

Polling Place Procedures Manual



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How To Use This Manual

Document Conventions

This manual contains cross-references to other chapters or sections that contain information relevant to the topic under discussion. If you are using the electronic version of this manual, click the blue cross-reference link to jump to that information. If you are using a printed version of this manual, the cross-reference tells you which chapter or chapter and section to consult.

Informational Symbols/Icons

The following icons are used to emphasize information:



Alert – indicates alert; warning; special attention needed



Information – indicates highlighted or additional information



Deadline – indicates a time sensitive issue or a deadline



Important Note

Assistance

If you have any questions about the material covered in this manual or need further assistance, please contact your immediate supervisor or designated staff in the supervisor of elections' office [Contact information for supervisors of elections' office <https://dos.elections.myflorida.com/supervisors/>]

Chapter I - Introduction

A. Overview

This manual is for use by the election team at the polls during the early voting period and on Election Day. All forms and signage referenced herein should be in the supplemental election materials provided as part of training and early voting and Election Day packets.

B. Definitions

The terms used herein are defined as follows:

Clerk	The person who is in charge of a polling place during an election. The term also refers to the supervisor or site manager at early voting sites.
Deputy	The person who has been deputized by the sheriff who is present at all times the polls or early voting site are open and who is charged with maintaining good order at the polls and early voting sites.
Election Board	The clerk and inspectors appointed to conduct an election.
Polling Place	The building which contains the polling room where either early voting or Election Day voting occurs. On Election Day, a polling place is designated for each precinct.
Polling Room	The room (or in the case of early voting, the area designated) in which ballots are cast on Election Day and during early voting.
Poll Workers	Clerks, inspectors, equipment managers, ballot managers, and assistants.
Precinct	Refers to geographic areas that local government has divided for election purposes. The voter's residential address within a particular geographic area determines which issues and offices a voter can vote upon in an election.
Precinct Register	Refers to either the computer printout or electronic database (or more commonly referred to as an electronic poll book). (section 98.461(2), Fla. Stat.).
Uniformed Services Members	Includes any member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service (PHS), and the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
Vote-by-Mail Ballot	A ballot cast without going to the polls to vote during early voting or Election Day. (formerly referred to as an absentee ballot).
Voting Area	The area designated by the supervisor of elections at the early voting or Election Day voting sites where voting activities occur including, but not limited, to the area where voters are in line waiting to be processed, check in and are processed; and cast their ballots.

Chapter II – Before Polls Open (Sections 101.5610, 102.012, Fla. Stat.)

A. Election Team

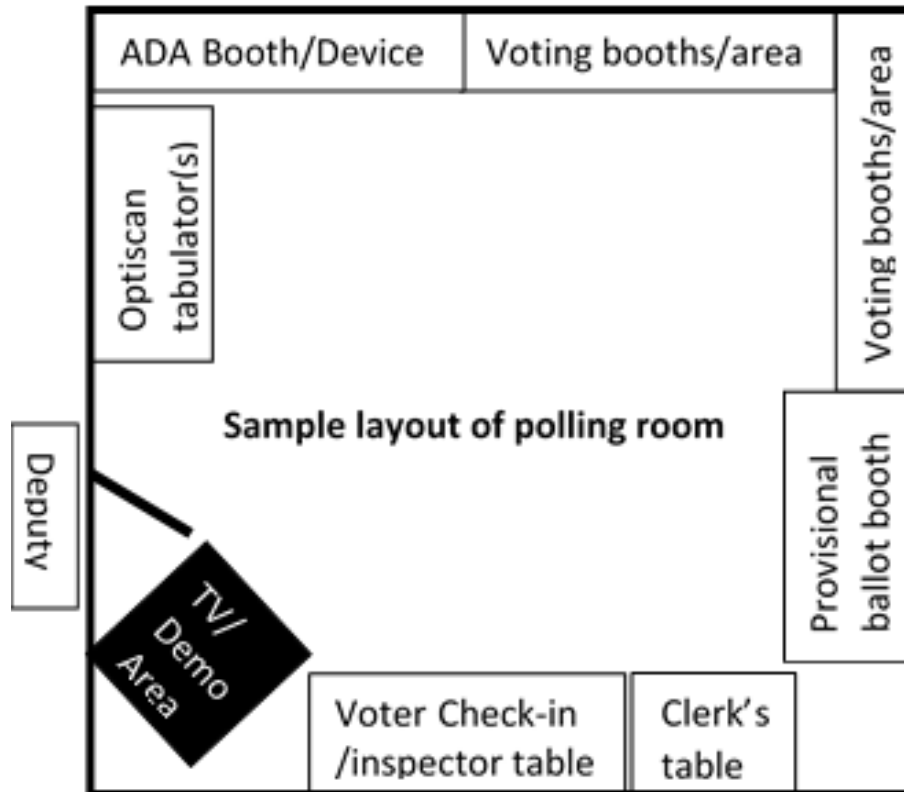
The election team consists of the election board and the deputy or deputies. The election board consists of all assigned poll workers who serve as clerks or inspectors for each precinct. The election board focuses on election issues inside the polling room. The deputy organizes the process outside the polling room during the early voting period and on Election Day.



On Election Day, the election team must arrive at its assigned polling place no later than 6 a.m. in order to set up the room. Polls must be ready to open and must open by 7 a.m. For the early voting period, opening and closing hours may vary by site. Follow the directions given to you by the supervisor of elections.

B. Polling Room Layout

The following is an example of a recommended layout for a polling room. Not all polling rooms need to or can be arranged the same as it may depend on the size, location, and shape of the polling room. Voting booths may also be placed in the center in rows, provided privacy is secured.



C. Set-up

At a minimum, the following steps must be taken before polls open:

- Compare the ballots or the ballot information to be used in the voting devices with the sample ballots furnished and certify in writing that the names, numbers, and letters agree.
- Arrange furniture, precinct supplies, and voting equipment.
- Set up the voting booths in a way that voters cannot see each other's ballots to ensure privacy.
- Set up the accessible voting equipment for persons with disabilities, even if you do not expect anyone to use this equipment. Check that equipment works and keep it operational throughout the voting day. All voters should be using voter interface devices that meet accessibility requirements.
- Ensure that paths of travel, doorways, hallways, entrances, and voting areas are clear and accessible.
- Make all requisite supplies, forms, and documents available.
- Display or make available all required notices and instructions in English and Spanish (See *Section D*).
- Ensure election board wear badges identifying them as staff and their role including if they provide language assistance.
- Designate sufficient non-permitted parking to accommodate the anticipated number of voters.
- Set-up and clearly designate the secure vote-by-mail drop box (early voting sites only).
- Designate no-solicitation zone (See *Section E*).

