

Polling Place Procedures Manual



Each Supervisor of Elections shall ensure that this manual is available in hard copy or electronic form in every polling place.

This manual shall guide inspectors, clerks, and deputy sheriffs in the proper implementation of election procedures and laws. The procedures in this manual control; if there is a discrepancy between this manual and a County's polling place procedure manual, the procedures in this manual shall be followed.

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(Rule 1S-2.034, F.A.C.)

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How To Use This Manual

Document Conventions

This manual contains cross-references to other chapters or sections that contain information relevant to the topic under discussion. If you are using the electronic version of this manual, click the blue cross-reference link to jump to that information. If you are using a printed version of this manual, the cross-reference tells you which chapter or chapter and section to consult.

Informational Symbols/Icons

The following icons are used to emphasize information:



Alert – indicates alert; warning; special attention needed



Information – indicates highlighted or additional information



Deadline – indicates a time sensitive issue or a deadline

Assistance

If you have any questions about the material covered in this manual or need further assistance, please contact your immediate supervisor or designated staff in the Supervisor of Elections' office [Contact information for Supervisors of Elections' offices <https://dos.elections.myflorida.com/supervisors/>]

Chapter I - Introduction

A. Overview

This manual must be used by the election team at the polls during the early voting period and on Election Day. All forms and signage referenced herein should be in the supplemental election materials provided as part of training and early voting and Election Day packets. A Supervisor of Elections may supplement the requirements in this handbook but may not create procedures that conflict with these requirements.

B. Definitions

The terms used herein are defined as follows:

Clerk	(1) A poll worker who is designated or certified to oversee a precinct or polling place during an election; and/or (2) The person who is the supervisor or site manager at early voting sites.
Deputy	The person deputized by the sheriff and who is always present while the polls or early voting sites are open. The Deputy is charged with maintaining good order at the polls and early voting sites.
Election Board	The clerk and inspectors appointed to conduct an election. In all questions that may arise before members of an election board, the questions are required to be decided by majority vote.
Election Team	Throughout this manual, the term “election team” is used to refer to the election board, other poll workers, and the deputy/deputies.
Inspectors	Inspectors are poll workers designated as such by the Supervisor of Elections. An inspector may perform any variety of duties including setting up a tabulator, managing equipment or ballots, processing voters as they check in to vote, offering instruction to the voter, and otherwise assisting the clerk.
Polling Place	The building which contains the polling room where either early voting or Election Day voting occurs. On Election Day, a polling place is designated for each precinct.
Polling Room	The room (or in the case of early voting, the area designated) in which ballots are cast on Election Day and during early voting.
Poll Watcher	A person designated by a candidate, political party, or political committee, and approved to observe elections on their behalf within a polling room or early voting site. Each political party and each candidate may have one watcher in each polling room or early voting area at any one time during the election. A political committee formed for the specific purpose of expressly advocating the passage or defeat of an issue on the ballot may have one watcher for each polling room or early voting area at any one time during the election.
Poll Workers	Clerks, inspectors, equipment managers, ballot managers, and assistants.

Precinct	The geographic areas that local government has divided for election purposes. The voter's residential address within a particular geographic area determines which issues and offices a voter can vote upon in an election.
Register	The computer printout in paper format or the electronic poll book that contains the names of persons registered to vote and that voters must sign before voting. (Section 98.461(2), Fla. Stat.).
Uniformed Services Members	Includes any member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard, the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service (PHS), and the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
Vote-by-Mail Ballot	A ballot cast without going to the polls to vote during early voting or on Election Day.
Voting Area	The area designated by the Supervisor of Elections at the early voting or Election Day voting sites where voting activities occur including, but not limited to, the area where voters are in line waiting to check-in and are processed; and cast their ballots.

Chapter II – Before Polls Open (Sections 101.5610, 102.012, Fla. Stat.)

A. Election Team

Throughout this manual, the term “election team” is used to refer to the election board, other poll workers, and the deputy/deputies. The election board focuses on election issues inside the polling room. The deputy organizes the process outside the polling room during the early voting period and on Election Day.



On Election Day, the election team must arrive at its assigned polling place no later than 6 a.m. to set up the room. Polls must be ready to open and must open by 7 a.m. For the early voting period, opening and closing hours may vary by site. Follow the directions given to you by the Supervisor of Elections.



The public is allowed to enter the polling room and observe the procedures before the polls open, however the public should not wander around the room but be confined to a specific area designated for public viewing. The public observers must leave when polls open. The public (including poll watchers) is allowed to enter the polling room and observe the procedures after the polls close, which is after all voters have cast their ballots.

B. Polling Room Layout

Not all polling rooms need to or can be arranged the same. The effective layout of a polling room during early voting or on Election Day will depend on several variables, including but not limited to the size, location, and shape of the early voting facility and polling place. For example, voting booths may be placed in the center in single or multiple rows, or flush against a wall, as long as, privacy is secured.

Polling Room layout should:

- Provide for accessibility;
- Ensure voter privacy;
- Account for voter turnout, staff, poll workers and poll watchers;
- Provide for clear and visible placement of required signage;
- Provide for accessible ingress and egress;
- Ensure proper lighting;
- Secure placement, storage, and access to equipment, polling place supplies, and election materials; and
- Allow for the implementation of security measures.

Factors to consider that enhance the voting process and polling place activities include but are not limited to:

- Maximize efficient traffic flow within the polling room for polling place activities including voting, management, and public observation,

- Establish clearly delineated and marked staging areas to provide for voter check-in, ballot distribution, completion of special forms, special voter assistance, voting, etc.,
- Accommodate tabulators, voting booths, scanners, and other equipment, and
- Account for the number and location of outlets for computer network availability and other electronics.

C. Set-up

At a minimum, the following steps must be taken before polls open:

- Verify that all poll workers have affirmed and signed the poll worker oath or affirmation under section 102.012, Fla. Stat.
- Compare the ballots or the ballot information to be used in the voting devices with the sample ballot and certify in writing that the names, numbers, and letters agree.
- Arrange furniture, precinct supplies, and voting equipment.
- Set up the voting booths in a way that voters cannot see each other's ballots to ensure privacy.
- Set up accessible voting equipment for persons with disabilities, even if you do not expect anyone to use this equipment. Check that equipment works and keep it operational throughout the voting day. All voter interface devices must meet accessibility requirements.
- Ensure that there is sufficient lighting within the polling place, including the booths with marking devices.
- Ensure that paths of travel, doorways, hallways, entrances, and voting areas are clear and accessible.
- Make all requisite supplies, forms, and documents available.
- Display or make available all required signages, notices, and instructions that are required to be in English, Spanish, and any other language when required by law or court order in the county. See **Section D. Signage/Information (Chapter II)**.
- Ensure members of the election team wear badges identifying themselves as staff and their role including if they provide language assistance.
- Designate sufficient non-permitted parking to accommodate the anticipated number of voters.
- Set-up and clearly designate the secure ballot intake station (only during early voting period).
- Designate no-solicitation zone. See **Section E. No Solicitation Zone (Chapter II)**.
- Designate an area for poll watchers where they may reasonably observe the check-in area.
- Work with location staff to disable or cover security cameras inside polling place during the voting period.
- Designate a poll worker who is also responsible for checking booths periodically to ensure that a voter has not left a ballot uncast or other materials in the voting area.

D. Signage/Information

The following materials must be in English, Spanish, and any other language when required by law or court order in your jurisdiction and displayed or made available where they can be easily seen and read. This may be set up as a voter information board or kiosk. Required polling place materials include but are not limited to:

1	Voter's Bill of Rights and Responsibilities	DS-DE 20 and DS-DE 21, eff. 01/2006; Section 101.031(1), Fla. Stat.
2	General Information and Instructions to Voters	DS-DE 68, eff. 03/2018, Appendix A; Section 101.031(1), Fla. Stat.
3	Specific instructions on manner of voting on <u>a</u> voting system	Section 101.5611(1), Fla. Stat.
4	Notice of Use of Accessible Voting Equipment	Section 101.5611(1), Fla. Stat.
5	Print-out or link to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's online bilingual election-related language assistance information	Voting Rights Act, section 10303(e), section 10503 https://www.eac.gov/election-officials/glossaries-election-terminology
6	Notice that reads: "A person who commits or attempts to commit any fraud in connection with voting, votes a fraudulent ballot, or votes more than once in an election can be convicted of a felony of the third degree and fined up to \$5,000, and/or imprisoned for up to 5 years." Include the voter fraud hotline: 1.877.868.3737	Section 101.5611(2), Fla. Stat.
7	Sample ballots for inspection	Section 101.20, Fla. Stat.
8	Conspicuous signage identifying the polling place by precinct number, on or near the polling place premises, of at least 3 inches in height and visible to passing motorists.	Section 101.715(4), Fla. Stat.
9	Constitutional amendment booklets including summary of the financial information statements for initiatives, if applicable.	Section 100.371(13) and 101.171, Fla. Stat.
10	Forms related to voter registration applications, change of legal residence, or change of name affidavits, declarations to secure or provide help to a voter, provisional ballot certificates and affirmations, oaths of persons entering challenge, affidavits for signature difference, etc.	Voting Rights Act, section 10303(e), section 10503 Sections 97.052, 101.045, 101.048, 101.051, 101.111, 101.49, Fla. Stat.

