

Slide 1



Welcome.

I've Ruth Scifo, chair of the Democratic Party of McHenry County, (chair@mchenrydems.org). Also here tonight is Angela Brancato, our election judge organizer, and Renee Hill, our Party Secretary (secretary@mchenrydems.org).

What are poll watchers?

Poll watchers are individuals designated to **observe** the election process at polling places before, during and after voting on Election Day.

They aid in ensuring the free and fair conduct of elections.

With proper credentials, poll watchers may also be present during other election events:

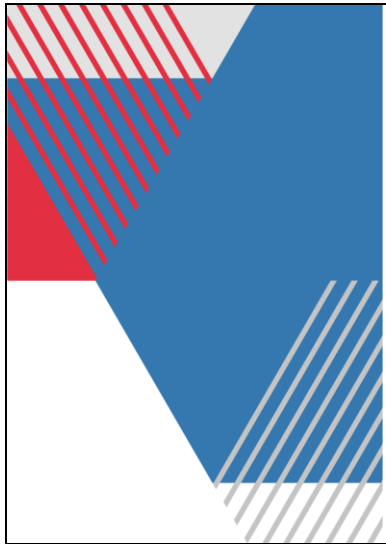
- early and nursing home voting
- vote-by-mail and provisional ballot processing.



In Sunday's Chicago Tribune, coincidentally, there was an article about poll watching. It said that for this election, poll watching has become "increasing high-stakes", and that some trainings are "seeding distrust in our system". They reported that one Republican-backed training claimed that elections carried "an incentive for fraud." If you believe Trump lost the election because of cheating, of course you are going to go into the polling place to police it, not to observe.

We are not those people. We don't believe that November will be that different from other recent elections. Will there be some problems? Yes. I hope this session will help you know when there is a problem, and what to do about it. We will be ready if something major happens, but the chances of slim. In McHenry County, a county where Republicans generally win, they don't have an incentive to gum up the works on election day. They recognize that it is primarily their voters who come out on Election Day, while ours vote early or through the mail.

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Qualifications

Poll Watchers:

- Must be registered to vote in Illinois.
- Must be poll watching with either a political party or an approved organization.
- Must have proper credentials which are issued by the McHenry County Clerk and authorized by one of the following:
 - The state or local party;
 - A candidate;
 - The presiding officer of a civic organization, like the League of Women Voters; or
 - The chairperson of the proponent or opponent group of a public question.

There can be several different poll watchers, from numerous organizations. You may not be alone in that capacity. Please note on your incident report if Republican pollwatchers are there, especially if they are disruptive or uninformed.

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Credentials

Both the credentials and a sample credential will be found on the DPMC website at www.mchenrydems.org/poll_workers.

- Poll watchers must present their credentials immediately when they first enter the voting site. The credentials are valid all day.
- If there are multiple precincts at one polling place, the poll observer needs separate credentials for each precinct.
- All credentials remain in the possession of the election judges and are returned to the County Clerk's office after the polls close.

10 ILCS 5/17-24, 17-25, 26-10

Revised 2/2015
SEC. No. 162

POLLWATCHER CREDENTIALS

TO THE JUDGE OF ELECTION

Pollwatcher Information		Authorized to act as a pollwatcher in:	
Name		Name of Precinct or Polling Place	
Street Address		Ward (if applicable)	
County of Residence		City/Township	
City/Township of Residence		Election	General Election
		Date of Election	November 3, 2020

In accordance with the provisions of the Election Code, the undersigned hereby appoints the individual listed above to act as a pollwatcher in the precinct and at the election also listed above.

Signature of Election Judge

McHenry County Clerk
 "TRUST YOUR VOTE"

Under penalties of law pursuant to 10 ILCS 5/29-10, the undersigned pollwatcher certifies that he or she resides and is duly registered to vote in:

Address _____
 County _____
 Precinct under which he or she is registered _____

Signature of Pollwatcher

Chair, Democratic Party of McHenry County
 "TRUST YOUR VOTE"

Address _____
 City/Township _____
 State _____
 Signature of Precinct Chair

EACH POLLWATCHER MUST PRESENT COMPLETED CREDENTIALS TO ELECTION JUDGES UPON ENTERING THE POLLING SITE

McHenry County Clerk's Office, 107 State St., Woodstock, IL 60098
Website: www.mchenrydems.org Phone: 815.334.4342

- Have your credentials at the ready when you enter the polling place.
- A credential is good all day even if the poll watcher leaves the polling place for a period of time. But if an EJ wants a new credential when you come back, give it to them even though it's not required. Don't fight the election judges.
- If you are arriving before the polls open Election Judges may be a bit distracted with their own responsibilities to accept your credential at that moment. Election judges may not have the poll watcher's sign-in sheet ready. Say something like, "I have my credentials, when you are ready for them." You can observe the proceedings while you wait for them to take them, but remind them about 10 minutes before the polls open and insist that they take them.
- If you arrive while the polls are open, enter and wait by the sign-in table out of the way until you can present your credentials.
- And, no, you do not need to have a poll watcher from each party.