D. Signage/Information

All of the following must be in English and Spanish and displayed or made available where they can be easily seen and read. This may be set up as a voter information board or kiosk.



Required polling place materials include but are not limited to:

1	Voter's Bill of Rights and Responsibilities	DS-DE 20 and DS-DE 21, eff. 01/2006; section 101.031(1), Fla. Stat.
2	General Information and Instructions to Voters	DS-DE 68, eff. 03/2018, Appendix A; section 101.031(1), Fla. Stat.
3	Specific instructions on manner of voting on voting system	section 101.5611(1), Fla. Stat.
4	Notice of Use of Accessible Voting Equipment	section 101.5611(1), Fla. Stat.
5	Glossary - U.S. Election Assistance Commission's "Election Phrases at a Glance – English to Spanish" and other bilingual election-related language assistance information	Voting Rights Act, section 10303(e), section 10503
6	Notice that reads: "A person who commits or attempts to commit any fraud in connection with voting, votes a fraudulent ballot, or votes more than once in an election can be convicted of a felony of the third degree and fined up to \$5,000, and/or imprisoned for up to 5 years."	section 101.5611(2), Fla. Stat.
7	Sample ballots for inspection	section 101.20, Fla. Stat.
8	Signage identifying an accessible path of travel to the polling place if it differs from the primary route or entrance.	section 101.71(4), Fla. Stat.
9	Constitutional amendment booklets including summary of the financial information statements for initiatives, if applicable.	sections 100.371(13) and 101.71, Fla. Stat.
10	Forms in English and Spanish related to voter registration applications, affidavits, declarations, provisional ballot certificates, etc.	Voting Rights Act, section 10303(e), section 10503
11	If a polling room has security cameras which have been disabled or are non-operational, the following notice must be posted: "Camera is non-operational during voting hours."	section 102.031(5), Fla. Stat.

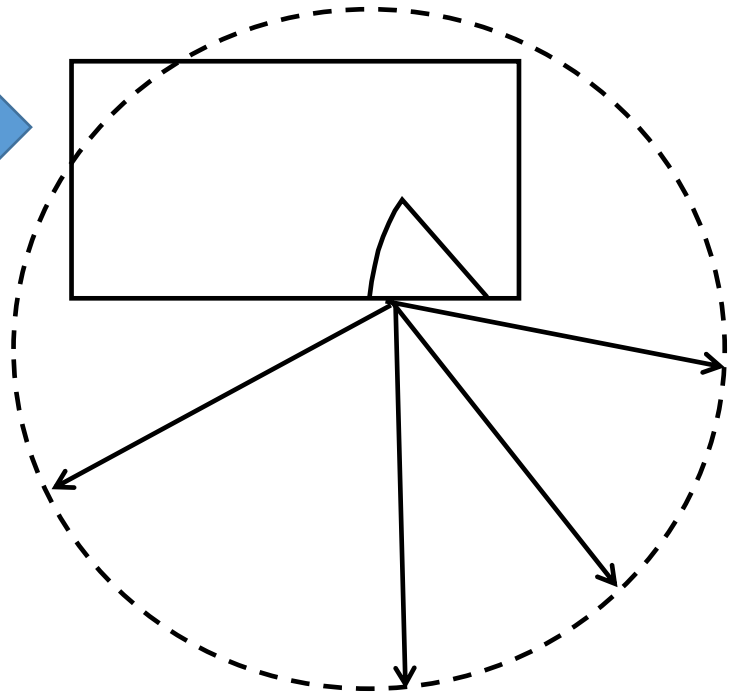
E. No Solicitation Zone (Section 102.031, Fla. Stat.)

The clerk or supervisor of elections must designate and mark the 150-foot no-solicitation zone and mark the boundaries, **in all directions if possible** from the entrance to a polling place or an early voting site, a polling room where the polling place is also a polling room, or if applicable, multiple entrances to the polling place or early voting site. See also *Section H. Solicitation Restrictions (Chapter III)*.



150-foot no solicitation zone should be marked in all directions if possible.

Polling Place,
Polling Room, or
Early Voting Site
(as applicable)



NOTE: Example above shows single entrance to polling place.

Chapter III - In the Polling Room

A. Who Is Allowed in the Polling Room? (Sections 101.051, 101.58, 102.031(3), Fla. Stat.)

While the polls are open, the only persons allowed in the polling room on Election Day or during the early voting period are:

- Poll workers
- The supervisor of elections or deputy supervisor of elections
- Voters who are present to vote
- A person (such as an elderly person or a child) in the care of a voter
- A person caring for a voter or assisting a voter (for example, someone assisting a voter who cannot read or does not speak English or assisting an elderly person or a person with disabilities)
- A person who is helping with or participating in a simulated election for minors which has been approved by the supervisor of elections (for example, the Kids Voting Program)
- Poll watchers approved by the supervisor of elections
- Election observers appointed by the Department of State, per section 101.58, Fla. Stat.



The public is allowed to enter the polling room and watch the procedures before the polls open and after the polls close and after all voters have cast their ballots.

B. Who Is Not Allowed in the Polling Room? (Sections 102.031, Fla. Stat.)

While the polls are open, the following persons or activities *are not* allowed in the polling room on Election Day or during the early voting period:

- Candidates, except to vote
- Members of the media, except to vote
- Law enforcement officers or emergency service personnel in a capacity other than as a voter, unless permitted by the clerk or a majority of the election board

If the polling room is in a location commonly used by the public to gain access to businesses or homes (such as the lobby of a condominium) or in an area traditionally used as public area for discussion (such as a mall), there may be other people traveling through the polling area. However, care should be taken that these people do not interfere with the voting process.

C. Election Team

The election team should wear identification badges. Special badges may be assigned if you are providing language assistance. If you are providing Spanish language assistance, please See *Section C. Voter Asks for Language Assistance (Chapter VI)*. This will help to distinguish the election team from poll watchers. It will also make it easier for voters to identify and seek

information or help from a poll worker or election staff. Poll workers and staff should refrain from use of personal electronics or other distractions so they can focus their attention on the voters.

Poll workers and election staff must remain nonpartisan while on duty during the early voting period and on Election Day.

- DO NOT wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or any other items that are politically oriented.
- DO NOT discuss any candidate, political party, issue, or any related topic with other poll workers, poll watchers, or voters.
- DO NOT have visible any written campaign or related material.

D. Voters

Voters may bring in pre-marked sample ballots or campaign literature for their personal use. They *may not* use these to campaign inside the polling place or within 150 feet of the entrance to the polling place.

Voters may wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or any other campaign items when they enter the polling place to vote.

