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# Precinct Election Official



## Quick Reference Guide

(Place County Information Sticker Here)

This guide contains the basic information all precinct election officials need to know about Ohio election law and voting. Your board of elections may provide you with additional instructions that are specific to your county's operations. You should contact your local board of elections office with questions.

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## Precinct Election Official Conduct

Precinct election officials must act in a professional manner, work efficiently, and resolve problems so that voters can vote with ease. Precinct election official activity must not distract voters from their business at the polls.

### Precinct Election Officials Must Not:

- Campaign at the polling location, attempt to promote, or oppose a candidate or ballot issue while in the polling location and its surrounding neutral zone (see “Campaigning”).
- Wear or disseminate any campaign literature, attire, or paraphernalia including, but not limited to, literature, sample ballots, slate cards, campaign badges, campaign clothing or campaign buttons (see “Campaigning”).
- Introduce into the polling location, or use during their working time, items that might distract them from managing the polls (i.e., laptops not provided by the board of elections, newspapers, headphones, cell phones for personal use, radios, televisions, etc.).
- Solicit contributions for raffle tickets or sell anything at the polling location, such as baked goods, candy, crafts, etc.
- Place any food or drink on the check-in table, or on or near voting equipment or supplies.
- Engage in any other activities identified as illegal or unacceptable according to the board of elections, the Secretary of State, or state or federal law.
- Refuse to enforce election laws, especially the laws that apply to a precinct and/or polling location (R.C. 3501.33, R.C. 3501.35).

## Opening the Polls - Checklist

- Take and sign the oath statement (R.C. 3501.31) and sign all necessary payroll documentation.
- Formulate a work plan for Election Day, including work assignments, lunch schedules, and break schedules, if the county board of elections has not already completed this task.
- Review any special instructions or recent changes to instructions.
- Arrange the polling location and set up the voting machines as directed by the board of elections so that:
  - Precinct election officials can observe voters upon entering, voting within, and leaving the polling location.
  - Voters, including people with disabilities, can easily enter, move within, and exit the polling location.

- Voting machines or voting booths are arranged so that voters can vote privately to ensure a secret ballot.
- The directional signs are posted so that voters can find the voting area from the main entrance.
- The flags are placed at the entrance (one large flag) and 100 feet from the entrance to the polling location (two small flags).
- All required signs and the Official Precinct Voter Registration List are prominently posted inside the polling location approximately four feet from the floor; and
- Tables and materials are organized efficiently with all necessary voting supplies easily accessible to precinct election officials.
- ☐ Break the seals on the election supply containers and confirm that the supplies, including ballots, are the correct supplies for the precinct or polling location.
- ☐ Remove all ballots from the ballot containers and place as instructed by the board of elections. Note that some precincts contain splits, which means that certain voters in the precinct will receive a specific ballot corresponding to the precinct-split in which the voter resides.
- ☐ Ensure that all campaigners and campaign materials are situated 100 feet beyond the entrance to the polling location, as marked by the U.S. flags posted outside the entrance to the polling location (even if the flags cannot be placed at 100 feet, the boundary extends to 100 feet) (R.C. 3501.30).

## Security at the Polling Location

### Necessary Security Procedures

- ☐ Inspect voting machines and other voting equipment (e.g., electronic pollbooks) for physical damage and check tamper-proof/ tamper-evident seals, seal numbers, and security wires, making sure the seal numbers match the information on the chain of custody forms and verifying that no seals have been removed, tampered with, or replaced since the equipment or supplies left the board of elections.
- ☐ Maintain control over all voting machines and all associated materials and supplies.
- ☐ Ensure that the memory card slot on every voting machine is protected from unauthorized use or tampering before the start of voting and throughout Election Day (if applicable).
- ☐ Keep a record, including a tally, of all voters who enter the polling location, and keep a record, including a tally, of all ballots issued.

- ❑ Document any incident that may affect the election results, such as machine problems, voters who signed the pollbook but left the polling location without voting, delays in opening the polling location, and any other incidents that could have an impact on the election — especially on tallying the votes or reconciling voting materials, equipment, or supplies.
- ❑ Report any suspicious activity in or around the voting machines to the board of elections.
- ❑ Follow chain of custody procedures for voting materials.
- ❑ Return the materials and all the ballots to the board of elections' office or other assigned location on Election Night.

