

## Designation of Poll Watchers - Section 101.131, Florida Statutes

- The chair of the county executive committee of a political party, the chair of a political committee and each candidate desiring poll watchers shall submit written authorization giving early voting and precinct assignment of poll watchers on a **Poll Watcher Designation Form DS DE 125**.
- The deadline for designating early voting poll watchers is **at least 14 days prior to the start of early voting**; the deadline for designating election day poll watchers is **PRIOR TO NOON THE SECOND TUESDAY** preceding the election.
- A poll watcher must be a Pinellas County registered voter.
- No candidate, sheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer, or other law enforcement officer may be designated as a poll watcher. In addition, **candidates CANNOT serve as poll workers** if they are opposed in an election, F.S. 102.012(2).
- Forms for the designation of poll watchers may be submitted to the Supervisor of Elections office.
- If the deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday when the elections offices are closed, forms must still be received before noon.
- **FORMS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE.**

## Poll Watcher Information and Guidelines (Early Voting and Polling Places) - Section 101.131, Florida Statutes

- Poll watchers shall produce identification to the precinct clerk upon entering the polling place (this information will be verified against a list of designated poll watchers compiled prior to election day).
- The Supervisor of Elections shall provide to each designated poll watcher a poll watcher identification badge that identifies the poll watcher by name.
- Poll watchers must wear the ID badge while in the polling room or early voting area.
- Each political party, candidate, and political committee is permitted to have ONE poll watcher at a time in each polling room or early voting area.
- Poll watchers shall not obstruct the orderly conduct of the election.
- Poll watchers may not talk to voters while in the polling place or within 150 ft. of the polling place.
- Poll watchers may not interfere in conversations between poll workers and voters.
- Poll watchers shall direct any questions/concerns to the precinct clerk.
- Poll watchers shall direct any voter challenges to the precinct clerk.
- Poll watchers are permitted within the polling room to observe the conduct of voters and poll workers; however, the poll worker staff may designate a location for the poll watchers that will not interfere with voter processing. This designation may be based on site constraints and other space limitations.
- Poll watchers may not review the precinct registers while there are voters in line.
- Poll workers are NOT required to call out a voter's name.
- Poll watchers may not stand so close that the voter feels his/her ballot secrecy is compromised.
- Poll watchers are required to furnish their own materials and necessities.
- Candidates cannot be poll watchers, nor can they enter any polling location except to vote.
- Poll watchers may not touch any voting equipment or materials, e.g., ballot scanner.
- Poll watchers may use a mobile electronic device provided the device:
  1. Is set so as to produce no noise or a low volume vibration.
  2. Is not used to take photos or record conversations inside polling room or Early Voting area.
  3. Is not used by the poll watcher to hold an audible telephone conversation inside the polling room or Early Voting area.
  4. Is not used in any manner to create a specific disruption or disturbance within the polling room or Early Voting area. (See Division of Elections [Opinion 12-13](#).)
- Poll watchers may not wear political advertisements or campaign paraphernalia in the polling place. This includes but is not limited to the following: clothing, campaign buttons, hats, wristbands, badges, and other similar items. **(Voters are entitled to wear political advertisements or campaign paraphernalia).**

The following FL Statute is taken from the following FL Legislative Office source:

[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0101/Sections/0101.131.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0101/Sections/0101.131.html)

## The 2020 Florida Statutes

Title IX: ELECTORS AND ELECTIONS, CHAPTER 10: VOTING METHODS AND PROCEDURE, **101.131 Watchers at polls.**—

(1) 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. No watcher shall be permitted to come closer to the officials' table or the voting booths than is reasonably necessary to properly perform his or her functions, but each shall be allowed within the polling room or early voting area to watch and observe the conduct of electors and officials. The poll watchers shall furnish their own materials and necessities and shall not obstruct the orderly conduct of any election. The poll watchers shall pose any questions regarding polling place procedures directly to the clerk for resolution. They may not interact with voters. Each poll watcher shall be a qualified and registered elector of the county in which he or she serves.

(2) Each party, each political committee, and each candidate requesting to have poll watchers shall designate, in writing to the supervisors of elections, on a form prescribed by the division, before noon of the second Tuesday preceding the election poll watchers for each polling room on election day. Designations of poll watchers for early voting areas shall be submitted in writing to the supervisor of elections, on a form prescribed by the division, before noon at least 14 days before early voting begins. The poll watchers for polling rooms shall be approved by the supervisor of elections on or before the Tuesday before the election. Poll watchers for early voting areas shall be approved by the supervisor of elections no later than 7 days before early voting begins. 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. Designation of poll watchers shall be made by the chair of the county executive committee of a political party, the chair of a political committee, or the candidate requesting to have poll watchers.

(3) No candidate or sheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer, or other law enforcement officer may be designated as a poll watcher.

(4) All poll watchers shall be allowed to enter and watch polls in all polling rooms and early voting areas within the county in which they have been designated if the number of poll watchers at any particular polling place does not exceed the number provided in this section.

(5) The supervisor of elections shall provide to each designated poll watcher, no later than 7 days before early voting begins, a poll watcher identification badge that identifies the poll watcher by name. Each poll watcher must wear his or her identification badge while in the polling room or early voting area.

**History.**—s. 3-D, ch. 22018, 1943; s. 5, ch. 26870, 1951; s. 18, ch. 29934, 1955; s. 6, ch. 65-380; s. 13, ch. 77-175; s. 3, ch. 87-184; s. 14, ch. 87-363; s. 18, ch. 89-338; s. 555, ch. 95-147; s. 61, ch. 2001-40; s. 28, ch. 2005-277; s. 27, ch. 2011-40.

**Note.**—Former s. 100.45.