



ELECTION DAY Poll Watcher Checklist and Guide

Poll Watcher Tips

- Bring your Credential Letter, Badge, Poll Watcher Report, and this Checklist with you.
- Cover or remove any campaign materials on or in your car.
- Bring a notepad or clipboard, paper and pen and please take detailed notes for the Poll Watcher Report.
- Bring a jacket/sweater, snacks, and drinks for yourself.
- Wear Business Casual attire and comfortable shoes.

Poll Watcher Don'ts

- **Don't** touch the machines or any voting equipment or materials.
- **Don't** use your phone or any electronic devices- including smart watch - inside the voting area (go outside).
- **Don't** stand near voters at the BMD or where you can see their screen.
- **Don't** talk to Voters, Poll Workers, other Poll Watchers, or candidates.
- **Don't** talk to Poll Manager when they are helping a voter.
- **Don't** interfere with or advise Poll Workers.
- **Don't** check elector lists or view any voter data.
- **Don't** participate in any form of campaigning.

Poll Watcher Hours

Morning Shift: We ask that Poll Watchers who are scheduled for the morning shift arrive at 6 am as to witness the Oaths administered, watch the set-up, and confirm zero counts on all machines.

Evening Shift: Please stay to observe all closing procedures including the ballot transfer. **It is very important that we have a final count from ALL locations and readable photos of the scanner/tabulator tapes – including the Total Ballots Cast, the Protective Counter #, software version # and the signatures.**

Conduct at the Polling Place

- Introduce yourself to the Manager when you arrive and present your letter. Record his/her name on the Poll Watcher Report.
- You can go anywhere in the poll as long as you do not interfere with voting, see the voter's BMD screen or the poll pad screen.
- You are free to come and go as needed and you should not tell the Poll Manager or anyone at the Poll location when you are leaving or when you are coming back.
- Do not wear candidate or party apparel and remove or cover all political bumper and window stickers from your car before you arrive at the polling place. Don't leave candidate material visible inside your car.
- Do not take photographs, video, or audio recordings inside the polling place. Keep your phone silent and out of site inside the polling place. [Except to take photos of scanner tapes **after the polls close on Election Day**]
- Be friendly and respectful.
- It is helpful to approach the Poll Manager with questions vs. telling them what to do. Do not discuss issues in front of Poll Workers or voters. Do not advise or correct Poll Workers – if you see something a Poll Worker is doing incorrectly, bring it up with the manager.
- Do not ask for personal information about Poll Workers or record their license plates or lurk in the parking lot.
- If an incident occurs, you may talk to the manager first. Oftentimes, poll managers will resolve problems if made aware of them. If the manager is not receptive, call the Hotline immediately. Always submit a written record of what happened.
- **Poll Managers have final say – do not argue with them!** They have the authority to remove you from the location if they believe you are interfering with the conduct of the election. Walk outside and call the hotline for help if there is an issue.

Outside Checklist

- Any campaigning or signs within 150 feet of building or 25 feet of voters in line?
- Any voters wearing campaign material?
- Wait times over 30 minutes?
- Any food truck or other "line warmer" activities within 150 feet?
- Any contact with voters in line (other than Poll Workers)?

Inside Checklist – Poll Opening

Door unlocked to allow public to observe?

Call the Hotline or Elections Office if you are not allowed in the voting area for meaningful observation.

Poll Workers

- Poll Officials Oaths Administered?
- All Poll Workers present and on-time?
- Everyone wearing name badge?
- Any campaign pins or slogans on clothing?
- Was poll staffed properly (Minimum: 1 Poll Manager, 2 Assistant Mgrs)

Scanner/Tabulators:

- Ballot boxes opened, confirmed empty, and resealed?
- Emergency ballot boxes, opened, confirmed empty, and resealed?
- Opening counts = 0? Zero Tapes printed and confirmed?
- All scanner seals secure including both memory cards? *Do not touch the machines. It is not necessary to record seal #s.*

Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs):

- All BMDs have an opening count of 0?
- Does each BMD have all 4 security seals? *Do not touch the machines. It is not necessary to record seal #s.*

Is all equipment visible in the same room?

Any equipment not in use? Why?

Provisional Station: Set up and ready at poll opening? Provisional Ballot Bag confirmed empty and resealed?

Printers: only Poll Tech or Manager are allowed to load ballot paper.

Poll Pad opening counts all = 0?

Did the Poll open on time?

Inside During Voting

- When did the first voter vote?
- Anyone with campaign or political slogans on their clothes or mask?
- Did anyone enter the enclosed space other than official Poll Workers, Poll Watchers, and Voters?
- Note any equipment issues: time it went down, who resolved, how, when it was back up. Did it impact voters?
- Did any equipment leave the room?
- Were any ballots left on the printer? Did the Manager spoil the ballot?
- Did anyone assist voters who did not sign the oath on the poll pad?
- Were any voters turned away without voting? Why?
- Any campaign discussions between Poll Workers, voters, or Poll Watchers or amongst Poll Workers within ear shot of voters?
- Did any voter bring in their Absentee Ballot and how was it handled?

Poll Closing Checklist

- What time did the poll close?
- Was everyone in line at closing time permitted to vote?

