments, jurisdictional measures, and building the election in TEAM 2.0 for public interface. Simultaneously, we are significantly behind on our essential statutory tasks such as application processing, certificate printing, scanning, districting, DPS data, jury pools, death abstracts, PIA requests, and other duties as Hunt County is strictly an on-line county.

While we recognize the Secretary of State's Office is working hard to resolve these issues, it does feel as though the responsibility of identifying and managing many of these problems is and will continue to fall disproportionately on the counties.

Staff and I are doing our best to remain understanding and solution-oriented, but we can't help but wonder if a temporary rollback to TEAM1 and a relaunch next summer to TEAM 2.0 has been considered as a viable option.

We understand that time is of the essence, but the current circumstances raise real concerns about the potential for inaccuracies with the November election.

We appreciate your attention to these concerns and respectfully urge reconsideration of the current approach.

Respectfully,

Jeannie Ash
Elections Administrator
Voter Administration | Hunt County
2217A Washington Street
Greenville, Texas 75401
T (903) 454-5467
F (903) 454-7905
www.huntcounty.net

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Neaves, Alicia [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 3:54 PM
To: Alicia Pierce
Subject: INFORMATION REQUEST - CBS SAN ANTONIO

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Report Suspicious

Good afternoon,

I'm a reporter with KENS 5, seeking information for a report tonight regarding a backlog of voter registrations in Bexar County.

Should Bexar County decide to use the state's TEAM system for election voter registration, does the Secretary of State's office believe TEAM can handle the big jump in numbers? Anything further we can learn about new upgrades to the system?

Thank you in advance! Please feel free to call/text any time 210-376-7412.

Sincerely,

Alicia Neaves

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Briggs, Shakari <[redacted]>
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:15 PM
To: Alicia Pierce; Christina Adkins
Subject: Media Inquiry

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Report Suspicious

Good afternoon,

I'm reaching out, because we've received complaints about residents having issues confirming their voter registration. Can you confirm whether the Texas Secretary of State's Office has experienced any problems with the recent updates to the TEAM System?

How many voter registration applications are pending state verification? How is the Texas Secretary of State's Office supporting county agencies to help mitigate the persistent problems residents are experiencing? Are the troubles county officials are having with TEAM due to operational errors or system errors? If it's an operational error, is the office providing training on the new system, given how close the election is?

When the updated version of TEAM launched, did the SOS's office anticipate widespread challenges? If so, was there a backup strategy in place, especially with the program launching in the summer and the election in the fall, a four-month timespan?

Additionally, does the SOS's office have any comment regarding a new resident's claim that someone at the agency hung up on her when she tried to get answers about her pending verification status?

Thanks so much for your time and consideration.

Warmest regards,

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Shakari Briggs

Suburban Quality of Life Reporter, Local Government Team

4747 Southwest Fwy, Houston, TX 77027

M | (972) 217-6130

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Brian Pena <Brian.Pena@house.texas.gov>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 2:50 PM
To: Gabe Valenzuela; Bobby Joe Dale; David Shoemaker
Subject: Rep Hinojosa TEAM System Backlog Question

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Report Suspicious

Hi,

Rep Hinojosa is looking for information about recent articles about backlogs in voter registration due to issues with the TEAM system.

She read that a 3rd party created the system, Civix I believe.

She is looking for additional details regarding the procurement process for Civix's contract , and confirmation whether it was secured via emergency procurement?

Thanks

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Abrahams, Tom (KTRK-TV) [redacted] >
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 5:43 PM
To: Alicia Pierce
Subject: Report about voter registration issues

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Report Suspicious

Hi Alicia,

I am writing about a report that appeared on the website VOTEBEAT regarding the delay in processing voter registration via the TEAM system.

https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/

Would anyone from your office be available for a zoom interview tomorrow to discuss the issues/solutions to the reported delay?

Can you confirm the accuracy of the report? If it is accurate, can you assure voters that they'll be able to vote in November (non-provisionally) if they correctly applied for their registration?

If nobody is available for an interview, does the office have a statement?

Thanks so much. My cell is 281-798-7142.

Tom

Tom Abrahams
Reporter/Weekend Evening News Anchor & Managing Editor | ABC13/KTRK-TV Houston
3310 Bissonnet Street, Houston TX 77005
281-798-7142 mobile [redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Pink, Saul <[redacted]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 12:28 PM
To: Alicia Pierce
Subject: Request for comment - San Antonio Express-News Re: TEAM system

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Report Suspicious

Hi Alicia,

Saul Pink here. I cover Bexar County government and politics for the San Antonio Express-News. I'm working on a story on the backlog of voter registration in Bexar County, which election officials have largely attributed to a slow implementation of the TEAM voter registration system after the private vendor Votec went out of business.

I'm seeking a brief comment from the Secretary of State's office on the following issues:

- Where do things stand on the upgrade of the TEAM system and its implementation with Bexar County? When does the Secretary of State's office expect to have this complete?
- Why has the implementation of TEAM been slower than expected?

My deadline for this is tomorrow (Thursday, Aug. 17) afternoon. Feel free to give me a call/text at 202-674-2231 if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Saul

Saul Pink
Bexar County Reporter, San Antonio Express-News
C: (202) 674-2231
[redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 7:22 PM
To: Neaves, Alicia
Subject: Re: INFORMATION REQUEST - CBS SAN ANTONIO

Hi: You can attribute the following statement to me.

This is an unprecedented situation. This vendor abruptly shut off their services, disrupting the voter registration functions of 23 Texas counties. Of those, 14 have requested to join the TEAM system, and we are working as diligently as possible to onboard those counties ahead of the November election. At the same time, we are trying to support our 230 counties who are in the process of migrating to the Team 2.0 system.