11	If a polling room has security cameras which have been disabled or are non-operational, the following notice must be posted unless the security cameras are covered: "Camera is non-operational during voting hours".	Section 102.031(5), Fla. Stat.
12	Poll watcher information regarding the scope of their role within the polling place or early voting site	Sections 101.131 and 104.615, Fla. Stat., Form DS-DE 125 (Poll watcher designation)
13	Signage for outside the polling room that notifies the public about section 104.0615, Florida Statutes.	Section 104.0615, Fla. Stat.
14	<p>Each precinct must be provided with information that will enable the clerks to direct voters to the proper precinct on Election Day such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A county map showing precinct boundaries and polling place locations. • A street index of the county with a polling place list, and/or <p>Any online source (other than through direct contact with the Supervisor of Elections' office) that reliably and accurately provides information indicating where a voter should vote based on his or her address.</p>	Section 101.045, Fla. Stat. (voter may not vote in any election precinct or district other than one in which the person has legal residence and is registered)

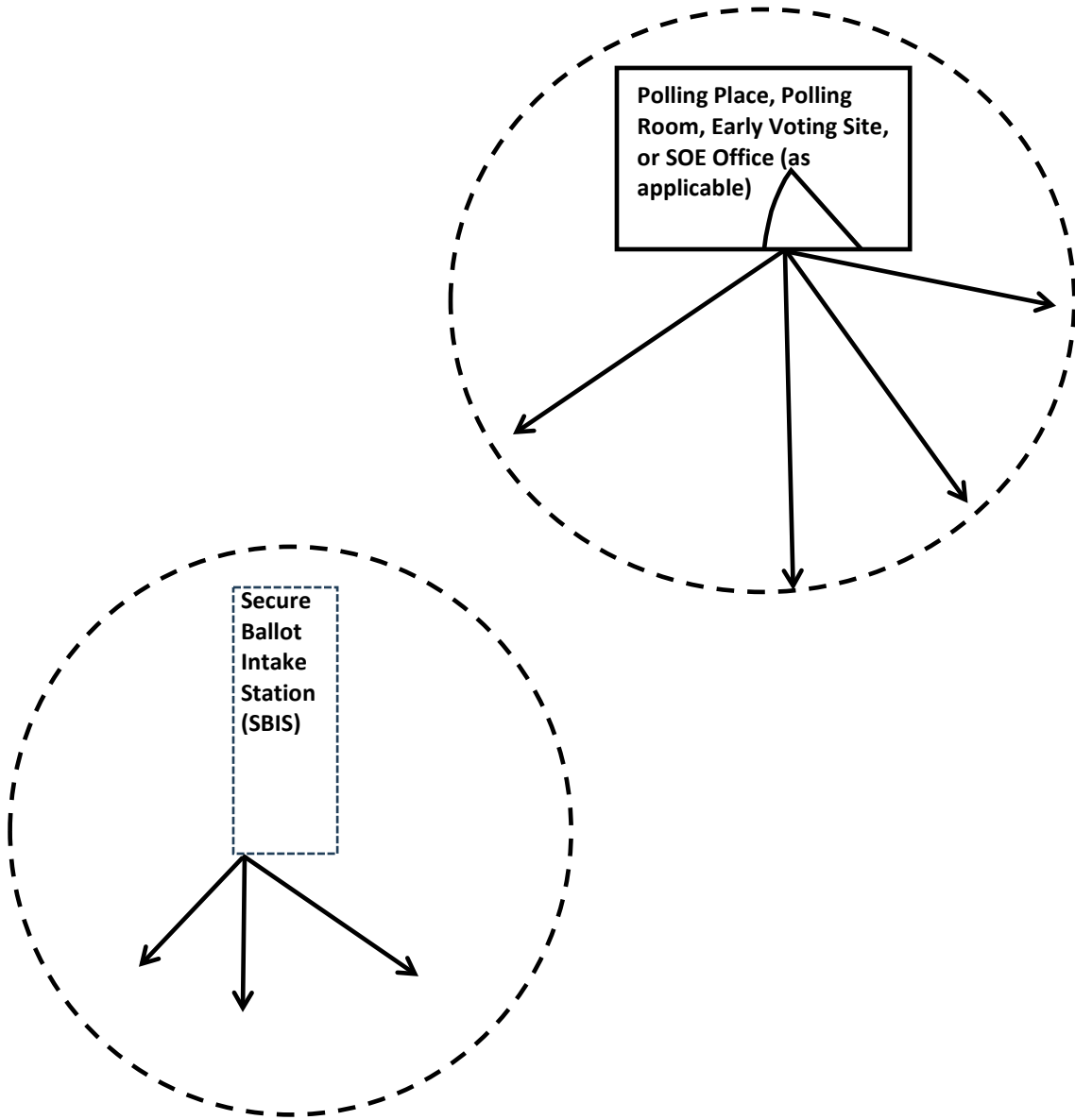
E. No Solicitation Zone (Section 102.031, Fla. Stat.)

No person, political committee, or other group or organization may solicit voters inside the polling place or within 150 feet of a secure ballot intake station or the entrance to any polling place, a polling room where the polling place is also a polling room, an early voting site, or an office of the Supervisor where vote-by-mail ballots are requested and printed on demand for the convenience of voters who appear in person to request them.

The clerk or Supervisor of Elections must designate and mark the 150-foot-no-solicitation zone and mark the boundaries, **in all directions if possible**, from the entrance to a polling place, a polling room where the polling place is also a polling room, an early voting site, an office of the Supervisor where vote-by-mail ballots are requested and printed on demand for the convenience of voters who appear in person to request them, or any secure ballot intake station, and if applicable, multiple entrances thereto. See also **Section F. Solicitation Restrictions (Chapter II)**.



150-foot no solicitation zone should be marked in all directions, if possible. The example below shows single entrance to polling place and single SBIS.



F. Solicitation Restrictions (Sections 101.051(2), 102.031, Fla. Stat.)

Exit polling by media or others is the **only exception** to the designated no-solicitation zone. Exit pollsters may approach voters only **after** voters leave the polling place. Otherwise, no person or group may solicit voters:

- Within the designated no solicitation zone. See **Section E. No Solicitation Zone (Chapter II)** for diagram of no-solicitation zone
- Inside the polling place

The terms “solicit” and “solicitation” includes, but it is not limited to:

- Asking someone for their vote
- Offering to assist someone to vote
- Asking for someone’s opinion
- Asking for a contribution
- Offering food in exchange for an “I voted” sticker
- Displaying political advertisements or campaign materials (including signage on vehicles), except for voters who, without loitering, directly enter and exit the polling place when they are present to vote. Voters may wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or other paraphernalia
- Distributing any political or campaign material or handout
- Conducting a poll (exit polling excepted)
- Asking someone to sign a petition
- Selling or attempting to sell any item
- Giving water or food
- Engaging in any activity with the intent to influence a voter

This does not preclude a Supervisor of Elections or employee of the Supervisor of Elections from providing nonpartisan assistance to voters, including giving food or water to voters.

Chapter III – While Polls are Open

A. Who Is Allowed in the Polling Room? (Sections 101.051, 101.58, 102.031(3), Fla. Stat.)

During voting hours, the only persons allowed in the polling room on Election Day or during the early voting period are:

- Poll workers
- Poll watchers approved by the Supervisor of Elections
- The Supervisor of Elections or Deputy Supervisor of Elections
- Election observers appointed by the Department of State, per section 101.58, Fla. Stat.
- Persons there to vote, persons in the care of a voter, or persons caring for such voter.
- A person who is helping with or participating in a simulated election for minors, as approved by the Supervisor of Elections (for example, the Kids Voting Program).