### **PROBLEMS WITH CONDUCT AT A POLLING LOCATION**

**Precinct election officials must contact the board of elections office and/or the appropriate law enforcement official immediately if they experience a problem with the conduct of ANY person at a polling location.**

### **General Guidelines for Assisting Voters With Disabilities**

- Always speak directly to the voter with a disability, not to a companion or an interpreter.
- Face the voter while speaking clearly, slowly, and expressively in a normal tone.
- Offering to shake hands when introduced to people with limited hand use or an artificial limb is acceptable.
- Always identify yourself as a precinct election official.
- If assistance is offered by two precinct election officials of different political parties, wait until the offer is accepted, then listen and wait for instructions. As with any other voter, allow their voting process to be private.
- Treat adults as adults. Never patronize a voter with a disability.
- Never distract a service animal. They are working.
- Relax. Do not be embarrassed to use common expressions such as "See you later" or "Walk over here" when speaking to a person with a disability.

**NOTE:** *The best advice for assisting a voter with a disability is to do for that person what you would want done for you and to treat that person as you would want to be treated.*

## **People Allowed in the Polling Location**

In general, only the following people are allowed in the polling location:

- An election official (as defined in R.C. 3501.01(U));
- A police officer or law enforcement officer;
- A person reviewing the 6:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. list of registered electors, otherwise known as the Official Precinct Voter Registration List;
- A voter;
- A voter's child, who is not yet of voting age;
- A person assisting another person to vote;
- An observer bearing a certificate of appointment; and
- Journalists.

### **Persons Checking the Official Precinct Voter Registration List**

Any person may enter the polling location for the sole purpose of checking and taking notes from the Official Precinct Voter Registration List that is posted at 6:30 a.m. and updated at 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Such persons must remove or cover all campaign attire or paraphernalia before entering the polling location and its surrounding neutral zone (see "Campaigning") and may not interfere with or disrupt the election.

Such persons may not remove the posted Official Precinct Voter Registration List, and election officials should be careful to place the list in a location that it cannot be removed unnoticed by an election official.

### **Persons Assisting Voters**

- A voter may ask for assistance in marking the ballot because of a disability or illiteracy. Voters who require assistance may have a person of their choice or two precinct election officials – each from a different political party – assist them. The voter may choose anyone they want to provide assistance, other than the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, an officer or agent of the voter's union (if the voter is a member of one), any candidate whose name appears on the ballot (R.C. 3505.24), or a single precinct election official.
- Prior to Election Day, a voter may designate an attorney-in-fact, who is a person eligible to sign all election-related documents on behalf of the voter. Such signing must be done in the voter's presence. The attorney-in-fact designation is specific to Ohio election law and not a general power of attorney. If such an attorney-in-fact is on file with the board of elections, it must be noted in the pollbook or on the poll list (R.C. 3501.382(B)(2)).
- Any person who provides assistance to a voter in marking the ballot is forbidden by law from providing any information on how they voted.

## **Observers**

Observers may be appointed by political parties or groups of candidates at least 11 days prior to Election Day to observe the conduct of the election in the polling location (R.C. 3505.21(C)).

### **What should a Precinct Election Official do?**

A precinct election official must verify the observer's Certificate of Appointment of Observer (Form 215-B, Form 216-B, or Form 220) and administer the following oath to an observer:

*"You do solemnly swear that you will faithfully and impartially discharge the duties as an official observer, assigned by law; that you will not cause any delay to persons offering to vote; and that you will not disclose or communicate to any person how any elector has voted at such election."*

### **Observers are permitted to:**

- Be in the polling location before, during, and after hours of voting.
- Move freely about the polling location to the extent that they do not engage in prohibited activity. They are not permitted to observe at precincts to which they are not duly appointed.
- Use communication devices and audio/video devices in and about the polling location, subject to the following conditions:
  - The devices must produce no noise (low volume vibration settings are permitted). Devices may not be used to take photographs, videos, or to record or transcribe any conversations inside the polling location (a camera is considered a device for purposes of these instructions).
  - The observer may not have an audible conversation inside the polling location using a communications device or audio/video device.
  - The observer may send and receive text messages, email communications, instant messages and similar other non-verbal, electronic communication using a communication device, or audio/video device.
  - The observer may not use the communication device or audio/video device in any manner that creates a disruption or disturbance within the polling location.

### **Observers are NOT permitted to:**

- Impede, interfere with, or disrupt an election, or in any way intimidate a voter, risk violating the secrecy of the ballot or voter privacy.

- Use a cellular or other communication device to discuss the election or a perceived problem with the administration of the election within the polling location.
- Interfere with precinct election officials doing their jobs or otherwise slow down the operation of the polling location, or to interact with voters in a manner that interferes with or disrupts an election.