A poll watcher must be inside the polling place BEFORE 7:00pm in order to observe closing procedures.

Credentials

Both the credentials and a sample credential can be found on the DPMC website at www.mchenrydems.org/poll_workers.

- Fill out the Poll Watcher Information area at the top left and at the bottom left of the form.
- Leave the top right half of the form blank! Do not sign the form.
- Make several copies of the partially filled out form.
- Fill in the "Authorized to act as a poll watcher in:" depending on the precinct you are observing.
- **Sign the form in front of the election judge before you turn in your credentials. It must be an original signature.**

10 ILCS 5/24, 17-25, 26-10

Suggested
Revised 10/1/10

POLLWATCHER CREDENTIALS

TO THE JUDGES OF ELECTION

Pollwatcher Information		Authorized to act as a poll watcher in:	
Name	Polly Pollwatcher	Name of Precinct or Polling Place	Nunda 25
Street Address	1126 Elm Street	Ward (if applicable)	
County of Residence	McHenry	Township or Municipality	Oakwood Hills
Township or Municipality of Residence	Crystal Lake	Election	General Election
		Date of Election	November 3, 2020

In accordance with the provisions of the Election Code, the undersigned hereby appoints the individual listed above to act as a pollwatcher in the precinct and at the election also listed above:

[Signature] Signature of Election Authority
[Signature] Signature of Appointing Authority

McHenry County Clerk
 TITLE: County Clerk, Election Division
 Chair, Democratic Party of McHenry County
 TITLE: Party Official (candidate, non representative precinct, supervisor or precinct clerk only)

Under penalties of law pursuant to 10 ILCS 5/29-10, the undersigned pollwatcher certifies that he or she resides and is duly registered to vote at:

1126 Elm St, Crystal Lake IL 60050
 Address
 McHenry
 County
 Algonquin 10
 Precinct (poller Ward is check Pollwatcher resides)
 Crystal Lake
 Township or Municipality
 Illinois
 State
Polly Pollwatcher
 Signature of Pollwatcher

YOUR OWN PRECINCT!

EACH POLLWATCHER MUST PRESENT COMPLETED CREDENTIALS TO ELECTION JUDGES UPON ENTERING THE POLLING SITE.
 McHenry County Clerk's Office, 607 State St., Woodstock, IL 60098
 Website: www.mchenrycountylakeil.gov Phone: 815-334-4242

How many poll watchers are allowed?

Appointing Authority	Primary Election	General Election Day	Early Voting Sites
Candidate	Two	Two	One
Established or New Political Party	One	Two	One
Qualified Organization of Citizens	One	One	One
Proponents & Opponents of a Ballot Proposition	One	One	One
State Nonpartisan Civic Organization	One	One	One

Election judges have legal authority over the conduct of elections. They may remove disruptive or unauthorized pollwatchers or may limit the total number of pollwatchers if the polling location becomes overcrowded and disorderly.



Election judges also have the discretion to reduce the number from 2 to 1 if the polling place is busy & crowded.

A poll watcher who is removed for overcrowding in the polling place:

- Can only be removed after a **vote by the majority of the Election Judges** of the precincts for which the poll watcher is credentialed.
- Must be selected by drawing lots.
- **One poll watcher per political party must be allowed** to remain in the polling place.

All poll observers should be treated the same, regardless of which campaign or organization they are representing.

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How many poll watchers are allowed?

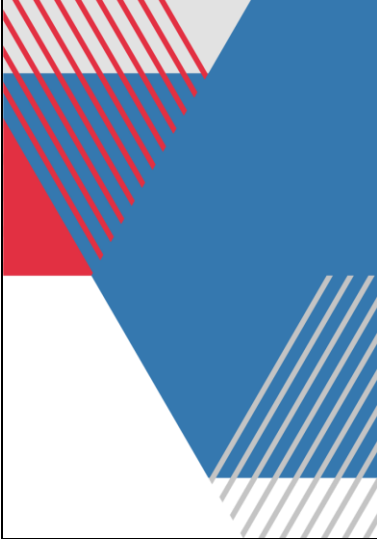
Appointing Authority	Primary Election	General Election Day	Early Voting Sites
Candidate	Two	Two	One
Established or New Political Party	One	Two	One
Qualified Organization of Citizens	One	One	One
Proponents & Opponents of a Ballot Proposition	One	One	One
State Nonpartisan Civic Organization	One	One	One

Election judges have legal authority over the conduct of elections. They may remove disruptive or unauthorized pollwatchers or may limit the total number of pollwatchers if the polling location becomes overcrowded and disorderly.