After each voter leaves, a poll worker must check the voting booth for uncast ballots and campaign or other materials left behind. Poll workers must remove and discard any sample ballots or campaign material left by a voter in the polling place. Follow the procedure in *Section H. Uncast Ballot (Chapter V)*.

Voters are permitted to photograph only their own ballot per section 102.031, Fla. Stat.

E. Poll Watchers (Sections 101.111, 101.131, 101.23, 102.031(3), Fla. Stat.)

Each political party and each candidate may have one poll watcher in each polling room during the early voting period and on Election Day. Additionally, a political committee formed for the specific purpose of expressly advocating the passage or defeat of an issue on the ballot may also have a designated poll watcher in each polling room during the early voting period and on Election Day. The supervisor of elections will provide each polling place a list of the names of poll watchers he or she has pre-approved.

Approved poll watchers may roam and are allowed in all polling locations within the county designated. However, each political party, candidate, or political committee may have only one poll watcher present at any one time in each polling room when the polls are open on Election Day or during designated early voting hours.

While in the polling room, poll watchers:

- Must wear their badges that identifies them by name
- Are allowed to observe the conduct of the election. They *may not*, however, obstruct the orderly conduct of the election
- May observe the voter check-in process. They *may not*, however, come closer to the inspectors' table or the voting booths than is reasonably necessary to perform the poll watcher's functions
- May not speak to or otherwise interact with voters inside the polling room

- May submit written voter challenges to the precinct clerk
- Are not allowed to wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats, or other campaign items
- May bring in and use mobile electronic devices in a **non-disruptive** way, for example:
 - Devices must be set so as to produce no noise or a low volume vibration.
 - Devices may not be used to take photographs or recordings of any kind inside the polling room or early voting site. See *Section D. Voters and G. Photography Prohibited (Chapter III)*.
 - Poll watcher may not have an audible telephone conversation inside the polling room or early voting site.
- Must pose any questions regarding polling place procedures to the clerk for resolution

F. Order at the Polls (Section 102.031, Fla. Stat.)

The supervisor of elections or the election board may take any reasonable action to ensure order is maintained at the polling place. Law enforcement officers may be called upon to remove disruptive persons from the polling room or the no-solicitation zone.

G. Photography Prohibited (Section 102.031, Fla. Stat.; DE AO 12-13)

No photography is allowed in the polling room or early voting area except as indicated below. This prohibition also applies to operational security cameras within the polling room. If they remain operational, they must be covered so voters, voting, and ballots are not recorded in violation of privacy. If cameras are not operational, a notice must be posted notifying voters that the camera is not in use during voting hours.

Voters are permitted to photograph only their own ballot.

H. Solicitation Restrictions (Sections 101.051(2), 102.031, Fla. Stat.)

Exit polling by media or others is the **only exception** to the no-solicitation law. Exit pollsters may approach voters only *after* voters leave the polling place. Otherwise, no person or group may solicit voters:

- Within the designated no solicitation zone. See *Section E. No Solicitation Zone (Chapter II)*
- Inside the polling place

“Solicit” and “solicitation” includes:

- Asking someone for their vote
- Offering to assist someone to vote
- Asking for someone’s opinion
- Asking for a contribution

- Displaying political advertisements or campaign materials, except for voters who, without loitering, directly enter and exit the polling place when they are present to vote. Voters may wear campaign buttons, shirts, hats or other paraphernalia
- Distributing any political or campaign material or handout
- Conducting a poll [exit polling excepted]
- Asking someone to sign a petition
- Selling any type of item

Chapter IV – Voter Check-In

A. Photo Identification (Sections 101.23, 101.043, 101.045, 101.49, Fla. Stat.)


When a voter presents to vote, ask the voter for a current and valid photo ID. Only the following forms of photo ID are acceptable by law:

- Florida driver license
- Florida ID card issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
- U.S. passport
- Debit/credit card
- Military ID
- Student ID
- Retirement center ID
- Neighborhood association ID
- Public assistance ID (Social Security or other social services)
- Veteran health ID card issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- License to carry a concealed weapon or firearm issued pursuant to section 790.06, Fla. Stat.
- Employee ID card issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the federal government, state, county, or a municipality.

If the person presents a valid photo ID and signature, compare the person in the photo to the voter and the signatures:

- If determined to be the same person, proceed to *Section B. Name (Chapter IV)*.
- If you doubt they are the same person, the voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. Follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.

If the voter does not present the proper photo and signature ID, he or she shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. Follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.



Problems with ID?

- If the photo ID presented does not contain the voter’s signature, a separate ID with the voter’s signature is required. For example, a student ID with a photo and a credit card or other identification such as a library card with the voter’s signature.
- No voter should be turned away from voting for lack of photo identification. Allow the voter to cast a provisional ballot.

B. Name (Sections 98.461, 101.5608(1), Fla. Stat.)

Search for the voter's name in the precinct register. If the voter's name is on the precinct register, proceed to *Section C. Address (Chapter IV)*. If the voter's name is not on the precinct register, check for name variations.

Search Tips if unable to locate name as presented:		
Name Search Type	Example	Possible Search Criteria
Hyphenated names	Mary Smith-Collins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Smith ▪ Collins ▪ SmithCollins or CollinsSmith ▪ Collins Smith or Smith Collins ▪ Smith% (wildcard search)
Multiple surnames	Maria Morena de Arroyo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ deArroyo ▪ de Arroyo ▪ Arroyo ▪ Morena
Surnames with special characters	Nela Muñoz or López	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Munoz ▪ Lopez
Same names (Father, son, and/or grandson – may or may not be distinguished by suffix)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thomas Jones, Sr. ▪ Thomas Jones, Jr. ▪ Thomas Jones, III 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Last name and date of birth
Similar names (Twins -same birthday; siblings or close relatives -different birthdays)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Terriyana - Terriana Jones ▪ Ethan - Evan Bennett ▪ Kathryn Elizabeth - Elizabeth Kathryn Sims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First name, last name, and date of birth ▪ If available, scan driver license or state ID card available to search

Depending on the electronic poll book in use, **you may be able to additionally search by:**

- FVRS number;
- voter's house number and last name;
- first name and date of birth; and
- last name and date of birth.

NOTE: Not all electronic poll books will accept all of the example searches above. Please refer to your county's training manuals for more information about electronic poll books used in your county.

If the voter's name still cannot be found on the precinct register, the inspector shall:

- Ask the voter if the voter's name or address has changed:
 - If the voter's name has changed, first follow the procedure in *Section G. Name Change (Chapter IV)* before continuing with the voter check-in process.
 - If the voter's address has changed, first follow the procedure in *Section F. Address Change (Chapter IV)* before continuing with the voter check-in process.