Contact the board of elections for further clarification and instructions if this situation arises.

## Journalists and Media

**The media is granted reasonable access to polling locations during elections.** The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution has been interpreted as allowing this access. However, the presence or activities of the media may not interfere with precinct election officials' activities, interfere with the election or voters as voters exercise their right to vote, and may not intimidate voters or jeopardize the secrecy of a voter's ballot.

While serving as a precinct election official or voting location manager, the primary responsibility is to lawfully manage the polling location and focus should be directed to this task. Precinct election officials are encouraged to inform the county board of elections if the media visits the polling location instead of providing an interview to the journalist, if requested.

## Pollsters

**Pollsters conducting exit polling are allowed OUTSIDE the polling location (within 100 feet) but are not allowed INSIDE the polling location.** Pollsters are permitted to be outside the polling location – even within 100 feet of the entrance – but they should not interfere with or disrupt the election, or otherwise violate the law. Persons conducting exit polls at a polling location may not wear anything that may be construed as campaigning for or against any candidate, political party, or issue on the ballot (See "Campaigning").



## Campaigning

**Each polling location and its surrounding area is a neutral zone.**

### **Campaigning Prohibitions**

#### ***Campaigning is prohibited...***

- Within each polling location;
- Within 100 feet of the entrance to a polling location; or
- Within 10 feet of voters waiting in line if the line extends past the 100-foot boundary.
- Voters must be free to vote without pressure from candidates, campaigns, precinct election officials, or fellow voters – even if those fellow voters are friends or family.

No one, including precinct election officials, should attempt to promote or oppose a candidate or ballot issue while in the polling location. The following three types of attire and paraphernalia are prohibited in a polling location and its surrounding neutral zone:

1. Attire and paraphernalia displaying the name of a political party;
2. Attire and paraphernalia displaying the name of a candidate; and
3. Attire and paraphernalia demonstrating support of or opposition to a ballot question or issue.

***NOTE: Any person who is permitted in a polling location and its surrounding neutral zone must remove or cover the campaign attire and paraphernalia prohibited in 1-3 above. A voter who refuses to remove or cover up prohibited campaign attire or paraphernalia **must be allowed to vote** if the voter is entitled to do so (R.C. 3501.33). However, you must report any such incident to the board of elections.***

### **Collecting Signatures at a Polling Location**

Occasionally, groups may station persons outside of a polling location to gather signatures on a petition. Persons are not permitted to collect signatures inside of a polling location or within the neutral zone outside of the polling location (i.e., within the area marked by the placement of two small U.S. flags). However, there is no prohibition against collecting signatures outside the neutral zone.

### **Distributing Food and Campaigning Inside a Polling Location**

Campaigning, displaying campaign material, or distributing food inside of the neutral zone of a polling location is prohibited. However, nothing in Ohio's election laws prohibits a person or entity from campaigning, displaying campaign material, or distributing food outside of the neutral zone of a polling location (i.e., outside of the

flags marking the 100-foot barrier or beyond 10 feet from any voter waiting in line to vote, if the line to vote extends beyond the flags). Ohio law prohibits anyone from procuring or offering “money or other valuable thing to or for the use of another, with the intent that it or part thereof shall be used to induce such person to vote or to refrain from voting” (R.C. 3599.01).

Food, discounts, and other such inducements are “things of value” for purposes of the election law statutes on bribery.

## Challenging Voters

On Election Day, voters may be challenged **ONLY** by a precinct election official or the voting location manager and only for the following reasons:

- The voter is not a resident of the precinct;
- The voter is not a resident of Ohio;
- The voter is not a U.S. citizen; or
- The voter is not of legal voting age.

If challenged by a precinct election official for one of the four reasons above, the prospective voter should complete the Affidavit-Oath-Examination of Person Challenged (Form 10-U).

- If the voter completes the Form 10-U and a majority of the precinct election officials are able to determine that the voter is eligible to cast a ballot, the voter must be given a regular ballot.
- If the voter refuses to complete the Form 10-U, the voter must vote a provisional ballot and the precinct election official will need to make a note as instructed by the board of elections (i.e., Problems and Corrections document, Precinct Election Official Notes, etc.).
- If a majority of the precinct election officials are unable to determine the person’s eligibility to cast a ballot, the precinct election officials shall provide a provisional ballot to the person.

## **Voter Identification Requirements**

### **Acceptable Forms of Identification**

For the purposes of voting, voters must show a valid form of photo identification (ID) that contains the **voter's name and photograph**, and the identification **cannot be expired**.