If asked about who sent you or party affiliation, **do not reply “I am a Democrat”** Just say **“I was sent by the Democratic Party of McHenry County: Then hush up. Don’t bring it up yourself, and if anyone comments, just say “I’m sorry, I can’t discuss that inside a polling place.”**

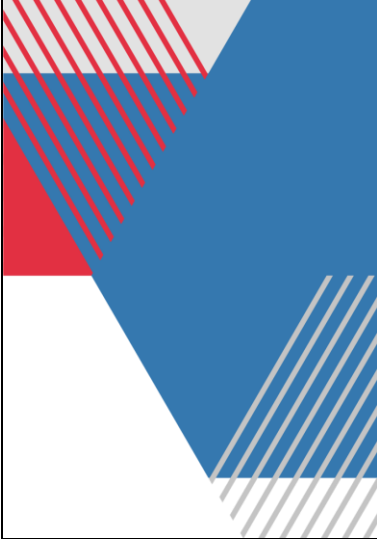
Elected officials, should they turn up, must adhere to all of the rules of a poll observer (including presenting credentials) unless he or she is voting (though committee persons can check on election judges and feed them.)



Authorized Individuals in the Polling Place

- Voters
- Minor children who are with their parent or guardian while voting
- Representatives of the Clerk's office
- Representatives of the State Board of Elections
- Representatives of the State's Attorney and Attorney General
- Law enforcement officers acting in their OFFICIAL CAPACITY; this might mean Department of Justice Observers,
- Authorized pollwatchers – like you!





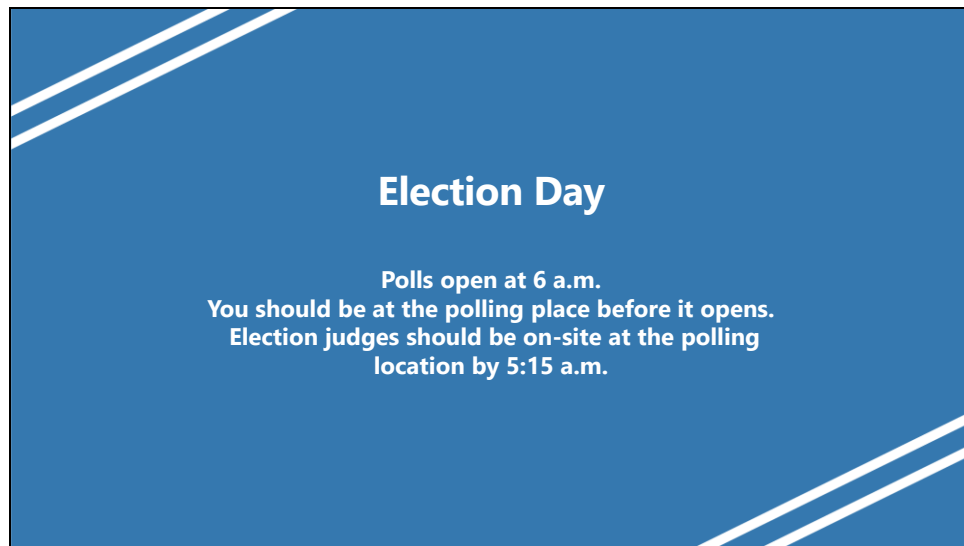
What to bring?

- A state identification
- Pen, paper, clipboard
- Multiple copies of your credentials
- Multiple copies of the Poll Worker Incident Report
- List of voting locations, with addresses
- Poll Watcher Quick Links & Contact Information
- Cell phone charger
- Water / Lunch, Snacks

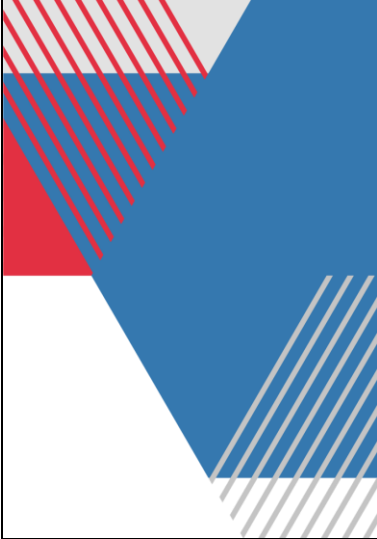
What to wear?

- Dress comfortably but respectably; formal business dress is not necessary and sometimes more formal clothing is intimidating to voters.
- Make sure to remove any campaign buttons or anything that would be viewed as electioneering from your jackets, bags, hats, etc.





Let Ruth know if your polling place will not open on time! 815-263-9659.