- Contact the supervisor’s office or, if available at the precinct, check the master list of registered voters.
 - If voter is found to be eligible to vote and, if voting on Election Day, is in the proper precinct, he or she may continue with the voter check-in process.
 - If voter is eligible to vote but assigned to another precinct (if voting on Election Day), the clerk shall direct the voter to the proper precinct. If voter’s address has changed, follow the procedure for *Section F. Address Change (Chapter IV)*. If voter’s address has not changed but voter insists on voting in the incorrect precinct, follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.
 - If voter is an unverified voter [i.e., someone whose Florida driver license number, Florida identification card number or last four digits of social security card has not yet been or could not be verified by the supervisor’s office, follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.
 - If voter is not registered or eligible to vote, but the voter believes he or she is, follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.

If you cannot get in contact with the supervisor of elections’ office to determine more about the voter’s eligibility, follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.



Voter’s Presumed Residence

If the voter’s address on the photo ID matches the voter’s address in the precinct register, you may not ask them to provide further information. If the address on voter’s photo ID is different from the precinct register, you may not use that difference as the sole basis to confirm or to otherwise challenge a voter’s legal residence address.

C. Address (Sections 101.043(1), 101.045, Fla. Stat.)

Ask each voter (if you have not already asked before an ID was presented) if he or she has any address change or update to make.

- If the voter responds *yes* to the question, follow the procedure in *Section F. Address Change (Chapter IV)*.
- If the voter responds *no* to the question and the address on the photo ID presented is the same as the one on the precinct register, proceed to *Section D. Signature (Chapter IV)*.
- If the voter cannot recall or is uncertain of his or her address on record is current, ask him or her to recite or show you his or her current address to compare with the one on record.

If the voter’s address is address protected, follow special procedures established by the supervisor of elections to allow voter to disclose address in a confidential and discreet manner.

D. Signature (Sections 98.461, 101.49, and 101.5608(1), Fla. Stat.)

The voter must sign the precinct register, electronic signature pad, or the early voting certificate, whichever is applicable. The precinct register must contain space or allow for voter's signature and for witnessing clerk's or inspector's initials.

1. Compare the voter's signature to the signature on the identification. If a signature match is determined, proceed to *Section E. Eligible to Vote (Chapter IV)*.
2. If the signature signed by the voter differs from the one on the ID or they do not appear to match, instruct the voter to complete a signature affidavit. If the person completes the affidavit, proceed to *Section E. Eligible to Vote (Chapter IV)*.
3. If the person does not complete the affidavit, follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.

E. Eligible to Vote (Sections 101.045, 101.5608, Fla. Stat.)

If the voter is in the proper precinct (if voting on Election Day), and it has been established that the voter is eligible and entitled to vote, allow the voter to vote a regular ballot.

1. Give the voter his or her proper ballot with a secrecy sleeve and check, if applicable, that all pages of a multi-page ballot are included.
2. If a voter requests assistance, follow the procedure for *Chapter VI – Assistance at the Polls*. Do not question the existence, nature or extent of his or her disability.

F. Address Change (Sections 101.045(2), Fla. Stat.)

If the voter's name appears on the precinct register but the voter indicates a change or different address than the address listed, follow these procedures:

1. **Within county.** If the voter is only making an in-county address change, instruct the voter to complete an affirmation or voter registration application.
 - If voting on Election Day and the voter's new address is in a different polling place, the clerk must direct the voter to the proper polling place corresponding to his or her new precinct. If the voter is not in the proper precinct but insists that they are, follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.
 - If voting on Election Day and the voter's new address is in the same polling place, continue with the voter check-in process.
 - If voting during the early voting period, the voter may vote at any polling place after making an in-county address change.
2. **From outside county.** If the voter has moved from another Florida county, follow the applicable procedures:
 - Precincts or polling places using electronic poll books. Instruct the voter to complete an address change affirmation or voter registration application. Once the voter has completed the form and the voter's new address is determined to be in the same polling place (if voting on Election Day), continue with the *Voter Check-in* process and allow the voter to vote a regular ballot. Once a voter is determined to be eligible to vote in the county, they may vote at any polling place if voting during the early voting period.

- Precincts using paper precinct registers. The voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot (see exception below). Follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*. The voter does not need to fill out a separate address change affirmation or voter registration form. The provisional ballot certificate affirmation may be copied and used for that purpose. Note that if the voter is voting on Election Day and if his or her new address corresponds to a different precinct or polling place, direct the voter to that precinct or polling place to vote to ensure that the ballot will be cast and counted.
 - **Exception:** For active uniformed services members or their family members moving in from another Florida county, allow the voter to make the address change on an affirmation or a voter registration application before voting a regular ballot.
3. **Protected address.** If a voter’s address is marked on the precinct register as address-protected, follow special procedures established by the supervisor of elections to allow the voter to make and disclose current address and if necessary, make address change in a confidential and discreet manner.



Voter Goes to the Wrong Precinct?

Each precinct must be provided with information which will enable the clerks to direct voters to the proper precinct on Election Day such as:

- A county map showing precinct boundaries and polling place locations
- A street index of the county with a polling place list
- Any online source (other than through direct contact with the supervisor of elections’ office) that reliably and accurately provides information indicating where a voter should vote based on his or her address

G. Name Change (Sections 101.045(2), Fla. Stat.)

If the voter’s former name appears on the precinct register, instruct the voter to complete an affirmation or a voter registration application for a name change before continuing the *Voter Check-in* process.

If the voter’s former name is not on the precinct register, call the supervisor of elections’ office or access a master list of registered voters to determine if the person is eligible to vote. If the person is eligible and in the proper precinct, instruct the voter to complete an affirmation or voter registration application for a name change before continuing the voter-check-in process. Otherwise proceed to Chapter V. *Voting Process*.

H. Challenge to Voter's Right to Vote (Sections 101.111, Fla. Stat.)

A voter's right to vote may be challenged at the polling place, or in advance in which case there will be a notation on the precinct register. A challenger must complete a written "Oath of Person Entering Challenge" form.

A challenged voter must be immediately presented with a copy of the written challenge. Except as provided below, the challenged voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. See *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.

Exception: If the sole basis of a challenge is that the voter's legal residence is not in the precinct, the challenged voter shall be first given the opportunity to do a change of address. Follow the procedures in *Section F. Address Change (Chapter IV)* before continuing the voter check-in process.

Chapter V – Voting Process

A. Primary Election (Sections 97.055, 101.021, Fla. Stat.; Section 5, Article VI, Fla. Const.)

Florida is a closed primary election state. This means that only voters who are registered members of political parties may vote in contests for their party’s candidates or nominees for an office in a primary election including in a presidential preference primary election.