**The following forms of photo ID are acceptable under Ohio law:**

1. Ohio driver's license, state ID card, or interim ID form issued by the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV).
2. A United States (U.S.) passport or passport card.
3. A U.S. military ID card, Ohio National Guard ID card, or U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ID card.

**When examining the photo identification, precinct election officials must be able to make the determination that the name of the voter conforms to the information in the pollbook.**

### **Unacceptable Types of Identification**

Ohio law prohibits acceptance of the following forms of ID:

- Utility bill;
- Bank statement;
- Government check;
- Paycheck;
- Other government document (other than acceptable forms listed above) such as a social security card or birth certificate;
- Driver's license or photo identification card issued by a state other than Ohio;
- Insurance card; or
- Any registration acknowledgment notice from the county board of elections.

### **Other Identification Considerations**

#### ***Change of Name***

If the voter changed their name and provides proof of the legal name change, completes and signs Form 10-L, and is registered within the precinct, the voter's name as it appears on the photo ID may or may not be the voter's reported change of name.

If the voter does not have proof of the legal name change, the voter must vote a provisional ballot.

### **No Photo Identification**

If a voter is unable to provide photo identification, the voter must be provided with a provisional ballot. In order for the provisional ballot to be counted, the voter must present one of the acceptable forms of identification to the board office within four days after Election Day.

### **Religious Objection**

If a voter does not have a photo ID because of a religious objection to being photographed, the precinct election official must provide the voter an affidavit of religious objection (Form 12-O). This may occur either when the voter casts the provisional ballot or at the office of the board by the fourth day after Election Day. Precinct election officials must attach the affidavit to the provisional ballot affirmation.

## **Processing Voters**

*\*For more instructions on issuing a ballot in a primary election, refer to "Primary Election Information."*

**Step 1:** Greet the voter and ask the voter to state their name.

**Step 2:** Locate the voter's name in the pollbook.

### **Name Matches – Continue to Step 3**

#### **Name Different – Same Precinct**

If it was determined after performing a secondary search (see "Electronic Pollbook Searches" below) that the voter's name has changed and the voter is still residing in the same precinct, the voter is eligible to receive a regular ballot if the voter has proof of the legal name change and completes Form 10-L. **Continue to Step 3.**

**Note:** *If the voter changed their name and provides proof of the legal name change (e.g., a marriage license, a court order that includes the voter's current and prior names, or other proof of legal name change that includes both the voter's former and current name), the voter may complete and sign a Notice of Change of Name (Form 10-L) and cast a regular ballot, as long as the voter is registered to vote in that precinct.*

*The voter's form of identification provided may or may not contain the voter's reported change of name.*

### **Name Not Found**

If the voter's name was **not** located in the pollbook after performing a secondary search (see "Electronic Pollbook Searches" below), use the address information provided by the voter to direct the voter to the proper location to cast their ballot.

### ***Electronic Pollbook Searches and Supplemental Voter Lists***

*If a driver license or state identification card is scanned or swiped to locate the voter's name in the electronic pollbook and the name is not located, perform a secondary, manual search to locate the voter. For example, typing in the first few characters of the voter's last name and/or house number should populate a list that can be used to determine if and where the voter is registered to vote.*

*If, at the time the electronic pollbooks are loaded with data or at the time the paper pollbook is printed, a complete list of eligible voters is unavailable, the board of elections might produce a Supplemental Voter List. If the board of elections provided a Supplemental Voter List, reference the Supplemental Voter List in addition to the pollbook when searching for a voter's name.*

**Step 3:** Ask the voter to state their current address and compare the address provided to the address listed in the pollbook next to the voter's name.

#### ***Address Matches – Continue to Step 4***

##### ***Address Different – Same Precinct***

If the address provided by the voter is different than the address listed in the pollbook, determine if the address provided by the voter is still within the precinct in which they are registered to vote. If the voter's address is within the same precinct, **continue to Step 4.**

A voter who has moved within the same precinct may vote a regular ballot. Voters who move within the same precinct must be provided with a voter registration update form to complete. In addition, a voter who moves within the precinct (and completes a Voter Registration Form) or provides proof of legal name change (and completes Form 10-L) votes a regular ballot.

##### ***Address Different – Same County, Different Precinct***

If the address provided by the voter is in a different precinct within the county, determine where the voter should be directed to cast a ballot. Refer to "Directing Voters to the Correct Precinct."

##### ***Address Different – Different County in Ohio***

If the address provided by the voter is in a different county, direct the voter to contact the board of elections in that county for more information (a list of county board of elections phone numbers may be found in this Quick Reference Guide).