From: Neaves, Alicia [redacted]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 3:53 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: INFORMATION REQUEST - CBS SAN ANTONIO

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Good afternoon,

I'm a reporter with KENS 5, seeking information for a report tonight regarding a backlog of voter registrations in Bexar County.

Should Bexar County decide to use the state's TEAM system for election voter registration, does the Secretary of State's office believe TEAM can handle the big jump in numbers? Anything further we can learn about new upgrades to the system?

Thank you in advance! Please feel free to call/text any time 210-376-7412.

Sincerely,

Alicia Neaves

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 11:43 AM
To: Manna, Orko
Subject: Re: KHOU 11 News Inquiry: Voter Registration Issues
Attachments: Harris County - Letter to TAC 10.10.2025.pdf

Hi Orko,

Attached is a letter we sent last week that has information about TEAM and the backlog created by the issues with Votec going out of business. Additionally, below is information about the verification process by the state. I'm happy to discuss on background as I know this can all get technical.

Because Harris County is an offline county, the automated verification process--which rarely takes more than 24 hours--doesn't begin until the county completes a manual batch upload of multiple records. For the 230 online counties in Texas, when a single registration is entered by the county, it initiates the automated verification process in real time. For counties using a third-party system, all records are queued, processed and returned when the records have completed the verification process. The amount of time is dependent on the volume. Our office will continue to work with Harris County and all third party vendors to identify any issues and expedite the return of all voter information.

From: Manna, Orko <[redacted]>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 10:07 AM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>; Manna, Orko <[redacted]>
Subject: Re: KHOU 11 News Inquiry: Voter Registration Issues

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Thank you!

Yes, I've already reached out to them for an update.

And thank you - we would love to get responses from you to our questions that we can use as statements. Our deadline would be 1 p.m. today.

Best,

Orko Manna
Reporter | KHOU 11
5718 Westheimer, Ste. 311, Houston, TX 77057
CELL. 713.409.9374 | **EMAIL.** [redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 9:50:09 AM
To: Manna, Orko [redacted]>
Subject: Re: KHOU 11 News Inquiry: Voter Registration Issues

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You might check in again this morning. I think they can provide an updated number. I'll also work on response here. What time is your deadline?

From: Manna, Orko [redacted]>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 9:32 AM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>; Manna, Orko <OManna@khou.com>
Subject: Re: KHOU 11 News Inquiry: Voter Registration Issues

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Hi there,

We got that statement yesterday.

Orko Manna
Reporter | KHOU 11
5718 Westheimer, Ste. 311, Houston, TX 77057
CELL. 713.409.9374 | **EMAIL. omanna@khou.com**

From: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 9:28:26 AM
To: Manna, Orko <[redacted]>
Subject: Re: KHOU 11 News Inquiry: Voter Registration Issues

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Can I ask when you received that statement from Harris County? That may be relevant to the story.

From: Manna, Orko <[redacted]>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 9:19 AM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>; Kim Bergmann <KBergmann@sos.texas.gov>; Manna, Orko [redacted] Secretary <Secretary@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: KHOU 11 News Inquiry: Voter Registration Issues

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AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Hello,

My name is Orko Manna, and I am a reporter with KHOU 11 News in Houston. I'm reaching out because I'm hoping to see if we can do an interview today or at least get a statement today from the Secretary of State's Office regarding the voter registration issue that several Texas counties are dealing with.

We've confirmed with Harris County officials (see below) that the issues system from software problems.

Official Statement

We are committed to ensuring our voter rolls are election-ready and every eligible voter can cast their ballot in the upcoming election. Like other counties across the state, Harris County is experiencing challenges with the Secretary of State's new Texas Election Administration Management (TEAM) system that recently launched ahead of the November elections. This is to be expected when major upgrades are made to a system as complex as the state's system. We are working closely with the Secretary of State to address these challenges and appreciate their partnership.

The Tax Office has timely processed and submitted all voter registration applications to the Secretary of State for verification. As of October 15, there are 14,096 voter registration applications that were submitted by the October 6 deadline and are pending state verification. Once the state's system completes the verification process, the Harris County voter rolls will be promptly updated.

Voters and recent applicants are encouraged to check their voter registration status on hctax.net today. If voters have any questions about their voter registration, they should contact the tax office at 713-274-8200 or email voters@hctx.net for assistance.

Background on Votec

Harris County first learned on August 1, 2025, that Votec, a long-time vendor for voter registration and election software, would no longer be able to provide services.

The Tax Office immediately began working closely with local and state election officials, county partners, and a team of IT consultants to ensure continuity of operations for the upcoming November elections and beyond while actively seeking a new voter registration system that meets the complex needs of Harris County.

The Tax Office has been able to maintain continuity of operations for voter registration and timely process and submit all applications to the Secretary of State.

Frida Villalobos
External Communications Director

Office of Annette Ramirez
Tax Assessor-Collector & Voter Registrar

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

<u>*In light of the information above, we wanted to asked the Secretary of State's Office some questions:</u>**
-Can you elaborate on why certain counties software is not compatible with the state's software?
-How many counties total are being impacted by this?
-What is the Secretary of State's Office doing to help counties fix the issue, especially with early voting and Election Day so close?
-What should voters do to check / ensure that their voter registration has been finalized?
-Do you believe all the issues will be resolved before Election Day?
-What will happen if a voter shows up on Election Day but their voter registration is not processed? What will likely happen? What should they do?

Again, we would love to do an interview with you today to discuss the questions above. If that's not possible, it would be great to get answers to the questions above in writing that we can use as statements.

Please let me know what would be possible for today. Thank you!

