

Consolidated Committee Report Regarding Election Activity in Areas Outside the Buffer Zone

At the September meeting of the Board of Elections, two committees were formed to address issues concerning conduct in the election activity areas (electioneering corrals) outside the buffer zone. The committees met, developed ideas and then consolidated their recommendations into this report. A copy of the proposed language regarding the recommendations was provided to the chairpersons of the Republican and Democrat parties.

Principles of Conduct for Electioneering Activity

To address rising concerns over activity occurring in or around areas adjacent to statutorily defined buffer zones at each polling place, the Rockingham County Board of Elections and participating political parties and candidates agree upon the following principles of conduct for electioneering activity. Unaffiliated candidates and individual campaigns are invited to join and participate in the implementation of these principles.

P1. Good Behavior. Everyone is expected to demonstrate good behavior. We recognize that political campaigns and those supporting them may disagree with others. Disagreeing does not mean being disagreeable. Good behavior includes control and management of anger; showing respect to others in speech and deed; and, empathy or consideration for others.

P2. Election Activity. All election related activity must be conducted in the area designated by the Board of Elections. Election related activity includes distribution of campaign literature, placement of political advertising, soliciting votes, or otherwise engaging in election-related activity.

P3. Participant Lists. Each party and all candidate campaigns are encouraged to develop and make available to the Board of Elections prior to election day a list of the names of every person who will be engaged in election related activity for that party or candidate. Those engaged in election related activity are encouraged to wear a name tag or button identifying the worker and the candidate or party they support.

P4. Tents. A tent may be placed at each polling place where the Board of Elections has determined that sufficient space exists to allow a tent. The size and placement of a tent must not interfere with access to the polling place. The Chief Judge of the precinct will determine the appropriateness of the tent size and its placement. Parties are encouraged to share their tent space with all other electioneers.

P5. Tables. No more than two tables (to hold electioneering materials) are permitted in the electioneering area. Tables may not exceed 3 feet by 3 feet in size and must not interfere with access to the polling place. Participants are encouraged to share these tables with all other participants. Chairs are also permitted where appropriate.

P6. Food. Food items such as sandwiches are not allowed in the election activity areas. Snacks are permitted. All trash must be removed by the end of the day.

P7. Animals. Animals, except service dogs, are not allowed in the election activity area. Per the ADA, a service animal is a ***dog*** that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. Dogs (or other animals) whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. Service animals should always be under the handler's control. Although not required, service animals should wear a vest, harness or ID tag identifying them as a service animal.

P8. Signs and Campaign Materials. Political signs may be posted in the election related activity area 36 hours prior to the opening of the voting place and at least 36 hours after the close of the voting place. NCGS. 163.129(d). Each party and candidate will ensure that signs and campaign materials are removed within the allotted times. The Board of Elections will not store tables, chairs, tents or materials.

P9. Parking. At all precincts, election related activity participants must not park in spaces immediately adjacent to the elections activity areas to ensure that those spaces are left for potential voters. This may mean use of remote parking lots such as nearby businesses, churches, schools, *etc.*

P10. Salvaged Campaign Materials. Voters will be allowed to deposit campaign materials in receptacles provided by the Board of Elections. Board of Elections staff will periodically place the receptacles outside the polling place to allow electioneers to retrieve these materials.

P11. Incident Management. Nothing herein is intended to limit or usurp the authority granted the Chief Judge under NCGS 163-48. Upon being notified of an actual or potential incident in violation of these principles, the Chief Judge of the precinct will assess the situation and determine an appropriate course of action. The Chief Judge may, in his/her discretion elect to notify the party chair or the appropriate candidate to request assistance. Once notified, the party chair or candidate will act immediately to support the Chief Judge and resolve the incident.