South Dakota Secretary of State

Monae L. Johnson
Secretary of State

Thomas J. Deadrick
Deputy Secretary of State

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Contact: SOS.Media@state.sd.us

SECRETARY OF STATE MONAE L. JOHNSON PROVIDES NOTICE OF FEDERAL ELECTION DAY MONITORING IN MINNEHAHA COUNTY

(Pierre, S.D.) – The South Dakota Secretary of State's Office has received notification from the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Division of its intent to send federal election monitors to Minnehaha County during the November 3rd, 2026, General Election.

According to the DOJ, the purpose of the monitoring is to observe election procedures and assess compliance with federal voting rights laws. These include the Voting Rights Act, the Help America Vote Act, and other federal laws intended to protect voting rights and ensure accessibility.

The DOJ has indicated that its monitors will observe and take notes without interfering in the voting process. Monitors will identify themselves to election officials, follow state and local election laws, and report any concerns through their designated DOJ leadership. The DOJ has also stated that its monitors will not speak to voters inside polling places or carry firearms.

Under South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL) 12-18-9, members of the public are permitted to observe voting and counting activities at polling locations, provided they do not interfere with election operations. Federal DOJ personnel conducting election monitoring are subject to the same privileges and restrictions as other members of the public serving as poll observers.

All election observers are expected to respect voter privacy, comply with election laws, and refrain from interfering with election workers or the voting process. Any concerns regarding activities at a polling location should be directed to the precinct superintendent or appropriate election officials.

The Secretary of State's Office remains committed to ensuring that South Dakota's elections are conducted in a fair, secure, transparent, and orderly manner. The presence of federal election monitors does not change the responsibilities of local election officials or the procedures established under South Dakota law.

For additional information regarding election observation requirements, please visit the Secretary of State's website at www.sdsos.gov.