All voters, regardless of party affiliation or no party affiliation may also vote for nonpartisan offices and public measures in a primary election.

There are times when a “universal primary” contest may appear on a primary ballot. This means that all the candidates or nominees in the contest are from the same party and they will face no opposition in the general election. When that happens, all voters, regardless of whether the voter is registered with or without a party affiliation, may vote in that contest.

While a voter may submit a party change at the polls in a primary election, it will not take effect until the next election.

It is very important that the voter be given the ballot that corresponds to his or her residential address and during a primary election, the ballot that corresponds to his or her party affiliation.

B. Provisional Ballot (52 U.S.C. Section 21082, Sections 101.048, 101.049, 101.111, Fla. Stat.)

Voters have a right to vote a provisional ballot in certain circumstances. This is a fail-safe mechanism provided under both federal and state law.

1. The following is a list of situations in which a voter must be allowed to vote a provisional ballot:

- A voter who does not produce an acceptable form of photo ID with signature or a photo ID and a signature ID.
- A voter whose Florida driver license number or Florida identification card number, or the last 4 digits of the social security number has not been verified.
- A person whose signature on the precinct register, electronic device, or early voting certificate differs from that on the identification presented and the person refuses to complete a signature affidavit.
- A voter whose identity is in question based on the photo identification provided.
- A person whose name is not on the precinct register and the poll worker is unable to verify whether or not the person is a registered voter of the state.
- A person whose name is not on the precinct register and the poll worker verifies that the person is not registered in the state, but the person maintains that he or she is entitled to vote.
- A registered voter who is not otherwise allowed to make an out-of-county address change at the polls for purposes of voting a regular ballot (e.g., new polling location does not have electronic poll book, or person is not an active uniformed services voter or family member).

- A registered voter who is required but refuses to execute an address change on an affirmation or voter registration application in order to vote a regular ballot.
 - A voter whose name is on the precinct register with an indication that he or she requested a vote-by-mail ballot and the poll worker is unable to verify whether the vote-by-mail ballot has been returned and received by the supervisor of elections.
 - A voter whose name is on the precinct register with an indication that he or she requested a vote-by-mail ballot and the poll worker confirms that the supervisor of elections has received the voted vote-by-mail ballot, but the voter maintains that he or she has not returned the vote-by-mail ballot.
 - A voter whose name is on the precinct register with an indication that he or she voted early but the voter maintains he or she has not already voted in this election.
 - A person whose name is not on the precinct register and who has completed either the change of name or change of residence affirmation but the poll worker is unable to verify whether the person is a registered voter of the state.
 - A voter who has been challenged except in specific cases of address changes.
 - A voter who votes on or after the normal poll closing time pursuant to a court or other order extending the polling hours.
 - Any person for whom you are unable to get through to the supervisor of elections' office to determine if person is eligible to vote.
2. **Notice of rights/instructions.** Each person voting a provisional ballot must be given the written notice and instructions required by law including:
- Right to present further written evidence (if he or she so chooses) that supports his or her eligibility to vote to the supervisor of elections by no later than 5 p.m. on the second day following the election.
 - Right to find out after the election whether the provisional ballot was counted and if not, the reason why.
 - Right to cure signature if signature is missing from provisional ballot certificate or the signature on the certificate does not match with the one on record or in the precinct register.
3. **How to vote and process a provisional ballot.**

Provisional voting with ballot (marksense or voter interface device with voter verifiable paper output).



Absolutely No Tabulation of Provisional Ballots!

Do not put or allow a voter to put the provisional ballot through the tabulating equipment at the polls.

- Step 1: The voter must first be provided the Provisional Ballot Voter’s Certificate and Affirmation form to complete. The voter must complete and sign the form in front of the poll worker.
- Step 2: The poll worker who witnesses the voter’s signature must also sign the same form and indicate the:
- ✓ Election date
 - ✓ Precinct or ballot style
 - ✓ Specific reason(s) the voter is voting a provisional ballot
- Step 3: The voter is to be given the marksense or voter verifiable paper output ballot.
- Step 4: Once the voter has completed the provisional ballot, the voter must place the voted ballot (which may be a voted marksense ballot or a voter verifiable paper output that contains the voter’s selections) into the secrecy envelope, then place the secrecy envelope within the provisional ballot envelope, and afterwards seal the provisional ballot envelope.
- Step 5: If the Provisional Ballot Certificate and Affirmation form is not a part of the envelope, the completed form must be attached to the envelope. The sealed provisional ballot envelope must then be placed in a ballot box or other container labeled specifically for and used only for provisional ballots.



**Keep ‘Extended Hours’ Separate from
‘Regularly Scheduled Hours’ Provisional Ballots!**

If a court order extends polling hours past the regularly scheduled hours, keep all provisional ballots voted as a result of the polling hours being extended separate from other provisional ballots cast during regular voting hours.
section 101.049, Fla. Stat.

4. **How to return voted provisional ballots to the office.** All provisional ballots must remain sealed in their envelopes and must be returned to the supervisor of elections after the polls close. The voter’s notice of rights may be given to the voter at any point in this process, but no later than the point at which the provisional ballot envelope is placed in a secured ballot box or other container.

C. Voter Asks for Another Ballot (Sections 101.5608, Fla. Stat.)

If a voter makes a mistake on his or her ballot or the voter-verifiable paper output, whichever is applicable, the voter may receive another ballot or be given another opportunity to make his or her selections on the voting equipment, as is applicable, unless the ballot or voter-verifiable paper output has been cast in the tabulator. The uncast ballot or voter-verifiable paper output that has a mistake on it is referred to as a “spoiled ballot.” Place the voter’s spoiled ballot or paper output in a spoiled ballot envelope. If the voter spoils a second ballot or paper output, allow the voter to mark another ballot or make another selection on the equipment. A voter is allowed up to three attempts to vote, including the original attempt.

D. Voter Who Requested Vote-by-Mail Ballot Goes to Vote at Polls (Section 101.69, Fla. Stat.)

A voter who has requested a vote-by-mail ballot may go instead to vote at the polling place. A voter who has requested a vote-by-mail ballot should already be noted on the precinct register.

