



CHAPTER 6: PRECINCTS, POLLING LOCATIONS, AND PRECINCT ELECTION OFFICIALS¹

Section 6.01 Precincts and Polling Locations, Introduction

This chapter covers the essential information about precincts, polling locations, and precinct election officials (PEOs) that boards need to manage elections effectively. It establishes the framework for creating accessible voting locations and outlines proper staffing levels. The chapter also outlines procedures for managing equipment, material, and personnel throughout the election process.

Section 6.02 Precincts and Polling Locations Requirements

DEFINITIONS

- **Precinct**

A defined geographic area within a county in which all qualified residing voters can vote at the same assigned polling location.²

- **Polling Location**

The place where voters in a precinct go to cast their ballots.³

PRECINCTS

- **General Requirements**

The board must provide a polling location for each precinct with proper facilities for conducting elections.⁴

¹[Directive 2026-33](#)

²[R.C. 3501.01\(Q\)](#).

³[R.C. 3501.01\(R\)](#).

⁴[R.C. 3501.29\(A\)](#).

- **Precinct Size**

Each precinct must have no more than 1,400 voters. The board decides what number is reasonable based on:

- Available equipment.
- Past voter turnout.
- Size and location of the polling place.
- Available parking.
- Number of available PEOs.
- Accessibility for voters with disabilities.⁵

- **Drawing Precinct Lines**

The board may divide parts of political subdivisions in the county into precincts.⁶ Precincts must follow census block lines.⁷

- **Waiver of Census Block Restrictions**

Using [Form 50](#) Census Block Reprecincting Waiver, the board may request a waiver from the Secretary of State if drawing precincts by census blocks isn't possible.⁸ Reasons include:

- A precinct would have more than 1,400 voters or is expected to surpass 1,400 voters.
- Census block boundaries would compromise the "continuity" of the neighborhood (i.e., would segregate certain residents of a neighborhood by placing them with residents of another neighborhood).
- School District boundaries intersect the census block.
- The census block is large and creates a travel hardship for voters.⁹

Any waiver request must explain in detail why it's needed and it must include

⁵[R.C. 3501.18\(A\).](#)

⁶[R.C. 3501.18\(A\).](#)

⁷[R.C. 3501.18\(B\)\(1\).](#)

⁸[R.C. 3501.18\(B\)\(2\).](#)

⁹[R.C. 3501.18\(B\)\(2\), \(C\).](#)

maps showing current and proposed precinct and census block boundaries.¹⁰

Email waiver requests and supporting materials to the Secretary of State's Elections Division inbox at SWVRD@OhioSoS.gov.

- **Separate Precinct Required for Disabled Soldiers**

State or national homes for disabled soldiers must have a separate election precinct.¹¹ The board may need to divide these facilities into multiple precincts.¹²

- **Changing Precincts**

The board may divide, rearrange, and combine precincts.¹³ The board may also change polling locations when needed to:

- Maintain proper precinct size.
- Provide voter convenience.
- Ensure proper election conduct.¹⁴

The board cannot put all precincts in a county into one polling location on Election Day when a countywide or statewide issue or candidate is on the ballot.

Boards cannot change the number of precincts or boundaries:

- During the 25 days before a primary or general election.
- Between January 1 and the election of county central committee members.¹⁵

- **Written Notice to Electors and the Secretary of State**

When the board needs to change, divide, or combine any precinct or move a polling location, it must:

- Notify all affected voters by mail before the next election.
- Notify the Secretary of State of any change in precinct boundaries within 45 days of making the change.¹⁶

¹⁰[R.C. 3501.18\(B\)\(2\).](#)

¹¹[R.C. 3501.20.](#)

¹²[R.C. 3501.20.](#)

¹³[R.C. 3501.18\(A\).](#)

¹⁴[R.C. 3501.18\(A\).](#)

¹⁵[R.C. 3501.18\(A\).](#)

¹⁶[R.C. 3501.21.](#)

- **Restrictions on Changes**

If the board changes precinct boundaries after someone files a local option election petition (according to [R.C. 4301.32](#) to [R.C. 4301.41](#), [R.C. 4303.29](#), or [R.C. 4305.14](#)), the local option election must use the original precinct boundaries that existed when the petition was filed.¹⁷

POLLING LOCATIONS

- **Public Buildings**

The board must use public buildings, such as schools, for polling locations when possible.¹⁸ By Ohio law, public authorities must provide space for elections and voting machine storage at no charge.¹⁹ A *reasonable* fee may be paid for needed janitorial services.²⁰