Best,

Orko Manna
Reporter | KHOU 11
5718 Westheimer, Ste. 311, Houston, TX 77057
CELL. 713.409.9374 | **EMAIL.** [redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

The State of Texas

Elections Division
P.O. Box 12060
Austin, Texas 78711-2060
www.sos.texas.gov

Phone: 512-463-5650
Fax: 512-475-2811
TTY: 7-1-1
(800) 252-VOTE (8683)

Jane Nelson
Secretary of State

October 10, 2025

The Honorable Annette Ramirez
Tax-Assessor Collector
Harris County
1001 Preston Street, Suite 100
Houston, Texas 77002

Dear Tax-Assessor Collector Ramirez,

Thank you for the letter and for the meeting last week. I know you are hard at work making sure that voter registrations are entered as soon as possible in anticipation of the November 4 Election. Our office appreciates the opportunity to clarify the actions the Secretary of State's office has taken to support Harris County in their Voter Registration efforts.

Below are specific responses to the concerns you brought to our office.

- **Pending State Verification for New Voter Registration Applications**. When a county that utilizes their own third-party vendor enters voter registration data into their system, the local system will indicate that the voter record is "Pending State Verification" until the county transmits files to the SOS and the TEAM system assigns a Voter Unique Identification ("VUID") number. This is an automated process. The Secretary of State's office does not manually review or assign numbers to voter records. The "Pending State Verification" label is merely generated when you enter the record in your local system. This status would stay with a record until a successful file transfer had occurred between the state system and your third-party vendor. It is an incorrect assumption that Harris County was waiting on any actions from the state. What we believe to be the source of the pending status was that the VOTEC VEMACs system that you have been utilizing did not have the proper conversion tools to read the files from the TEAM system properly. As VOTEC, the vendor that developed and provided this system to counties, had abruptly stopped providing services to their customers in August of 2025, there was no one to make the necessary modifications to your system to allow it to read files from the TEAM system. Unfortunately, since early August, while we were able to work with our other certified vendors to make any necessary adjustments to our systems, we had no point of contact with VOTEC to work with to identify any potential issues or make any necessary modifications to the VOTEC system so that VEMACS could read the TEAM files.

- **Data Transfer Challenges**: In your letter, you state that as of September 30, 2025, you had processed and submitted to our office 29,987 voter registration records to our office and that you had not received the necessary VRU files from the Secretary of State's office. As we discussed on a call on October 1, 2025, Harris County is utilizing a consultant to provide services to the tax-assessor collector's office since your voter registration vendor is no longer operational. On September 24, 2025, Harris County provided written permission for our office to work with this

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your consultant, Next Election Services. That same day we met with the consultant and provided the consultant with sample files to review to determine if there were any adjustments that needed to be made by either the SOS or Harris County in order to process voter registration applications. Next Election Services instructed our office to not resume file transfers of voter registration data to Harris County while they reviewed the sample files. Over the course of the next week, our office made multiple attempts to confirm that Next Election Services had reviewed the files. It was not until, Wednesday, October 1, 2025, six days after we provided files to them, that Next Election Services told our office that they would start reviewing the files that day. On October 2, 2025, we finally received confirmation from Next Election Services that that we should resume sending files to Harris County. In their response, they indicated that no modifications were needed to our file for Harris County to successfully process files.

Since we have received permission from Harris County to resume file transfers, we have successfully imported all Harris County files and provided a response file to upload to your third-party system. Additionally, our technical support team continues to stand by to work with Harris County to support your efforts and to addresses any issues that may arise as we both work with our respective vendors.

I know our shared goal is to make sure every eligible voter who wants to vote in the upcoming election has the opportunity to do so. Thank you for the hard work of you and your team.

Sincerely,

Christina W. Adkins

Christina Worrell Adkins
Director of Elections

CC:

Kristi Hart, Deputy Director of Elections
Lina Hidalgo, Harris County Judge
Rodney Ellis, Harris County Commissioner Precinct 1
Adrian Garcia, Harris County Commissioner Precinct 2
Tom Ramsey, Harris County Commissioner Precinct 3
Lesley Briones, Harris County Commissioner Precinct 4
Teneshia Hudspeth, Harris County Clerk
Cindy Siegel, Harris County Republican Party Chair
Mike Doyle, Harris County Democratic Party Chair

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2025 4:15 PM
To: Cora Neas
Subject: Re: KXAN Request: Travis County voter issues

Below is the text in response to the letter from the representatives. I think it will address your questions. If viewers want to check their registration status, they can do it through VoteTexas.gov
Thank you for contacting me about our ongoing roll out of the new Texas Elections Administration Management (TEAM) system.

For over a year, our office has been planning for this once-in-a-decade upgrade of TEAM, which will provide our counties a fully integrated election management system that will ultimately make our elections run more efficiently. As you can imagine, this has been a massive undertaking involving the migration of over 20 million records and extensive training with our county partners to learn the new system.

With a rollout of this magnitude, we always anticipated technical issues – which is why we chose the constitutional election to be the first election using TEAM 2.0. Our staff is systematically addressing any technical issues as they arise. For Travis County, as of today I am aware of a backlog of less than 2,000 voters – which is normal for large counties that experience a surge of registrations right before the deadline. It is worth noting that as of today there are zero backlogs in most counties, including Dallas, Bexar, El Paso, and other highly populated counties.

Complicating this rollout, our staff is working to assist 24 counties whose voter registration vendor VOTEC - abruptly went out of business in August. This left these counties without a functioning voter registration system. Our staff has completed onboarding 11 of those counties, including Bexar County, onto our TEAM system. We did this in a matter of weeks for a process that usually takes months.

Despite these unprecedented events, I can assure you that our staff has been working nights and weekends for months to ensure that our counties are supported during this constitutional election and beyond. I hope this information is helpful. As always, I am grateful for your service and look forward to working with you to ensure that Texas voters can exercise their right to vote.

From: Cora Neas [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2025 3:47 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Re: KXAN Request: Travis County voter issues

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Is the SOS aware of problems related to this summer's TEAM update?
What steps has/will the SOS take before Election Day to ameliorate those issues?
What does the SOS want Texas voters to know about the situation?

