

# POLL WATCHER GUIDE



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HERNANDO COUNTY **SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS**

**352-754-4125 • [HernandoVotes.gov](http://HernandoVotes.gov)**



# POLL WATCHER INFORMATION

## 101.131, FLORIDA STATUTES

Poll watchers shall furnish their own materials and necessities

Poll watchers shall not obstruct the orderly conduct of any election

Poll watchers shall pose any questions regarding Polling Place procedures **ONLY** to the Election Day Precinct Clerk or Early Voting Clerk for resolution.

One poll watcher per candidate, political committee, or political party at any one time  
➤ Applies to Early Voting sites and polling rooms on Election Day

Poll watchers are there for the observance of the election

Must be a registered voter in Hernando County and approved by Supervisor of Elections

# WHO CAN BE A POLL WATCHER?

A Hernando County registered voter  
selected by :

**1. Candidate on upcoming ballot**

**2. Political Party**

**3. Political Committee**

- Formed for a specific purpose, such as 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  
Officers



# GENERAL INFORMATION

- Poll watchers may observe the check-in process of voters
- Poll watchers may make written voter challenges with the precinct clerk
- Poll watchers may **NOT** obstruct orderly conduct of the election
- Poll watchers can **NOT** stand so close that the voter feels their ballot secrecy is compromised
- Poll watchers may **NOT** speak to or otherwise interact with voters
- Poll watchers may **NOT** wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or other campaign items while they are in the polling room
- Poll watchers may **NOT** use photography in the Early Voting area or polling room.



# POLL WATCHER FUNCTIONS

- Pose any questions or concerns regarding procedures to the Precinct Clerk.
- Can ONLY speak to the Precinct Clerk- you can't speak to voters or poll workers.
- If you are not satisfied with action taken or explanation provided by the Precinct Clerk, call the Supervisor of Elections Office.
- Direct any voter challenges to the Precinct Clerk.



# POLL WATCHER DESIGNATION

- Poll Watcher may be designated:
  - For a specific Election Day polling location or early voting site
- **OR**
- All Election Day polling locations or all early voting sites
- Remember: One poll watcher per polling location for each candidate, party or committee.
- SOE does not assign poll watchers to a polling location.
- Poll watchers are to coordinate with their party/ candidate/ committee for their assigned hours and location.
- Poll watchers must furnish their own materials/necessities to perform their poll watcher duties (i.e. writing materials,etc.).



# POLL WATCHER DESIGNATION

- Separate forms must be submitted for designating early voting and Election Day poll watchers.
- DS-DE 125 form must be completed with the following information:
  - Full Name of Poll Watcher(s)
  - Date of Birth
  - Full Address
  - Phone number
  - Polling Place/ Early Voting Site
- SOE will verify the designee is a registered voter in Hernando County.



# DS-DE 125: FRONT SIDE



## Designation of Poll Watchers

<b>Section 1. Election</b> Election Date: _____ Select Early Voting or Election Day: _____	<b>Official Use Only</b>																											
<b>Section 2. Category of Authorized Persons</b> I am a <b>candidate</b> (or candidate designee*) for the following office in this election: I am the <b>chair</b> (or designee*) of the County Executive Committee of the following Party: I am the <b>chair</b> (or designee*) of the following Political Committee: * A candidate or chair as indicated above must first submit a written, signed designation to the supervisor of elections (or for statewide candidates/issues, to the Division of Elections) authorizing the designee to designate poll watchers on his or her behalf.																												
<b>Complete Only One of the Boxes Below:</b> _____ _____ _____																												
<b>Section 3. Candidate/Chair/Designee</b> I request that the listed person(s) below (none of whom is a candidate or a sheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer or other law enforcement officer), who are qualified and registered voters of the county in which they will serve, be approved as poll watchers at the locations indicated below. Name: _____ Address: _____ Email address: _____ Phone: _____ By submitting this form, I certify that I am the person listed above and I am authorized under s. 101.131, Florida Statutes, to designate poll watchers. Date Submitted: _____ <b>Note: This form becomes a public record when submitted to the Supervisor of Elections.</b>																												
<b>Section 4. List of Designated Poll Watchers</b>	<b>Official Use Only</b>																											
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;">Name</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Residential Address</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Phone #</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Polling Place / Early Voting Site (Either write "All Locations" or specify location)</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Approved (Y/N)</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Assigned Badge Number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td style="color: red;">Must include street, city, and zip</td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name	Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	Residential Address	Phone #	Polling Place / Early Voting Site (Either write "All Locations" or specify location)	Approved (Y/N)	Assigned Badge Number			Must include street, city, and zip												<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;">Approved (Y/N)</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Assigned Badge Number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Approved (Y/N)	Assigned Badge Number				
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# DS-DE 125: BACK SIDE

