



Poll Watcher

Regulations

Leslie Rossway Swan

Indian River County

Supervisor of Elections

What is a Poll Watcher?

- A person may be asked by a candidate or political party to go to a polling place and observe. This person is called a poll watcher.
- The poll watcher observes the elections process to see if any violations of the election laws occur.
- If such a violation occurs, the poll watcher is to inform the Clerk of the violation.

Poll Watcher Functions

- The main function of a poll watcher is to observe the activities at the polling place.
- Prior to the Polls opening, poll watchers have the right to see that the ballot box is empty before the first ballot is cast.

Poll Watcher Functions

- If the poll watcher observes what he/she thinks might be a violation, he/she may question a voter's privilege by stating his/her case to the Clerk and completing a "challenge form".
- Once a challenge has been issued, the voter must vote a Provisional Ballot.
- All Provisional Ballots are reviewed by the Canvassing Board.

Who can be a Poll Watcher

- **Candidate Representatives**
- **Political Parties**
- **Political Committees***

*The only acceptable Political Committees are those formed for the specific purpose of expressly advocating the passage or defeat of an issue on the ballot.

Who Cannot Be A Poll Watcher?

- Candidates
- Sheriff
- Deputy Sheriff
- Police Officers
- Or other Law Enforcement Officers

Poll Watcher Designation

- **Candidate Representative**
- **Political Parties**
- **Political Committees**

May have one watcher in each polling room or early voting area at any one time during the election.

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

Poll Watcher Designation

Each party, each political committee and each candidate requesting to have poll watchers shall designate, in writing by personal delivery, mail, fax, or email to the SOE on form DS-DE 125 and any attachments before **noon**:

General

October 10, 2016 for Early Voting

October 25, 2016 for Election Day

Designation of Poll Watchers

Section 1. Election					Official Use Only	
<div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 20px;">Election Date:</div> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>						
<div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 20px;">Select Early Voting or Election Day:</div> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>						
Section 2. Category of Authorized Persons						
I am a candidate (or candidate designee*) for the following office in this election: I am the chair (or designee*) of the County Executive Committee of the following Party: I am the chair (or designee*) of the following Political Committee:					Complete Only One of the Boxes Below:	
* 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.					<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
Section 3. Candidate/Chair/Designee						
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.						
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 15%;">Name:</div> <input style="width: 85%;" type="text"/> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 15%;">Address:</div> <input style="width: 85%;" type="text"/> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 15%;">Email address:</div> <input style="width: 85%;" type="text"/> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 15%;">Phone:</div> <input style="width: 85%;" type="text"/> </div>						
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.						
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 20%;">Date Submitted:</div> <input style="width: 15%;" type="text"/> <div style="width: 65%;">Note: This form becomes a public record when submitted to the Supervisor of Elections.</div> </div>						
Section 4. List of Designated Poll Watchers					Official Use Only	
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

Designation of Poll Watchers

[illegible]

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 15-2.034 of the Florida Administrative Code; and the rule's incorporated form, DS-DE 11, which contains the Polling Place Procedures Manual.

Poll Watcher Designation

- 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.

Poll Watcher Designation

Poll watchers may be designated:

- For a specific polling room or early voting area.
- “All locations/areas” considered “At –Large”, meaning they can have access to any an all polling rooms or early voting areas.
- A person designated for “At- Large” is not permitted to be present in a polling room/early voting area at the same time as another poll watcher designated by the same candidate/political party/political committee.

Regulations

- 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.
- A poll watcher shall be a qualified and registered elector of the county of which he or she serves. Therefore, all poll watchers in Indian River County must be registered voters in our county.



Poll Watcher Approval

- Poll watchers for polling rooms shall be approved (or disapproved) by the Supervisor of Elections on or before:

October 17, 2016 for Early Voting

November 1, 2016 for Election Day

- Certified poll watchers will receive letters indicating certification and their assigned precinct(s).
- Poll watcher ID badges are available for pick-up, by the poll watcher at the Supervisor of Elections office.



Regulations

- The Supervisor of Elections shall furnish to each Clerk a list of the poll watchers designated and approved for such polling rooms or early voting areas.
- Upon arrival at the precinct or EV site, the poll watcher must show their identification and Supervisor of Elections issued badge to the Deputy.
- The Deputy will direct the poll watcher to the Clerk to verify that he/she is on the “Poll Watcher Designation List.”

Regulations

Poll watchers:

- Must wear his or her Poll Watcher Identification Badge while in the polling room or EV area.
- Are not permitted to wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or other campaign items while they are in the polling room.



Regulations

Poll watchers:

- Shall be allowed within the polling room or early voting area to watch and observe the conduct of electors and officials before, during and after the polls close.
- May observe the counting of the ballots when the polls close.
- Must furnish their own materials and necessities i.e. writing materials, chairs, tables, etc. They cannot use the poll workers' supplies.



Regulations

Poll watchers:



- May observe the voter check-in process.
- Shall not interfere with or impede the conduct of election.
- Are not permitted to come closer to the officials' table or the voting booths than is reasonably necessary to perform his or her functions.
- May not walk around the voting area.

Regulations

Poll watchers shall NOT:

- Pose any questions to poll workers or voters
Questions need to be made directly to the Clerk for resolution.
- Bring cameras, including cameras from cellular phones.
- Bring radios, television sets or newspapers to the polls.



Regulations – Voter Challenge

- Complete an “Oath Of Person Entering Challenge” if they want to challenge a voter’s right to vote, the challenge must be in writing. The Clerk has the form.
- 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 address in order to be able to vote a regular ballot.
- Any poll watcher filing a frivolous challenge of any person’s right to vote commits a misdemeanor of the first degree.

General Election Early Voting

**Monday, October 24th to Saturday, November 5th
8 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

Supervisor of Elections Office
4375 43rd Avenue, Vero Beach

Indian River County Main Library
1600 21st Street, Vero Beach

Sebastian City Hall Council Chambers
1225 Main Street, Sebastian



Election Day

- **Election Day: November 8, 2016**
- **Polls Open: 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.**



Important Dates to Remember

General Election

- **Noon – October 10, 2016** - Deadline for poll watcher designations for Early Voting sites.
- **October 17, 2016** – Deadline for Supervisor of Elections to approve poll watchers and provide ID badges for Early Voting sites.
- **Noon – October 25, 2016** – Deadline for poll watcher designations for General Election polling locations.
- **November 1, 2016** – Deadline for Supervisor of Elections to approve poll watchers and provide ID badges for General Election polling locations.

Additional Information

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



Questions?