1. If the voter returns the vote-by-mail ballot, voted or not, to the poll worker, the poll worker must confirm that the voter has not already voted. If not able to confirm, the voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. If the vote-by-mail ballot is returned, first mark the returned vote-by-mail ballot “Canceled” on the certificate side of the ballot envelope and secure the ballot for return to the supervisor of elections after the polls close.
2. If the voter does not return the vote-by-mail ballot to the poll worker, the poll worker must confirm with the supervisor of elections’ office that the supervisor of elections has not already received the voter’s vote-by-mail ballot. A vote-by-mail ballot is deemed cast upon receipt by the supervisor of elections’ office.
 - If it is verified that the supervisor of elections has not received the vote-by-mail ballot, the supervisor of elections will authorize the voter to proceed with the voting process.
 - If it is verified that the supervisor of elections has received the vote-by-mail ballot but the voter maintains that he or she did not return the vote-by-mail ballot, the voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. Follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.
 - If it cannot be verified or otherwise determined whether the voter’s vote-by-mail ballot has been received by or returned to the supervisor of elections, the voter shall be allowed to vote a provisional ballot. Follow the procedure in *Section B. Provisional Ballot (Chapter V)*.

E. Secure Drop-Boxes for Voted Vote-by-Mail Ballots (Section 101.69, Fla. Stat.)

Every early voting location must provide a secure drop box for voters who do not want to vote at the location but want to physically return a voted vote-by-mail ballot to the supervisor of elections. The secure drop box must be clearly labeled, sealed and placed in an area where a designated election board member maintains custody and control of the drop box at all times.

The designated election board member should ensure that prior to the ballot being dropped off that the voter has placed and sealed their voted ballot in the certificate envelope and signed the certificate. When the polls close, the election board must perform the ballot accounting procedures in *Section D. Ballot Accounting (Chapter IX)* to account for the ballots in the drop box.

F. Spoiled Ballot (Section 101.5608(2), Fla. Stat.)

If a voter, who after checking-in, is given a ballot and then returns the ballot to a poll worker before casting it and indicates that he or she does not desire to vote, the ballot, even if blank, shall be treated as a spoiled ballot and shall not be tabulated. Place the voter’s spoiled ballot in a spoiled ballot envelope. To preclude the voter from having a voter history, the poll worker should either “undo” the voter check-in in the precinct register (either paper or electronic), if possible, or record the circumstances of the person checking-in and not voting so that the information later may be provided to the supervisor of elections. When the polls close, the election board must perform the ballot accounting procedures in *Section D. Ballot Accounting (Chapter IX)* to account for the ballots issued and the number of ballots spoiled.

G. Voter Tries to Take Ballot from Polling Room (Section 104.20, Fla. Stat.)

If a voter attempts to take his or her ballot from the polling room, advise the voter that this is against the law and he or she will be reported.

Explain to the voter that the ballot may be spoiled if the voter does not wish to have it counted. Attempt to stop the voter from taking the ballot but if the voter does, make a notation on the Ballot Accounting Form and document the incident.

H. Uncast Ballot

If a voter leaves the polling room and leaves his or her ballot in the voting booth or in and around the tabulation equipment without casting the marksense ballot, the poll workers shall place the ballot in an envelope or container marked “unscanned ballot.” The envelope or container shall be transmitted to the canvassing board.

I. Upset Voter

Voters may become upset, irate or frustrated for a number of reasons, particularly if they are told that they cannot do something they want to do, they must go to another location to vote, or their registration or eligibility is in question.

Keep the following things in mind as you address the situation:

- Remain calm and professional. If you get upset or shout, the voter is likely to get increasingly upset.
- Keep voice levels down.
- Watch your body language.
- Listen to what the voter is saying.
- Be polite and respectful.
- Offer the voter assistance. Try to find a solution to the problem.
- If necessary, ask the clerk or deputy to assist if the voter becomes very angry or threatening.
- Document reported problems and resolutions.



For additional information see *Section F. Order at the Polls (Chapter III)*.

Chapter VI – Assistance at the Polls

A. Overview

All voters have the right to ask for and receive help in voting from any person other than their employer, employer’s agent, or union representative; including but not limited to reasons of blindness, disability, inability to read or write, or limited-language proficiency.

B. Voter Asks for Help In Casting a Ballot or Using Equipment (Sections 101.5611, 101.031(4), 101.051, 97.061, Fla. Stat.)

If after entering the voting booth, the voter asks for more instructions on how to mark the ballot or use the equipment, two poll workers of different political parties, if present, or, if not, two poll workers of same political party, shall assist the voter. No one assisting the voter shall in any manner request, suggest, or seek to persuade or induce any elector to vote for or against any particular ticket, candidate, amendment, question, or proposition. After giving the elector instructions, the poll workers shall leave the voter to vote in secret.

For other types of specific assistance, see Section C. Voter Asks for Language Assistance within this chapter, and Chapter VII entitled Voters with Disabilities.

C. Voter Asks for Language Assistance (52 U.S.C. 10303(f)(4) and 52 U.S.C. 10503(b)(2)(A))

Some voters may need language assistance due to an inability to read, write, or speak English or because of limited-English language proficiency. A voter needing language assistance must be allowed to:

- Bring along a person to interpret as long as that person is not an employer, an agent of the employer, or union representative.
- Vote using a Spanish translated marksense ballot to mark their choices for subsequent tabulation or a voter interface device that provides the voter an option to view and select contest choices in Spanish and produce a voter-verifiable paper output with the voter’s selections for subsequent tabulation.
- Have available for reading sample ballots, other voting and registration materials and information translated in Spanish.
- Have language assistance provided by bilingual worker, interpreter, or professional translator services by phone, other interactive or virtual service for translation, or multi-language-audio-capable voting equipment, whichever is provided in your county.

Your county supervisor of elections will provide you with the requisite materials and guidance including the U.S. Election Assistance Commission’s glossary entitled “Election Phrases at a Glance – English to Spanish”. If you are serving as a bilingual poll worker, wear identification at all times in the polls in the required language.



Do not request, suggest, or seek to persuade any voter on how to vote for any particular candidate, issue, or judicial retention.

A. Overview

All voters have the right to request and obtain assistance in voting. See also (*Chapter VI*).

Some voters may have a disability that is not visible or evident. Regardless of the name of the disability, the basic steps below should be followed:

- Treat every voter with the same dignity and respect you would want, expect, and deserve in words, tone, and actions.
- Be professional, courteous, and patient.
- Use “People First” language. For example:
 - “A person who uses a wheelchair” instead of “a wheelchair bound” or “a person confined to a wheelchair.”
 - “A person who is blind” instead of a “blind person.”
- Avoid outdated terms such as “handicapped” or “crippled” or contrived or potentially offensive terms such as “differently abled” or “physically challenged.”
- Avoid using vague and exclusive group terms such as “they” or “them” for voters with disabilities.
- Speak directly to the voter, even if accompanied by a companion or caregiver.
- Treat assistive devices as an extension of the voter whether it is a wheelchair, scooter, crutch, walker, cane, eye wear, hearing aid, prosthetic device, or orthotic device.
- Listen carefully to the voter to learn how to best help the voter. Explain the process and, if needed, give the voter more time to complete the task at hand.