B. Who Is Not Allowed in the Polling Room?

While the polls are open, the following persons or activities **are not** allowed in the polling room on Election Day or during the early voting period:

- Candidates, except to vote
- Members of the media, except to vote
- Law enforcement officers or emergency service personnel in a capacity other than as a voter, unless permitted by the clerk or a majority of the election board

If the polling room is in a location commonly used by the public to gain access to businesses or homes (such as the lobby of a condominium) or in an area traditionally used as public area for discussion (such as a mall), there may be other people traveling through the area. However, care should be taken that these people do not interfere with the voting process.

C. Election Team

The election team must wear identification badges. Special badges should be assigned if the poll worker is providing language assistance. See **Section C. Voter Asks for Language Assistance (Chapter VI)** This will help to distinguish the election team from poll watchers. It will also make it easier for voters to identify and seek information or help from a poll worker or election staff.

Poll workers and staff should refrain from using personal electronics or other distractions so they can focus their attention on the voters.

Poll workers and election staff must remain nonpartisan while on duty during the early voting period and on Election Day.



Election Team Shall Not Display Partisanship

- DO NOT wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or any other items that are politically oriented.
- DO NOT discuss any candidate, political party, issue, or any related topic with other poll workers, poll watchers, or voters.
- DO NOT have visible any written campaign or related material.

D. Voters

Voters may bring in pre-marked sample ballots or campaign literature for their personal use. They **may not** use these to campaign inside the polling place, within 150 feet of the entrance to the polling place, or within 150 feet of the secure ballot intake station. Voters **may not** bring a vote-by-mail ballot into the voting booth. A vote-by-mail ballot brought to the poll must be surrendered prior to the voter receiving a ballot to vote at the polls. See **Section D. Voter Who Requested Vote-by-Mail Ballot Goes to Vote at Polls – Returned/Surrendered Ballot (Chapter V)**.

Voters are permitted to wear partisan items and bring campaign literature for personal use. Voters may wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or any other campaign items when they enter the polling place to vote.

After each voter leaves, a poll worker must check the voting booth for uncast ballots and campaign or other materials left behind. Poll workers must remove and discard any sample ballots or campaign material left by a voter in the polling place. Follow the procedure in **Section H. Uncast (Abandoned) Ballot (Chapter V)**.

No photography is permitted within the polling room or early voting area. However, voters are permitted to photograph only their own ballot per section 102.031, Fla. Stat.

E. Poll Watchers (Sections 101.111, 101.131, 101.23, 102.031(3), Fla. Stat.)

Each political party and each candidate may have one poll watcher in each polling room or early voting area at any one time during the early voting period and on Election Day. A political committee formed for the specific purpose of expressly advocating the passage or defeat of an issue on the ballot may also have a designated poll watcher in each polling room during the early voting period and on Election Day. The Supervisor shall furnish to each election board a list of the poll watchers designated and approved for such polling rooms or early voting areas.

Approved poll watchers are allowed to roam from one polling room or early voting area to another if the number of poll watchers at any polling room or early voting area does not exceed the allowable number for the applicable candidate, political party, or political committee within the county designated.

While in the polling room, each poll watcher:

- Must wear his or her badge that clearly identifies the poll watcher as a poll watcher and displays the poll watcher’s name. No other information is required on the badge, however, section 101.131, Florida Statutes states “[e]ach political party and each candidate may have one watcher in each polling room or early voting area at any one time during the election. A political committee formed for the specific purpose of expressly advocating the passage or defeat of an issue on the ballot may have one watcher for each polling room or early voting area at any one time during the election.” In accordance with this requirement, each poll watcher should have something signifying on whose behalf he/she is watching.
- Is allowed to observe the conduct of the election. The poll watcher **may not**, however, obstruct the orderly conduct of the election.
- May observe the voter check-in process. The poll watcher **may not**, however, come closer to the inspectors’ table or the voting booths than is reasonably necessary to perform the poll watcher’s functions.
- May observe the operations of a secure ballot intake station at an early voting site. The poll watcher may not obstruct the operations of the station.
- May not speak to or otherwise interact with voters inside the polling room, nor provide help to a voter in any way with the voting of his/her ballot.
- May submit written voter challenges to the clerk. See **Section H. Challenge to Voter’s Right to Vote (Chapter IV)**
- Is not allowed to wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or other campaign items.
- May bring in and use mobile electronic devices in a **non-disruptive** way, for example:
 - Devices must be set to produce no noise or a low volume vibration.
 - Devices may not be used to take photographs or recordings of any kind inside the polling room or early voting site. See **Section D. Voters and G. Photography Prohibited (Chapter III)**.
 - Poll watchers may not have an audible telephone conversation inside the polling room or early voting site.
 - Poll watchers may use electronic devices so long as they do not disturb voters, poll workers, or election staff in the performance of their duties.
- Shall pose any questions regarding polling place procedures **directly** to the clerk for resolution.

After polls close, no more than 3 people are allowed near the inspectors or other election officials to see ballot reconciliation.

F. Order at the Polls (Sections 102.031 and 104.101, Fla. Stat)

The Supervisor of Elections or the election board may take any reasonable action to ensure order is maintained at the polling place. Law enforcement officers may be called upon to remove disruptive persons from the

polling room or the no-solicitation zone. It is a first-degree misdemeanor for anyone to fail or refuse to assist the sheriff or deputy sheriff in maintaining order at the polls.

G. Photography Prohibited (Section 102.031, Fla. Stat.; DEAO 12-13)

No photography is allowed in the polling room or early voting area. This prohibition also applies to operational security cameras within the polling room. If they remain operational, they must be covered so voters, voting, and ballots are not recorded in violation of privacy. If cameras are not operational, a notice must be posted notifying voters that the camera is not in use during voting hours.

Exception: Voters are permitted to photograph their own ballot.

Chapter IV – Voter Check-In

A. Overview

Voter check-in involves several key steps to ensure that the voter is registered and eligible to vote a regular ballot, including:

- Finding the voter’s name on the precinct register to verify registration;
- Presenting a photo ID to confirm identity;
- Comparing the voter’s signature on an ID with the signature on the precinct register to confirm a match;
- Determining that the voter’s address on record is the most current so that the voter is provided the ballot corresponding to his or her current address and that the voter, on Election Day, if applicable, is in the proper precinct for voting the ballot;
- Determining that the voter is eligible to vote a regular ballot or to allow the voter to vote a provisional ballot under specified circumstances such as a written challenge has been submitted, or the voter was issued a notice of potential ineligibility, or it cannot be determined that the voter has not already voted a vote-by-mail ballot.

B. Identification: Photo and Signature (Sections 101.23, 101.043, 101.045, 101.49, Fla. Stat.)

When a voter presents to vote, the voter must provide a current and valid photo ID with signature for you to confirm identity. If the photo ID presented does not contain the signature of the voter, an additional identification that provides the voter’s signature must be provided. For example, a voter may present a student ID for photo identification. If that ID has no signature, a signature comparison must still be made, so another form of identification such as a credit card or library card that has the voter’s signature must be presented in addition to the photo ID.

1. Only the following forms of photo ID are acceptable by law. The photo ID cannot be an electronic image or photocopy.
 - Florida driver license
 - Florida ID card issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
 - U.S. passport (the U.S. passport card is acceptable)
 - Debit/credit card
 - Military ID
 - Student ID
 - Retirement center ID
 - Neighborhood association ID
 - Public assistance ID
 - Veteran health ID card issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
 - License to carry a concealed weapon or firearm issued pursuant to section 790.06, Fla. Stat.
 - Employee ID card issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the Federal Government, the state, a county, or a municipality.
2. If the voter presents a photo ID with signature or a photo ID and a separate signature identification:

- To confirm identity, compare the photo ID to the voter standing before you.
 - If the voter is the same person as in the photo ID, then proceed to search for the voter’s name on the register as set forth in **Section C. Name on Precinct Register (Chapter IV)**.
 - If the voter does not appear to be the same person as in the photo, the voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. Follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.
3. The voter must sign the precinct register, electronic signature pad, or the early voting certificate, whichever is applicable. The precinct register must contain space to allow for voter’s signature and for the clerk’s or inspector’s initials. Compare the voter’s signature on the precinct register to the signature on the voter’s ID.
 - If the signatures appear to be the same, proceed with the voting process.
 - If you doubt that the signature on the voter’s identification is the same as the voter’s signature on the precinct register, the voter will need to complete a signature affidavit.
 - If the person completes the affidavit, proceed with the voting process.
 - If the person will not or does not complete the affidavit, the voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. Proceed to **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.
 4. If the voter does not present an acceptable form of photo ID and identification with a signature, or presents a copy of a photo ID instead of the physical photo ID, the voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. Proceed to **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.

