



**DUVAL COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS
POLL WATCHER GUIDELINES
(101.131, Florida Statutes)**

- Poll watchers are permitted within the polling room/early voting area to observe the conduct of voters and poll workers.
- Each political party and each candidate may have **ONE** poll watcher in each polling room/early voting area at any time during the election. A political committee formed for the specific purpose of expressly advocating the passage or defeat of an issue on the ballot may have **ONE** watcher for each polling room or early voting area at any one time during the election.
- A poll watcher must be a registered voter in Duval County at the time the designation is made.
- Upon arrival at the polling location/early voting site, a poll watcher must check in with the Precinct Manager, show badge and photo identification for verification of name on the list.
- **NO** candidate who appears on the ballot, sheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer or other law enforcement officer may be designated as a poll watcher.
- Poll watchers are required to wear the badge provided to them by the elections office at all times while in the polling room/early voting area.
- Poll watchers are required to furnish their own materials and necessities. They may not use poll worker equipment or supplies. Poll watchers may not use the precinct cell phone. Poll watchers are required to bring their own food and drinks.
- Poll watchers are prohibited from wearing anything with a political or controversial message on masks, t-shirts, buttons, hats, etc., while they are observing in the polling room/early voting area.
- Poll watchers are allowed (as any member of the public) to observe opening and closing procedures, but may not speak to, or interfere with the Election Board in any way. The precinct manager will direct the poll watcher to a designated area away from the voting equipment and registration table to avoid interference with voter transactions. **POLL WATCHERS MAY NOT WANDER AROUND THE VOTING AREA OR ASK QUESTIONS OF POLL WORKERS OTHER THAN THE PRECINCT MANAGER.** A poll watcher may view the vote count on DS300 machine and go outside the polling room to report the data to a campaign colleague.
- No poll watchers shall be permitted to come closer to the officials' table or the voting booths than is reasonably necessary to properly perform their functions but shall be allowed within the polling room or early voting area to watch and observe the conduct of the electors and officials. Any questions they may have are posed **DIRECTLY** to the Precinct Manager for resolution. **POLL WATCHERS MAY NOT INTERACT WITH VOTERS.**
- Poll watchers on duty in an SOE branch (Downtown) must be mindful of where the voting area ends, and office space begins. Poll watchers must respect the privacy of a voter who is being assisted by office staff on matters unrelated to the act of voting.
- A poll watcher must inform the Precinct Manager if he/she wishes to challenge a voter's right to vote. The Precinct Manager will follow the procedures for a challenged voter.

- A poll watcher must inform the Precinct Manager if he/she sees anything that does not comply with election laws. If the poll watcher is not satisfied with the explanation or action taken, the poll watcher should contact his/her Poll Watcher coordinator who will in turn, inform the Supervisor of Elections.
- A poll watcher may not volunteer to help voters who need assistance. A poll watcher may only help a voter if specifically requested by that voter and the proper procedures for providing assistance are followed.
- Poll watchers may not bring radios, television sets, cameras, or newspapers into the polling room/early voting area. As stated in DE 12-13, a poll watcher may utilize a smart/cell phone providing: a) Device must be set so as to produce no noise or low volume vibration; b) Device may not be used to take photos or record conversations unlawfully inside the polling room; c) Poll watcher may not have an audible telephone conversation inside the polling room; and d) Device may not be used in a manner to create a specific disruption or disturbance within the polling room.
- Poll watchers may not obstruct the orderly conduct of any election. The poll watchers must be respectful and mindful of the service being provided to the voters. The election board, under the supervision of the precinct manager is responsible for maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for everyone in the polling room or early voting area. If poll workers and poll watchers are mutually respectful of each other and the functions they fulfill, the voters will have a positive experience on Election Day.
- Poll watchers are afforded **ONE WARNING** of a violation. The warning will be called into the elections office by the precinct manager for validation. After that, the poll watcher will lose his/her privilege to re-enter any polling location. If time permits, the elections office will notify the respective parties or campaigns of the poll watcher's violation.

Watchers at Polls (101.131 F.S.)

(1) Each political party and each candidate may have one watcher in each polling room or early voting area at any one time during the election. A political committee formed for the specific purpose of expressly advocating the passage or defeat of an issue on the ballot may have one watcher for each polling room or early voting area at any one time during the election. No watcher shall be permitted to come closer to the officials' table or the voting booths than is reasonably necessary to properly perform his or her functions, but each shall be allowed within the polling room or early voting area to watch and observe the conduct of electors and officials. The poll watchers shall furnish their own materials and necessities and shall not obstruct the orderly conduct of any election. The poll watchers shall pose any questions regarding polling place procedures directly to the clerk for resolution. They may not interact with voters. Each poll watcher shall be a qualified and registered elector of the county in which he or she serves.

(2) Each party, each political committee, and each candidate requesting to have poll watchers shall designate, in writing to the supervisors of elections, on a form prescribed by the division before noon of the second Tuesday preceding the election poll watchers for each polling room on election day. Designations of poll watchers for early voting areas shall be submitted in writing to the supervisor of elections, on a form prescribed by the division before noon at least 14 days before early voting begins. The poll watchers for polling rooms shall be approved by the supervisor of elections on or before the Tuesday before the election. Poll watchers for early voting areas shall be approved by the supervisor of elections no later than 7 days before early voting begins. The supervisor shall furnish to each election board a list of the poll watchers designated and approved for such polling rooms or early voting areas. Designation of poll watchers shall be made by the chair of the county executive committee of a political party, the chair of a political committee, or the candidate requesting to have poll watchers.

(3) No candidate or sheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer, or other law enforcement officer may be designated as a poll watcher.

(4) All poll watchers shall be allowed to enter and watch polls in all polling rooms and early voting areas within the county in which they have been designated if the number of poll watchers at any particular polling place does not exceed the number provided in this section.

(5) The supervisor of elections shall provide to each designated poll watcher an identification badge which identifies the poll watcher by name. Each poll watcher must wear his or her identification badge while performing his or her duties.