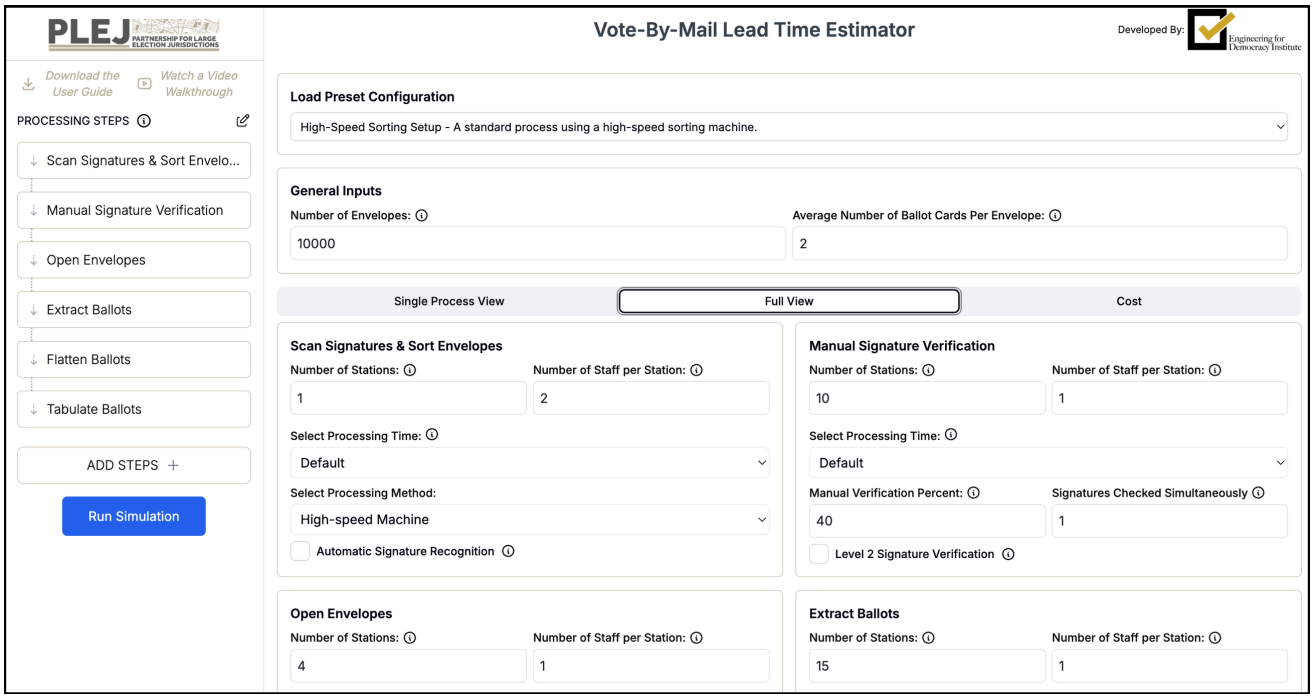
# PUBLICLY-AVAILABLE TOOL TO ESTIMATE VOTE-BY-MAIL LEAD TIMES!

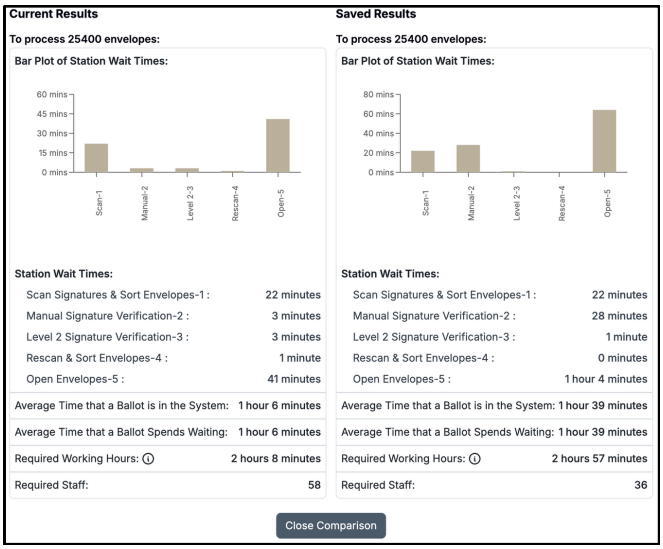
Wonder how long it will take to count mail ballots after receipt or what happens if you have to adjust resources along the way? PLEJ and the Engineering for Democracy Institute (EDI) have created a publicly available tool to help election offices plan the time to process and count mail ballots—from arrival through verification, scanning, and tabulation—based on resources available.

This tool uses data-backed simulations to allow election officials to enter their specific, step-by-step vote-by-mail processing methods, voter turnout estimates, and vote-by-mail ballot arrivals to predict the time required to process all vote-by-mail ballots. This tool (i) helps address concerns that voters have regarding when election results are finalized, (ii) provides a mechanism for election officials to use to help project the lead time required to complete the counting and tabulation processes, and (iii) helps estimate end-to-end costs for the process. Rest assured, no information that you enter is saved or stored by PLEJ or EDI.