C. Name on Precinct Register (Sections 98.461, 101.5608(1), Fla. Stat.)

If a Florida driver license or state ID card is made available and you have an electronic poll book, scan the card first to search the precinct register. If the voter’s name is found on the precinct register, follow the procedures in paragraph (3) of **Section B. Identification: Photo and Signature(Chapter IV)** for the signature comparison.

1. If not already determined to be on the precinct register, search for the voter’s name in the precinct register:
 - If the voter’s name is on the precinct register, proceed to **Section E. Address (Chapter IV)** to confirm the address.
 - If the voter’s name is not on the precinct register, check for name variations.

Search Tips if unable to locate name as presented:		
Name Search Type	Example	Possible Search Criteria
<i>Hyphenated names</i>	Mary Smith-Collins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Smith ▪ Collins ▪ SmithCollins or CollinsSmith ▪ Collins Smith or Smith Collins ▪ Smith% or Collins%(wildcard search)
<i>Multiple surnames</i>	Maria Morena de Arroyo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ deArroyo ▪ de Arroyo ▪ Arroyo

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Morena
<i>Surnames with special characters</i>	Nela Muñoz or López	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Munoz ▪ Lopez
<i>Same names</i> (Father, son, and/or grandson – may or may not be distinguished by suffix)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thomas Jones, Sr. ▪ Thomas Jones, Jr. ▪ Thomas Jones, III 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Last name and date of birth
<i>Similar names</i> (Twins -same birthday; siblings or close relatives - different birthdays)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Terriyana - Terriana Jones ▪ Ethan - Evan Bennett ▪ Kathryn Elizabeth - Elizabeth Kathryn Sims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First name, last name, and date of birth

NOTE: Not all electronic poll books have the same search features. Depending on the electronic poll book in use, **you may be able to additionally search by:**

- The voter’s registration number (i.e., Florida Voter Registration System (FVRS) number;
- Voter’s house number and last name;
- First name and date of birth; and
- Last name and date of birth.
- Please refer to your county’s training manuals for more information about electronic poll books used in your county.

2. If the voter’s name still cannot be found on the precinct register, the inspector shall ask the voter if the voter’s name or address has changed:

- If the voter’s name has changed, first follow the procedure in **Section F. Name Change (Chapter IV)** before continuing with the voter check-in process.
- If the voter’s address has changed, first follow the procedure in **Section E. Address Change (Chapter IV)** before continuing with the voter check-in process.
- If the voter’s name or address has not changed, contact the Supervisor’s office or, if available at the precinct, check the master list of registered voters. If you still are not able to find the voter’s name or cannot get in contact with the Supervisor of Elections’ office to determine more about the voter’s eligibility, follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.

D. Address (Sections 101.043(1), 101.045, Fla. Stat.)

Ask each voter (if you have not already asked the voter beforehand) whether the voter has an address change or any update to make.

- If the voter responds **yes** to the question, follow the procedure in **Section E. Address Change (Chapter IV)**.

- If the voter responds **no** to the question and the address on the photo ID presented is the same as the one on the precinct register, proceed with voting process. A voter may still be asked to reconfirm the current residential address.
- If the voter cannot recall or is uncertain whether his or her address on record is current, ask him or her to recite or show you his or her current address to compare with the one on record.
- If the voter's address is address protected, follow special procedures established by the Supervisor of Elections to allow the voter to disclose his/her address in a confidential and discreet manner.

E. Address Change (Sections 101.045(2), Fla. Stat., 101.657, Fla. Stat.)

If the voter indicates a change or different address than the address listed in the register, follow these procedures:

1. If the voter is only making an **in-county address change**, instruct the voter to complete an address change affirmation or voter registration application with further guidance as follows:

- If voting on Election Day and the voter's new address is in a different polling place, direct the voter to the proper polling place corresponding to his or her new precinct. If the voter is not in the proper precinct but insists that they are, follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.
- If voting on Election Day and the voter's new address is in the same polling place, direct the voter to continue with the voter check-in process to vote.
- If voting during the early voting period, direct the voter to continue with the voter check-in process to vote.

2. If the voter is making an **out-of-county address change** from **another Florida county**, instruct the voter to complete an address change affirmation or voter registration application with further guidance as follows:

For precincts or polling places using electronic poll books:

- If voting on Election Day and the voter's new address is in a different polling place, direct the voter to the proper polling place corresponding to his or her new precinct. If the voter is not in the proper precinct but insists that they are, follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.
- If voting on Election Day and the voter's new address is in the same polling place, direct the voter to continue with the voter check-in process to vote.
- If voting during the early voting period, direct the voter to continue with the voter check-in process to vote.

For precincts using paper precinct registers: The voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot (see exception below). Follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**. The voter does not need to fill out a separate address change affirmation or voter registration form. The provisional ballot certificate affirmation may be copied and used for that purpose. Note that if the voter is voting on Election Day and if his or her new address corresponds to a different precinct or polling place, direct the voter to that precinct or polling place to vote to ensure that the ballot will be cast and counted.

Exception: For active uniformed services members or their family members moving in from another Florida county, allow the voter to complete an address change affirmation or a voter registration application before voting a regular ballot.

3. If a voter's address is marked as **address-protected** on the precinct register, follow special procedures established by the Supervisor of Elections to allow the voter to make and disclose current address and if necessary, make address change in a confidential and discreet manner.

F. Name Change (Sections 101.045(2), Fla. Stat.)

If the voter's former name appears on the precinct register, instruct the voter to complete an affirmation or a voter registration application for a name change before continuing the **Voter Check-in** process.

If the voter's former name is not on the precinct register, call the Supervisor of Elections' office or access a master list of registered voters to determine if the person is eligible to vote. If the person is eligible and in the proper precinct, instruct the voter to complete an affirmation or voter registration application for a name change before continuing the voter-check-in process. Otherwise proceed to **Section G. Ineligibility to Vote (Chapter IV)**.

G. Ineligibility to Vote (Sections 97.053, 101.045, 101.048, and 101.5608, Fla. Stat.)

A voter's eligibility to vote a regular ballot is contingent on being registered and eligible to vote in the proper precinct and having satisfied the other requirements for check-in. If the voter's eligibility to vote cannot be determined, and/or the voter is not in the proper precinct (if voting on Election Day), refer to the following:

- If the register indicates that the voter's eligibility to be registered and/or to vote has been challenged, proceed to **Section H. Challenge to Voter's Right to Vote (Chapter IV)**.
- If the register indicates that the voter may not be eligible, proceed to **Section I. Potential Ineligibility to Vote (Chapter IV)**.
- If the voter is found to be eligible to vote and, if voting on Election Day, is in the proper precinct, he or she may continue with the voter check-in process and proceed to vote a regular ballot. If the voter is eligible to vote but their address has changed or they are assigned to another precinct (if voting on Election Day), the clerk shall direct the voter to the proper precinct.
- If the voter insists on voting in the precinct not associated with the voter's address, follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.
- If the voter is an unverified voter [i.e., someone whose Florida driver license number, Florida identification card number or last four digits of social security card has not yet been or could not be verified by the Supervisor's office, follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.
- If the voter is not registered or eligible to vote, but the voter believes he or she is, follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.

H. Challenge to Voter's Right to Vote (Sections 101.111, Fla. Stat.)

A voter's right to vote may be challenged at the polling place, or in advance, in which case there will be a notation on the precinct register. A challenger must complete a written "Oath of Person Entering Challenge" form.

A challenged voter must immediately be presented with a copy of the written challenge. Except as provided below, the challenged voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. See **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.

Exception: If the sole basis of a challenge is that the voter's legal residence is not in the precinct, the challenged voter shall be first given the opportunity to make a change of address. Follow the procedures in **Section E. Address Change (Chapter IV)** before continuing the voter check-in process.

I. Potential Ineligibility to Vote (Sections 101.048, Fla. Stat.)

If the precinct register contains a notation that the election office has asserted that the voter may be ineligible, follow special procedures established by the Supervisor for the voter to determine the basis of the ineligibility in a confidential and discreet manner. The voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. See **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.