## **Directing Voters to the Correct Precinct**

If the voter's address is outside a precinct within the polling location, use the electronic pollbook or the county street directory to determine the correct precinct and direct the voter to the correct precinct or polling location.

Explain to the voter that a provisional ballot cast in the wrong precinct cannot be counted, and provide the voter with the telephone number of the board of elections in case the individual has questions.

If the voter insists on voting in the wrong precinct after being directed to the correct precinct or polling location, the voter must cast a provisional ballot.

**NOTE:** If the voter is in the correct polling location but the wrong precinct and insists on voting in the wrong precinct, the precinct election official must complete the Provisional Voter Precinct Verification (Form 12-D) and attach it to the voter's provisional ballot envelope. This form demonstrates that the precinct election official directed the voter to the correct precinct and that the voter refused to go there to vote.

**Step 4:** Ask the voter to provide a valid form of photo ID. Refer to "Voter Identification Requirements" for more information.

***Voter Presents a Valid Form of Photo ID – Continue to Step 5***

***Voter is Unable to Present a Valid Form of Photo ID – Provide Voter a Provisional Ballot***

**Step 5:** Check for flags, marks, or notations in the pollbook which instruct precinct election officials to provide the voter with a provisional ballot. If the voter's name is flagged or marked in the pollbook, the voter must be provided with a provisional ballot. If there are no notations or instructions which instruct precinct election officials to provide a provisional ballot, **continue to Step 6.**

### ***Reasons for Notations***

- The voter was challenged before the election, a hearing was held, and the challenge was found by the board of elections to have merit.
- The voter is marked (flagged) absentee or provisional in the pollbook, which indicates the voter may have already received a ballot before Election Day.
- The voter is marked (flagged) in the pollbook because a Notice of Registration Acknowledgment Notice (Form 10-J) sent to the voter was returned as undeliverable.

**Step 6:** Ask the voter to sign the pollbook. Compare the voter's signature with the signature provided in the pollbook.

***Signature Matches the Signature in Pollbook***

If the signature provided by the voter matches the signature already on file in the pollbook, **continue to step 7.**

***Voter Cannot Sign – Has Assistive Technology or Signature Stamp***

Generally, signing or affixing a signature to an election-related document requires a person’s written, cursive-style legal mark written in that person’s own hand.

However, a voter with a disability may personally affix their signature through the use of a reasonable accommodation, including the use of assistive technology or an augmentative device such as a signature stamp. A voter using assistive technology or an augmentative device may affix their signature in the backup paper pollbook.

**Continue to Step 7.**

***Voter Cannot Sign – Has Attorney-in Fact on File with Board of Elections***

If the voter has an attorney-in-fact designation on file with the board of elections, the voter can have their attorney-in-fact sign the voter’s name for them in the presence and at the direction of the voter. In order to have an attorney-in-fact, the voter must have completed and filed the correct forms with the county board of elections before Election Day (Form 10-F or Form 10-G). If that voter has an attorney-in-fact on file with the board of elections, the attorney-in-fact’s signature will be on file, and it will be noted in the pollbook or on the poll list. The voter must have their attorney-in-fact accompany them to the polling location. The attorney-in-fact should be allowed to sign the voter’s name in the pollbook, in the presence and at the direction of the voter. The signature of the attorney-in-fact should be examined, and if it matches the attorney-in-fact’s signature already on file in the pollbook (R.C. 3505.18(B)), **continue to Step 7.**

**Note:** An attorney-in-fact is different from a power of attorney. In order for a person with power of attorney to sign election forms for another person, a valid appointment as an attorney-in-fact must be on file with the county board of elections.

***Voter Cannot Sign – Voter is Able to Provide Legal Mark***

If the voter is able, they should make their legal mark, such as an “X,” on the signature line in the pollbook. A precinct election official shall record the name of the elector at the proper place in the pollbook following the elector’s mark.

The precinct election official shall attest to the making of the mark by signing the precinct election official’s name on the poll list or pollbook as a witness to the mark (R.C.3505.18(B)). **Continue to Step 7.**

### ***Signature Does Not Match***

If, in the opinion of the majority of precinct election officials, the signature does not substantially conform to the signature in the pollbook, the voter must vote a provisional ballot.

- Step 7:** Provide the voter with a regular ballot or the appropriate ballot permission slip for the correct ballot for the voter's precinct, based on the voter's residence address and direct the voter to the proper voting booth or voting machine.
- If a voter is unable to mark their ballot, the voter may use the voting machine that is accessible for individuals with disabilities. See "Persons Assisting Voters" for more options available.

