

Poll Watcher Information

Florida Statute 101.131 Watchers at polls. —

(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.

The following guidelines are provided to assist in maintaining orderly conduct of poll watchers at the polling locations.

- Those qualified via statute who are requesting poll watchers must complete Form DS-DE125 and submit to the Supervisor of Elections office for review no later than 14 days before early voting begins or no later than noon of the 2nd Tuesday before the election.
- Each political party and each candidate on the ballot are permitted to have ONE poll watcher per polling location at any one time. Should a candidate select several watchers to “take shifts”, the poll watcher in the polling location must exit the polling location before the next poll watcher may enter.

POLL WATCHERS ARE ALLOWED:

- To ask questions of the Precinct Clerk only.
- To have their cell phones with them but they must be placed on silent mode and any calls should be made or taken outside the polling location.

POLL WATCHERS' MUST:

- Park away from the entrance, leaving those parking spots for voters; and if their vehicle displays any campaign signs, the vehicle must be parked at least 150' away from the entrance of the polling location.
- Must wear an identification badge provided by Supervisor of Elections at all times while inside the polling location.
- Check in with the Deputy at the entrance of the polling location upon arrival- and if you leave and return to the polling location. The Deputy will have a list of approved poll watchers will direct the poll watcher to their assigned location within the polling location.
- Present their personal Photo ID to the Deputy upon arrival and check-in.
- Provide their own supplies or materials and shall not obstruct the orderly conduct of the election.
- Direct any voter challenges to the Precinct Clerk.

POLL WATCHERS CANNOT:

- Be Candidates, Sheriffs, Deputy Sheriffs, Police Officers, or other Law Enforcement officer.
- Come closer to the voter check-in table, the Clerk's Cart, or any voting booth than is necessary to properly perform their duties. Voters must not be made to feel they are being watched while they are casting their vote.
- Wear any clothing (shirts, hats, buttons, etc.) that references a political party or a candidate name while on duty in the polling location.
- Take photographs or record ANY activity or conversations in the polling location- these actions are strictly prohibited by law inside a polling location.
- Bring magazines, newspapers, radios, TVs, etc. that pertain to the election inside the polling location.
- May not interact with voters.

It is of paramount importance that the Precinct Clerk maintain order within the polling location. If a Poll Watcher becomes unruly, disruptive, or disrespectful to the poll workers or voters, the Clerk has the authority to control the situation and ask the individual to leave the voting area, if necessary, be removed from the polling location.











While I respect the rule of law and acknowledge the public has a lawful right to observe the election process, I also hold expectations that our voters should have the ability to vote without interruption and in private. Please be respectful of our voters and our poll workers and provide each with the same level of courtesy that you would like shown to you.

The link to download the FORM DS-DE125 is listed in the below links.

After review and approval by the Supervisor of Elections, the Poll Watcher will be notified of their approval via telephone. The Deputy of the Polling Location will have your name badge and upon check-in the Poll Watcher will receive their badge. The badge must be returned to the Deputy when the Poll Watcher leaves the polling location.

If you have any questions regarding the Poll Watcher application process or rules related to Poll Watchers, please contact my office at 850.674.8568.

For more information about the process of becoming a poll watcher and guidelines for poll watchers, please browse the links below:

- [Florida Statute 101.131](#) 
- [DS DE 125 Poll Watcher Designation Form and Instructions](#)  
- [Florida Statute 101.111](#) 
- [Voter Challenges Reference Guide](#)  
- [Florida Statute 101.23](#) 
- [Florida Statute 102.031](#) 
- [Florida Division of Elections Opinion 12-13](#)  
- [Election Integrity Information](#)