### Designation of Poll Watchers

Name	Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	Residential Address	Phone #	Polling Place / Early Voting Site (Either write "All Locations" or specify location)	Approved (Y/N)	Assigned Badge Number



# DS-DE 125: INSTRUCTION SHEET

Note: This instructional page need not be included with submission of the DS-DE 125.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR POLL WATCHER DESIGNATIONS

1. Each candidate/political party/political committee may have only one poll watcher per polling room or early voting area at any one time.
2. A candidate whose name will appear on the ballot in a future election may not designate poll watchers for an election in which the candidate's name is not on the ballot.
3. Designation of Poll Watchers, Form DS-DE 125, must be used to request designation of poll watchers. **Separate forms must be submitted for designating Early Voting and Election Day poll watchers.** Sufficient information concerning the desired poll watcher must be completed on the form so that the Supervisor of Elections can identify the person as a registered voter in the supervisor's county.
4. Form DS-DE 125 and any attachments to it may be provided to the supervisor of elections by personal delivery, mail, fax, or email.
5. The deadlines to submit a request for poll watcher designation:
  - For Early Voting (EV) -- No later than noon at least 14 days before EV begins.
  - For Election Day -- No later than noon of the second Tuesday preceding the election.
6. The Supervisors of Elections must approve or disapprove the designation of poll watchers for early voting areas no later than 7 days before the start of early voting and the designations for poll watchers for polling rooms on Election Day, on or before the Tuesday before the election.

## POLL WATCHERS

A poll watcher:

1. Must be a qualified and registered voter of the county in which they serve as poll watcher.
2. Cannot be a candidate, sheriff, deputy sheriff, policeman, or other law enforcement officer.
3. Who is designated for a specific location is not precluded from going to another polling room/EV area if the number of poll watchers at any particular polling room/EV area does not exceed the allowable number for the applicable candidate/political party/political committee.
4. Who is designated for "All locations/areas" (at-large) is not permitted to be present in a polling room/EV area at the same time as another poll watcher designated by the same candidate/political party/political committee.
5. Will be provided a Poll Watcher Identification Badge by the Supervisor of Elections. The poll watcher must wear his or her Poll Watcher Identification Badge while in the polling room or EV area.
6. Must bring his or her own materials and necessities.
7. Is allowed within the polling room to observe the conduct of the election. He or she *may not* obstruct the orderly conduct of the election.
8. May observe the voter check-in process. He or she may not come closer to the inspectors' table or the voting booths than is reasonably necessary to perform the poll watcher's functions.
9. May not speak to or otherwise interact with voters nor provide assistance to a voter in any way with the voting of his/her ballot, unless a Request for Assistance Form is completed at the voter's request.
10. May make and provide written voter challenges to the precinct clerk.
11. Shall pose any questions regarding polling place procedures directly to the precinct clerk for resolution.

Note: For further details or requirements governing the designation and conduct of poll watchers, refer to sections 101.131 and 101.111, Florida Statutes; Rule 1S-2.034 of the Florida Administrative Code; and the rule's incorporated form, DS-DE 11, which contains the Polling Place Procedures Manual.



