



CITIZENS AGAINST VOTER FRAUD & ILLINOIS FREEDOM ALLIANCE POLL WATCHERS TRAINING GUIDE PART 1 – POLL WATCHING BASICS



WHAT IS A POLL WATCHER ?





Definition of *poll watcher*:

A person assigned (as by a Political Party, Candidate, or Civic Organization) to observe activities at a polling place.

To guard against illegal voting, fraudulent counting of ballots, and other violations of election laws



The State of Illinois also defines a Poll Watcher.



ILLINOIS POLLWATCHERS - 10 ILCS 5/17-23



WHAT ARE POLL WATCHERS? The great majority of election officials are honest and dedicated; however, even the most honest election officials can make mistakes.

Poll Watchers sometimes referred to as challengers, checkers or watchers, are election observers who aid in ensuring the free and fair conduct of elections.

Poll Watchers may be in the polling place before the polls open, during the actual voting hours, and after the polls close.



Why Become A Poll Watcher?

- Why in the world would anyone want to be a poll watcher? It is long hours.
- You are not paid.
- It is dull as dishwater.
- Someone is always telling you where you can stand or where you can sit.
- Someone is sure to tell you that you can't speak.
- You will definitely receive dark vibes from some people.
- You are considered a know-it-all, buttinski.
- But, if you are already a "know-it-all, buttinski" we've got the prefect job for you.
- You are also ensuring the integrity of the vote.
- You are assisting the voter.
- You are assisting the election judges.
- You uphold free and fair elections.
- You are being a good American.

And, as an extra bonus, if you are planning to run for office or become an election judge, being a poll watcher is one of your best training opportunities.



A Poll Watcher must have credentials

They must be

1. Registered To Vote - 10 ILCS 5/17-23

A poll watcher must be a registered voter in Illinois.

2. Appointing as a Poll Watcher - 10 ILCS 5/17-23

A poll watcher must be appointed by a:

- A) Political Party.
- B) Candidate running in the current election
- C) Civic Organization



A Poll Watcher must have credentials

sample credential form IL SBE form M-2

TOP SECTION
You fill out as needed



BOTTOM SECTION
You fill out as required



LAUREN STALEY FERRY
WILL COUNTY CLERK

10 ILCS 5/7-34, 17-25, 29-10

Revised July 2019
SBE No. M-2

POLLWATCHER CREDENTIALS

TO THE JUDGES OF ELECTION

Pollwatcher Information		Subject to act as a pollwatcher in	
Name		Name of Precinct	
Street Address		Ward (if applicable)	
County of Residence		Township or Municipality	
Township or Municipality of Residence		Election	
		Date of Election	

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

Lauren Staley Ferry
Signature of Election Authority

Lauren Staley Ferry
Signature of Supporting Authority

WILL COUNTY CLERK

ITSL: County Clerk, Will County, Illinois

ITSL: Party official, candidate, civic organization president, proponent or supporter group chair

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:

Address: _____

City: _____

County: _____

Precinct and Ward listed on Pollwatcher credentials

Township or Municipality: _____

Single _____

Signature of Pollwatcher: _____

withholding poll watcher's gov. ID
Form may be reprinted

MIDDLE SECTION
authorizing entities fills
this section out





A Poll Watcher must have credentials

Top half of sample credential form



Duplicate with no information in the top or bottom section. Middle section must be filled in before duplicating.

Fill in top section before going to the polling place.



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10 ILCS 5/7-34, 17-23, 29-10

Revised July 2019
SBE No. M-2

POLLWATCHER CREDENTIALS

TO THE JUDGES OF ELECTION:

Pollwatcher Information		Authorize to act as a pollwatcher in:	
Name		Name of Precinct	
Street Address		Ward (if applicable)	
County of Residence		Township or Municipality	
Township or Municipality of Residence		Election	
		Date of Election	

SAMPLE

In accordance with the provisions of the Election Code, the undersigned hereby appoints the individual listed above to act



A Poll Watcher must have credentials

Bottom half of sample credential form

Duplicate with no information in the top or bottom section. Middle section must be filled in before duplicating.

Fill in bottom section before going to the polling place.

