

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: POLL MONITORS, POLL WORKERS, AND HELPING OTHERS

NORTH CAROLINA

Are you a Poll Monitor or Poll Worker serving your community during the 2020 General Election? What is the difference between a Poll Monitor and Poll Worker? What are my rights and how does the law protect me?

This guide will help YOU feel comfortable and confident when assisting voters at polling places.

POLL MONITORS



WHO CAN BE POLL MONITORS?

- Anyone can be a Poll Monitor!
- You do not need to be a registered voter or a resident of the county
- Poll Monitors can volunteer with any group or organization, but are not employees of any Board of Elections

WHERE DOES A POLL MONITOR OBSERVE?

- Poll Monitors must remain outside the marked buffer zone located outside the polling place
- The County Board of Elections may set the buffer zone 25 to 50 feet away from the entrance of the polling place
- The County Board of Elections will provide an area adjacent to the marked buffer zone where persons or groups may engage in election-related activity, such as distribute campaign literature, political advertising, and/or solicit votes
N.C. Gen. Stat. § 163-166.4(b)

POLL MONITORS CAN:

- Watch and monitor the election outside the polling place in the marked buffer zone
- Help promote a positive and safe voting experience
- Talk with and listen to voters. Provide voters with voting materials, such as sample ballots.

POLL MONITORS, CONTINUED



POLL MONITORS SHOULD NOT:

- Obstruct, intimidate, or interfere with any person entering the polling place or exiting the polling place. **Intimidation of any voter is a state and federal crime.**
- Enter the marked buffer zone outside the polling place
- Enter the polling place or curbside voting area, but Poll Monitors can talk to Poll Workers working outside and make them aware of any issues

NOTE: Poll Monitors should call 888-OUR-VOTE (888-687-8683) and report any issues

POLL MONITORS CAN STAY SAFE BY:

- Wearing a mask
- Keeping social distance: 6 feet apart and avoid close contact with others
- Reporting any concerns and complaints to 888-OUR-VOTE (888-687-8683)

IMPORTANT: Under the First Amendment, you have the right of freedom of speech and association. The area outside the buffer zone is a public forum.

N.C. Const. art. I, § 14

POLL WORKERS

WHO CAN BE A POLL WORKER?

- During Early Voting, Poll Workers do not need to be a registered voter in the county
- On Election Day, you need to be a registered voter in the county to serve as a Poll Worker

NOTE: High school students, who are 17 years old by Election day, can serve as Poll Assistants. They must reside in the precinct where they wish to serve, and have consent from a parent and from their school principal.

N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 163-41, 163-42



POLL MONITORS, CONTINUED

WHAT ARE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A POLL WORKER?



- Protect democracy for all voters
- Operate the polls during Early Voting and on Election Day by providing services such as setting up the voting equipment, checking in voters, processing ballots, assisting voters upon request, and closing down/securing the voting site
- Poll Worker positions include: chief judge, judge, provisional/transfer assistant, equipment assistant, and assistants
- Report voter harassment or intimidation to the chief judge or one-stop site manager. The chief judge is required to ensure peace and good order at the voting place.

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 163-48

WHAT ARE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CHIEF JUDGE?

- The Chief Judge is required to prevent and stop improper practices and attempts to obstruct, intimidate, or interfere with any person in registering or voting
- The Chief Judge may remove any person from the polling place for violation of any provision of election laws; to call upon the sheriff, the police, or other law enforcement officers to aid them in enforcing the law; and to order the arrest of the person if necessary
- Local law enforcement are permitted within the voting enclosure, but only when requested to come within the voting enclosure by the county board of elections or by the Chief Judge for the purpose of preventing disorder
- If local law enforcement is called by the Chief Judge, they are required to “immediately obey and aid in the enforcement of any lawful order” made by the Chief Judge in the enforcement of election laws

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 163-48

IMPORTANT: Voters will not be turned away from the polling place if they choose not to wear a mask

REMINDER

All voters have a right to vote free from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination. Do you see a problem at the polls or outside the buffer zone? Call 888-OUR-VOTE (888-687-8683). Examples of unlawful activity include:

- Discrimination against voters, whether by private citizens or election officials
- Intimidation against voters, whether by private citizens or election officials
- Use of insulting, offensive, or threatening language against voters
- Display of racially hostile signs or symbols (e.g. Confederate flags)
- Actual violence
- Voter eligibility challenges targeting specific groups of people
- Dissemination of misleading information about elections and voter eligibility
- Private citizens imitating law-enforcement officers