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Cora Neas
Digital Reporter
KXAN|KNVA|KBVO|KXAN.com
KXAN In-Depth. Investigative.



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From: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2025 3:39 PM
To: Cora Neas <[redacted]>
Subject: Re: KXAN Request: Travis County voter issues

Thanks, Cora. I am working on getting you a copy of a letter that we will send in response. In the mean time, do you have any particular questions I can answer?

From: Cora Neas [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2025 1:04 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Re: KXAN Request: Travis County voter issues

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1 — Specific to Travis County
2 — We have not yet, but will do so shortly

My deadline for today is 4:30 p.m.

Cora Neas
Digital Reporter
KXAN|KNVA|KBVO|KXAN.com
KXAN In-Depth. Investigative.



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From: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2025 11:49 AM
To: Cora Neas [redacted]>
Subject: Re: KXAN Request: Travis County voter issues

Hi Cora. Thanks for reaching out.

A couple of quick questions:

1. Is your story specific to Travis County or more of a statewide perspective?
2. Have you reached out to the county or counties yet on their take?

Finally, we have a couple of things happening today. What's your deadline?

From: Cora Neas <[redacted]>
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2025 10:18 AM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: KXAN Request: Travis County voter issues

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Good morning,

Does the Secretary of State wish to comment on a letter from Travis County state representatives that was delivered to him this morning?
It asked for his help with getting Travis County's elections system fixed in time for Election Day. It's also attached!

Please let me know if you have any questions! Thanks,

Cora Neas
Digital Reporter
KXAN|KNVA|KBVO|KXAN.com
KXAN In-Depth. Investigative.



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From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Thursday, September 4, 2025 4:36 PM
To: Natalia Contreras
Cc: Christina Adkins
Subject: Re: Latest Votec letter to counties

Per our call this is what I would send on record:

We are in continual contact with affected counties, and the majority have decided to come onto TEAM, the state-offered election management system. We do not anticipate turning away any county that wants to come online to the TEAM system. Counties that do not come online will have to decide if they can make it work for the November election with existing resources or look for an alternate vendor.

We are not aware of any backlogs for online counties. To our knowledge, counties experiencing backlogs have faced delays because of issues with Votec.

On certification of Votec: Our office has limited statutory authority on approving these vendors only certifying that a system is able to interface with TEAM. Our focus right now is working directly with affected counties.

As a reminder, we do have voter data from all of Texas' counties in the statewide voter registration database.

From: Natalia Contreras [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 3, 2025 3:55 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Cc: Christina Adkins <CAdkins@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Re: Latest Votec letter to counties

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Alicia, here are follow up questions per our conversation earlier. If I could get a response from you by EOD tomorrow that would be great. Thank you!

What has SOS done to make sure counties are in a position to pull off this election? Can you share on record whether the state keeps a snapshot of counties' voter registration data and whether SOS is encouraging counties to move on to TEAM if they so choose?

Also, I have been hearing for weeks that counties aren't able to process new voter registration applications and there's a huge backlog - when is that gonna be resolved? Votec counties that go online will need to process these new apps they're getting in TEAM directly.

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Can you share the steps that voter registration software vendors go through in order to be approved to do business in Texas?

Is Votec still a state-approved vendor? Is it still a vendor that per SOS counties should use? Does SOS have any discretion or authority to take action given the problems it has caused for counties?

On Fri, Aug 29, 2025 at 12:39 PM Natalia Contreras <[redacted]> wrote:

Thanks, Alicia!
It'd be helpful to have some specifics about how the state is responding to this. It's getting really close to November and voters need to know how the state and counties are handling this/and or doing about it. It seems serious, if it's set to affect the election in November, unless your office thinks otherwise, please let me know.
Is SOS allowing counties to move over to TEAM? or sharing any other advice on this?
If you're able to share more details by Tuesday (we're closed Monday) that would be helpful. Thank you!

On Fri, Aug 29, 2025 at 10:25 AM Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov> wrote:

We remain in close contact with affected counties.

From: Natalia Contreras [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 4:53 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>; Adam Bitter <ABitter@sos.texas.gov>; Christina Adkins <CAdkins@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Latest Votec letter to counties

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Hi, y'sll. I talked to Alicia about this briefly.
John Medcalf has sent another letter to his clients. I have attached it.
I wanted to know what your interpretation is of this and what steps your office is taking? How are you advising counties to handle this?
Also, has he communicated any of this to your office?
If you could share something by Friday afternoon that would be great. Thank you.

--
Natalia Contreras
Texas reporter | Votebeat.org
C: 361-695-1553
Twitter, Facebook: @NataliaECG
[redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Natalia Contreras [redacted] >
Sent: Thursday, September 4, 2025 4:40 PM
To: Alicia Pierce
Cc: Christina Adkins
Subject: Re: Latest Votec letter to counties

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OK thanks. Just bringing up this follow-up question again:
Medcalf in his latest later says he's made SOS and the Gov's office aware of these problems with counties potentially not accessing their data. I just want to make sure that's true that he has made your office aware of this. If that's not the case and you haven't heard from him directly via calls or letters/emails, please let me know.

On Thu, Sep 4, 2025 at 4:35 PM Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov> wrote:

Per our call this is what I would send on record:

We are in continual contact with affected counties, and the majority have decided to come onto TEAM, the state-offered election management system. We do not anticipate turning away any county that wants to come online to the TEAM system. Counties that do not come online will have to decide if they can make it work for the November election with existing resources or look for an alternate vendor.

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Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 4:53 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>; Adam Bitter <ABitter@sos.texas.gov>; Christina Adkins <CAdkins@sos.texas.gov>
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AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

--
Natalia Contreras
Texas reporter | Votebeat.org
C: 361-695-1553
Twitter, Facebook: @NataliaECG
[redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Natalia Contreras <[redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 3, 2025 3:55 PM
To: Alicia Pierce
Cc: Christina Adkins
Subject: Re: Latest Votec letter to counties

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Alicia, here are follow up questions per our conversation earlier. If I could get a response from you by EOD tomorrow that would be great. Thank you!

