

# ELECTION WORKER TRAINING



“Welcome Precinct  
Workers!”

“Let me first offer my thanks to you for being a precinct worker. Without you it would be impossible to conduct free and fair elections in our state. Your responsibility is great.

# ELECTION WORKER TRAINING

**Prior to each election, training is to be conducted by the person in charge of the election (*County Auditor, Municipal Finance Officer, School Business Manager*) and assisted by the jurisdiction's attorney.**

SDCL 12-15-7 and 12-1-2.



# POLL WORKER CONDUCT

**Be professional** - You are conducting the most essential element of our democracy. Work and act accordingly.

**Be on time** - Arrive at the polling place at the time required.

**Leave “partisan” leanings at the door** - All of us have our favorite candidate or position on a ballot question. That’s OK. When you are an election official, however, none of your personal preferences can show while you are working.

**Be fair and respectful to ALL** - Nothing shakes a voter’s confidence in the integrity of the election more than when a precinct worker treats them or their ballot unfairly.

**Work as a team** - Your work will be more enjoyable and the voters will be better served if you work as a team.



# POLL HOURS

- All elections: 7:00am to 7:00pm local time
- Be sure the polling place clock is set to the correct time!
- No earlier than twenty-four hours before the polls open, the person in charge of the election may call a special emergency meeting, pursuant to [SDCL 1-25-1](#) and [1-25-1.1](#), of the local governing board to postpone any election, except a primary or general election, for one week if the weather conditions put into question the opening of a polling place. The polling place shall then remain open for the same number of hours as it would normally have been open. Absentee voting shall continue pursuant to [chapter 12-19](#). ([SDCL 12-2-8](#))
- Voters waiting in line at 7:00pm are allowed to vote.
- Precinct workers may not leave polling place while polls are open.



## POLL HOURS *cont'd*

- Notwithstanding **SDCL 12-2-3**, the county auditor may, upon request of the superintendent of an election precinct, if an emergency exists by reason of mechanical failure of a voting machine or an unanticipated shortage of ballots or like unforeseen event warrants it, extend the polling hours for that precinct until the emergency situation has been resolved. If the emergency situation is not resolved within two hours, except for a primary or general election, the polling place shall remain closed for one week and reopen at the time of the closure of the polling place (**SDCL 12-2-4**).
- **Please NOTE:** if the polling hours have been extended, anyone in line after 7:00 pm (local time) until the polls would close, have to vote a provisional ballot. If anyone is in line after the extended polling times close they are not allowed to vote.



# POLL WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

## Precinct Superintendent

- In charge of the polling place
- Designates election board duties to each election worker
- Duties would include:
  - Registration list
  - Poll book
  - Stamping ballots
  - Handing out ballots
  - Observing returned ballots for a ballot stamp before they are placed in the ballot box
- If you are using the AutoMARK voter assist terminal, refer to slides later slides for the AutoMARK procedures.



# POLL WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

## Precinct Deputies

- Perform duties assigned by the superintendent
- Duties may rotate throughout election day if directed by the precinct superintendent
- Precinct worker in charge of the pollbook must be of a different political party than worker in charge of registration list
  - This does not pertain to city and school elections unless they are combined with the County and then the County Auditor would follow this rule.



# NO CAMPAIGNING IN OR NEAR POLLING PLACE (SDCL 12-18-3)

- **Before the opening of the polls and throughout election day** the 100 foot area surrounding the entrance to the polling place must be checked to be sure it is free of campaign materials.
- The importance of keeping the polling place free from advertising cannot be stressed enough.
- The polling place includes where absentee voting takes place.
- No campaign advertising, signs, buttons, articles of clothing or any other type of campaigning may be in the polling place or within 100 feet of the entrance to the polling place.
- **Periodically view each polling booth** (when empty) to make sure that no campaign materials are left there.
- **If any campaign materials are found they should be removed.** If some person is campaigning or wearing campaign advertising they must be stopped or asked to exit the area.



- A candidate who is on the ballot in your precinct may only be present long enough to cast their vote.
- If anyone persists with campaign activities within the prohibited area, law enforcement should be called to deal with the situation.

**NO  
CAMPAIGNING  
BEYOND  
THIS POINT**

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# POLL WATCHERS

- Poll watchers work for a candidate or campaign to monitor activity at the polling place.
- Election board workers may not be poll watchers.
- Poll watchers must be allowed to be positioned close enough to the election worker's table so that they can see and hear what is going on but not so that they interfere in any way.
- Poll watchers **may** converse with the election board and look at the pollbook if it doesn't interfere with the voting process.
- Poll watchers **may not** campaign in any way within the polling place, touch any election supplies or control the legal actions of the election board!
- Provide each poll watcher with a copy of the *South Dakota Poll Watcher and Observer Guidelines* as shown on the next screen.
- Voters cannot take a picture of their voted ballot (**SDCL 12-18-3**).





# South Dakota Secretary of State

## SHANTEL KREBS

### SOUTH DAKOTA POLL WATCHER AND OBSERVER GUIDELINES

South Dakota law allows poll watchers and observers to be present to observe the voting and counting activity at polling places and provides guidelines for poll watchers and observers.  
(SDCL 12-18-8.1, 12-18-9, 12-18-9.1)

Any person present at a polling place to observe who does not declare themselves to represent one of the categories below is not a poll watcher but is an observer. ARSD 05:02:12 establishes the number of poll watchers allowed at each polling place for the following elections:

- **Primary\***- ONE for each candidate, ONE for each slate of national convention delegates, ONE for each side of any ballot issue
  - **General\***- ONE for each party, ONE for each independent candidate, ONE for each slate of presidential electors, ONE for each side of any ballot issue
- \*additional poll watchers are allowed if "adequate space" permits*

No person is allowed to view the contents of a voter's voted ballot (SDCL 12-18-27).

Those **NOT** allowed as Poll Watchers:

- Election Board Workers
- Candidates on the ballot (*cannot be an Observer either*)

Poll watchers must be positioned in a location where they can plainly see and hear what is done within the polling place but may not interfere in any way (SDCL 12-18-9). Poll watchers and observers may converse with the election board and look at the pollbook only if it doesn't interfere with the voting process.

Within 100 feet of a polling place (*includes absentee voting polling places*), poll watchers and observers **MAY NOT** do any of the following (SDCL 12-18-3, 12-18-9.1, 12-26-21, 12-26-22):

- Campaign or wear buttons or clothing containing campaign information
- Solicit votes for or against any person, political part or ballot question position
- Maintain an "office or public address system"
- Interfere with a voter's free access to the polling place
- Interfere with the officials actions of the election board
- Disrupt the administration of the polling place
- Use any communication or photographic device in any manner which repeatedly distracts, interrupts or intimidates any voter or election worker
- See into voting booths, read identifying numbers on a photo identification cards or interfere with voters in the act of voting or with the official action of the election board
- Disobey a lawful command of any election worker
- Cause a disturbance or breach of peace
- Engage in disorderly conduct such as threatening behavior or making unreasonable noise
- Gather petition signatures
- Use the polling place telephone designated for the election board
- Take any unilateral steps to change any action, inaction or activity occurring at the polling place
- Advocate for or against a voter as the voter interacts with the election board

If a poll watcher or observer has a concern or question about any action occurring in the polling place, that person should bring this concern to the attention of the precinct superintendent. It is then the superintendent's responsibility to respond to that question or concern.