

10 TIPS - SCRUTINEERING

1. Download the "Scrutineer appointment and undertaking form" (AECEF107) from AEC website <https://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/candidates/files/scrutineers-appointment-form.pdf>

and have it completed, signed and dated by both the Candidate from the electorate and the Scrutineer (with Scrutineer's address). Only one Scrutineer is allowed for each Candidate at each polling/ early voting or counting location. Take some ID with you and the completed Scrutineer form and show to the supervising AEC electoral officer at the polling booth. Most Scrutineers arrive about 5.30pm at polling booths, to show their documentation and ID. Take a mask/ exemption, in case there are COVID health changes. Volunteer Scrutineers, do NOT need to be 'jabbed', to undertake scrutineering role.

2. Do not wear any political party t-shirts, hats, badges etc., or any other political marketing material when undertaking the role as a Scrutineer. A Scrutineer must wear the AEC Scrutineer's "Identification Badge" with lanyard during scrutineering and to return the ID badge/ lanyard whenever leaving the polling, early-voting or counting locations.

3. Take a clip board, paper and pen for making any observations/ notes.

4. Avoid saying "*I am new to this scrutineering*". Be prepared by reading the 72-page booklet published by AEC on 23rd Dec., 2021 (version 11) called "**Scrutineers Handbook**" (see pages 5-13, 19-20, 24-33, 38-50 & 59-62). <https://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/candidates/files/scrutineers-handbook.pdf>

5. See page 8 of Scrutineers Handbook for "do's" and "don'ts". See pages 11 and 12 on "Rights of scrutineers." See pages 19 and 20 on what Scrutineers do and must not do. See pages 59 to 62 on offences and penalties (fines and imprisonment).

6. Do NOT get too close to ballot paper counters/ electoral employees. Observe and write notes. Scrutineers can inspect ballot papers, but are not allowed to touch ballots at the count.

7. Do not use any device e.g. a mobile phone, tablet, camera, video equipment etc. - as NO photographs and/or video/audio recording are permitted during scrutineering.

8. If unsure of anything, ask questions to the "presiding officer" or during the scrutiny process, ask the "ARO" (Assistant Returning Officer) e.g. "*What is that pile of ballot papers?*" or "*When will the informal ballot papers be counted?*".

9. Inspect piles of ballot papers and challenge counters where appropriate e.g. a Scrutineer in SA, witnessed a pile of Liberal candidate ballot papers being placed in a separate pile and then a Labor candidate ballot paper was placed on top of the Liberal pile, to 'appear' as a pile of Labor votes. This same Scrutineer also witnessed counters (electoral employees) using pencils and rightfully challenged them. The Scrutineer then reported this incident to the officer-in-charge, who swiftly acted to remove all pencils from counters. Over 10 years ago, a past electoral employee publicly confessed at a political party members event, to using a piece of lead (from a lead pencil) under one of her long finger nails, and then flicked through ballot papers to alter numbers that had been completed in pencil and to make particular ballot papers "informal". Hence the need for using a pen (not a pencil) on ballot papers and for proper scrutiny at counting.

10. Scrutineers should ask to ensure the counting forms are completed correctly as officials do make mistakes due to tiredness because electoral employees have been working at polling locations all day (from opening up polling booths early in the morning, to working all day and into the night with counting/ supervision). If this request is denied, record the incident directly to both the electorate Candidate who signed the Scrutineer appointment form and to the AEC, for possible investigation.

Scrutineer appointment and undertaking form

Year Federal election

To the Divisional Returning Officer **Through the Officer-in-Charge/Supervisor**

Division Polling place/
counting centre

Section A: Candidate details

I hereby appoint the person named in Section B below to represent me as a scrutineer at your polling place/counting centre at the abovementioned federal election.

Name of candidate as it appears on the ballot paper Signature Date

 / /

Name of registered party (if applicable)

Section B: Scrutineer details

Family name Given name/s

Address

Suburb State Postcode

Section C: Undertaking by scrutineer

I undertake for the purpose of subsection 202A(3) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*:

- i. Not to, either directly or indirectly, divulge or communicate any information with respect to the vote of an elector acquired by me in the performance of my duties or functions or in the exercise of my powers, under this Act or the regulations, in a manner that is likely to enable the identification of an elector
- ii. Not to interfere with or attempt to influence the vote of any elector (section 200DB and section 218 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*)
- iii. Not to communicate with any person in the polling booth or pre-poll voting office except so far as is necessary in the discharge of my duties or performance of my functions
- iv. To inform myself of my obligations under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* the relevant offence provisions under this Act
- v. To carry out my duties and functions in accordance with the requirements of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, including complying with any lawful direction given under s 348 designed to address the health risks presented by Covid-19 infection (which may include wearing face masks during scrutiny).
- vi. To at all times, wear the scrutineer identification supplied to me by the AEC within a polling place or counting centre, and
- vii. Not to use any image recording device (including cameras, video recorders and video-enabled mobile phones) to record images of ballot papers or declaration envelopes, or any other images that might identify an elector and how they have voted, in a polling place.
- viii. Not to use any device with the potential capability of image-recording (including, but not limited to, mobile phones, tablets, cameras and video recorders) in the scrutiny area of a counting centre.

I have read and understood the above undertakings. I understand that should I fail to adhere to the above guidelines, I may be asked to leave the polling place or counting centre. I recognise that the AEC produces the 'Scrutineers Handbook' to assist me in understanding my duties, functions and obligations, and relevant offence provisions.

Scrutineer Date

Signature / /

Scrutineers Handbooks are available from the Divisional Returning Officer or the AEC website www.aec.gov.au

Safeguard of official information: your attention is directed to:

- *Public Service Regulations 1999* (Cth), Part 2, Division 2.1: an employee must not disclose confidential information obtained in connection with the employee's employment, and
- Section 70 of the *Crimes Act 1914*: it is an offence to publish or communicate any fact or document which comes to an Officer's knowledge, or into possession, by virtue of being a Commonwealth officer, and which it is the Officer's duty not to disclose. **Penalty:** Imprisonment for 2 years.