Before the Polls Open

Prior to the polls opening, poll watchers may:

- Observe as the equipment is checked
- Inspect the voting machines (e.g. to ensure that there are no completed ballots in the machine at the beginning of the day)
- View-- but not handle-- the election materials and forms.
- Make sure that the voting machines reflect 0 votes before the polls open and that there are no filled out paper ballots.
- Check outside and access; is signage and markers in place?

If you have any questions about the process, for instance, where to see that the machine is set to 0, ask the election judges to show you.

Once Voting Begins

During voting hours, poll observers may

- Stand or sit close enough to observe all proceedings, but they may not be within 5 feet of the touchscreen unit while voters are voting or in a position where they can see the vote being cast
- Hear election officials converse with a voter, except during assisted voting
- View the signature clip of the voter
- Write down the name and address information of the voter
- Inspect the voting equipment when not in use by voters
- Bring concerns or questions to the attention of the election officials.



Poll watchers, by law, have, extraordinary access within the Polling Place. You may go behind the judges to view the signature clip of the voter, for instance.

The one restriction a poll watcher has to free movement within the Polling Place is to be near the voting booths while the booths are occupied by voters.

Stay out of the voting booth area if there are ANY voters voting. If you see something has been left behind in a voting booth, alert the judges – do not touch anything in the voting booth.

Once Voting Begins

During voting hours, poll observers may

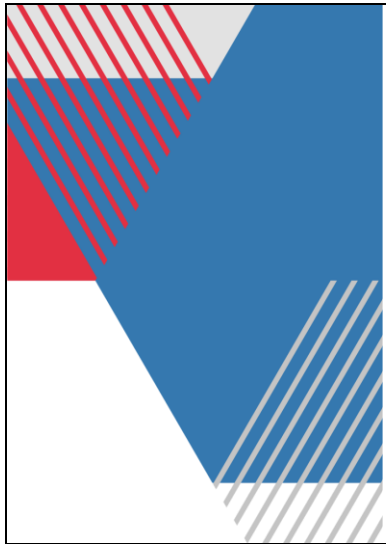
- Inspect vacant voting stations to ensure the unit has not been tampered with or damaged, or anything is left behind
- Challenge the qualifications or identity of a person appearing to vote (This is rare - Democrats generally do not do this.)

The purpose of voter protection is to ensure that eligible voters are allowed to vote freely; it is not to challenge voters. However, if you believe a voter is committing fraud or voting illegally, you may challenge the voter.

Tell the election judge you want to challenge the voter and then call the hotline for further assistance.



Challenging voters – we rarely do this. Let the judges determine if the voter is legitimate, unless you are very sure something is wrong.



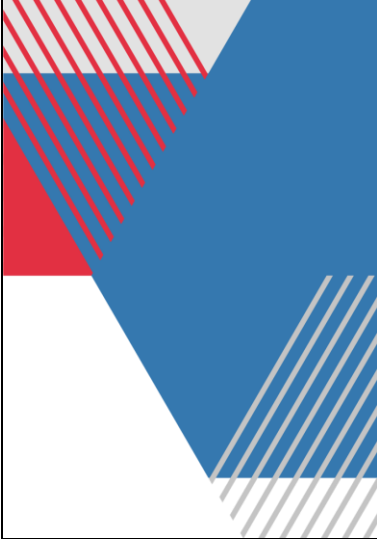
Once Voting Begins

Poll watchers may not:

- Disrupt any of the election activities and procedures
- Address the voter directly in the voting place unless first addressed by the voter with a question
 - **Always talk to the judges!**
 - If necessary to speak to a voter (such as to follow up on a provisional ballot) you should follow the voter outside the polling place.
- Handle the election materials and forms
- Film or photograph any voter in the process of voting
- Use their cell phones in the voting area
 - Keep you cell on vibrate and leave the voting area to make calls.

From the time the voter is handed a ballot until the ballot is deposited into the tabulator/ballot box or placed in a security envelope, ***do not talk to the voter.***

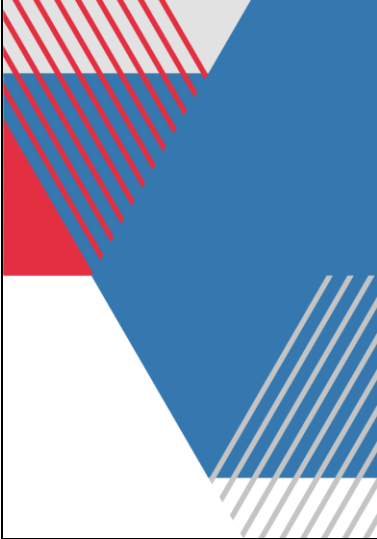
You should not take any photos inside the polling place.