Chapter V – Voting Process

A. Primary Election (Sections 97.055, 101.021, Fla. Stat.; Section 5, Article VI, Fla. Const.)

Florida is a closed primary election state. This means that only voters who are registered members of political parties may vote in contests for their party’s candidates or nominees for an office in a primary election, including in a presidential preference primary election. A voter registered with “no party affiliation” is not permitted to choose to vote for a particular political party on primary election day.

All voters, regardless of party affiliation or no party affiliation, may vote for nonpartisan offices and public measures in a primary election.

There are times when a “universal primary” contest may appear on a primary ballot. This means that all the candidates or nominees in the contest are from the same party and they will face no opposition in the general election. When that happens, all voters, regardless of whether the voter is registered with or without a party affiliation, may vote in that contest. This is different from a presidential preference primary. In a presidential preference primary, a voter must be registered with the political party that has a presidential preference primary to vote in that election.

A voter may submit a party change at the polls in a primary election; however, this change will not take effect until the next election. The voter will not be able to vote as a member of this new party at the primary election.

It is very important that the voter be given the ballot that corresponds to his or her residential address and, during a primary election, the ballot that corresponds to his or her party affiliation. It is recommended that the poll worker handing the ballot to the voter ask the voter whether he or she has received the ballot that properly corresponds to his or her residential address and, if during a primary election, whether the ballot properly corresponds to the voter’s political party affiliation.

B. Provisional Ballot (52 U.S.C. Section 21082; Sections 101.048, 101.049, and 101.111, Fla. Stat.)

Voters have a right to vote a provisional ballot in certain circumstances. This is a fail-safe mechanism provided under both federal and state laws.

1. Who Must be Allowed to Vote a Provisional Ballot:

- A voter who does not produce an acceptable form of photo ID with signature or a photo ID and a signature ID.
- A voter whose Florida driver license number or Florida identification card number, or the last 4 digits of the social security number has not been verified.
- A person whose signature on the precinct register, electronic device, or early voting certificate differs from that on the identification presented and the person refuses to complete a signature affidavit.
- A voter whose identity is in question based on the photo identification provided.

- A person whose name is not on the precinct register and the poll worker is unable to verify that the person is a registered voter of the state.
- A person whose name is not on the precinct register and the poll worker verifies that the person is not registered in the state, but the person maintains that he or she is entitled to vote.
- A registered voter who is not otherwise allowed to make an out-of-county address change at the polls for purposes of voting a regular ballot (e.g., new polling location does not have electronic poll book, or person is not an active uniformed services voter or family member).
- A registered voter who is required but refuses to execute an address change on an affirmation or voter registration application to vote a regular ballot.
- A voter whose name is on the precinct register with an indication that he or she requested a vote-by-mail ballot and the poll worker is unable to verify whether the vote-by-mail ballot has been returned and received by the Supervisor of Elections.
- A voter whose name is on the precinct register with an indication that he or she requested a vote-by-mail ballot and the poll worker confirms that the Supervisor of Elections has received the voted vote-by-mail ballot, but the voter maintains that he or she has not returned the vote-by-mail ballot.
- A voter whose name is on the precinct register with an indication that he or she voted early but the voter maintains he or she has not already voted in this election.
- A person whose name is not on the precinct register and who has completed either the change of name or change of residence affirmation but the poll worker is unable to verify whether the person is a registered voter of the state.
- A voter who has been challenged except in specific cases of address changes.
- A person whom an election official has asserted is not eligible and a notation is indicated on the precinct register.
- A voter who votes on or after the normal poll closing time pursuant to a court or other order extending the polling hours.
- Any person for whom you are unable to get through to the Supervisor of Elections' office to determine if the person is eligible to vote.

2. Notice of rights/instructions: Each person voting a provision ballot must be given a written "Notice of Rights" and instructions required by law for a provisional ballot voter.

- Right to present further written evidence (if he or she so chooses) that supports his or her eligibility to vote to the Supervisor of Elections by no later than 5 p.m. on the second day following the election.
- Right to find out after the election whether the provisional ballot was counted, and if not, the reason why.
- Right to cure a signature if a signature is missing from the provisional ballot certificate or the signature on the certificate does not match with the one on record or in the precinct register.

3. How to vote and process a provisional ballot:

Step 1: The voter must first be provided the Provisional Ballot Voter's Certificate and Affirmation form to complete. The voter must complete and sign the form in front of the poll worker.

Step 2: The poll worker who witnesses the voter's signature must also sign the same form and indicate the:

- Election date;
- Precinct or ballot style; and
- Specific reason(s) the voter is voting a provisional ballot.

Step 3: The voter is to be given the ballot.

Step 4: Once the voter has completed the provisional ballot, the voter must place the voted ballot into the secrecy envelope, then place the secrecy envelope within the provisional ballot envelope, and afterwards seal the provisional ballot envelope.

Before the sealed provisional ballot envelope is placed in a secured ballot box or other container labeled specifically for and used only for provisional ballots:

Step 5: Give the voter the voter's Notice of Rights as provisional ballot vote. The voter's notice of rights must be given to the voter no later than the point at which the provisional ballot envelope is placed in a secured ballot box or other container.

Step 6: If the Provisional Ballot Certificate and Affirmation form is not a part of the envelope, the completed form must be attached to the envelope. The sealed provisional ballot envelope must then be placed in a ballot box or other container labeled specifically for and used only for provisional ballots.

4. How to return voted provisional ballots to the office. All provisional ballots must remain sealed in their envelopes and must be returned to the Supervisor of Elections after the polls close.

Attention:

1. Do not tabulate or allow a provisional ballot to be tabulated at the polls.
2. If a court order extends polling hours past the official close of polling hours, keep provisional ballots voted during the extended hours separate from those voted during the regularly scheduled polling hours.

C. Voter Asks for Another Ballot (Sections 101.5608, Fla. Stat.)

If a voter makes a mistake on his or her ballot or on the voter-verifiable paper output, whichever is applicable, the voter may receive another ballot or be given another opportunity to make his or her selections on the voting equipment, as is applicable, unless the ballot or voter-verifiable paper output has been cast in the tabulator. The uncast ballot or voter-verifiable paper output that has a mistake on it is referred to as a “spoiled ballot.” The following procedures, as shall be posted in the polling room, are required to ensure that the ballot cannot be tabulated but also preserve, to the extent possible, the secrecy of the ballot.

To ensure that the “spoiled ballot” cannot be counted or otherwise tabulated, the voter shall physically alter the ballot by notching, cutting, or tearing through the timing marks on the spoiled ballot. A voter may, instead, allow the poll worker to do the physical alteration.

If the voter spoils a second ballot or paper output, allow the voter to mark another ballot or make another selection on the equipment. Process a subsequently spoiled ballot as previously described.

A voter is allowed up to three attempts to vote, including the original attempt.

These “spoiled ballots” must be properly secured in accordance with established chain of custody procedures including transfer to the Supervisor of Elections after the close of polls of each early voting day or Election Day, as applicable. The election board must also then perform the ballot accounting procedures in **Section D. Ballot Accounting (Chapter IX)** to account for the ballots issued and the number of ballots spoiled.

D. Voter Who Requested Vote-by-Mail Ballot Goes to Vote at Polls (Section 101.69, Fla. Stat.)

A voter who has requested a vote-by-mail ballot may opt to vote at the polling place. A voter who has requested a vote-by-mail ballot should already be noted on the precinct register. The poll worker must take the following steps to determine whether the voter will be allowed to vote a regular ballot or a provisional ballot.

1. Unreturned Ballot

If the voter does not return the vote-by-mail ballot to the poll worker, the poll worker must confirm with the Supervisor of Elections’ office that the Supervisor of Elections has not already received the voter’s vote-by-mail ballot. A vote-by-mail ballot is deemed cast upon receipt by the Supervisor of Elections’ office.

- If it is verified that the Supervisor of Elections has not received the vote-by-mail ballot, the Supervisor of Elections will authorize the voter to proceed with the voting process.
- If it is verified that the Supervisor of Elections has received the vote-by-mail ballot but the voter maintains that he or she did not return the vote-by-mail ballot, the voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. Follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.
- If it cannot be verified or otherwise determined whether the voter’s vote-by-mail ballot has been received by or returned to the Supervisor of Elections, the voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. Follow the procedure in **Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)**.

