



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.

(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, no later than 7 days before early voting begins, a poll watcher identification badge that identifies the poll watcher by name. Each poll watcher must wear his or her identification badge while in the polling room or early voting area.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. Each Poll Watcher shall be wearing their Supervisor of Elections badge at all times from the supervisor of elections to verify he or she is an approved Poll Watcher.**
- 2. Poll Watchers may NOT wear or display any political party, candidates name, or pertinent campaign materials. Politics are NOT to be discussed by anyone within the polling room. Watchers may NOT bring radios, TV sets, or newspapers inside the polling room. NO photos shall be taken inside the polling room by Poll Watchers or media.**
- 3. Any member of the public (including Poll Watchers) may observe the opening and closing procedures, but may NOT interfere with or assist the election board in any way.**
- 4. Poll Watchers may use mobile electronic devices (no electronic books/readers) subject to the following conditions:**
 - The mobile devices must be set to zero noise or vibrate mode.**
 - The mobile devices may not be used to take photographs or to record conversations unlawfully inside the polling room or early voting site.**
 - The mobile device should be utilized while lying flat on a table, so electors do not perceive the Poll Watcher as taking pictures unlawfully.**
 - The Poll Watcher may not have an audible mobile device conversation inside the polling room or early voting site.**
 - The Poll Watcher may not use the mobile device in any manner to create a specific disruption or disturbance within the polling room or early voting site.**
- 5. Any elector or Poll Watcher filing a frivolous challenge of any person's right to vote commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083; however, electors 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 electors or Poll Watchers by law. Each instance where any elector or Poll Watcher files a frivolous challenge of any person's right to vote constitutes a separate offense.**

PLEASE BE CERTAIN THAT NO VOTER FEELS THEY ARE BEING WATCHED AS THEY VOTE. VOTERS SHALL NOT BE DELAYED BY POLL WATCHERS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION IN HELPING TO MAKE THIS A SUCCESSFUL ELECTION FOR SUMTER COUNTY VOTERS.