Once Voting Begins

Giving Instruction

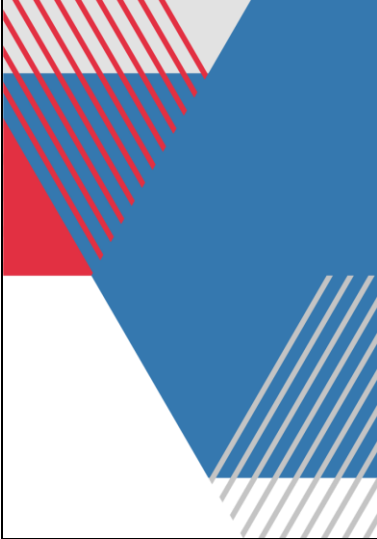
- Instruction means **demonstrating to the voter how to properly mark the ballot sheet**. This should occur before the voter enters the booth and in view of the entire polling place.
- The judges giving instruction are to alternate between political parties.
- Election authorities are required to provide registration and voting aids to voters with disabilities and elderly voters including large font sample ballots and magnifying glasses upon request.
- A demonstrator ballot, not the voter's official ballot, must be used during instruction.



Once Voting Begins

Giving assistance

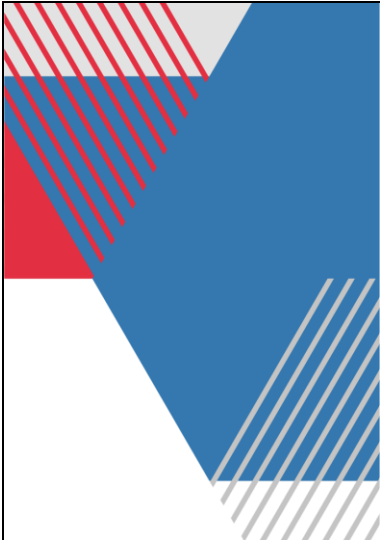
- Only voters who are blind, have another physical disability, who can't read, write or speak English, can get assistance.
- Voters who are intoxicated **cannot** receive assistance.
- Support animals that assist people with disabilities should be admitted into all buildings



Once Voting Begins

Giving assistance

- 2 Election Judges, one from each party, assist the voter, **or**
- Voter choose their own assistant. Both the voters and the person who is assisting must sign an affidavit.
- Candidates and Precinct Committeeperson may act as assistants, if the voter chooses them.
- The voter's employer, agent of the employer, or an officer or agent of the voter's union cannot aid the voter.



Once Voting Begins

Giving assistance

- If you hear anything or see anything, you are sworn to silence.
- If asked by a voter to help, refer them to an election judge.

I've heard that sometimes the poll watcher is handing out the I VOTED stickers. That really is not your job!

Once Voting Begins

Curbside Voting

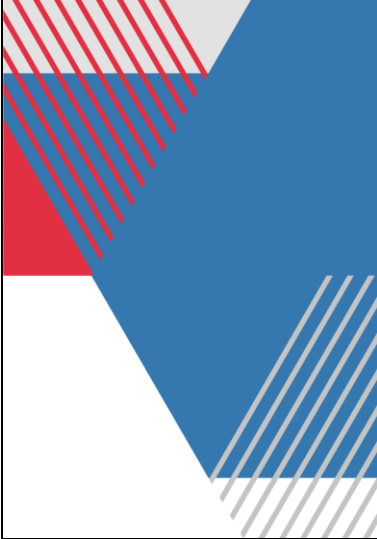
- The McHenry County Clerk offers curbside voting at the Election Center, 410 S. Eastwood in Woodstock.
- They require notice 24 hours ahead of time and will have all materials available.
- Two election judges from different parties will deliver the ballot to the voter. The election judges will remain until the ballot is completely filled out and returned to the election judges, who, upon re-entering the polling place will deposit the ballot immediately in the ballot box/tabulator.
- The poll watcher may accompany the election judges in order to observe.





Key Voters' Rights to Monitor

Your main job is to make the election judges follow the rules and votes are not suppressed.
Violations of these rules should be recorded on the incident report, and to the chair to report to the clerk or the voter protection hotline.



Things to watch for

Republican Poll Watchers

- There have been instances where Republican poll watchers become 'aggressive' vote challengers.

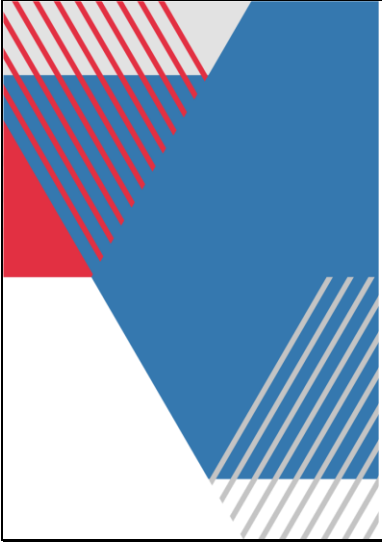
For instance, a challenger may ask a voter to prove who they are by showing ID.
- **There should be a valid reason for a challenge.**
Profiling is not a valid reason.