- **Private Buildings, Rental and Insurance**

When using private buildings as polling locations, the board may:

- Pay a reasonable rental fee.
- Pay for liability insurance for the premises when used for election purposes.
- Purchase a single liability policy covering both the board and the building owners.²¹

- **Temporary Buildings**

When the board provides a temporary building for voting:

- They must be built under the contract awarded to the lowest and best bidder.
- They must follow all accessibility and safety rules.
- They must be removed within 30 days after an election, unless another election will occur within 90 days.²²

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

State and federal laws require all polling locations to be accessible to people with

¹⁷[R.C. 3501.18\(A\).](#)

¹⁸[R.C. 3501.29\(A\).](#)

¹⁹[R.C. 3501.29\(A\).](#)

²⁰[R.C. 3501.29\(A\).](#)

²¹[R.C. 3501.29\(A\).](#)

²²[R.C. 3501.29\(A\).](#)

disabilities. People with disabilities must be able to vote privately, just like other voters. Make sure that polling locations are accessible and have appropriate parking before each election.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) created accessibility standards for voting locations. The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 requires polling locations, including the path of travel, entrances, exits, and voting areas, to be accessible to individuals with disabilities.²³ Access must provide voters with disabilities, including the blind and visually impaired, the same opportunities for participation, including privacy and independence, as for other voters.²⁴

Ohio law requires boards to ensure that polling locations:

- ☐ Are free from barriers that would block entry or exit for people with a disability.
- ☐ Have enough accessible parking spaces.
- ☐ Have level entrances or non-skid ramps that meet federal legal requirements.
- ☐ Have doorways at least 32 inches wide.²⁵

Evaluating Accessibility

Boards must evaluate every selected polling location using the most recent version of the [Secretary of State's Polling Location Accessibility Checklist](#) and [Accessible Parking Guide](#). When the Secretary of State's office publishes a revised checklist, all polling locations should be rechecked before the next general election.

Keep completed checklists on file and review all voting locations at least once every two years.

The board should also consider the Presidential Commission on Elections Administration's recommendation to keep diagrams of polling locations, including signs required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.²⁶

The Secretary of State's ADA coordinator can help the board develop polling location assessment strategies. The U.S. Election Assistance Commission has published a [Quick Start Guide for Making Voting Accessible](#) that board employees may find helpful, too.

²³52 U.S.C. § 21021(b)(1).

²⁴52 U.S.C. § 21021(b)(1).

²⁵R.C. 3501.29(B).

²⁶[The American Voting Experience: Report and Recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration \(January, 2014\)](#), at 33.

Boards can use the *Automated Accessibility Checklist Program*²⁷ to conduct assessments. Using a Windows-based tablet, this program allows users to complete the survey at the site, take measurements, and document access with photos. Contact the Secretary of State's ADA coordinator for more information at ADA@OhioSoS.gov.

If a polling location has issues, board employees must take action to ensure proper access on Election Day. Actions may include:

- Notifying the facility's owners about problems to coordinate permanent fixes.
- Buying equipment to temporarily fix the issues.
- Finding another accessible facility to use as required by law.²⁸

These requirements also apply to board offices because they function as polling locations during early voting.

Verification of Accessible Polling Locations

Before each election, the board director must sign a statement verifying that each polling place meets the requirements for accessible parking.²⁹ This statement ([Form 16](#)) must be signed by both the director and deputy director (or by the chairperson if there is no deputy director). They must also file a signed statement ([Form 17](#)) before each election verifying that each polling location meets federal and state laws for accessibility.

Outside the Polling Location

PEOs should check the route from accessible parking to the polling room to make sure there are no barriers. They should:

- Make sure directional signs guide voters to the nearest accessible entrance.
- Set up any temporary equipment, such as parking signs, cones, or ramps provided by the board to fix barriers.
- Be sure any alternate accessible entrance is unlocked.

PEOs should notify the board of accessibility issues and be alert that voters with disabilities may need help in accessing the polling location.

²⁷This is a desktop-based program available to all counties. Contact ADA@OhioSos.gov to arrange a file transfer of the automated checklist.

²⁸When a board of elections considers it necessary to relocate a polling location, it must notify each of the registered voters in the precinct by mail prior to the next election. [R.C. 3501.21](#).

²⁹[R.C. 3501.29\(E\)](#).