B. Cognition

A voter with a cognitive disability may have difficulty with memory, attention, reading, or sight.

- Use a calm demeanor.
- Use simple words and short sentences to explain the process.
- Repeat process as needed.
- Give them time to move through the process without feeling rushed.

C. Hearing

A voter who is deaf, hard of hearing, or with mild or moderate hearing ability may use a hearing device or an interpreter. It may not be immediately obvious.

- Do not shout. It is disruptive to shout and may actually make you harder to understand, especially if the voter reads lips.
- Speak directly to the voter, even if accompanied by an interpreter.

D. Mobility

A voter with a permanent or temporary physical disability may use a cane, a crutch, a walker, or a wheelchair to move around. The degree of mobility may vary. For example, a voter using a wheelchair may still be able to use his or her hands and arms or get out of the wheelchair and walk a short distance. A person with respiratory or heart trouble may not appear to be mobility impaired, but he or she may need to sit down.

- Do not lean across a wheelchair user to talk to someone else or to shake another person's hand.
- Make eye contact with the voter. If voter is in a wheelchair, be at eye level, if possible, by either sitting in a chair or standing at a slight distance.
- Do not pull or touch a voter's wheelchair unless you have received permission to do so. The chair is part of the voter's personal space.
- Ensure ramps provide the closest accessibility to the polling place. This is important not only for voters who may be using wheelchairs but for voters who may be using canes, crutches, or walkers.
- Ensure ramps are not obstructed so they can be used without difficulty.
- Ensure there is a clear path of travel into and out of the polling area for persons who may be in wheelchairs or using other assistive devices.
- Be aware of the reach limits of people in wheelchairs. If a counter is too high for a wheelchair user to see over it, step around it to conduct business with the person.
- Do not grab a cane, crutch, or walker. People who use them rely on them for balance.

E. Sight

A voter who is blind or has low vision may use glasses or a magnifying glass, or travel with a guide dog, a cane, or a sighted guide, or be alone. Be prepared to offer assistance in orientation and reading.

- A poll worker should identify them self with name and title as he or she makes contact with a person who is blind or has low vision.
- Do not speak loudly to a person who is blind or has low vision.

- If voter asks to be guided, offer an arm or shoulder to guide and walk slightly in front of the voter.
- Describe the setting including any partly open doors, steps, or ramps.
- If the person is using a guide dog, walk on the opposite side of where the dog is guiding the voter. Do not talk to, distract, or otherwise touch service animals including their harness or leash. The dog is “on duty.”
- Do not touch a person’s cane. If the person puts down the cane in an unsafe place, do not move it. Tell the person kindly to move it. That way, the person will know where the cane is.
- Be specific with warnings such as stop, swerve, duck, or bend. Do not shout or use non-specific warnings such as “Look out!”
- Be specific and non-visual with directions. Do not tell someone to turn left at the end of the desk. It would be better to say, “Take five steps and turn left.”
- When departing from a person who is blind or has low vision, let him or her know.
- Read informational signs that appear in print on the walls of the polling place.
- Offer magnifying sheets or lens if available or requested by the voter.
- Offer the voter who is blind or has low vision the option of voting on the accessible voting device. If the voter would rather have assistance, allow him or her to be accompanied in the voting booth by someone of his or her choosing or two election officials.

F. Speech and Communication

A voter with a speech or communication disability may have difficulty with speaking, memory, or concentration. It may not be immediately obvious.

- Be patient and do not interrupt. Wait for the voter to finish speaking.
- If you do not understand or need clarification, restate what you understood.
- If needed or requested, provide the voter a pen/pencil and paper to write questions and answers.

Chapter VIII – Voting Systems Operation (Sections 101.5601-101.5614, 101.56062, Fla. Stat.)

A. Overview

Instructions on the proper method for casting a ballot for the specific voting system used in the election must be available at each polling place. Each precinct must have a Voting Systems Operations Manual for each type of voting system including the accessible voting device used in the county. The manual should include, at a minimum, instructions on how to set up the voting system in the polling place, how to operate the specific voting equipment used in the county, how to troubleshoot, how to lock the vote tabulator against further voting after the polls have closed, and how to properly relay vote totals, handle the ballots and, in some cases, transport voting equipment back to the supervisor of elections' office after the polls have closed.

B. Vote Tabulators - (Sections 101.5606, 101.5608(2), Fla. Stat.)

The following applies when a voter uses an optical or digital scan voting system:

The voter is given a ballot and a secrecy sleeve which he or she takes to the voting booth. After marking the ballot, the voter places the voted ballot into the secrecy sleeve, takes it to the vote tabulator and puts the ballot in the vote tabulator.

If there is a race on the ballot that is overvoted (the voter has marked more candidates than there are persons to be elected or has marked more than one choice for an issue) or if the vote tabulator reads the ballot as completely blank, the ballot will be rejected by the tabulator.

The vote tabulator screen will display a message to the voter. If necessary, the inspector should inform the voter, without looking at the ballot, that the displayed message is the cause the ballot was rejected and that the voter should follow the instructions on the screen. The inspector should also inform the voter that he or she may get another ballot or cast the ballot 'as is'.



Tabulator Rejected Ballot?

If the voting equipment allows the voter to make the choice as to whether to allow or reject the ballot as it is marked, always allow the voter to choose.

If the voter wants to vote another ballot, the rejected ballot shall be considered spoiled. The ballot should be spoiled by placing it in an envelope designated for ballots that contain mistakes or errors. The voter is to be given another ballot and secrecy sleeve, with instructions on how to properly mark the ballot. See *Section C. Voter Asks For Another Ballot (Chapter V)*.

If the voter wants to vote the rejected ballot instead of voting a new ballot, the clerk or poll worker designated by the supervisor of elections, or the voter (depending on the voting system) shall override the rejection mechanism to allow the rejected ballot to be put in the tabulator. See instructions for overriding the rejection mechanism in the Voting Systems Operations Manual specific to the voting system in your county.



Effective January 1, 2020

All voting must be by marksense ballot, using either a ballot marking device or a voter interface device that produces a voter-verifiable paper output. Voted marksense ballots will be cast into vote tabulators to be counted.