# PRIMARY ELECTION – AUGUST 20, 2024

- July 27<sup>th</sup> (Noon) – Deadline for candidates/ political committees to submit DS-DE 125 for early voting sites to the election's office.
- August 6 (noon) - Deadline for candidates/political committees to submit DS-DE 125 for Election Day for Primary Election to the election's office.
- The deadline for the Supervisor of Elections to approve eligible applicants for early voting is: Saturday, August 3, 2024
  - (No later than 7 days before early voting begins)
- The deadline for the Supervisor of Elections to approve eligible applicants for Election Day is: Tuesday, August 13, 2024
  - (No later than the Tuesday before the election)



# GENERAL ELECTION – NOVEMBER 5, 2024

- October 12 (Noon) – Deadline for candidates/political committees to submit DS-DE 125 for early voting sites to the election's office.
- October 22 (noon) - Deadline for candidates/committees to submit DS-DE 125 for General Election to the election's office.
- The deadline for the Supervisor of Elections to approve eligible applicants for early voting is: Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024
  - (No later than 7 days before early voting begins)
- The deadline for the Supervisor of Elections to approve eligible applicants for Election Day is: Tuesday, October 29, 2024
  - (No later than the Tuesday before the election)



# POLL WATCHER APPROVAL

## Letter(s) In The Mail

You will be notified by the Supervisor of Elections office if you have been approved.

You will receive two separate letters in the mail if you were appointed for Early Voting AND Election Day; one letter for Early Voting, one letter for Election Day.



# POLL WATCHER BADGES

- Once a poll watcher is approved by the Supervisor of Elections. The SOE will notify the poll watcher when their badge is available for pick-up; it is the responsibility of the poll watcher to pick-up their badge from the Elections Office (16264 Spring Hill Drive, Brooksville, Florida).
- Please return your poll watcher badge to the Supervisor of Elections office following each election or leave it with the precinct clerk at the end of your assignment.
- A list of approved poll watchers will be provided to each polling location and early voting site.
- Each poll watcher **MUST** wear their identification badge **AT ALL TIMES** within the 150 foot No Solicitation Zone and in the polling location.





## UPON ARRIVAL AT POLLING PLACE

- Each poll watcher must present their SOE-issued I.D. badge to the Deputy to gain access into polling room.
- Report to the Precinct Clerk once inside voting location and present your photo I.D. and badge to check-in.
- Any member of the public, including poll watchers, are allowed in the polling room, prior to the opening of the polls to observe the opening procedures.





# SOLICITATION INFORMATION

- A “No Solicitation” zone has been designated for each polling place and early voting site.
- This area **MUST** be 150 feet from the entrance to the polling place and early voting site.
- Solicitors cannot come within 150 feet of the entrance to the polling place or early voting site.
  - The only exception is exit polling
- The “No Solicitation” zone includes the posting of campaign signs.
- Zones are designated with a ‘no solicitation beyond this point’ sign.

# RESTRICTED DEVICES



## DO NOT BRING:

Laptops

Newspapers

Radios

Television Sets

Cameras



# MOBILE DEVICES



- Make sure all cell phones are on vibrate or silent.
- Cell phones **cannot** be used to take photograph or record conversations.
- Cell phones can **ONLY** be used outside the 150 ft. No Solicitation Zone.
- Talk-to-Text is NOT allowed, silent texting only

# DISABILITY INFORMATION



- Items available for Voters with disabilities include:
  - Magnifiers
  - Notepads
- Also available:
  - ADA Privacy Booth
  - Poll worker assistance

# DISABILITY INFORMATION

- Another privacy booth will be set-up on a table for use by persons in wheelchairs or for those who cannot stand for long periods of time
- A voter who requires assistance in voting may use either
- **ONE PERSON OF THEIR OWN CHOOSING**

