

COUNTY CLERK / REGISTER OF DEEDS

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For Immediate Release
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LISA POSTHUMUS LYONS
County Clerk / Register

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Statement from Kent County Clerk Lisa Posthumus Lyons Regarding Illegal Election Activity in August 2022 Primary Election

On August 18, I was made aware of suspicious activity on the part of an election worker that occurred during the August 2022 Primary Election in one of our Kent County Precincts.

The incident took place at Gaines Township Precinct 8, where- after the polls closed- an individual witnessed the worker insert a personal USB drive into the Electronic Poll Book. The Electronic Poll Book is the computer that election workers use to administer the election at their precinct. It contains voter registration data, including confidential, personal identifying information about all voters in that precinct. The Electronic Poll Book is not connected to any of the tabulation equipment, nor is it connected to the internet. It is a computer that is protected by various provisions of Michigan criminal and election law.

Immediately upon learning of the incident, I contacted Sheriff Michelle LaJoye-Young, where an investigation into the matter began. Since then, I have worked with the Sheriff's detectives in a manner to maintain the integrity of their investigation. The investigation is now complete, and today I learned charges have been authorized by Prosecutor Becker.

This was a township election worker, not an employee of Kent County or Gaines Township. Election workers are everyday citizens trained and certified by clerks to work the precincts and absentee counting boards on Election Day. The Gaines Township Clerk has cooperated with the Sheriff's detectives, and I have notified the State Bureau of Elections.

There are two things I want to emphasize:

First, this incident is extremely egregious and incredibly alarming. Not only is it a violation of Michigan law, but it is a violation of public trust and of the oath all election workers are required to take.

Second, this incident had no impact on the election. The breach of the Electronic Poll Book could not- and did not- allow any access to voting machines, ballots, or election results, and it could not have affected the outcome of the election itself. The willful violation occurred after the files in the Electronic Poll Book were saved to the precinct's authorized, encrypted system device, and that system device was placed in a certified, sealed container, per standard procedure. My office intends to conduct a post-election audit of the precinct, complete with a tally of the paper ballots to reaffirm the results and reassure the voters. As an added measure, the Electronic Poll Book that was breached will no longer be used in future elections and will be replaced by a new one prior to the November election.

Let me be very clear: voter fraud and illegal election activity in Kent County will not be tolerated. Our citizens deserve to have faith in their elections and in those who work them. I will do everything possible to keep Kent County's elections secure, transparent, fair, and accurate. If someone or something threatens that, we will take aggressive action to protect our elections and hold those responsible accountable.

Any questions regarding the charges should be directed to the Prosecutor's Office and any questions regarding the investigation should be directed to the [Sheriff's Office](#).