2. Returned/Surrendered Ballot

If the voter returns/surrenders his or her vote-by-mail ballot (voted or not) to vote in person instead, follow the procedures below to mark the returned ballot as “canceled.” These procedures, as shall be posted in the polling room, are required to ensure that the ballot cannot be tabulated but also preserve, to the extent possible, the secrecy of the ballot.

- If the vote-by-mail ballot is returned/surrendered without the envelope or outside the envelope, the returned/surrendered ballot shall be marked as “canceled” by having the voter physically alter the ballot by notching, cutting, or tearing through the ballot’s timing marks on the ballot; or
- If the vote-by-mail ballot is returned/surrendered within the envelope, the ballot shall be marked as “canceled” by having the voter physically alter the envelope in a manner that also notches, cuts, or tears through the timing marks of the enclosed ballot. Alternatively, the voter may first remove the ballot from the envelope and physically alter the ballot by notching, cutting, or tearing through the ballot’s timing marks and then placing the ballot back into the envelope. The poll worker shall then also mark the certificate envelope as “canceled.”

The voter may allow the poll worker to do the physical alteration as described above. Once the returned ballot is marked as “canceled”, the poll worker must properly secure the “canceled” ballot or “canceled” ballot with the envelope for transfer in accordance with established chain of custody procedures to the Supervisor of Elections after the close of polls on each early voting day or Election Day.

NOTE: If the voter requests to use the returned ballot which the voter has marked as a sample ballot, allow the voter to take a photo of their ballot before surrendering the ballot to the inspector to cancel. A voter may not take a vote-by-mail ballot into the booth.

E. Secure Ballot Intake Stations for Voted Vote-by-Mail Ballots (Section 101.69, Fla. Stat)

Every early voting location must provide a secure ballot intake station for voters who do not want to vote at the location but want to physically return a voted vote-by-mail ballot to the Supervisor of Elections. The secure ballot intake station must be clearly labeled, sealed, and placed in an area where a designated election board member always maintains custody and control of the secure ballot intake station.

The designated election board member should ensure that, prior to the ballot being dropped off, the voter has placed and sealed their voted ballot in the certificate envelope and signed the certificate. When the polls close, the election board must perform the ballot accounting procedures in **Section D. Ballot Accounting (Chapter IX)** to account for the ballots in the secure ballot intake station.

F. Voter Does Not Want to Vote Ballot (Section 101.5608(2), Fla. Stat.)

If after checking in, a voter returns a ballot because he or she does not want to vote, the poll worker shall treat the blank ballot as a spoiled ballot. The following procedures, as shall be posted in the polling room, are required to ensure that the “spoiled” ballot cannot be tabulated but also preserves, to the extent possible, the secrecy of the ballot.

The voter shall physically alter the ballot by notching, cutting, or tearing through the timing marks on the spoiled ballot. A voter may, instead, allow the poll worker to physically alter the ballot. The poll worker shall physically alter the ballot if the voter has left without physically altering the ballot.

These “spoiled ballots” must be properly secured in accordance with established chain of custody procedures including transfer to the Supervisor of Elections after the close of polls on each early voting day or Election Day, as applicable.

To preclude the voter from having a voter history, the poll worker should either “undo” the voter check-in in the precinct register (either paper or electronic), if possible, or record the circumstances of the person checking-in and not voting so that the information later may be provided to the Supervisor of Elections for purposes of reconciliation.

After the close of polls on each early voting day or Election Day, the election board must perform the ballot accounting procedures in **Section D. Ballot Accounting (Chapter IX)** to account for the ballots issued and the number of ballots spoiled.

In the event a voter requests a replacement ballot, see **Section C. Voter Asks for Another Ballot (Chapter V)**.

G. Voter Tries to Take Ballot from Polling Room (Section 104.20, Fla. Stat.)

If a voter attempts to take his or her ballot from the polling room, explain to the voter that the ballot may be spoiled if the voter does not wish to have it counted. See **Section F. Voter Does Not Want to Vote Ballot (Chapter V)**. If the voter insists on taking the ballot, advise the voter that it is against the law to attempt to take or remove a ballot from the polling room, and the incident will be reported. If the voter takes the ballot, the poll worker shall make a notation on the Ballot Accounting Form and document the incident. If the voter can be identified, the poll worker shall complete a voter fraud complaint using DS-DE 34 which can be found at <https://dos.fl.gov/elections/contacts/elections-fraud-complaint/>.

Voter Fraud Hotline: 1.877.868.3737

H. Uncast (Abandoned) Ballot (Section 101.051)

If a voter leaves the polling room and leaves his or her ballot in the voting booth or in and around the tabulation equipment without casting the ballot, whether the ballot is blank or filled in, the poll workers shall place the ballot in an envelope or container marked “unscanned ballot.” The envelope or container shall be transmitted to the canvassing board. **Do not tabulate the abandoned ballot at the polling place or early voting site.** See **Chapter VI – Assistance at the Polls**, requiring a voter to fill out an assistance request form if the voter needs help casting a vote.

I. Upset Voter

Voters may become upset, irate, or frustrated for several reasons, particularly if they are told that they cannot do something they want to do, they must go to another location to vote, or their registration or eligibility is in question.

As you address the situation:

- Remain calm and professional. If you get upset or shout, the voter is likely to get increasingly upset.
- Keep voice levels down.
- Watch your body language.
- Listen to what the voter is saying.
- Be polite and respectful.
- Offer the voter assistance. Try to find a solution to the problem.
- If necessary, ask the clerk or deputy to assist if the voter becomes very angry or threatening.
- Document reported problems and resolutions.



For additional information see **Section F. Order at the Polls (Chapter III)**.

Chapter VI – Assistance at the Polls

A. Overview

All voters have the right to ask for and receive help for any reason, including reasons of blindness, disability, inability to read or write, or limited-language proficiency, from any person of their choosing other than their employer, employer’s agent, or union representative.

B. Voter Asks for Help in Casting a Ballot or Using Equipment (Sections 101.5611, 101.031(4), 101.051, 97.061, Fla. Stat.)

If, after entering the voting booth, the voter asks for more instructions on how to mark the ballot or use the equipment, two poll workers of different political parties, if present, or, if not, two poll workers of same political party, must assist the voter. No one assisting the voter may in any manner request, suggest, or seek to persuade or induce any voter to vote for or against any political party, candidate, amendment, question, or proposition. After giving the voter instructions, the poll workers must leave the voter to vote in secret. For other types of specific assistance, see **Section C. Voter Asks for Language Assistance** within this chapter, and Chapter VII entitled Voters with Disabilities.

C. Voter Asks for Language Assistance (52 U.S.C. 10303(f)(4) and 52 U.S.C. 10503(b)(2)(A))

Some voters may need language assistance due to an inability to read, write, or speak English or because of limited English language proficiency. A voter needing assistance must fill out the “Declaration to Secure Assistance” form as found in 101.051, Fla. Stat. Likewise, a person assisting a voter must fill out the “Declaration to Provide Assistance” form found in 101.051, Fla. Stat. A voter needing language assistance must be allowed to:

- Bring along a person to interpret as long as that person is not an employer, an agent of the employer, or union representative.
- Vote using a ballot to mark their choices for subsequent tabulation or a voter interface device that provides the voter an option to view and select contest choices in Spanish or other required language and produce a voter-verifiable paper output with the voter’s selections for subsequent tabulation.
- Have access to sample ballots and other voting and registration materials and information translated in Spanish.
- Have language assistance provided by a bilingual worker or interpreter, or professional translator services by phone, other interactive or virtual service for translation, or multi-language-audio-capable voting equipment, whichever is provided in your county.

Your county Supervisor of Elections will provide you with the requisite materials and guidance including the U.S. Election Assistance Commission’s glossary entitled “Election Phrases at a Glance – English to Spanish.” If you are serving as a bilingual poll worker, always wear identification in the polls in the required language.

NOTE: A person providing assistance must not request, suggest, or seek to persuade any voter on how to vote for any candidate, issue, or judicial retention race.

A. Overview

All voters have the right to request and obtain assistance in voting. See also **(Chapter VI)**.

IMPORTANT: A voter requesting assistance must fill out the “Declaration to Secure Assistance” form as found in 101.051, Fla. Stat. Likewise, a person assisting a voter must fill out the “Declaration to Provide Assistance” form found in 101.051, Fla. Stat.

