

POLL WATCHERS

What does a poll watcher do?

- Serves as the eyes and ears for our party or a candidate in the polling place.
- Checks that the polls open on time and everything is working properly and judges have all needed supplies.
- Checks that election judges are present and performing their duties.
- Observes processes to make sure everything is being done properly (see Poll Watcher Checklist and Poll Watcher Handbook).
- Reports any problems or improper procedures to township chair or campaign.
- Some poll watchers may check off base Democratic voters on a list the poll watcher made as they sign in to vote. They can then call up the ones that had not voted in the last few hours to help get out the vote.
- Observes closing of polls and watches judges following procedures to close out machines and handle ballots.

A Poll Watcher May...

- ✓ Enter the polling place before it opens. Must have poll watcher credentials which are given to a judge. The judges will keep the credentials, and you will sign in and out each time you enter and leave the polling place. Credentials can be found with campaigns or the PC coordinator.
- ✓ Be anywhere in the polling place, as long as you are not interfering with the judges' ability to perform their duties or interfering with the voters' privacy as they mark their ballot.
- ✓ Watch voters sign in. (Remember voters do not need photo ID's to vote unless they registered online or with a motor voter form. Also voters can register to vote and vote on the same day.)
- ✓ Ask questions of the election judges.
- ✓ Leave the polling place (sign out) and return later.
- ✓ Remain in the polling place after the polls close to observe the closing procedures. You must be in the polling place before the polls close in order to watch the closing procedures. You will not be allowed in after the polls close.
- ✓ Ask for a tape of the results. The election judges do not have to run a tape for you, but will usually do this if there are not too many other requests.

A Poll Watcher May Not...

- Enter a polling place without poll watcher credentials.
- Wear any partisan items such as campaign shirts or buttons.
- Interfere with the judges' activities.
- Touch anything that is not yours!
- Say anything partisan or that might influence how a voter will vote.
- Observe a voter while they vote or talk to a voter while they are voting.
- Use a cell phone in the polling place—go outside to make calls.

The election judges are in charge—do not argue with them or counteract their decisions. If you disagree with something judges are doing, you may question them and give your opinion, but if they persist, report what is going on to your township chair or campaign. You are an observer!

(Election judges have the right to decide there are too many poll watchers in a polling location and ask some to leave. 2 is the normal number allowed. It is very unlikely that this will happen.)

Contact your township chair or the campaign if you think there is a problem, or if you have any questions about what is happening. You are not expected to be an expert in the procedures or rules—it's ok to ask!