

Lake County Supervisor of Elections Office Reduces Training Time, Costs with ELM



The Lake County (Florida) Supervisor of Elections Office, with Supervisor of Elections Alan Hays at the helm, serves a total of 222,407 registered voters. The Supervisor of Elections Office is responsible for conducting all public elections in Lake County, which includes registering voters and maintaining voter registration rolls, redistricting and maintaining precinct information, securing polling places, hiring and training poll workers and maintaining election equipment.

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BRIAN SWEZEZEA
ELECTION WORKER COORDINATOR
LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA

The Challenge

It takes a large team to ensure that an election runs smoothly, and poll workers play an important role for the Lake County Supervisor of Elections Office. During the election period, the County’s elections office hires more than 1,000 workers to serve at over 100 precincts county-wide, and the in-classroom training for these workers can be both costly and time consuming.

The Solution

To ensure they have well-trained poll workers who are ready for Election Day, Lake County turned to VR’s online elections training platform, ELM, to help reduce the amount of time temporary poll workers spent receiving in-classroom, instructor-led training.

The Lake County Supervisor of Elections Office first began utilizing ELM to train a limited number of temporary poll workers in 2017. According to Election Worker Coordinator Brian Sweezea, ELM courses will be used to train more than 800 incoming poll workers who will be working with the County for the 2018 elections.

Prior to reporting to the Elections Office for their classroom training, Lake County poll workers are now required to complete five courses using ELM, followed by a final assessment that tests their knowledge.

Though there has been a learning curve for poll workers who are new to the program and less familiar with technology—the average Lake County poll worker is between 72 and 74 years old—Sweezea said the simple format, easy navigation and integration to VR products makes ELM a great option for the County.

To combat the generational gap, Lake County gives poll workers a two-month window before they are scheduled to begin classroom training to complete their ELM courses with the option to work from personal devices or at the Elections Office.

“A good 70 percent of our poll workers are brand new to ELM, so at our main office we have a learning lab that has manned training computers that are specific for ELM use,” Sweezea said. “We’ve now moved into the 21st Century, and I would say ELM has reduced the training time for an election by 30 to 40 percent.”

(The Solution Continued)

Since integrating ELM into the Lake County elections training process, Sweezea said he has used the program's convenient library to create 11 courses with topics that range from basic election worker and clerk training to serving voters with disabilities and conflict management. Additionally, Sweezea said the County utilizes the ELM library's pre-existing EViD course to prepare workers for handling the equipment.

Lake County has also taken advantage of the various video and audio content capabilities that ELM provides by incorporating original videos produced in-house as well as videos supplied by the state.

"We include different elements in the courses depending on the course content," Sweezea said. "We have a basic training session that introduces video with audio, and we also produced some videos featuring our supervisor, Alan Hayes. We also use videos for our conflict-management course that were supplied by the state."

The Result

Through the use of ELM, Sweezea said the Lake County Supervisor of Elections Office has been able to decrease the number of instructors that provide in-classroom training and significantly reduce class time— all while producing better trained election workers.

"It takes a lot of the bookwork out of the classroom, so we're not going over simple statutes that they can learn on their own time before they actually use the equipment," Sweezea said. "I think the fact that they have to take an assessment at the end also helps them think again about what they're doing."

After successfully training poll workers using ELM, Sweezea said Lake County is prepared to begin using the software to train other elections staff as well.

"We're definitely interested in expanding our training using ELM to other positions," Sweezea said. "I just recently set up a course for poll watchers, and we're hoping to begin getting them trained with ELM also."

LESS
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BETTER
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