Warning !!

Some jurisdictions may require you to sign at the polling place in front of a judge. They may also require Photo ID.

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.

Lauren Staley Ferry
Signature of Election Authority

Candidates Signature
Signature of Appointing Authority

WILL COUNTY CLERK
TITLE: (County Clerk, Executive Director)

Campaign Chairperson
TITLE: (party official, candidate, civic organization president, proponent or opponent group chair)

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:

Address

Township or Municipality

County

Illinois
State

Precinct and/or Ward in which Pollwatcher resides

Signature of Pollwatcher

willcountyclerk.gov
elections.il.gov
Form may be reproduced



Electioneering - 10 ILCS 5/7-41(c)

You must be Non-Partisan as a Poll Watcher

- Do not participate in partisan politics in or around the polling place.
- Do not wear clothing or insignia promoting a political party, candidate, ballot issue, or even a political view while in the polling place or within 100 feet of the polling place. Do not use hand gestures to signal your political preference.
- Do not have a conversation regarding politics within 100 feet of the polling place.
- If someone discloses their political preference, show them neither favor nor disdain.
- A poll watcher is to be fair-minded at all times while in the polling place.



Electioneering – cont.



The Exception – issue

Some time during the day, you may be asked, who sent you or who do you represent?

Answer honestly while remaining within the electioneering guidelines.

IF ASKED about party affiliation, you reply clearly and only once. Reply with the name of the organization on your credentials ONLY.

Do not reply, "I am a Democrat," or "I am a Republican." or even "I am Sparticus."

Instead, reply: "I represent the Citizens Against Voter Fraud civic organization." or "I represent the Illinois Freedom Alliance Organization". Then hush up.

If they are persistent, reply "I'm sorry, I cannot discuss that within the polling place."

If they continue to request any party affiliation, refer it to the election judge.



What Can A Poll Watcher See?

10 ILCS 5/17-23



A poll watcher can see anything.

- Ask the election judge for any record you require. You can't touch it, but you can read it.
- A poll watcher can go anywhere in the polling place, including behind the judge's table if a record is inaccessible otherwise. Keep in mind that a poll watcher cannot "station themselves in such close proximity to the judges of election so as to interfere with the orderly conduct of the election".
- A poll watcher can "view all reasonably requested records". That includes the election judge's computer screen when comparing signatures. Refrain from requesting to see the computer screen for all signatures, wait for the occasions when the election judge decides that the signature does not match or there is a challenge to the signature.



What Is An Unreasonable Record?

10 ILCS 5/1A-16.7(k)

- Some addresses, such as those of battered women's shelters, are restricted. It is unreasonable for a poll watcher to request to view those records.
- Do not ask an election judge if X has voted, unless X is standing beside you and the question is part of a challenge.
- Do not ask an election judge for your ex's address.
- The following information shall be designated as confidential: any portion of an applicant's Social Security number;
- any portion of an applicant's driver's license number or State identification number;
- an applicant's decision to decline voter registration;
- the identity of the person providing information relating to a specific applicant; and
- the personal residence and contact information of any applicant for whom notice has been given by an appropriate legal authority.
- A poll watcher may overhear any of the above or see the above as part of the registration process, but must treat such information as confidential. A poll watcher cannot request any of the above information from the election judge.



Ballots - 10 ILCS 5/17-23



- From the time an election judge hands a voter a ballot until that ballot is submitted to the ballot box/tabulator, the is ballot off limits from observation.
- If a ballot is spoiled, the poll watcher can observe the election judge writing "SPOILED" across the ballot, but you should ignore any votes that can be seen.



Voting Booths - 10 ILCS 5/17-23



- 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.
- One of the duties of the poll watcher before the polls open is to check the voting booths. A poll watcher can check voting booths throughout the day when there are no voters in the voting booths.
- *Rule of thumb:* Stay out of the voting booth area if there are ANY voters voting.
- An exception would be if an election judge goes to a voting booth to assist a voter. A poll watcher can accompany the election judge. The poll watcher should do their best to station themselves where they cannot see the ballot of any voter in the area.



Do I Get To Haul A Chair Around?