## **Primary Election Information**

By requesting a political party's ballot, the voter becomes affiliated with the political party for which ballot the person votes. This designation can only be changed by requesting a different political party's ballot at the next partisan primary election.

Make sure to enter in the pollbook which political party's ballot is voted by a voter, regardless of whether or not there is a change in party affiliation.

At the end of the day, complete the bottom portion of Form 10-X for any pages which were not completely filled in earlier in the day.

### **Issuing a Ballot as Part of the Voting Process During a Primary Election**

Use the following additional procedures when issuing a ballot. Please refer to more detailed instructions under "Processing Voters."

**Step 1.** Ask the voter: "Which ballot would you like – a political party ballot or an issues only ballot?"

- Most voters will know which type of political party ballot they will want. But, if a voter asks, "What are my choices?" then explain the political party ballot choices, if any exist.

**Step 2:** Record the voter's choice of ballot in the pollbook by marking either:

- The appropriate political party for the ballot requested by the voter, or
- That the voter requested an issues only ballot;

**Step 3:** Give the voter the proper ballot or appropriate ballot permission slip/device.

**Step 4:** Direct the voter to the appropriate voting location in the polling place.



## **Challenging a Voter – Party Affiliation**

If a precinct election official has personal knowledge that a voter is not affiliated with or a member of the political party whose ballot they have requested, the precinct election official may challenge the voter and ask the voter to complete the Statement of Person Challenged as to Party Affiliation (Form 10-W or Form 10-X).

- Personal knowledge requires more than just a notation of party affiliation in a board record such as a pollbook. Precinct election officials must not rely solely on information contained in the pollbook to challenge an elector's party affiliation.
- Such challenges will be rare, and a voter is required to complete Form 10-W or Form 10-X, only if they are challenged.
- If the challenged voter completes the Statement of Person Challenged as to Party Affiliation (Form 10-W or Form 10-X), then the voter's choice of ballot is added in the pollbook by marking the appropriate political party whose ballot was requested by the voter. The voter is then given a regular ballot or appropriate ballot permission slip for the political party ballot of their choice.
- If the challenged voter refuses to complete the Statement of Person Challenged as to Party Affiliation (Form 10-W or Form 10-X), then the voter MUST vote the voter's choice of political party ballot provisionally. In such a case, the voter is to be given the provisional ballot for the voter's choice of political party.

## **17-Year-Old Voters**

A 17-year-old, registered voter who will be 18 years of age on or before the date of the next general election may vote in a primary election, including for Presidential delegates.

However, voters who are 17 years old as of the primary election are not permitted to vote on any of the following:

- State Party Central Committee; and
- Questions and Issues, such as a school tax levy, charter amendment, or local liquor option.

17-year-old voters will be identified as such in the pollbook. Before giving the 17-year-old voter their ballot or ballot permission slip/device, give the voter the 17-Year-Old Voter Instructions.

If the county board of elections does NOT provide a unique ballot for 17-year-old voters, the following items must be provided to a 17-year-old voter:

- A regular paper ballot;
- Instructions on the proper method for marking and returning the ballot (i.e., the 17-Year-Old Voter Instructions); and

- An envelope into which the voted ballot can be placed and segregated from the other regular ballots so that the board can review the ballot to ensure that no votes for which the 17-year-old voter is ineligible to cast are counted.

## Provisional Ballots

### Reasons for Issuing a Provisional Ballot

If a voter meets **ONE** or **MORE** of the following criteria, the voter must be provided a provisional ballot:

- The voter's name does not appear in the pollbook or the Supplemental Voter List.
- The voter does not provide or is unable to provide valid photo identification.
- The voter is marked (flagged) absentee or provisional in the pollbook, which indicates the voter may have already received a ballot before Election Day.
- The voter is marked (flagged) in the pollbook because a Notice of Registration Acknowledgment Notice (Form 10-J) sent to the voter was returned as undeliverable.
- The voter has changed their name and did not provide proof of a legal name change and complete Form 10-L.
- The voter has moved from one Ohio precinct to another without updating their voter registration by the registration deadline (30 days prior to the election).
- The voter has changed their name and moved from one Ohio precinct to another without updating their voter registration by the registration deadline (30 days prior to the election).
- The voter's eligibility to cast a ballot has been challenged by the precinct election officials and the voter refused to complete the Affidavit-Oath-Examination of Person Challenged (Form 10-U).
- The voter's signature, in the opinion of the majority of precinct election officials, does not substantially conform to the signature in the pollbook.
- The voter is marked (flagged) that they were challenged before the election and the hearing was postponed until after the day of the election.