## *Consider using this tool to:*

- *Forecast processing times and determine optimal times to bring in staff*
- *Quickly estimate the impact of large-scale changes in voting patterns, processes, or deadlines*
- *Evaluate operational impact of resource changes (i.e. allocation of staffing by stage, budget adjustments, changes in available equipment, or requirement shifts)*




***View:***

- ***User Guide (bit.ly/PLEJ-VBMTU)***
- ***Video Tutorial (bit.ly/PLEJ-VBME)***
- ***Planning for sudden shifts in VBM patterns? Mini-Guide: (bit.ly/PLEJ-VBM-SHIFTS)***
- ***How-To Instructions on the Reverse Side***

**VBMTIME.APP** SCAN ME!

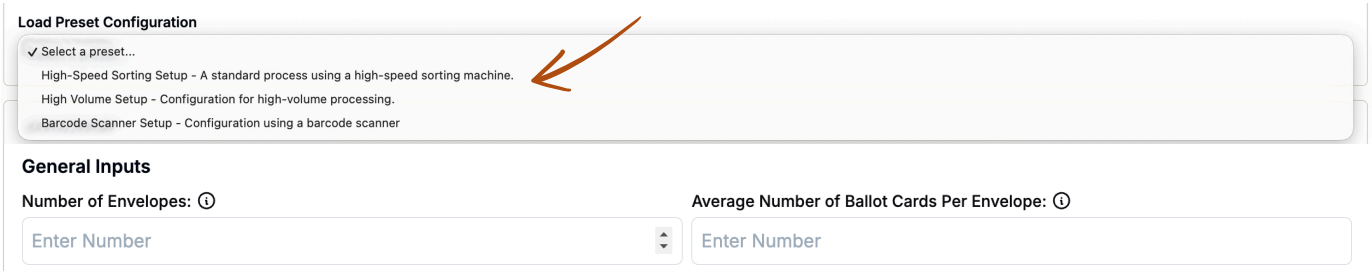
*Revised: June 2026*

# USING THE VOTE-BY-MAIL LEAD TIME ESTIMATOR

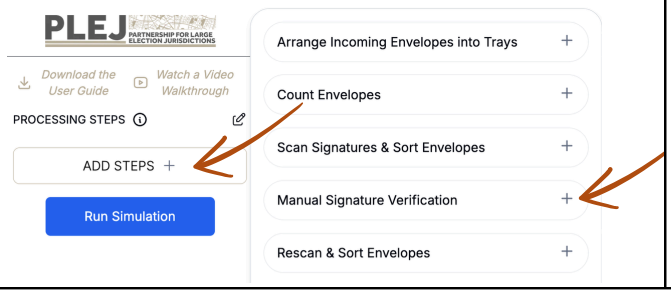
## Step 1: Go to vbmtime.app



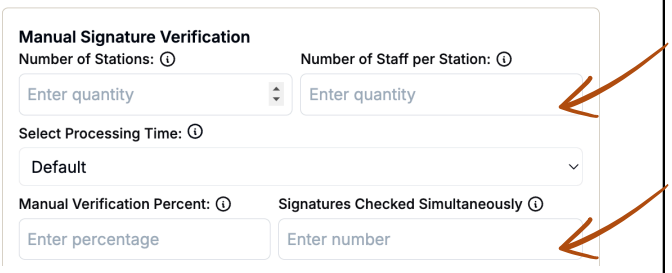

## Step 2: Select one of the convenient preset configurations, or enter the two "General Inputs" values.




## Step 3: Click "Add Steps" Button, use the + sign to add all of the expected stages in your vote-by-mail process.




## Step 4: Enter the necessary information for each of the stages in your VBM process.




## Step 5: If interested, in financial estimates, click to the "Cost" tab and enter values.




## Step 6: Start simulation!

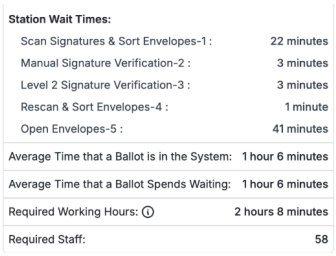
*(Note: Larger estimates may take time to process)*

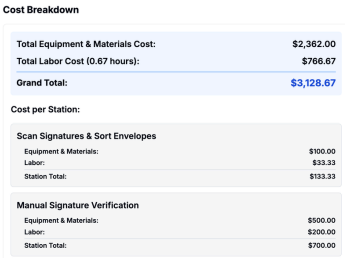



## Step 7: Explore your data!

After simulation completes, a "results" window will pop up with information about each stage of the process, overall wait times, bottlenecks, and more.

Download results, or save data to compare and contrast against a future simulation as you adjust resources.




### About PLEJ

PLEJ is a national, nonpartisan nonprofit providing a community of support to large election jurisdictions (those with 250K+ population or any of the four largest jurisdictions in the state or U.S. territory) and professional development opportunities to individuals working in the election administration space.



### Wait-to-Vote Calculator
votetime.app

Allows election offices to plan ahead for in-person voting by estimating wait times based on ballot length, equipment allocations, and voters in line.



### Warehouse Estimator
ballotstorage.app

Helps election offices estimate storage needs and off-site storage costs for ballots, equipment, and supplies per election cycle.




### Precinct Design Tool
votelayout.app

Allows election offices to create digital layouts of all assigned equipment, staff, etc at in-person voting locations by election type.