Things to watch for

Illinois voters do not have to provide identification at the polling place in order to vote a regular ballot, except for:

- A first-time voter who registered by mail or online and did not include proper identification
- A voter whose qualifications are challenged, and a majority of judges agree.





Things to watch for

There is same-day voter registration

- To register on election day, the voter must have two forms of ID, one of which has their current address.
- A voter who cannot present sufficient identification may vote a provisional ballot, but **the voter should be encouraged to get proper ID and come back rather than vote a provisional ballot.**

You do not want voters to vote a provisional ballot if it can be avoided. Voters who vote provisionally because of ID problems are unlikely to cure their ballots, meaning they won't be counted. However, it is better than not voting at all.

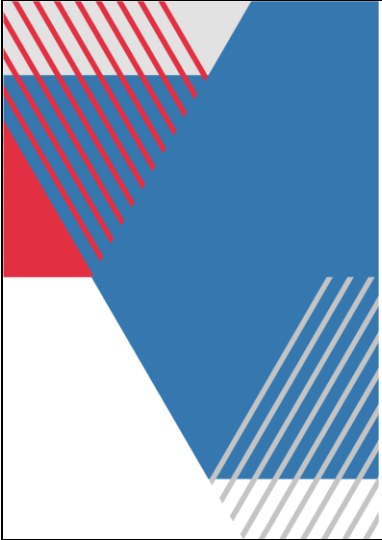
Things to watch for

A voter who is not on the rolls may vote a provisional ballot.

- Prior to voting a provisional ballot, they should **check to make sure they are at the correct polling place.** We have a quick link sheet to help a voter (OUTSIDE) find their polling place if the judges didn't provide it.
- It is better for a voter to vote at their correct precinct than take a provisional ballot.



The QR codes on your quick link sheet can be used to check registration and polling place. Make sure they are at the right one.



Things to watch for

If a voter has moved...

- Within the same precinct 27 or fewer days before the election - they can vote a regular ballot at their polling place after signing an affidavit of eligibility
- To a different precinct within 30 days before the election and has not transferred his or her registration - the voter can vote a regular ballot at their previous polling place after signing an affidavit of eligibility.

They may be able to vote for federal candidates at other polling places.

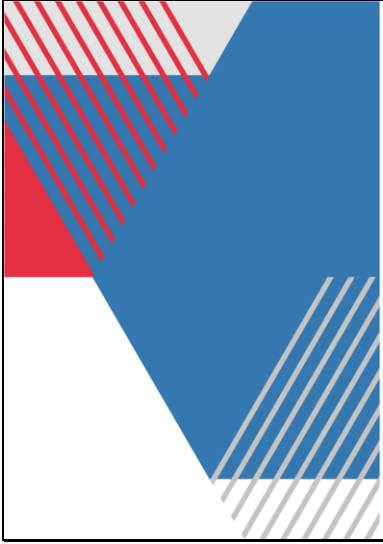
Things to watch for

Other

- Anyone who is in line at 7pm when the polls close must be allowed to vote.
- Illinois law permits convicted felons to vote as long as they have completed their sentence (felons on probation or parole may vote).
- If a voter spoils a ballot and has not cast the ballot, the voter has the right to receive a new ballot after returning the spoiled ballot.
- If a ballot is rejected at the tabulator because the election judge did not initial the ballot, that ballot **MUST BE SPOILED**. The voter will need to be given a new ballot and vote again.



If a convicted felon is present, that means they aren't in jail and must be on parole or probation. They can vote.



Things to watch for

Vote by Mail ballots

- As long as a voter who requested a Vote by Mail (VBM) ballot has not submitted it and is otherwise qualified, the voter should be allowed to vote a regular ballot if:
 - they turn in the VBM ballot for cancellation or,
 - they complete an affidavit that they did not receive the ballot or,
 - they were informed the election authority did not receive the ballot.
- If the voter received the VBM ballot and did not return it, the voter may vote a provisional ballot.
- TIP: Voters should be encouraged to bring their VBM with them to surrender, along with all the envelopes if they intend to vote in person.

Confusion around Vote by Mail ballots on Election Day. If someone brings their Vote by Mail ballot to the polling station and tries to vote it there, they may be confused when the election judge asks them to surrender the ballot and then vote in person. They must surrender that ballot and vote a new ballot. This process can be confusing for many people, because they think they can use their VBM ballot to vote in person. Be on the look out for it.