### Processing Provisional Voters

**IMPORTANT:** Before providing a voter with a provisional ballot, make sure that the voter's address is in the polling location. If not, the voter must be directed to the correct precinct and polling location.

**Step 1:** Provide the voter with an Identification Envelope - Provisional Ballot Affirmation (Form 12-B), along with the correct ballot for the voter's precinct, based on the voter's residence address.

**Step 2:** The voter must complete the Provisional Ballot Affirmation (Form 12-B). To be eligible to be counted, a provisional ballot affirmation must include the voter's printed name, valid signature, date of birth, current address, and acceptable photo identification.

If the voter presents an Ohio driver's license or state ID card, the voter must check the box and print his or her driver's license or state ID card number.

**NOTE:** The completed Identification Envelope - Provisional Ballot Affirmation (Form 12-B) - will serve as a voter registration update form for the provisional voter so that the voter's residential address will be printed in the pollbook for future elections. Precinct election officials should encourage voters to complete the registration update section of the form.

**Step 3:** If the voter did not provide identification because of a religious objection to being photographed, the precinct election official must provide the voter an affidavit of religious objection (Form 12-O). The completed form must be attached to the provisional ballot affirmation (Form 12-B).

**Step 4:** Provide to each provisional voter a copy of the Provisional Ballot Notice (Form 12-H) when the voter casts the provisional ballot.

**Step 5:** After the voter has marked their ballot, the voter must place the voted ballot inside the Identification Envelope – Provisional Ballot Affirmation (Form 12-B). The voter must then place the envelope containing the voted ballot in a secure ballot box or bag provided by the board of elections.

**Note:** Under no circumstances shall a provisional ballot be placed into a ballot scanner or ballot box used by voters to cast regular ballots.

## Write-In Candidates

The board of elections will provide a list of names of candidates who are officially eligible as write-in candidates. These candidates' names do not appear on the ballot, whether printed or electronic, but voters may request the list and write in names from this list if they choose.

This list is not posted but must be shown to voters if they request to see it.

## Time Limits

The permissible time limit for a voter to occupy a voting compartment or use a voting machine is 10 minutes. However, a voter should be given a reasonable amount of time

to mark and check their ballot. The 10-minute time limit does not apply to any voter with a disability requiring the use of an accessible voting machine.

If a voter seems to be taking an unusually long period of time while in the voting compartment, two precinct election officials of different political parties may inquire, in a polite and professional manner, if the voter requires assistance.

## Replacement Ballots

The following applies to paper ballots only:

- If a voter tears, soils, defaces, or erroneously marks a ballot, the voter may return it to a precinct election official and a second ballot must be issued to the voter. Before a voter turns in a torn, soiled, defaced, or erroneously marked ballot, the voter must fold it to conceal any marks the voter made.
- If the voter tears, soils, defaces, or erroneously marks a second ballot, the voter may return it to the precinct election official and a third ballot must be issued to the voter. In no case may more than three ballots be issued to a voter.
- When a returned torn, soiled, defaced, or erroneously marked ballot is received, write "Defaced" on the back of the ballot and place the stub and the ballot in the separate containers provided by the board of elections for that purpose.
- No voter voting a paper ballot may leave the polling location until they return every ballot issued to them to a precinct election official, regardless of whether the voter has made any marks on the ballot.

## Fleeing Voters

If a voter is issued a ballot but abandons the ballot without depositing the ballot into a ballot scanner or ballot storage container, that ballot cannot be counted. Instead, the ballot should be deposited into an envelope for soiled and defaced ballots, and a precinct election official should make note of the event.

## Court Orders

If there is a court order to keep the polling location open past 7:30 p.m., precinct election officials will need to know who the last person in line was at 7:30 p.m. Precinct election officials must then make sure of the following:

- Voters who were already in line at 7:30 p.m. get to vote a regular ballot.
- All voters who arrive at the polling location to vote between 7:30 p.m. and the court ordered closing of the polling location must vote a provisional ballot.
- These provisional ballots must be kept separate from other provisional ballots voted during the regular voting hours in case the court decision is later overturned. Note on each Identification Envelope — Provisional Ballot Affirmation

(Form 12-B) that the provisional ballot was cast after 7:30 p.m. pursuant to a court order. To do so, write "After Close of Polls by Order of the Court" on the provisional envelope.

