

NEP methodology for total expected vote

From Joe Lenski – Edison Research – October 19, 2020

For the 2020 general election, the National Election Pool (NEP) will be reporting all vote results as a percentage of total expected vote.

For the past few election cycles the NEP had already transitioned from reporting statewide results as a percentage of precincts reporting to a percentage of total expected vote reporting. The traditional use of percentage of precincts reporting no longer serves the purpose of accurately reflecting the status of the vote count since a large number of votes in most states are cast by mail and in person before Election Day and are not assigned to a precinct on election night.

For the 2020 general election the NEP will be reporting the status of the vote count as a percentage of total expected vote at all levels – statewide, by congressional district, and by county. Total expected vote is the best estimate made by the NEP based upon all information that is available at the time. These estimates will be updated as we receive election results on election night and beyond.

At the beginning of Election Day the total expected vote estimates are based upon the trends in mail and early voting reported by the states. Additionally, we use overall turnout trends that are anticipated based upon pre-election telephone surveys measuring voters' expectation for participating in the election. The NEP also uses information about the growth in voting eligible population and voter registration in each state and expectations from state and local election officials as well.

As we receive partial vote returns on election night we will be revising these estimates. Also, many states and counties provide us with estimates of the outstanding vote yet to be reported and we incorporate that information in our total expected vote estimates. Once enough counties in a state have reached final or near-final reporting of their vote counts we will use the turnouts in those counties to revise the estimate of total expected vote from similar counties in that state.

We will also be providing a “stage” of vote reporting for each county:

Stage	Description
0	No vote data in EAS
2	We have vote data from reporter/source
4	Last report for election night has been entered. This information comes from the reporter). Where available, details on number and type of outstanding ballots still to be counted after Election Day are reported as well.
6	The county has indicated that there are no additional votes to count with the exception of provisional ballots.
8	The county has indicated that there is no additional vote to count and Edison has verified this information.
10	Vote has been certified by the Secretary of State.

If the county has not indicated their vote is final then the percentage will be capped at 95%, regardless of how much current vote has reported. Once we have reached stage 6, the percentage of total expected vote reporting will be capped at 99% until we reach certification where we will finally reach 100% of total expected vote reporting.