Illegal Activities

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Illegal Activities to Watch Out For

Electioneering

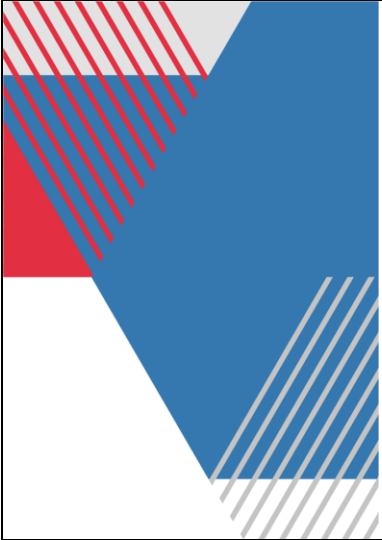
- Electioneering is any promotion of a candidate or public question, and it is prohibited inside the campaign-free zone.
- A campaign-free zone, designated by markers, is strictly enforced within 100 feet of the entrance to the room where voting occurs.
- Some examples of prohibited items:
 - campaign signs
 - clothing or button promoting a candidate or public question, or
 - any printed campaign information.

EJs can ask the voter to remove hats, buttons, etc. or turn their t-shirt inside out. Sometimes it is just easier to let the voter vote and get out.

Electioneering

- If the 100-foot measurement from the polling room's door is located within the building of a public or private school or a place of worship, the boundary for the campaign-free zone is located at the building's front door so electioneering is limited to the outside of the building.
- Private schools and places of worship may ban electioneering from their entire property.

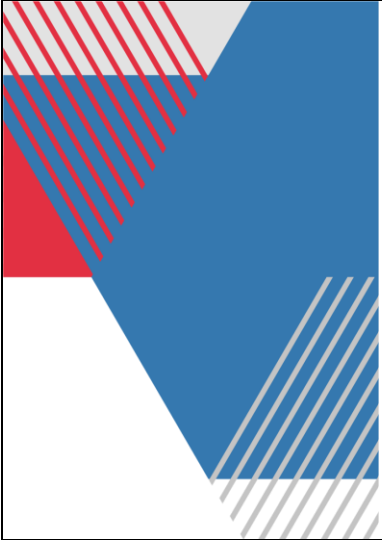




Illegal Activities to Watch Out For

Other

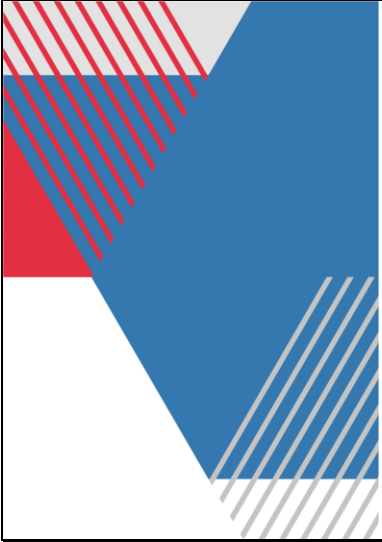
- Voters attempting to leave the polling place with a ballot or ballots.
- Payment for a vote.
- Impersonating a registered voter (signature is not a match).
- Tampering with voting equipment.
- Interfering with the voting process.
- Harassing the election judges.
- Harassing or intimidating voters (checking on what is going on outside occasionally is a good idea).



Illegal Activities to Watch Out For

Other

- Interfering with the voting process.
- Illegal voter assistance or instruction.
- Misinformation to voters outside the polling place (polling place has moved, closed, etc.).
- A **law enforcement official** may be in the polling place to preserve order and carry out **lawful directions given by the judges only**.



Illegal Activities to Watch Out For

Other

- **Federal agents** appearing at the Precinct Polling Place.
 - **Illinois is prepared;** DPI is in contact with state and local authorities, as well as the DNC and candidates.
 - This is the only time you may take videos/photos in the polling place. Document everything in an incident report, including witnesses.
 - DO NOT overreact and scare voters from coming into polling places to vote.

It's Almost Over ...

[illegible]

When the Polls Close

- Make sure everyone in line at 7pm votes. If there is a line, make sure the end of the line at 7pm is marked.
- **You must be inside before 7pm to witness the closing of the polls.**
- Observe the process of closing the polling place by the judges
 - All ballots and electronic voting records should be sealed properly before they leave the polling place.
 - Each machine should have a tape printed and displayed where the public can view it. **You should request a tape to be run for you.**



Its been confirmed with the clerk's office that a tape will be run for a poll watcher if requested and present during the post election period.