What has SOS done to make sure counties are in a position to pull off this election? Can you share on record whether the state keeps a snapshot of counties' voter registration data and whether SOS is encouraging counties to move on to TEAM if they so choose?

Also, I have been hearing for weeks that counties aren't able to process new voter registration applications and there's a huge backlog - when is that gonna be resolved? Votec counties that go online will need to process these new apps they're getting in TEAM directly.

Can you share the steps that voter registration software vendors go through in order to be approved to do business in Texas?

Is Votec still a state-approved vendor? Is it still a vendor that per SOS counties should use? Does SOS have any discretion or authority to take action given the problems it has caused for counties?

On Fri, Aug 29, 2025 at 12:39 PM Natalia Contreras [redacted] > wrote:

> Thanks, Alicia!
> It'd be helpful to have some specifics about how the state is responding to this. It's getting really close to November and voters need to know how the state and counties are handling this/and or doing about it. It seems serious, if it's set to affect the election in November, unless your office thinks otherwise, please let me know.
> Is SOS allowing counties to move over to TEAM? or sharing any other advice on this?
> If you're able to share more details by Tuesday (we're closed Monday) that would be helpful. Thank you!
>
> On Fri, Aug 29, 2025 at 10:25 AM Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov> wrote:
>
> > We remain in close contact with affected counties.
> >
> > ---
> >
> > **From:** Natalia Contreras <[redacted]>
> > **Sent:** Wednesday, August 27, 2025 4:53 PM
> > **To:** Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>; Adam Bitter <ABitter@sos.texas.gov>; Christina Adkins <CAdkins@sos.texas.gov>
> > **Subject:** Latest Votec letter to counties
> >
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Hi, y'sll. I talked to Alicia about this briefly.
John Medcalf has sent another letter to his clients. I have attached it.
I wanted to know what your interpretation is of this and what steps your office is taking? How are you advising counties to handle this?
Also, has he communicated any of this to your office?
If you could share something by Friday afternoon that would be great. Thank you.

--
Natalia Contreras
Texas reporter | Votebeat.org
C: 361-695-1553
Twitter, Facebook: @NataliaECG
[redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:19 PM
To: Briggs, Shakari; Christina Adkins
Subject: Re: Media Inquiry

Hi Shakari,

I just got off of the phone with another Houston Chronicle reporter, John Lomax, who asked similar. Is this for the same story?

From: Briggs, Shakari [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:14 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>; Christina Adkins <CAdkins@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Media Inquiry

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Good afternoon,

I'm reaching out, because we've received complaints about residents having issues confirming their voter registration. Can you confirm whether the Texas Secretary of State's Office has experienced any problems with the recent updates to the TEAM System?

How many voter registration applications are pending state verification? How is the Texas Secretary of State's Office supporting county agencies to help mitigate the persistent problems residents are experiencing? Are the troubles county officials are having with TEAM due to operational errors or system errors? If it's an operational error, is the office providing training on the new system, given how close the election is?

When the updated version of TEAM launched, did the SOS's office anticipate widespread challenges? If so, was there a backup strategy in place, especially with the program launching in the summer and the election in the fall, a four-month timespan?

Additionally, does the SOS's office have any comment regarding a new resident's claim that someone at the agency hung up on her when she tried to get answers about her pending verification status?

Thanks so much for your time and consideration.

Warmest regards,

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Shakari Briggs

Suburban Quality of Life Reporter, Local Government Team

4747 Southwest Fwy, Houston, TX 77027

M | (972) 217-6130

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Gabe Valenzuela
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 2:39 PM
To: 'Brian Pena'
Subject: RE: Rep Hinojosa TEAM System Backlog Question

Categories: Inquiry

Hello Brian,

I looked into this, and I have some info. for you. I hope this gets at what you're asking. But if not, then please let me know what specifically you're looking for.

First, there was no emergency procurement for the TEAM system. It went through the normal procurement process for state contracts. But as you mentioned, there have been a lot of media reports so I could see how someone might think that TEAM is a new program. Admittedly, the current TEAM system is the second version of TEAM. But the first version came out about 20 years ago, and has been available to counties that whole time – and always been available for free. You might be seeing more stories since some of the larger counties have decided to join, but more than 200 counties were already using it.

I think there might also be some confusion about the transition process for counties moving to the TEAM system. It's much more complex than flipping a switch, and can take about six weeks. But please know that there are no, "issues with the TEAM system."

Most non-TEAM counties currently use a third-party vendor, although some have the resources to build their own voter registration management system. But since there's a lot of private identifying information used for voter registration it's imperative the transition be done correctly, hence the delay. And it's not simply actions by the SOS that'll make the conversion complete. A county also has to do its part, which can include them scheduling and working with their current vendor. But once complete, the TEAM system has so many great features, such as real-time updates and local election training, that I'm certain counties will like it. And again, it's free, which'll help free up some local tax dollars.

So while I fully understand that change can be frustrating, including change that doesn't occur instantaneously, I think things are actually going well. But again, it's not something that can be rushed since it's important that the voter rolls be fully scrutinized to ensure full compliance and integrity.

I hope this information was helpful. But again, please let me know if there was something more specific that I can help with.

Sincerely,

Gabe Valenzuela
Director of Government Relations
Office of the Texas Secretary of State

From: Brian Pena <Brian.Pena@house.texas.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 9:40 AM
To: Gabe Valenzuela <GValenzuela@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: RE: Rep Hinojosa TEAM System Backlog Question

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Hi Gabe,

Confirmed with Comptroller's office that this is out of their jurisdiction, just want to confirm you received this?

