

## What is a Poll Watcher?

An individual designated by a candidate, political party, or political committee to watch and observe the conduct of elections.

## Who can designate Poll Watchers?

- Candidate on upcoming ballot
- Political Party or
- Political Committee formed for the specific purpose, of expressly advocating the passage or defeat of an issue on the ballot

## Who cannot be a Poll Watcher?

- Candidate
- Sheriff
- Deputy Sheriff
- Police Officer
- Or other Law Enforcement Officer

## Where does the Poll Watcher get authority and approval?

Poll Watchers get their authority from Florida Statute 101.131. Each candidate, each political party, and each political committee, requesting to have poll watchers shall designate with the Supervisor of Elections, in writing, prior to noon of the second Tuesday preceding Election Day. The Poll Watchers for election day shall be approved (or not) by the Supervisor of Elections on or before the Tuesday preceding the election.

Designations of Poll Watchers for early voting shall be submitted in writing to the Supervisor of Elections at least 14 days before early voting begins. Poll Watchers for early voting shall be approved (or not) by the Supervisor of Elections no later than 7 days before early voting begins.

## How many Poll Watchers are allowed in a polling place?

Each candidate, political party, and political committee is allowed to have ONE Poll Watcher at each polling location or early voting site at any one time.

## Can a Poll Watcher Challenge a voter's right to vote?

Yes, any registered voter or Poll Watcher may challenge the right of a person to vote. The challenge must be in writing and contain an oath as prescribed by statute, which shall be delivered to the clerk. The clerk will provide a copy to the challenged voter. The voter shall be allowed to cast a provisional ballot.

Any voter or Poll Watcher filing a frivolous challenge of any person's right to vote commits a misdemeanor of the first degree; however, voters or Poll Watchers shall not be subject to liability for any action taken in good faith and in furtherance of any activity or duty permitted of such voters or Poll Watchers by law. Each instance where any voter or Poll Watcher files a frivolous challenge of any person's right to vote constitutes a separate offense.

## Designation of Poll Watchers

The chair of the county executive committee of a political party, the chair of a political committee, and each candidate desiring Poll Watchers shall submit written authorization for early voting and election day on a Poll Watcher Designation Form DS-DE 125.

Poll Watcher designation forms must be submitted to the Supervisor of Elections via email to [candidates@votepalmbeach.gov](mailto:candidates@votepalmbeach.gov), mail, or in person so that it is in our office by the

deadline. The Supervisor of Elections will then review and notify such parties whether all submitted poll watchers have been approved.

## A Poll Watcher shall:

- Be a qualified registered elector of Palm Beach County.
- Report to the precinct Clerk or Site Supervisor upon arrival at a polling location or early voting site and present his/her identification badge issued by the Supervisor of Elections and a valid Driver's License or photo identification.
- Wear his/her Poll Watcher identification badge (provided by the Supervisor of Elections) at all times while performing his/her duties.
- Not wear another person's Poll Watcher Identification badge.
- Pose any questions or concerns regarding procedures to the precinct Clerk or Site Supervisor only.
- Be allowed to observe the conduct of electors and officials.
- Direct voter challenges to the precinct Clerk or Site Supervisor.
- Furnish their own materials and necessities.
- Set mobile devices to silent or low volume vibrate while inside the polling location or early voting site. Texting is allowed but talk-to-text is not.
- Be allowed (as any member of the public) to observe opening and closing procedures, but may not speak to, or interfere with the Poll Workers in any way.

## A Poll Watcher shall not:

- Obstruct the orderly conduct of the election.
- Be permitted to touch or come closer to the officials' tables, the voting machines, or the privacy booths than is reasonably necessary to properly perform Poll Watcher functions.
- Talk to voters or election workers (except the clerk) while in the polling place or within 150 ft. of the polling place.
- Interfere in conversations between election workers and voters.
- Stand so close that the voter feels his/her ballot secrecy is compromised.
- Volunteer to help voters who need assistance. A Poll Watcher may only provide assistance to a voter if specifically requested by that voter and the proper procedures for providing assistance are followed.
- Display partisan or political clothing, jewelry, stickers/signs, or engage in partisan conversations inside the polling location or early voting site.
- Bring cameras, tape recorders, or any other audio/visual recording devices into the polling location or early voting site. You must exit the polling location to make and receive phone calls.
- No photography is permitted in the polling room or early voting area, except an elector may photograph his or her own ballot, F.S. 102.031(5).

## Dates to Remember:

### Presidential Preference Primary and Municipal Elections – March 19, 2024

- Early Voting designations due:  
Noon, February 24, 2024
- Election Day designations due:  
Noon, March 5, 2024

*Municipal Candidates must submit their Poll Watcher designation form to their municipal clerk by the due date(s) listed above.*

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### Primary Election – August 20, 2024

- Early Voting designations due:  
Noon, July 27, 2024
- Election Day designations due:  
Noon, August 6, 2024

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### General Election – November 5, 2024

- Early Voting designations due:  
Noon, October 7, 2024
- Election Day designations due:  
Noon, October 22, 2024

Poll Watchers are afforded **ONE WARNING** for a rule's violation. The warning will be documented by the precinct clerk. Any further violations will result in the Poll Watcher losing his/her privilege to re-enter any polling location or early voting site in their service as a Poll Watcher.

# Poll Watchers Guide



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Supervisor of Elections Office  
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For more information, please  
visit [www.VotePalmBeach.gov](http://www.VotePalmBeach.gov)