

# Poll Watcher FAQs

**Q What if I don't have my Poll Watcher badge with me?**

A The badge must be worn at all times while serving as a Poll Watcher. Even if you arrive with your designation letter, you cannot enter the enclosed space without your badge. Credential packets can be picked up at the Main Elections Office 4380 Memorial Dr. Suite 300. The sooner we receive the designation letter from your party or candidate, the sooner we can have the credentials ready.

**Q Is there a dress code?**

A Please dress in business-casual attire. Do not wear anything that is revealing or distracting to voters and staff. You are prohibited from wearing anything that could be considered campaigning. We recommend that you refrain from wearing any printed words, slogans or images on clothing or masks.

**Q Are masks required?**

A Be prepared to follow the COVID protocols established by the facility. DeKalb County government facilities require masks to be worn unless social distancing can be practiced.

**Q What am I allowed to touch?**

A As a Poll Watcher you may only observe, you may not touch any election-related materials or forms.

**Q Do I have to sit in the area where the Poll Manager has set up a chair for me?**

A No. Official Poll Watchers may enter the enclosed space. You can observe the election, as long as you do not interfere or violate a voter's right to privacy. A chair is often placed in a certain area where you can observe and not disrupt the flow of voters, but you do not have to sit there the whole time.

**Q Can I text on my cell phone while in the poll?**

A Any use of cell phones, including through ear buds and texting, and any use of photographic, electronic monitoring or recording devices is prohibited in the poll while voting is taking place.

**Q If I see something wrong, can I tell the Poll Manager and ask that it be stopped?**

A The law requires that you contact the Election Superintendent, not the Poll Manager, if you see an infraction. Please step outside and call 404-298-4020

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**Q If I disagree with how a situation is handled, can I talk to the voter and offer to help or provide other advice?**

A You may not talk to the voter while in the enclosed space. After the voter leaves the poll, you may speak to him or her outside the polling place. Be mindful that conversations within 150-feet of the poll shall not solicit votes in any manner.

**Q What if I just have a question about a process that I'm observing?**

A You may ask the Poll Manager or Assistant Manager to explain on-site processes, as long as you are not disrupting the operation in the poll. Do not talk with poll workers or voters while within the enclosed space. Ask the Poll Manager to answer your question in an area away from voters. You may also call the Election Superintendent at 404-298-4020.

**Q Can I obtain the Poll Pad count whenever I want?**

A Poll Pad, Scanner and BMD counts are checked every hour. To obtain these numbers, simply ask the Poll Manager to give you the hourly count throughout the day.

**Q Why doesn't the total BMD count match the total number of ballots cast plus spoiled ballots?**

A Printer errors (such as jams, no paper, no ink, buffering problems) and voter rejections can make the number of BMD printed ballots higher than the number of cast ballots. Many times, these situations result in spoiled ballots, but not always. There are two components to the BMD, the touchscreen and printer, so even though the number on the touchscreen incremented upwards, a printer failure may result in no ballot being printed.

**Q What totals do we need to match at the end of the day?**

A The number of voters checked in on the Poll Pads and the number of ballots cast on the Scanner.

**Q How can I see the equipment seal numbers and counts during opening and closing?**

A If you wish to record the equipment opening and closing numbers, please record the information and step back to allow the staff to complete their duties. You may ask the staff to provide you with seal numbers after the opening or closing has been completed. Please give the workers space to do their jobs. If you get in the way of the opening or closing activities, you can be asked to leave the poll. You may not interfere with the operation of the poll place.