Thanks

Brian Peña
Legislative Director
State Representative Gina Hinojosa, HD 49
Office: 512.463.0668 | Cell: 956.678.0805
brian.pena@house.texas.gov
brian.pena.atx@gmail.com
Capitol Office 4S.2

From: Brian Pena
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 2:50 PM
To: Gabe Valenzuela <gvalenzuela@sos.texas.gov>; Bobby Joe Dale <bobbyjoe.dale@cpa.texas.gov>; David Shoemaker <david.shoemaker@cpa.texas.gov>
Subject: Rep Hinojosa TEAM System Backlog Question

Hi,

Rep Hinojosa is looking for information about recent articles about backlogs in voter registration due to issues with the TEAM system.

She read that a 3rd party created the system, Civix I believe.

She is looking for additional details regarding the procurement process for Civix's contract , and confirmation whether it was secured via emergency procurement?

Thanks

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:57 AM
To: Abrahams, Tom (KTRK-TV)
Subject: Re: Report about voter registration issues

Hi Tom,

I'll follow up with a call, but you can use the statement below and attribute to me as agency spokesperson.

“Migrating more than 20 million records and training more than 2,500 users on a new system is a massive undertaking, and we have been preparing for this for over a year. Technical issues are to be expected with a rollout of this size, and that is why we chose this constitutional election cycle for this transition. Our team is addressing any issues as they arise in support of the 254 counties who are adjusting to the new system. At the same time, we are attempting to onboard counties whose privately contracted vendor just went out of business, leaving them without a functioning voter registration system. This is an unprecedented situation, but we are working long hours to help our counties prepare for the November election and upgrade to a new version of TEAM that will ultimately result in more efficiently managed elections. As we are in the middle of a once-in-a-decade upgrade of the state’s voter registration system, our focus right now is on supporting counties in preparation for the upcoming election.”

From: Abrahams, Tom (KTRK-TV) <[redacted]
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 5:42 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Report about voter registration issues

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Report Suspicious

Hi Alicia,

I am writing about a report that appeared on the website VOTEBEAT regarding the delay in processing voter registration via the TEAM system.

https://www.votebeat.org/texas/2025/09/25/team-voter-registration-system-problems-county-election-officials/

Would anyone from your office be available for a zoom interview tomorrow to discuss the issues/solutions to the reported delay?

Can you confirm the accuracy of the report? If it is accurate, can you assure voters that they’ll be able to vote in November (non-provisionally) if they correctly applied for their registration?

If nobody is available for an interview, does the office have a statement?

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Thanks so much. My cell is 281-798-7142.

Tom

Tom Abrahams
Reporter/Weekend Evening News Anchor & Managing Editor | ABC13/KTRK-TV Houston
3310 Bissonnet Street, Houston TX 77005
281-798-7142 mobile | [redacted]



AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 11:04 AM
To: Abrahams, Tom (KTRK-TV)
Subject: Re: Report about voter registration issues

Confirming that TEAM stands for Texas Election Administrative Management.

From: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 10:56 AM
To: Abrahams, Tom (KTRK-TV) [redacted]>
Subject: Re: Report about voter registration issues

Hi Tom,

I'll follow up with a call, but you can use the statement below and attribute to me as agency spokesperson.

“Migrating more than 20 million records and training more than 2,500 users on a new system is a massive undertaking, and we have been preparing for this for over a year. Technical issues are to be expected with a rollout of this size, and that is why we chose this constitutional election cycle for this transition. Our team is addressing any issues as they arise in support of the 254 counties who are adjusting to the new system. At the same time, we are attempting to onboard counties whose privately contracted vendor just went out of business, leaving them without a functioning voter registration system. This is an unprecedented situation, but we are working long hours to help our counties prepare for the November election and upgrade to a new version of TEAM that will ultimately result in more efficiently managed elections. As we are in the middle of a once-in-a-decade upgrade of the state’s voter registration system, our focus right now is on supporting counties in preparation for the upcoming election.”

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Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 5:42 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Report about voter registration issues

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Thanks so much. My cell is 281-798-7142.

Tom

Tom Abrahams
Reporter/Weekend Evening News Anchor & Managing Editor | ABC13/KTRK-TV Houston
3310 Bissonnet Street, Houston TX 77005
281-798-7142 mobile | [redacted]



AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 12:22 PM
To: Natalia Contreras
Subject: Re: Rep. Goodwin's letter

Below is the text in response to the letter from the representatives. Let me know if you need an actual copy of the letter.

Thank you for contacting me about our ongoing roll out of the new Texas Elections Administration Management (TEAM) system.

For over a year, our office has been planning for this once-in-a-decade upgrade of TEAM, which will provide our counties a fully integrated election management system that will ultimately make our elections run more efficiently. As you can imagine, this has been a massive undertaking involving the migration of over 20 million records and extensive training with our county partners to learn the new system.

With a rollout of this magnitude, we always anticipated technical issues – which is why we chose the constitutional election to be the first election using TEAM 2.0. Our staff is systematically addressing any technical issues as they arise. For Travis County, as of today I am aware of a backlog of less than 2,000 voters – which is normal for large counties that experience a surge of registrations right before the deadline. It is worth noting that as of today there are zero backlogs in most counties, including Dallas, Bexar, El Paso, and other highly populated counties.

Complicating this rollout, our staff is working to assist 24 counties whose voter registration vendor VOTEC - abruptly went out of business in August. This left these counties without a functioning voter registration system. Our staff has completed onboarding 11 of those counties, including Bexar County, onto our TEAM system. We did this in a matter of weeks for a process that usually takes months.

Despite these unprecedented events, I can assure you that our staff has been working nights and weekends for months to ensure that our counties are supported during this constitutional election and beyond. I hope this information is helpful. As always, I am grateful for your service and look forward to working with you to ensure that Texas voters can exercise their right to vote.

