

721—26.1 (49) Definitions.

“*Blank ballot*” means a ballot that contains no votes that can be detected by a tabulating device. See also “*unvoted ballot*.”

“*Hesitation mark*” means a small mark made by resting a pen or pencil on the ballot.

“*Optical scan voting system*” includes a tabulating device that reads ballots by detecting voters’ marks using reflected or absorbed light. An optical scan voting system may be used to count ballots either at the polling place (precinct count) or at a counting center (central count). Optical scan ballots are special paper ballots designed for use with an optical scan voting system.

“*Overvote*” means to vote for more than the permitted number of choices for any office or question on a ballot.

“*Paper ballot*” as used in this chapter means a ballot that is intended to be counted only after inspection by precinct election officials. “*Paper ballot*” in this context means a ballot provided at a precinct that does not have optical scan voting equipment.

“*Prescribed mark*” means the mark shown in the voting instructions as the appropriate way to mark a vote. “*Prescribed mark*” includes a close approximation of the mark.

“*Question*” as used in this chapter includes a public measure as defined by Iowa Code section 39.3(10) and a judicial retention question pursuant to Iowa Code section 46.21.

“*Random mark*” means a mark on a ballot (other than the prescribed mark) that is used inconsistently, either in or near the voting target or the names of candidates.

“*Straight party vote*” means a vote cast in the area of the ballot where political parties and nonparty political organizations are listed, pursuant to Iowa Code section 49.37(1).

“*Stray mark*” means a mark on a ballot that appears to be accidental or appears to be unrelated to the act of filling in the voting target.

“*Tabulating device*” means the portable apparatus that removes the special paper ballot from the secrecy envelope, examines and counts the votes recorded on the special paper ballot, and produces a paper printout of the results of the voting.

“*Undervote*” means to vote for fewer than the permitted number of choices for any office or question on a ballot.

“*Unvoted ballot*” means a ballot that has not been marked in any way. See also “*blank ballot*.”

“*Vote*” means the voter’s choice for an office or question on the ballot.

“*Voting target*” means the place designated on a ballot for the voter to mark the voter’s choice.

“*Write-in vote*” means a vote cast pursuant to Iowa Code section 49.99 or 52.16.