C. Ballot Marking Devices

The following applies when voting using a ballot marking device:

- Depending on the system used in the county, the voter is given an unmarked ballot or a blank ballot card and a secrecy sleeve which he or she takes to the voting booth. If a voter asks for further assistance, the poll worker will accompany the voter to the ballot marking device, and as necessary will assist them as needed with retrieving accessible equipment. Once the display appears on the screen, the voter will be left alone to vote and cast his or her ballot.
- The voter marks his or her ballot on a screen similar to a touchscreen or computer screen either by hand, with an audio tactile interface (ATI) and headphones, or using a sip and puff device.
- Ballot marking devices do not allow a voter to overvote a ballot. However, a voter can undervote the ballot. When the selections are being reviewed by the voter, the system will alert the voter that one or more contests have been undervoted, giving the voter the opportunity to select a choice, if he or she wishes to do so.
- When the ballot is marked, the voter's ballot should then be cast into a vote tabulator.

Chapter IX. Closing the Polls (Sections 100.011(1), Fla. Stat.)

A. Announcement



At the scheduled closing hour for the early voting day or at 7 p.m. on Election Day, the clerk or other designated official shall announce that the polls are closed and that anyone in line will be allowed to vote. The election team must complete steps including but not limited to securing equipment and ballots as further detailed below. After all voters have finished voting and the polls are closed, the proceedings of the election board are open to the public.

B. Voters in Line at Close of Polls

All eligible voters standing in line at the polling place by the early voting closing hour or 7 p.m. on Election Day shall be allowed to vote. A procedure should be in place to clearly mark the end of the line such as having the deputy stand behind the last person in line to establish a cut-off point.

In the rare event that a court or other order extends the polling hours, the deputy shall stand behind the last person who is in the line waiting to vote at the closing hour. Any person voting after the last person who was in line during the scheduled early voting closing hour or 7 p.m. on Election Day must vote a provisional ballot. These provisional ballots must be kept separate from all other provisional ballots cast during the regular voting hours. (*section 101.049, Fla. Stat.*)

C. Securing Voting Equipment

Once all voters in line by close of polls have voted, the election board must secure the voting device so that no more ballots may be cast. Then the election board shall follow the procedures outlined in the Voting Systems Operations Manual for the voting system used in the county and the security procedures approved for the county.

D. Ballot Accounting (Section 101.69(2), Fla. Stat.)

Ballot accounting must be conducted at the end of each day during early voting and on Election Day after the polls close.

Voted vote-by-mail ballots physically returned and placed in authorized secure drop boxes at early voting locations must be kept separate and apart from canceled returned vote-by-mail ballots where the voter chose to vote in person. Voted vote-by-mail ballots in secure drop boxes must be retrieved and placed in a transfer box, case or bag with numbered seals. The transfer box, case or bag with the returned voted vote-by-mail ballots must be returned to the Supervisor of Elections' office at the end of every day of voting. The transfer box, case or bag must include audit forms documenting the number of vote-by-mail ballots received and the seal numbers used to secure the box, case or bag.



Ballot Accounting Reconciliation

- **Do not** let any unauthorized person touch or otherwise interfere with the ballot or ballot container or the process for counting ballots. No more than 3 poll watchers are allowed near the election officials reconciling ballots. See section 104.29, Fla. Stat.
- **Do not** rush through any process or be pressured for results. Accuracy is extremely important.

i. Vote Tabulators

After the voting devices have been locked against further voting and the polls have closed, the election board must:

1. Verify that the number of voted ballots, unused ballots, provisional ballots, unscanned ballots, and spoiled ballots corresponds with the number of marksense ballots issued by the supervisor of elections.
2. Verify that the number of voters equals the number of ballots cast as indicated by the precinct tabulator, plus the number of provisional ballots voted. The Board must take into consideration whether or not provisional voters signed in at a central point or just signed the Provisional Ballot Voter Certificate and Affirmation. The number of voters may be based either on the signatures on the precinct registers, on the tally of voters who signed in on an electronic device, or on the number of voter authority slips that contains voters' signatures.
3. If there are any differences, the election board shall recount the signatures, the validated voter check-ins, or the authority slips and certificates. If there are still differences, the clerk shall report in writing such differences, with the reasons for the difference, if known, to the supervisor of elections for post-election processing in coordination with the canvassing board, as appropriate.
4. If ballots have more than one page, the election board must follow the supplemental accounting procedures prescribed by the supervisor of elections.

ii. Ballot on Demand Systems for Early Voting and Election Day

At the end of each day during the early voting period and on Election Day, after the voting devices have been locked against further voting and the polls have closed, the election board must:

1. Count the number of persons who signed in to vote and determine the number of persons who voted as shown by the ballots cast on the precinct tabulator.
2. Determine the number of ballots printed and the number of ballots spoiled as compared to the number of persons who signed in and the number of persons who voted.
3. If there are discrepancies, the election board shall report the discrepancy to the supervisor of elections.
4. If ballots have more than one page, the election board must follow the supplemental accounting procedures prescribed by your supervisor of elections.

A. Security

The size of a polling place and the number of persons in a polling place can have security implications from traffic flow to voter privacy to order and vigilance in the polling place. The election team should follow written procedures for security established by the supervisor of elections which will include but not be limited to securing voting devices and ballots before, during and after the voting process.

Some basic steps that should be taken include but are not limited to:

- Monitor closely, entrances and exits to ensure that only authorized persons are within the polling room and any surrounding restricted areas at all times.
- Prevent unauthorized access, theft, or misuse of election materials and sensitive and/or confidential documents such as signed forms, voted ballots, ballot stock, provisional ballots, and equipment from time of delivery through voting and return.
- Ensure that equipment (including ancillary equipment such as cables and modems) cannot be tampered with or deliberately damaged.
- Check (e.g., audit, reconcile, inventory) periodically throughout the day to make sure there are no vulnerabilities or oversights which allow inappropriate access to election materials and equipment.
- Follow established procedures for securing, counting, and transporting ballots to and from the polling place.
- Document procedures, incidents, and troubleshooting.
- Ensure electronic transmission of results, data, and files are secure. For example, if signal is weak, exercise caution if moving equipment to window or door within public view or access.
- Review chain-of-custody procedures.
- Review and be familiar with a contingency plan to communicate and respond to a threat to public safety (e.g., bomb, electrical outage, fire, knife/shooting, flood, or other disaster) and include an evacuation plan, if necessary.
- No sheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer or other officer of the law is allowed within the polling place until the clerk or majority of the inspectors grant permission or unless he or she is there to vote. Once allowed, the deputy sheriff in an official capacity is subject to the clerk's or inspector's commands.

B. Emergency Event

In the event of a medical or other emergency requiring assistance from the police, fire department, or medical personnel, call 911 and then call the supervisor of elections to report the incident.

If there is a power outage, check the [Voting Systems Operations Manual](#) on how to deal with ballots cast during an outage. For all other types of emergencies, be familiar with and follow the protocols established by the supervisor of elections.

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