From: Natalia Contreras <[redacted]>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 9:47 AM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Rep. Goodwin's letter

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Report Suspicious

Good morning, Alicia — did yall respond to Rep. Goodwin's letter from yesterday?
If so can you share it with me?
--
Natalia Contreras
Texas reporter | Votebeat.org
C: 361-695-1553
Twitter, Facebook: @NataliaECG
[redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 7:20 PM
To: Pink, Saul
Subject: Re: Request for comment - San Antonio Express-News Re: TEAM system

Hi Paul,

You can attribute the following statement to me:

This is an unprecedented situation. The vendor abruptly shut off their services, disrupting the voter registration functions of 23 Texas counties. Of those, 14 have requested to join the TEAM system, and we are working as diligently as possible to onboard those counties ahead of the November election.

From: Pink, Saul <[redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 12:27 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Request for comment - San Antonio Express-News Re: TEAM system

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Hi Alicia,

Saul Pink here. I cover Bexar County government and politics for the San Antonio Express-News. I'm working on a story on the backlog of voter registration in Bexar County, which election officials have largely attributed to a slow implementation of the TEAM voter registration system after the private vendor Votec went out of business.

I'm seeking a brief comment from the Secretary of State's office on the following issues:

- Where do things stand on the upgrade of the TEAM system and its implementation with Bexar County? When does the Secretary of State's office expect to have this complete?
- Why has the implementation of TEAM been slower than expected?

My deadline for this is tomorrow (Thursday, Aug. 17) afternoon. Feel free to give me a call/text at 202-674-2231 if you have any questions.

Thanks,

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

Saul

Saul Pink
Bexar County Reporter, San Antonio Express-News
C: (202) 674-2231
[redacted]

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:28 PM
To: Briggs, Shakari
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Media Inquiry

Thanks, Shakari. I'll plan to follow up with John just because he and I have already discussed the story. Let me know if you need anything else.

From: Briggs, Shakari <[redacted]>
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:26 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>; Christina Adkins <CAdkins@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Media Inquiry

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faints*

Yes. I'm sorry that we both* reached out to you, Alicia. I wasn't aware that he was reaching out to your office.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Shakari Briggs

Suburban Quality of Life Reporter, Local Government Team

4747 Southwest Fwy, Houston, TX 77027

M | (972) 217-6130

From: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:19 PM
To: Briggs, Shakari <[redacted]>; Christina Adkins <CAdkins@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Media Inquiry

Hi Shakari,

I just got off of the phone with another Houston Chronicle reporter, John Lomax, who asked similar. Is this for the same story?

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From: Briggs, Shakari <[redacted]>
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Good afternoon,

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How many voter registration applications are pending state verification? How is the Texas Secretary of State's Office supporting county agencies to help mitigate the persistent problems residents are experiencing? Are the troubles county officials are having with TEAM due to operational errors or system errors? If it's an operational error, is the office providing training on the new system, given how close the election is?

When the updated version of TEAM launched, did the SOS's office anticipate widespread challenges? If so, was there a backup strategy in place, especially with the program launching in the summer and the election in the fall, a four-month timespan?

Additionally, does the SOS's office have any comment regarding a new resident's claim that someone at the agency hung up on her when she tried to get answers about her pending verification status?

Thanks so much for your time and consideration.

Warmest regards,

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

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4747 Southwest Fwy, Houston, TX 77027

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From: Briggs, Shakari [redacted]
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HOUSTON CHRONICLE

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Suburban Quality of Life Reporter, Local Government Team

4747 Southwest Fwy, Houston, TX 77027

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From: Briggs, Shakari [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:36 PM
To: Alicia Pierce
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Media Inquiry

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Sure thing.

Thanks, Alicia!! Have a good day.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Shakari Briggs

Suburban Quality of Life Reporter, Local Government Team

4747 Southwest Fwy, Houston, TX 77027

M | (972) 217-6130

From: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:28 PM
To: Briggs, Shakari [redacted]
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Media Inquiry

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Suburban Quality of Life Reporter, Local Government Team

4747 Southwest Fwy, Houston, TX 77027

M | (972) 217-6130

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Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:19 PM
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Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 2:14 PM
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AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

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Warmest regards,

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M | (972) 217-6130

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

From: Alicia Pierce
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 2:16 PM
To: Pink, Saul
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Request for comment - San Antonio Express-News Re: TEAM system

Hi Paul,

If you want to add additional context to the story, you can also quote from this statement.

There are two separate issues here. SOS is in the process of rolling out TEAM 2.0 to our 230 existing customers. At the same time, we are working to onboard 14 counties that were customers of Votec who just lost access to their voter registration systems due to the company going out of business. Our staff is working hard, long hours to get these new counties on board in order to ensure that they are ready for the November election.

From: Pink, Saul [redacted]>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 7:48 PM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Request for comment - San Antonio Express-News Re: TEAM system

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Hi Alicia,

Great. Thanks for your quick response on this!

Best,
Saul

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From: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 17, 2025 7:20:11 PM
To: Pink, Saul <[redacted]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Request for comment - San Antonio Express-News Re: TEAM system

Hi Paul,

You can attribute the following statement to me:

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

This is an unprecedented situation. The vendor abruptly shut off their services, disrupting the voter registration functions of 23 Texas counties. Of those, 14 have requested to join the TEAM system, and we are working as diligently as possible to onboard those counties ahead of the November election.

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- Where do things stand on the upgrade of the TEAM system and its implementation with Bexar County? When does the Secretary of State's office expect to have this complete?
- Why has the implementation of TEAM been slower than expected?

My deadline for this is tomorrow (Thursday, Aug. 17) afternoon. Feel free to give me a call/text at 202-674-2231 if you have any questions.

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Saul Pink
Bexar County Reporter, San Antonio Express-News
C: (202) 674-2231
[redacted]

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From: Pink, Saul [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 2:19 PM
To: Alicia Pierce
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Request for comment - San Antonio Express-News Re: TEAM system

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Great, thank you!