## **Closing the Polls**

At 7:30 p.m. on Election Day, the official closing time, the voting location manager should loudly declare, "The polls are closed!" If people are waiting to vote at closing time, they must be permitted to vote. To accommodate voters waiting in line:

- Move the line inside the locked door of the polling location, if possible; or
- Place a precinct election official after the last person who is in line at 7:30 p.m. to prevent additional people from joining the line.

## **After the Voters Have Left the Polling Location**

To properly close the polling location, all the following tasks must be completed using the documents provided by the board of elections:

- Record all ballot statistics (e.g., regular, provisional, soiled, defaced, and unused ballots) on the balance/reconciliation sheet provided by the board of elections.
- Count and/or record the total number of signatures in the pollbook. Follow the instructions provided by the board of elections for recording the number of signatures.
- Post precinct results at the polling location as directed by the board of elections.
- Double-check ballot statistics and sign the closing certificate and balance/reconciliation sheet.
- Bring in the flags and take down signs inside and outside the polling location.
- Close out and pack up the voting equipment following the directions provided by the board of elections.
- Securely pack ballots and supplies and immediately return them to the board of elections, or the designated drop-off location.

## **Important: Transportation of Ballots and Election Supplies**

The ballots, all required voting materials and supplies must be transported to the board of elections by a voting location manager with a precinct election official, employee, or appointee of the board to whom an oath was given and who is a member of a different political party than the voting location manager. Please refer to specific transport instructions provided by the board of elections for more details.

## Board of Elections Directory

ADAMS	937.544.2633	HAMILTON	513.632.7000	NOBLE	740.732.2057
ALLEN	419.223.8530	HANCOCK	419.422.3245	OTTAWA	419.898.3071
ASHLAND	419.282.4224	HARDIN	419.674.2211	PAULDING	419.399.8230
ASHTABULA	440.576.6915	HARRISON	740.942.8866	PERRY	740.342.2134
ATHENS	740.592.3201	HENRY	419.592.7956	PICKAWAY	740.474.1100
AUGLAIZE	419.739.6720	HIGHLAND	937.393.9961	PIKE	740.947.4512
BELMONT	740.526.0188	HOCKING	740.380.8683	PORTAGE	330.297.3511
BROWN	937.378.3008	HOLMES	330.674.5921	PREBLE	937.456.8117
BUTLER	513.887.3700	HURON	419.668.8238	PUTNAM	419.538.6850
CARROLL	330.627.2610	JACKSON	740.286.2905	RICHLAND	419.774.5530
CHAMPAIGN	937.484.1575	JEFFERSON	740.283.8522	ROSS	740.775.2350
CLARK	937.521.2120	KNOX	740.393.6716	SANDUSKY	419.334.6180
CLERMONT	513.732.7275	LAKE	440.350.2700	SCIOTO	740.353.4178
CLINTON	937.382.3537	LAWRENCE	740.532.0444	SENECA	419.447.4424
COLUMBIANA	330.424.1448	LICKING	740.670.5080	SHELBY	937.498.7207
COSHOCTON	740.622.1117	LOGAN	937.599.7255	STARK	330.451.8683
CRAWFORD	419.562.8721	LORAIN	440.326.5900	SUMMIT	330.643.5200
CUYAHOGA	216.443.8683	LUCAS	419.213.4001	TRUMBULL	330.369.4050
DARKE	937.548.1835	MADISON	740.852.9424	TUSCARAWAS	330.343.8819
DEFIANCE	419.782.8543	MAHONING	330.783.2474	UNION	937.642.2836
DELAWARE	740.833.2080	MARION	740.223.4090	VAN WERT	419.238.4192
ERIE	419.627.7601	MEDINA	330.722.9278	VINTON	740.596.5855
FAIRFIELD	740.652.7000	MEIGS	740.992.2697	WARREN	513.695.1358
FAYETTE	740.335.1190	MERCER	419.586.2215	WASHINGTON	740.374.6828
FRANKLIN	614.525.3100	MIAMI	937.440.3900	WAYNE	330.287.5480
FULTON	419.335.6841	MONROE	740.472.0929	WILLIAMS	419.636.1854
GALLIA	740.446.1600	MONTGOMERY	937.225.5656	WOOD	419.354.9120
GEAUGA	440.279.2030	MORGAN	740.962.3116	WYANDOT	419.294.1226
GREENE	937.562.6170	MORROW	419.946.4026		
GUERNSEY	740.432.2680	MUSKINGUM	740.455.7120		

(Current as of 02/2023)



**ELECTIONS DIVISION**

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