Some voters may have a disability that is not visible or evident. Regardless of the name of the disability, the basic steps below should be followed:

- Treat every voter with the same dignity and respect you would want, expect, and deserve in words, tone, and actions.
- Be professional, courteous, and patient.
- Use “People First” language. For example:
 - “A person who uses a wheelchair” instead of “a wheelchair bound” or “a person confined to a wheelchair.”
 - “A person who is blind” instead of a “blind person.”
- Avoid outdated terms such as “handicapped” or “crippled” or contrived or potentially offensive terms such as “differently abled” or “physically challenged.”
- Avoid using vague and exclusive group terms such as “they” or “them” for voters with disabilities.
- Speak directly to the voter, even if accompanied by a companion or caregiver, or interpreter.
- Treat assistive devices as an extension of the voter whether it is a wheelchair, scooter, crutch, walker, cane, eye wear, hearing aid, prosthetic device, or orthotic device. Always ask permission before touching or grabbing their assistive devices.
- Listen carefully to the voter to learn how to best help the voter. Explain the process and, if needed, give the voter more time to complete the task at hand.

B. Cognition

A voter with a cognitive disability may have difficulty with memory, attention, reading, or sight. When interacting:

- Be patient and respectful.
- Use a calm demeanor.
- Use clear and concise words and short sentences to explain the process.

- Repeat instructions and process as may be needed for the voter to understand and process what is being said.
- Give them time to move through the process without feeling rushed.

C. Hearing

A voter who is deaf, hard of hearing, or with mild or moderate hearing ability may use a hearing device or an interpreter. It may not be immediately obvious.

- Do not shout. It is disruptive to shout and may make you harder to understand, especially if the voter reads lips.
- Rephrase, rather than repeat, sentences that the voter may not understand.
- Speak directly to the voter, even if accompanied by an interpreter and maintain eye contact with the voter.

D. Mobility

A voter with a permanent or temporary physical disability may use a cane, a crutch, a walker, or a wheelchair to move around. The degree of mobility may vary. For example, a voter using a wheelchair may still be able to use his or her hands and arms or get out of the wheelchair and walk a short distance. A person with respiratory or heart trouble may not appear to be mobility impaired, but he or she may need to sit down.

- Do not lean across a wheelchair user to talk to someone else or to shake another person's hand.
- Make eye contact with the voter. If the voter is in a wheelchair, be at eye level, if possible, by either sitting in a chair or standing at a slight distance.
- Do not pull or touch a voter's wheelchair unless you have received permission to do so. The chair is part of the voter's personal space.
- Ensure ramps provide the closest accessibility to the polling place. This is important not only for voters who may be using wheelchairs but for voters who may be using canes, crutches, or walkers.
- Ensure ramps are not obstructed so they can be used without difficulty. If polling site has multiple paths of travel, be sure that signs direct people to the accessible paths around the site.
- Ensure there is a clear path of travel into and out of the polling area for persons who may be in wheelchairs or using other assistive devices.
- Be aware of the reach limits of people in wheelchairs. If a counter is too high for a wheelchair user to see over it, step around it to conduct business with the person.
- Ask first before touching or grabbing a voter's cane, crutch, or walker. People who use them rely on them for balance.

E. Sight

A voter who is blind or has low vision may use glasses or a magnifying glass, or travel with a service animal defined by law, a cane, or a sighted companion, or be alone. Be prepared to help with orientation and reading.

- A poll worker should state his or her name and title or position when communicating with a person who is blind or has low vision.
- Do not speak loudly to a person who is blind or has low vision.
- If the voter asks to be guided, offer an arm or shoulder to guide and walk slightly in front of the voter.
- Describe the setting including any partly open doors, steps, or ramps.
- Read information signs that appear in print on the walls or displays.
- If the person is using a service animal, walk on the opposite side of where the dog is guiding the voter. Do not talk to, distract, or otherwise touch service animals including their harness or leash. The dog is “on duty.”
- Do not touch a person’s cane. If the person puts down the cane in an unsafe place, do not move it. Tell the person kindly to move it. That way, the person will know where the cane is.
- Be specific with warnings such as stop, swerve, duck, or bend. Do not shout or use non-specific warnings such as “Look out!”
- Be specific and non-visual with directions. Do not tell someone to turn left at the end of the desk. It would be better to say, “Take five steps and turn left.”
- When departing from a person who is blind or has low vision, let him or her know.
- Read informational signs that appear in print on the walls of the polling place.
- Offer magnifying sheets or lens if available or requested by the voter.
- Offer the voter who is blind or has low vision the option of voting on the accessible voting device. If the voter would rather have assistance, allow him or her to be accompanied in the voting booth by someone of his or her choosing or two election officials.

F. Speech and Communication

A voter with a speech or communication disability may have difficulty with speaking, memory, or concentration. It may not be immediately obvious.

- Be patient and do not interrupt. Wait for the voter to finish speaking.
- If you do not understand or need clarification, restate what you understood.
- If needed or requested, provide the voter a pen/pencil and paper to write questions and answers.

Chapter VIII – Voting Systems Operation (Sections 101.5601-101.5614, 101.56062, Fla. Stat.)

A. Overview (Section 101.56075)

The polling place or early voting site must allow for voting by marksense ballot. “Marksense Ballots” means that printed sheet of paper, used in conjunction with an electronic or electromechanical vote tabulation system, containing the names of candidates, or a statement of proposed constitutional amendments or other questions or propositions submitted to the electorate at any election, on which sheet of paper an elector casts his or her vote.” Therefore, a polling place or early voting site must allow for voting by marksense ballot. Additionally, a voter interface device that meets the voter accessibility requirements for individuals with disabilities under section 301 of the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 and section 101.5602, Florida Statutes must also be available at each early voting site and polling location.

Instructions on the proper method for casting a ballot for the specific voting system used in the election must be available at each polling place. Each precinct must have a **Voting Systems Operations Manual** for each type of voting system including the accessible voting device used in the county. The manual should include, at a minimum, instructions on how to set up the voting system in the polling place, how to operate the specific voting equipment used in the county, how to troubleshoot, how to lock the vote tabulator against further voting after the polls have closed, and how to properly relay vote totals, handle the ballots and, in some cases, transport voting equipment back to the Supervisor of Elections’ office after the polls have closed.

B. Vote Tabulators (Sections 101.5606, 101.5608(2), Fla. Stat.)

The following applies when a voter uses an optical or digital scan voting system:

Tabulation of ballot – The voter is given a ballot and a secrecy sleeve which he or she takes to the voting booth. After marking the ballot, the voter places the voted ballot into the secrecy sleeve, takes it to the vote tabulator and puts the ballot in the vote tabulator.

Rejected Ballot:

If there is a race on the ballot that is overvoted (the voter has marked more candidates than there are persons to be elected or has marked more than one choice for an issue) or if the vote tabulator reads the ballot as completely blank, the ballot will be rejected by the tabulator. A rejected ballot is considered to be a spoiled ballot.

The vote tabulator screen will display a message to the voter. If necessary, the inspector should inform the voter, without looking at the ballot, why the ballot was rejected and direct the voter to follow the instructions on the screen. The inspector should also inform the voter that he or she may get another ballot or cast the ballot ‘as is’.

To vote another ballot, the rejected ballot must first be marked as “Canceled” by following the procedures for physically altering the ballot as set forth in **Section C. Voter Asks For Another Ballot (Chapter V)**. The “canceled” rejected ballot must then be properly secured in accordance with established chain of custody

procedures including transfer to the Supervisor of Elections after the close of polls on each early voting day or Election Day, as applicable. Once this is completed, the voter may be given another ballot and secrecy sleeve, with instructions on how to properly mark the ballot. See **Section C. Voter Asks For Another Ballot (Chapter V)**.

To vote the rejected ballot, the inspector designated by the Supervisor of Elections, or the voter (depending on the voting system) shall override the rejection mechanism to allow the rejected ballot to be accepted by the tabulator. See instructions for overriding the rejection mechanism in the **Voting Systems Operations Manual** specific to the voting system in your county.

It is the voter's choice to allow the rejected ballot or to reject and vote another ballot.

C. Voter Interface Devices

The following applies when voting using a voter interface device:

- Depending on the system used in the county, the voter is given an unmarked ballot or a blank ballot card and a secrecy sleeve which he or she takes to the voting booth. If a voter asks for further assistance, the poll worker will accompany the voter to the voter interface device and will assist them as needed with retrieving the accessible equipment. Once the display appears on the screen, the voter is left alone to vote and cast his or her ballot.
- The voter marks his or her ballot on an interface screen using their hand, an audio tactile interface device (ATI) and headphones, or a sip and puff device.
- Voter interface devices do not allow a voter to overvote a ballot. However, a voter can undervote one or more races on the ballot. When the voter reviews his or her choices, the system will alert the voter that one or more races have been undervoted, giving the voter another opportunity to make a choice.
- When the ballot is marked, the voter's ballot must then be cast into a vote tabulator.

