



## Part 2 — Space & Storage: The Hidden Challenge

Posted on August 15, 2025 – by Carey Fauscett-Anderson

TRENTON, Ga. — Running elections is not just about ballots and voting machines. It's also about where those items are stored, tested, and staged—and in Dade County, the current space limitations make this a constant challenge.

---

### State Rules Require Secure and Adequate Storage

Georgia law requires counties to securely store all elections equipment, supplies, and records in a manner that ensures their safety, integrity, and readiness for use. This includes ballot markers, optical scanners, printers, poll pads, batteries, ballot storage bins, and security seals ([O.C.G.A. § 21-2-300](#), State Election Board Rule 183-1-12).

Equipment must be protected from environmental hazards, kept secure from unauthorized access, and remain organized for rapid deployment during elections.

---

### Dade County's Current Reality

In Dade County, elections equipment is stored in multiple locations across different county buildings—not in a single, purpose-built facility. This includes:

- Voting machines and supplies stored in limited space at the County Administration Building.
- Batteries for elections equipment kept in a main hallway due to lack of dedicated storage—posing a potential fire hazard.
- Additional items stored in off-site rooms, meaning equipment must be transported between locations before and after each election.

The result is a logistical maze that requires extra time, labor, and rented trucks just to prepare for each election.

---

## Impact on Daily Operations

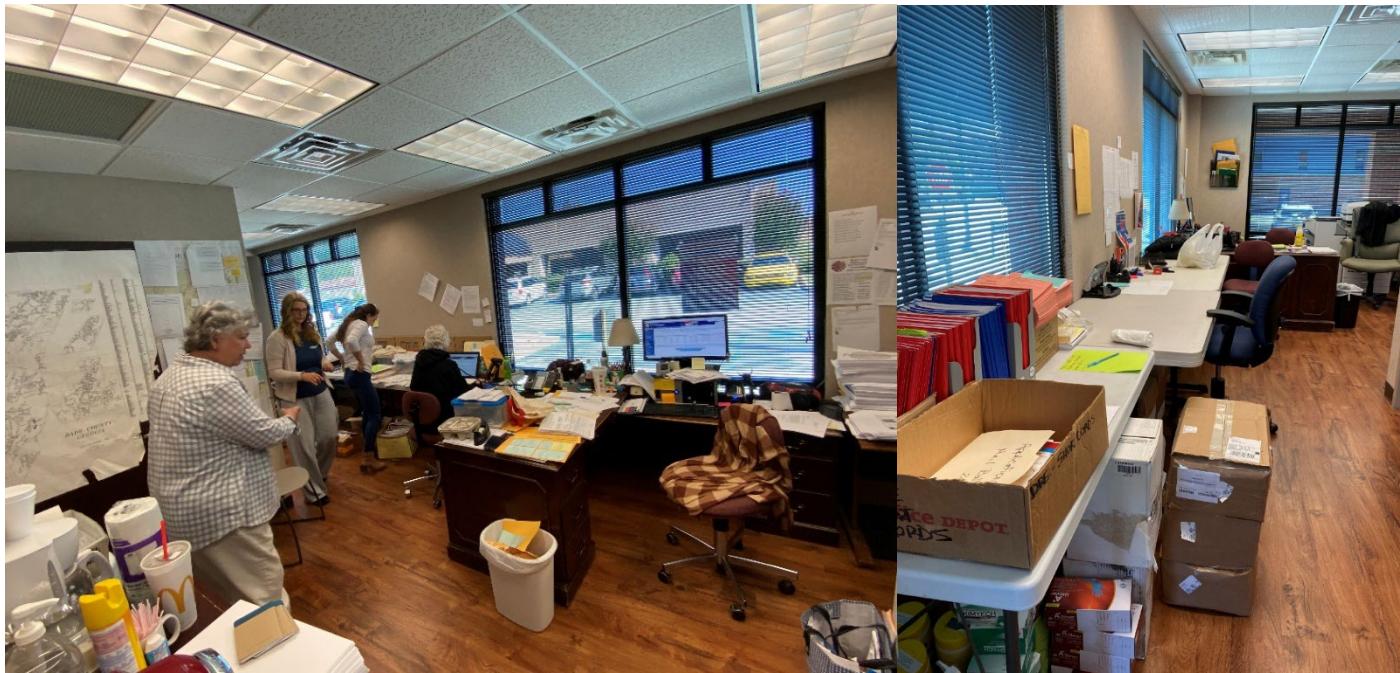
Elections Supervisor Lowanna Vaughan—Dade County’s only full-time elections employee—must physically move equipment from one site to another to access records or set up for Logic & Accuracy testing. Sometimes, she and her poll workers have to set up and break down equipment multiple times in a single day because they share space with other departments or public events.

These repeated moves increase the risk of equipment damage and accelerate wear and tear. They also extend work hours and add stress to an already demanding schedule.

---

## No Dedicated Training Space

The Georgia Secretary of State requires that all poll workers receive training before serving in an election ([Georgia Poll Worker Manual, 2021](#)). Without a dedicated elections facility, Vaughan has to find available public rooms for training—rooms that are often already in use for other purposes. This means training sessions are sometimes relocated or split into smaller groups, requiring more total hours of instruction and setup.



---

## Example: How Space Limitations Add Days of Work

For a typical countywide election, the lack of centralized storage and a dedicated workspace adds significant extra labor. A sample timeline looks like this:

**Day 1–2:** Transport voting machines from multiple storage sites to a staging area.

**Day 3–7:** Set up for L&A testing in a shared room; break down each night because the room is needed for other county business.

**Day 8–9:** Move tested equipment back into temporary storage until closer to Election Day.

**Day 10–12:** Transport machines again to precincts for setup.

**Day 13–14:** After polls close, retrieve equipment from precincts and return it to temporary storage; begin breakdown for transport back to multiple storage sites.

This cycle means what could be accomplished in half the time in a dedicated facility now takes nearly two full weeks—and that's just for one election, without considering early voting, absentee processing, or runoffs.



## Conclusion

Secure, centralized storage and a dedicated workspace are not “nice-to-have” extras—they are operational necessities for meeting Georgia’s elections requirements. In Dade County, the lack of such a facility forces equipment to be scattered across multiple locations, creating inefficiencies, safety hazards, and unnecessary costs.

For the county’s one full-time elections employee and the Board of Elections the absence of a dedicated elections building means every election starts and ends with the same uphill logistical battle.