or

- **TWO ELECTION WORKERS OF OPPOSITE POLITICAL PARTIES**



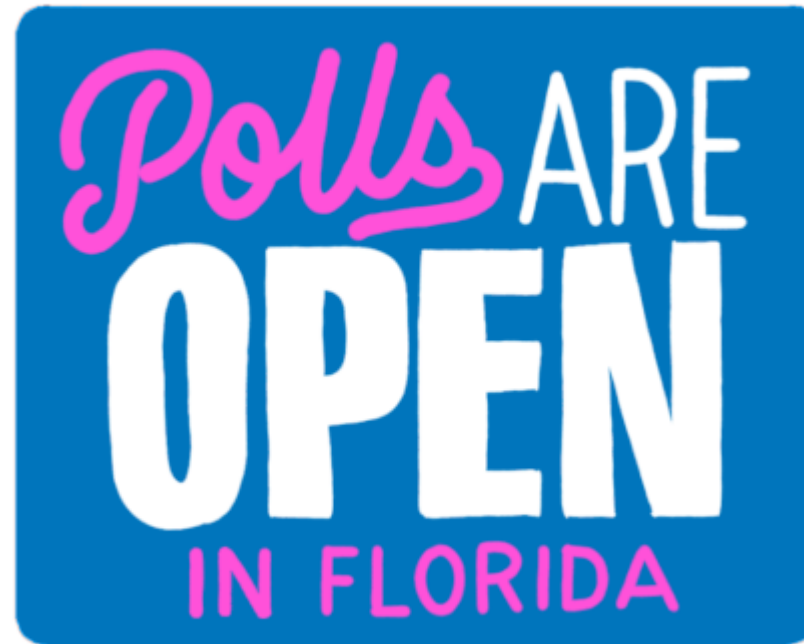
## BEFORE THE POLLS OPEN

- Once all tasks have been completed, the Precinct Clerk will give any last-minute instructions to the election workers
- At 7:00am the Deputy will announce that the polls are open
- At this time, public observers must leave while poll watchers may remain



## OPENING THE POLLS ON ELECTION DAY

- All opening procedures are open to the public
- An informational poster display board will be near the entrance to the polling room



# POLL DEPUTY

- Remains outside all day – except in inclement weather
- Greets voters
- Encourages voters to have photo/signature ID ready
- Monitors 150 foot No Solicitation Zone





# EVID STATION



- The “Check-In” station EVID unit(s) will produce a voting pass for eligible voters who do not need to make any changes to their voter record and who are in the correct polling place for Election Day
- During Early Voting, Ballot on Demand set-ups print precinct-specific ballots
- Voters who need to make changes to their record will be sent to the Precinct Clerk to complete the necessary paperwork
- After this, they can be processed on the EVID and will be issued a voting pass

# BALLOT ATTENDANT

- The Ballot Attendant issues a paper ballot to all eligible voters with a voting pass from an EViD station
- Assists with ballot reconciliation throughout the day and during closing procedures



# MANUAL VOTING PASS



- Green manual voting passes are treated the same as the voting pass issued by the EViD
- These will be issued to a voter who is not able to be processed on the EViD
- Manual Voting Passes may be used in power outages or for voters who are moving in from other counties

# VOTING EQUIPMENT SPECIALIST

- The Voting Equipment Specialist (VES) and the Attendant assist voters with ballot issues at the privacy booth or the ICE Unit
- Distributes “I Voted” stickers



# COMMON ISSUES AT THE TABULATION UNIT



- Ovals are not filled out properly (ballot is returned automatically)
- Stray marks on the ballot (ballot is returned automatically)
- Overvote on the ballot (Voter may cast or return the ballot)
- Blank ballot (Voter may cast or return the ballot)

# WHY DO VOTERS SEE THE PRECINCT CLERK?

- No I.D.
- Not registered
- Spoil existing ballot
- Provisional voting
- Signature update
- Name change
- Address change/ within or from out of county
- Need assistance with voting
- Need “assistance required” alert removed from voter record





# REASONS VOTERS OPT TO LEAVE WITHOUT VOTING

- Not registered in our county or the state of Florida
  - Forgot I.D. – will return with it
  - Already voted via Early Voting or Vote-by-Mail
- During Primaries, voter may not want to vote for the party they are affiliated with

**No voter is ever turned away, the voter is always offered the opportunity to vote a provisional ballot**



# CHALLENGES TO VOTER

- If the poll watcher observes what they think might be a violation of election law, they may question a voter's privilege by filing a Challenge Form
- Challenges must be in writing using the Oath of Person Entering Challenge form (F.S. 101.111(1))

