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Davidson County voters wait hours to cast ballots

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Turnout high at Looby, provisional ballots used



Some TSU students unsure of voting



Election Day 2012

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Written by Adam Tamburin | The Tennessean

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2:30 p.m. North, South Nashville

Election officials at Hadley Park Community Center in North Nashville have had to give out provisional ballots to a handful of Tennessee State University students with voters registration issues. Poll official Carolyn Harris said about 10 students who received the provisional ballots had questions verifying their registration and polling places.

"A lot of them really don't know," Harris said. "It's not an ID issue."

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The issue is did they register, when did they register and where did they register.”

At Paragon Mills School in South Nashville, voters waited for an hour and stood in lines 50 to 60 people deep early in the day, said Even Cathey, the communications coordinator at the Tennessee Immigrants and Refugees Coalition and a poll watcher at the precinct.



Voting line in East Nashville at Shelby Park 7 am on Nov. 6, 2012. It was an hour wait. / John Partipilo / The Tennessean

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He said delays from the photo ID requirement implemented this year and issues with finding correct information and paperwork have had an inbalanced effect in a district where many voters speak English as a second language.

“At Paragon Mills, the process is confusing,” Cathey said. “They’re understaffed, and with the forms they seemed under-sourced. It’s having a disproportionate effect on people of color.”

Multiple locations at 1:30 p.m. Various precincts around Nashville have dealt with issues ranging from power outages to a lack of change of address forms or provisional ballots on site.

Tennessee Citizen Action director Mary Mancini said her organization had been dealing with calls and complaints from voters since the polls opened.

“This is the worst election I’ve ever seen,” Mancini said. “[The presidential election] is a large factor, but for the Davidson County Election Commission not to be prepared for this is inexcusable.”

Since polls opened at 7 a.m., complaints have also developed about a lack of change of address forms at precincts in Nashville. Davidson County Election Administrator Albert Tische said this morning election officials were being sent out to resupply these precincts.



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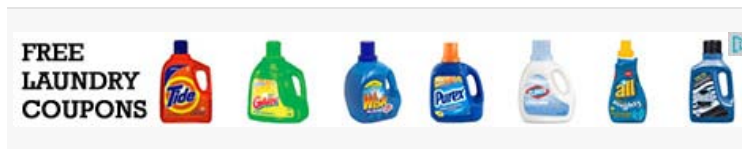
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