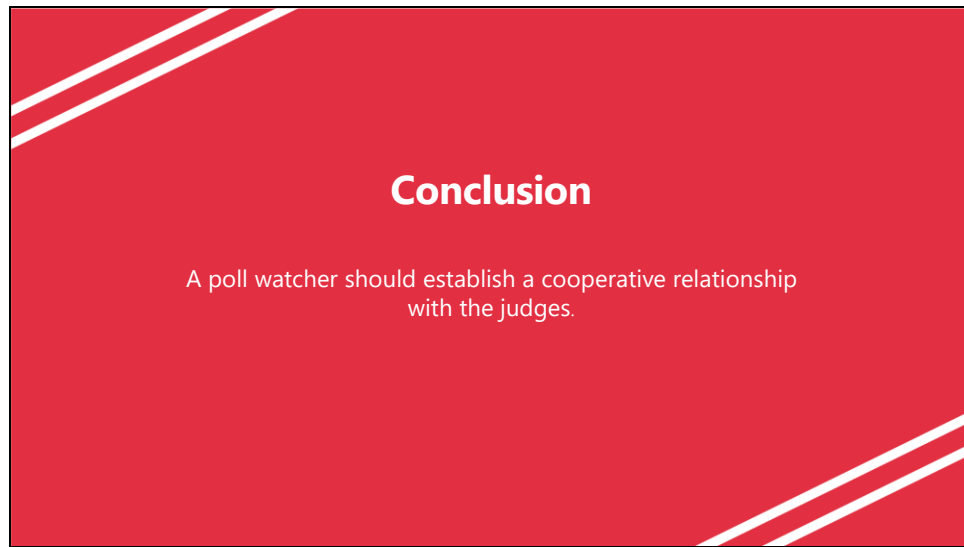
When the Polls Close

- Send your photos of the tape you collected at the end of the night:
- Use GuestCam. No app needed. Just scan the QR code below and follow the instructions to upload your photos of the tapes.



- OR text them to 815-263-9659
- OR email the photos to chair@mchenrydems.org
- OR bring them to the election night party
- OR let me know how you'd like to get them to me.

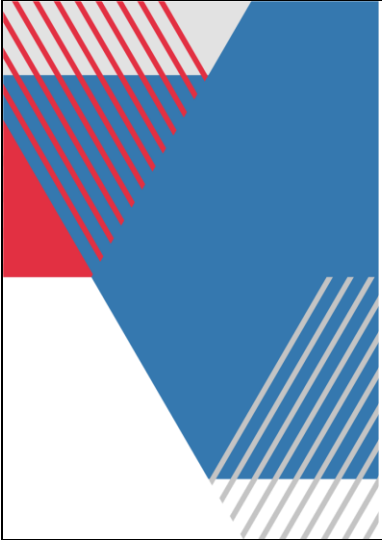




Conclusion

A poll watcher should establish a cooperative relationship with the judges.





Elections are messy...

So...

- **Try and establish a cooperative relationship with the judges. Be polite to the judges,** but firm and persistent in making sure that the laws and procedures are followed correctly.
- **Pick your battles carefully and thoughtfully.** Where the electioneering boundary cone is placed is less important than denying someone a vote.
- You can't win every battle. Ultimately election judges are the authority in the polling place. **But document!**

Addressing Issues

To reiterate:

1. Election Judges are the first point of contact.
2. Election Judges should be asked to call the Clerk's office for clarification or help if they don't know what to do.
3. Text or call County Chair – Ruth at 815-263-9659
 1. Chair will call the County Clerk
 2. Chair will call the DPI Hotline and our attorney or escalate it from there.
 3. Only call the hotline yourself if you can't get through to Ruth.
4. Call the police only if you believe you or others are in physical danger.



If you call the hotline before you call the Chair, they will call the Chair first. BETTER CALL RUTH.

All these forms will be found on our website by using the following link:

www.mchenrydems.org/poll_workers

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Quick Links & Contacts

All these forms will be found on our website by using the following link:

www.mchenrydems.org/poll_workers



Registration Check/Ballot Locator
<https://mcherry-connect.org/petitions/care/care-ballot-locator/#search>



Registration Lookup
<https://www.elections.il.gov/RegistrationLookup.aspx>

You should first try to resolve any issues with the Election Judges on site before calling for assistance. You should call the appropriate hotline with any issues that cannot be resolved on-site.

If problems occur, contact these people in the following order:

1. Election Judges - Each of the judges have equal power. If there is a dispute over the interpretation or application of the rules, the judges should vote together on all decisions - and you can ask for that. If the judges decide to apply a rule in a manner you believe is incorrect or there is a violation of the rules, go to the next step.
2. Call or text Ruth, Chair of DPMC, at 815-263-9659. She will determine whether the Clerk or our attorney needs to be called.
3. County Clerk - 815-334-4242
4. Voter Protection Hotline - available 6am-7:30pm.
- (855) 458-6837 or (855) IL VOTES
- Email: voterpro@ildems.com

5. Please only call the police if you feel you are in danger, not to report voting irregularities.

REMEMBER to fill out the Poll Worker Incident Report and turn it into the Party.

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