Saul Pink
Bexar County Reporter, San Antonio Express-News
C: (202) 674-2231
[redacted]

From: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 2:15 PM
To: Pink, Saul <[redacted]
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Request for comment - San Antonio Express-News Re: TEAM system

Hi Paul,

If you want to add additional context to the story, you can also quote from this statement.

There are two separate issues here. SOS is in the process of rolling out TEAM 2.0 to our 230 existing customers. At the same time, we are working to onboard 14 counties that were customers of Votec who just lost access to their voter registration systems due to the company going out of business. Our staff is working hard, long hours to get these new counties on board in order to ensure that they are ready for the November election.

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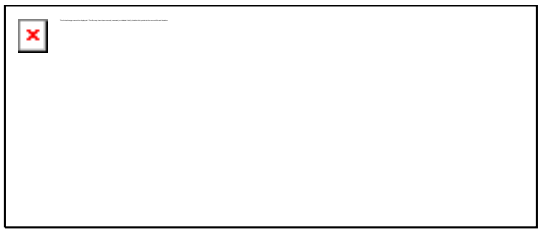
From: Texas Secretary of State Elections Division <TXSoSAgency@public.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 2:45 PM
To: Christina Adkins
Subject: TEAM Development Update 8.27.2025

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ELECTIONS DIVISION

TO: Texas Election Officials

FROM: Elections Division, Texas Secretary of State

SUBJECT: TEAM Development Update 8.27.2025

DATE: August 27, 2025

Dear County Election Officials,

This purpose of this email is to address specific concerns that have been brought to our attention regarding our TEAM implementation. We understand that some of our counties are frustrated because they are not getting clear communications as frequently as other counties. In our attempt to ensure direct access to TEAM personnel to address county specific issues, we utilized direct communication through our TEAM reps. However, we understand that you all would like more uniform communications with regular system updates.

To achieve that goal, you can expect the following going forward:

- Weekly to biweekly emails sent to all county election officials that detail the current status of the TEAM development project.

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- Consistent county specific notifications when a county issues has been resolved.

After meeting with the Executive Board of TACEO yesterday, we suggested meeting weekly throughout the remainder of the TEAM redevelopment to ensure that broad concerns about the project are being communicated directly to me and my management team in a meaningful way. We appreciate the board's willingness to engage with our office and to do so in a way that is productive and resolution focused.

To date, the features below have been released in the TEAM system and are currently being utilized successfully by counties. If your county has concerns about items on the list below, please notify your TEAM rep immediately because it may be a county specific data issue and not indicative of a broad system issue. We are willing to work with you all on resolving any data inconsistencies you identify.

Current Functionality in TEAM System

- Voter Registration Functionality including the following:
    - New Voter Registrations
    - Updates to Voter Registrations
    - Transfer of Voter Registrations to a new county
    - Cancellation of Voter Registrations
    - DPS applications
    - Texas Online Updates
    - List Maintenance including applicable voter notifications
- District Management
- Street Indexing
- Election Set up and Management
- Voter List Report (with or without confidential voters)
- GIS Residential Mapping has been upgraded to rooftop identification to more accurately locate residences for district assignments
- Office Management
- Polling Places (ability to inactivate individual polling locations as been added for county users)
- Candidate Management

All counties, including offline counties, should be reviewing incoming voter registration applications, changes/updates, and conducting list maintenance activities. Any remaining data received by our office is currently being sent to counties for further review.

Upcoming Releases

According to our vendor:

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- The following reports will be available by end of day tomorrow.
    - Street List Report
    - OLRV Report
    - Ballot Styles Report
- Additional Reports scheduled for delivery this week.
    - ABBM/FPCA Report
    - Cancellation Trend Report
    - Jury Report

Additionally, our vendor is currently focusing efforts on the completion of the ballot by mail functionality specifically related to entry of applications through the issuance of ballots. Jury management is also anticipated to be complete early next week. System work will continue over the holiday weekend.

As a reminder, the TEAM manual has been posted to TEAM so that you may use this as a resource to help you navigate this new system. Utilizing the TEAM manual will help ensure that the issues being reported are truly system issues and not user error.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many counties throughout Texas that have partnered with our office in testing the system, timely reviewing reports, and working with us to resolve concerns. This is a team effort and we truly appreciate your patience and partnership as we navigate this transition together.

Thank you,

Christina Adkins

Director of Elections

Office of the Texas Secretary of State

1019 Brazos Street | Rudder Building, 2nd Floor | Austin, Texas 78701 800-252-8683 | 1.800.252.VOTE (8683)

elections@sos.texas.gov | www.sos.texas.gov

The information contained in this email is intended to provide advice and assistance in election matters per §31.004 of the Texas Election Code. It is not intended to serve as a legal opinion for any matter. Please review the law yourself, and consult with an attorney when your legal rights are involved.

If you have any questions regarding this e-mail, please e-mail elections@sos.texas.gov

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Saul

Saul Pink
Bexar County Reporter, San Antonio Express-News
C: (202) 674-2231
[redacted]

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[redacted]

From: Bennett, Adam [redacted]
Sent: Monday, October 6, 2025 10:30 AM
To: Alicia Pierce <APierce@sos.texas.gov>
Subject: KVUE-TV Monday Question on Deadline - TEAM Software Backlog

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Hi Alicia,

I'm covering today's voter registration deadline and wanted to get your response to

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recent reports about registration backlogs blamed on the recent TEAM software update.

How long are new voter registration applications or registration updates currently taking to be processed into the SOS system? Will all registrations and registration updates received by today (Monday 10/6) be ready in time for the start of early voting (October 20)?

Thank you,

Adam Bennett
KVUE Anchor/Reporter
512-653-0320 (cell)

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