- Record final BMD and Scanner ballot counts. Ask Manager for final Poll Pad Check-in, Provisional, Spoiled ballot counts, hand-counts of paper ballots and total ballots cast, protective counter # and software version # from tabulator tape and record on your Poll Watcher Report.
- Did BMD and Scanner count match at closing? If not, why not?
- Poll Pads returned to cases and sealed.
- Printers are put in black rolling bags.
- Provisional Ballots returned to the Unused Provisional Transport Case and sealed. Orange PB Bag remains sealed.
- Scanners:
 - Emergency Ballot Box opened, confirmed empty or any ballots scanned, then resealed.
 - Manager “Closes the Poll” on the scanner and prints 3 copies of the result tapes. [this is Tabulation]
 - Ballots removed and hand counted, put in Ballot Transport bag, and sealed. Each bag is labeled with scanner number, count, date/time of transfer, and signed by the Manager.
 - Standalone Scanner: when ballots removed, did they look up inside for more ballots and check the write-in compartment?
 - Scanner Ballot Boxes locked and sealed after ballots removed?
 - Poll Worker Memory Card removed and sealed in Memory Card Bag?
- **Use your phone after the poll closes to take photos of scanner tapes and Provisional Ballot Recap sheet prior to them being posted on the door.** If the tape is very long, you may have to take multiple pictures. The most important areas to capture are the top of the tape, the totals, total ballots cast, the protective counter # and the bottom of the tape with signatures.
- Record **Total Ballots Cast** from the scanner/tabulator tapes on the Poll Watcher Report and ensure it reconciles to scanner count from display on top of scanner. Record **Protective Counter #** and **Software Version #** from tabulator tapes.
- Runners: 2 Poll Workers leave together with Memory Card Bag and signed Chain-of-Custody form to take to the check-in location.
- Ballot Transport Bags: Chain of Custody form created with seal #s and signed by Manager and Assistant Managers.
- BMDs: Final counts recorded on Recap Sheets, BMDs shutdown, confirm all 4 lock seals.
- Unscanned Ballot Bag: should be sealed even if there are no unscanned ballots.
- All equipment carriers are locked and sealed.
- Manager and Assistance Manager leave together to take ballots, etc. to check-in.

Election Day Differences from Early Voting

- Voters must go to their assigned precinct.
- Closing tapes printed from each scanner. Tapes posted to the window after close.
- Votes are tabulated at close.
- Scanner memory cards are removed, and runners take secured memory bag with cards and copy of tapes to check-in.
- No Absentee Drop Boxes

Election Offenses Involving Operation of the Polls

21-2-15 Misc Offenses while operating the polls

- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-413, 21-2-414: Restrictions on Campaign Activities, no campaigning or solicitation of votes, money or gifts for votes (including food and drink), no petitions, etc. within 150 feet of edge of Poll building or 25 feet of voter even if outside the 150 feet.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-568: Entry into voting compartment or booth while another voting, interfering with elector, inducing elector to reveal, or revealing elector's vote, and influencing voter while assisting
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-568.1: Intentionally Observing an Elector while casting a ballot.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-568.2: Use of photographic or other electronic monitoring or recording devices, cameras, or cellular telephones.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-584: Refusal or failure of manager to administer oath to poll officer; poll officer acting without being sworn; giving of false certificate as to swear of poll officer.

- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-587: Frauds by poll officers. Failure to return memory cards.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-588: Premature counting of votes by poll officer.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-589: Willful omissions by poll officers.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-590: Poll officer permitting unregistered or unqualified persons to vote; refusing to permit registered and qualified persons to vote; unlawful rendering of assistance.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-591: Poll officers permitting unlawful assistance to voters.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-592: Failure of poll officers to keep record of assisted voters
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-385: Only family members, someone who resides with the voter, or a caretaker of a voter with disabilities can return an Absentee Ballot on behalf of another voter.
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-574: Unauthorized possession of an absentee ballot
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-576: Willfully destroying, defacing, or delaying the delivery of any ballot
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-417, 21-2-267: Voter Identification
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-230: Challenged Ballots
- O.C.G.A. § 21-2-408(d): **“...a poll watcher may be permitted behind the enclosed space for the purpose of observing the conduct of the election and counting and recording votes.** Poll watchers shall be entitled to observe any activity conducted at the location at which they are serving as poll watchers. **...poll watchers shall be entitled to sit or stand as close as is practicable to the observed activity so as to be able to see and hear the poll worker or election official being observed.** Poll watchers shall not be permitted to observe information that is prohibited from disclosure by subsection (b) of Code Section 21-2-225. (Personal Private Information) Such poll watcher shall in no way interfere with the conduct of the election, and the poll manager may make reasonable regulations to avoid such interference. Without in any way limiting the authority of poll managers, poll watchers are prohibited from talking to voters, checking elector lists, using photographic or other electronic monitoring, or recording devices, using cellular telephones, or participating in any form of campaigning while they are behind the enclosed space. If a poll watcher persists in interfering with the conduct of the election . . . after being duly warned by the poll manager or superintendent, he or she may be removed by such official.”