- Oddly enough, chairs are not listed as election materials.
- Just as you can walk on the carpet in the polling place, poll watchers can touch the chairs to move them as required.
- This is not an invitation to redecorate the polling place. The poll watcher can move one chair in order to observe.
- Even if something within the polling place is not considered election material, treat it with respect. You are a guest.



When Is A Poll Watcher Is Allowed The Polling Place ?

10 ILCS 5/17-3(b)



Any Time The Ballot Box/Tabulator Is Not Secured

The ballot box/tabulator is on public display.

The Polling Place

- In the polling place, from time the ballot box/tabulator is examined until the polls are closed the ballot box is on public display.
- The Election Code needs a thorough update on storage of the ballot boxes over night at permanent polling places for early voting and at temporary branch polling places



When Is A Poll Watcher Is Allowed in the Central Counting Facility?

10 ILCS 5/24B-13



- The poll watcher is allowed "at all times". Those times are the times publicly listed on the County Clerk's website or the website of the local Board of Elections.
- In the Central Counting Facility, from the time the ballot box/tabulator is examined until the official return is announced, a poll watcher is allowed to be there.
- Because the process at the central counting facility is over multiple days, the only time a poll watcher is not in sight of the ballot box is when the ballot box is locked away.
- The last two things a poll watcher does EVERY DAY is check the count then watch the room with the ballot box being locked. If the area is sealed, note the number of the seal.
- The first two things a poll watcher does EVERY DAY is to witness the room being unlocked then check the count to see if it matches the night before. Check and note the seal number.
- There is no other time when access to the ballots or the ballot box is available to anyone.



Poll Watcher Leaving & Returning To the Polling Place



Presenting Credentials- 10 ILCS 5/17-23

The first thing a poll watcher does upon entering the polling place is to present their credentials to an election judge. The poll watcher may also be required to sign-in.

Leaving the Polling Place

Once the poll watcher has presented his/her credentials and signed in, and while the polling place is open, the poll watcher is free to leave the polling place and return "provided that such continuing action does not disrupt the conduct of the election." Poll watchers may be substituted during the day, but the substitutes must also be credentialed.



Poll Watcher Leaving & Returning To the Polling Place – cont.



Multiple Days

In polling places which are open multiple days, such as early voting sites, the poll watcher must present new credentials each day.

A Polling Place With Multiple Precincts

In a polling place with multiple precincts, the poll watcher must present multiple credentials, one credential form for each precinct within the polling place. The credential form must be presented to one of the election judges representing that precinct. A polling place with multiple precincts will usually have only one sign-in sheet.

NOTE: Credentials you receive can be duplicated as many times as you need . Make sure you copy the Credentials before you fill it out. At each polling place you will have to surrender your credentials and you do not get them back.



Poll Watcher Leaving & Returning To the Polling Place – cont.



In a polling place, such as an early voting site, where all the the precincts of a county or a multitude of precincts are represented, the poll watcher will present one credential for the day. In the space on the credential form where "precinct" is required, substitute the name of the early voting site.

Leaving One Site For Another

If the poll watcher leaves one polling place to go to another polling place, the poll watcher **must present new credentials** at each site. The poll watcher can, on the same day, return to a site where he/she already presented credentials.

NOTE: This is why you need to have duplicated credentials.



END OF PART 1 OF THE TRAINING GUIDE (Poll Watching Basics).

REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

- **ALWAYS BE RESPECTFUL.**
- **ALWAYS BE COURTEOUS.**
- **ALWAYS RESPECT THE VOTERS RIGHT TO PRIVACY.**
- **ALWAYS REFER TO THE JUDGES DECISIONS.**
- **NEVER TOUCH ANYTHING ELECTION RELATED.**
- **ALWAYS BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR ISSUES.**
- **ALWAYS DOCUMENT ANY ISSUES WITH DATE / TIME / PLACE / PEOPLE.**
- **NEVER DISCUSS POLITICS IN THE POLLING PLACE.**
- **NEVER WEAR POLITICAL CLOTHING.**
- **NEVER TAKE FOOD OR DRINK UNLESS IT IS OFFERED TO YOU.**