

WHAT IS A POLL WATCHER?

Anna Pingel | June 24, 2024

POLL WATCHERS ARE CRUCIAL TO WELL-RUN ELECTIONS.

Poll watchers, or “election observers,” observe steps in the election process. They are critical to maintaining transparency and accountability in election administration. They are an extra “set of eyes” and help bring confidence and trust into the election system. Every state has its own procedures and laws concerning who is eligible to be a poll watcher, how they must be trained, and where and when they can be present during an election.

The job of a poll watcher is to carefully observe the election process without violating voter privacy or causing disruption and making election officials aware of inconsistencies, mistakes, or questionable practices they observe.

WHO CAN BE A POLL WATCHER?

Most registered voters are eligible to be a poll watcher. In some states, an established organization such as a political party must submit a list of approved poll watchers, but you do not have to be a member of a political party or group to be a poll watcher. Poll watchers watch at polling places and ballot processing centers, where mail ballots are opened, verified, and counted.

How do I become a poll watcher?

- ★ Each state has different requirements regarding poll watchers. [Check here](#) to review the rules for being a poll watcher in your state.
 - Alternatively, contact your local Board of Elections or political party representative to get connected and learn about poll-watching opportunities and requirements.
- ★ Attend training and receive an official certification if necessary.
- ★ Ensure you are prepared to monitor the election process and report any anomalies, issues, or concerns.