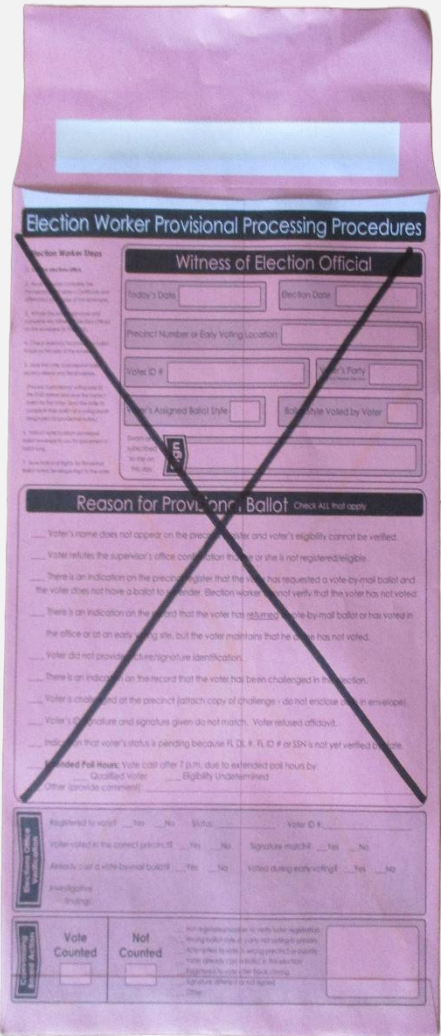
(If the basis for the challenge is that the person's legal residence is not in that precinct, the person shall first be given the opportunity to execute a change of legal residence in order to be able to vote a regular ballot in accordance with s. 101.045(2))

- Once a challenge has been issued, the voter must vote a Provisional Ballot
- A challenge may come from a poll watcher, election worker or voter
- Provisional Ballots are issued by the Precinct Clerk and Assistant Precinct Clerk



# PROVISIONAL BALLOT

- Provisional Ballot voting allows a person to vote who does not have appropriate ID or whose eligibility to vote cannot be determined
- In the event that polling hours are extended, all voters not in line at 7:00pm are required to vote a provisional ballot
- A privacy booth will be set up near the Precinct Clerk table for provisional voters
- Precinct Clerk gives the voter a Provisional Ballot Information Receipt, which provides the information they need to determine the disposition of their ballot





# PROVISIONAL BALLOT

- The Provisional Ballot is not tabulated on Election Day or at an early voting site.
- Voters have until 5:00pm on the second day after the election to provide written evidence supporting his/her eligibility.
- Following research by Supervisor of Elections' staff, the canvassing board determines whether a provisional vote should be tabulated or not.
- Voter receives a ballot, but the ballot is not fed into the tabulation unit.
- All Provisional Ballots are reviewed by the Canvassing Board.
- If voter is deemed an eligible voter, their ballot will be tabulated.
- Voters are provided information on how to track their provisional ballots

## ADDITIONAL REASONS A PROVISIONAL BALLOT IS ISSUED

- Voter has no acceptable form of I.D.
- Voter is not registered or registered after book closing
- Voter has already voted
- Voter refuses to update signature
- Voter disputes party affiliation on voter record (pertaining to Primary Elections only)



# CLOSING THE POLLS

Poll Deputy will announce the polls are closed at 7:00pm

- Poll Deputy gets behind last voter in line to ensure that no one votes who was not in line at 7:00pm.
- Voters arriving after 7:00pm will get in line behind the Poll Deputy.
- At this time, public observers are allowed back into the polling room to observe the closing procedures





# IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- The public, including poll watchers, are allowed to observe the conduct of voters and officials before the polls open and after the polls close.
- Electioneering, campaigning, or solicitation within 150' of the entrance to the polling room or early voting area is prohibited.
- You are not allowed to wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or other campaign items while you are in the polling room or within 150 ft from the entrance and early voting site.
- You may not park your vehicle inside the 150 ft No Solicitation zone if you have any political/partisan stickers, flags, or other paraphernalia on it.
- Failure to comply with any of these rules may result in the revocation of the poll watcher's credentials for the remainder of the election.
- Poll watchers are afforded with **ONE** warning for a violation.
- After the initial warning, the poll watcher will lose their privilege to enter any polling room.





# QUESTIONS?

Contact Information:

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[Elections@hernandovotes.gov](mailto:Elections@hernandovotes.gov)

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