A. Announcement



At the scheduled closing hour for the early voting day or at 7 p.m. on Election Day, the clerk or other designated official shall announce that the polls are closed and that anyone already in line will be allowed to vote.

After all voters have finished voting and the polls are closed, the proceedings of the election board are open to the public. An area shall be designated to facilitate public observation within a reasonable distance that allows the election officials to close the polls (including reconciliation) properly and securely without interference and disruption.

The election team must complete the following steps including, but not limited to, securing equipment and ballots as further detailed below. The election board must also follow the supplemental accounting procedures prescribed by the Supervisor of Elections.

REMEMBER: The public is allowed to enter the polling room and observe the procedures before the polls open, however the public should not wander around the room but be confined to a specific area designated for public viewing. The public observers must leave when polls open. The public (including poll watchers) is allowed to enter the polling room and observe the procedures after the polls close, which is after all voters have cast their ballots.

B. Voters in Line at Close of Polls (Section 101.049, Fla. Stat)

All eligible voters standing in line at the polling place by the early voting closing hour or 7 p.m. on Election Day shall be allowed to vote. A procedure should be in place to clearly mark the end of the line such as having the deputy stand behind the last person in line to establish a cut-off point.

In the rare event that a court or other order extends the polling hours, the deputy shall stand behind the last person who is in the line waiting to vote at the closing hour. Any person voting after the last person who was in line during the scheduled early voting closing hour or 7 p.m. on Election Day must vote a provisional ballot. These provisional ballots must be kept separate from all other provisional ballots cast during the regular voting hours.

C. Securing Voting Equipment

Once all voters in line by close of polls have voted, the election board must secure the voting device so that no more ballots may be cast. Then the election board shall follow the procedures outlined in the **Voting Systems Operations Manual** for the voting system used in the county and the security procedures approved for the county. Voting equipment must not be shut down prior to the announcement of polls closing and completion of voting.

D. Ballot Accounting (Section 101.69(2), Fla. Stat)

The following steps are necessary to account for all ballots and votes cast during the early voting period and on Election Day:

1. Vote-by-Mail Ballots in Secure Ballot Intake Stations/Early Voting Period

At the end of each day during the early voting period and on Election Day, voted vote-by-mail ballots returned in secure ballot intake stations must be retrieved and placed in a transfer box, case, or bag with numbered seals. Voted vote-by-mail ballots physically returned, counted, and placed in authorized secure ballot intake stations at early voting locations are distinct from canceled returned vote-by-mail ballots where the voter chose to vote in person. See **Section D. Voter Who Requested Vote-by-Mail Ballot Goes to Vote at Polls (Chapter V)**. These two distinct sets of ballots must be kept separate and apart.

The transfer box, case, or bag with the returned voted vote-by-mail ballots from the secure ballot intake stations must be returned to the Supervisor of Elections' office at the end of every day of voting. The transfer box, case or bag must include audit forms documenting the number of vote-by-mail ballots received and the seal numbers used to secure the box, case, or bag. If the ballot intake station that has been emptied of vote-by-mail ballots is to remain on location for further use during the election, it must be secured against tampering or insertion of ballots outside of voting hours.

2. Ballot Reconciliation at Close of Polls

No unauthorized person shall touch or otherwise interfere with the ballot or ballot container or the process for counting ballots. No more than three people are allowed near the election officials while reconciling ballots. See section 104.29, Fla. Stat. Observation areas may be designated to allow for reasonable access and distance. Staff should be deliberative and accurate when conducting ballot accounting.

3. Vote Tabulators/Bins/Ballots

At the end of each day during the early voting period and on Election Day, after the voting devices have been locked against further voting and the polls have closed, the election board must reconcile as follows before leaving for the day:

- a. Verify that the number of voted ballots, unused ballots, provisional ballots, unscanned ballots, ballot stubs, and spoiled ballots corresponds with the number of ballots issued by the Supervisor of Elections. Check all emergency and auxiliary bins for any voted ballots.
- b. Verify that the number of voters equals the number of ballots cast as indicated by the precinct tabulator, plus the number of provisional ballots voted. The election board must take into consideration whether provisional voters signed in at a central point or just signed the Provisional Ballot Voter Certificate and Affirmation. The number of voters may be based either on the signatures on the precinct registers, on the tally of voters who signed in on an electronic device, or on the number of voter authority slips that contain voters' signatures.

- c. If there are any differences, the election board shall recount the signatures, the validated voter check-ins, or the authority slips and certificates. If there are still differences, the clerk shall report in writing such differences, with the reasons for the difference, if known, to the Supervisor of Elections for post-election processing in coordination with the canvassing board, as appropriate. Reasons for differences may be that a voter signed in but left the polling place before voting the ballot.
- d. If ballots have more than one page, the election board must follow the supplemental accounting procedures prescribed by the Supervisor of Elections.

4. Ballot on Demand Systems for Early Voting and Election Day

At the end of each day during the early voting period and on Election Day, after the voting devices have been locked against further voting and the polls have closed, the election board must reconcile as follows before leaving for the day:

- a. Count the number of people who signed in to vote and determine the number of people who voted as shown by the ballots cast on the precinct tabulator.
- b. Determine the number of ballots printed and the number of ballots spoiled as compared to the number of persons who signed in and the number of persons who voted.
- c. If there are discrepancies, the election board shall report the discrepancy to the Supervisor of Elections.
- d. If ballots have more than one page, the election board must follow the supplemental accounting procedures prescribed by your Supervisor of Elections.

E. Posting Voting Results

The election board shall post at the polls the results of the voting for each office or other item on the ballot as the count is completed.

Upon completion of all counts in all races, a certificate of the results shall be drawn up by the inspectors and clerk at each precinct upon a form provided by the Supervisor of Elections. The certificate shall contain the name of each person voted for, for each office, and the number of votes cast for each person for such office; and, if any question is submitted, the certificate shall also contain the number of votes cast for and against the question. The certificate shall be signed by the inspectors and clerk and shall be delivered securely sealed, to the Supervisor for immediate publication.

All the ballot boxes, ballots, ballot stubs, memoranda, and papers of all kinds used in the election shall also be transmitted, after being sealed by the inspectors, to the Supervisor's office. Registration books and the poll lists shall not be placed in the ballot boxes but shall be returned to the Supervisor.

A. Security

The size of a polling place and the number of persons in a polling place can have security implications from traffic flow to voter privacy to order and vigilance in the polling place. The election team should follow written procedures for security established by the Supervisor of Elections which will include but not be limited to securing voting devices and ballots before, during and after the voting process.

Some basic steps that should be taken include but are not limited to:

- Monitor closely entrances and exits to ensure that only authorized persons are within the polling room and any other restricted areas.
- Prevent unauthorized access, theft, or misuse of election materials and sensitive and/or confidential documents such as signed forms, voted ballots, ballot stock, provisional ballots, and equipment from time of delivery through voting and return.
- Ensure that equipment (including ancillary equipment such as cables and modems) cannot be tampered with or deliberately damaged.
- Check (e.g., audit, reconcile, inventory) periodically throughout the day to make sure there are no vulnerabilities or oversights which allow inappropriate access to election materials and equipment.
- Follow established procedures for securing, counting, and transporting ballots to and from the polling place.
- Document procedures, incidents, and troubleshooting.
- Ensure electronic transmission of results, data, and files are secure. For example, if the signal is weak, exercise caution if moving equipment to window or door within public view or access.
- Review chain-of-custody procedures.
- Review and be familiar with a contingency plan to communicate and respond to a threat to public safety (e.g., bomb, electrical outage, fire, knife/shooting, flood, or other disaster) and include an evacuation plan, if necessary.
- No sheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer or other officer of the law is allowed within the polling place until the clerk or majority of the inspectors grant permission or unless he or she is there to vote. Once allowed, the deputy sheriff in an official capacity is subject to the clerk's or inspector's commands.

B. Emergency Event

In the event of a medical or other emergency requiring assistance from the police, fire department, or medical personnel, call 911 and then call the Supervisor of Elections to report the incident.

If there is a power outage, check the **Voting Systems Operations Manual** on how to deal with ballots cast during an outage. For all other types of emergencies, be familiar with and follow the protocols established by the supervisor of elections.

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