Inside the Polling Location

PEOs should make sure the entire route to the voting area is accessible. This includes:

- Checking that any elevators or lifts are working.
- Ensuring easy access from the entrance to the voting area and stations.
- Making sure there is a 36-inch-wide path through the voting area.
- Providing accessible tables and voting machines.
- Ensuring adequate privacy for voters.

Be ready to provide reasonable accommodations, such as chairs for voters who need to rest.

Common Accessibility Issues

Common barriers at polling locations include:

- Lack of designated accessible parking spaces.
- Lack of vertical signs or access aisles at accessible parking spaces.
- Sidewalks without curb-cuts.
- Steps at entrances.
- High thresholds or steps.
- Uneven surfaces like gravel, grates, or cracked sidewalks.
- Heavy doors.
- Door handles that can't be used with a closed fist.
- Tripping hazards like loose mats or cords.
- Protruding objects that can't be detected by a cane or are sitting in a walkway.

Simple Solutions to Accessibility Issues

Many access problems can be fixed easily on Election Day:

- Use temporary signs to mark accessible parking spaces.
- Post directional signs to accessible entrances.
- Post signs inside the building to the voting room.
- Use temporary ramps where needed.
- Prop open heavy doors and those that can't be opened with a closed fist.

- Keep a 36-inch passageway throughout the voting room.
- Place chairs, trash cans, or cones under protruding objects so they can be found with a cane.
- Set up accessible voting machine(s) in private locations in the voting room.
- Tape down or remove loose mats, cords, or wires.
- Remove obstacles from walkways.
- Place chairs along routes or in the voting location where a person can rest.

POLLING LOCATION SUPPLIES

Before polls open at 6:30 a.m. on Election Day, PEOs should work in teams to set up. Working in pairs makes the process faster and prevents errors. For example, one person can read off items from a list while another person checks to see if the item is in the supplies.

Polling Location Supplies Checklist

Checking Supplies and Forms

PEOs should verify they have these supplies for the polling location:

- ☐ Quick Reference Guide (flip chart) for PEOs from the Secretary of State
- ☐ Official manuals and guides from the board
- ☐ Voter identification requirements
- ☐ Chain of Custody forms for voting materials
- ☐ Reference Guides for voting equipment
- ☐ Reference guides for accessibility³⁰
- ☐ Emergency Contact List for the board
- ☐ "I Voted" stickers
- ☐ Officials' name tags
- ☐ Locks and seals
- ☐ Oath and payroll forms
- ☐ Miscellaneous supplies (such as extension cords, tape, paper clips, pens, rubber bands, three-prong adapters, etc.)
- ☐ Other materials that may be required by the Secretary of State

Forms and Materials Checklist

Officials should also check for the following items and make sure they are designated for the right precinct:

- ☐ Encoders/Access Cards (if applicable)
- ☐ Pollbook
- ☐ Signature Pollbook
- ☐ Official Precinct Voter Registration Lists
- ☐ Absentee Voter List
- ☐ Ballot Stub Containers

³⁰[Secretary of State's Polling Location Accessibility Checklist](#) and [Accessible Parking Guide](#).

- ☐ Precinct Voting Location Guide
- ☐ Identification Envelope - Provisional Ballot Affirmation: (Secretary of State [Form 12-B](#), have with optical scan paper ballots on the correct table)
- ☐ Provisional Voter Precinct Verification Form ([Form 12-D](#))
- ☐ Provisional Ballot Notices (include list of acceptable forms of proof of citizenship and hotline number) ([Form 12-H](#))
- ☐ Official ballot bag or box for voted provisional ballots (have in an accessible, secure location)
- ☐ Voter Registration and Change of Address Forms
- ☐ Forms and envelopes (for example, curbside voting or 17-year-old voter forms)
- ☐ List of write-in candidates (if applicable)
- ☐ Spoiled/Defaced Ballot Envelope
- ☐ Ballot accounting chart (to record the number of paper ballots if needed)
- ☐ Precinct identifier sign (above the table and in plain sight)
- ☐ Signature Pollbook and Official Precinct Voter Registration List (place next to each other so both can be checked by two PEOs)
- ☐ Precinct referral cards (have on table, if available)
- ☐ Quick Reference Guide (flip chart) for PEOs from the Secretary of State (place on table) Any other official precinct election official manuals, instructions, or guides from the board to accompany the Quick Reference Guide

Make sure PEOs responsible for provisional voting have:

- ☐ Unvoted paper ballots for the precinct.
- ☐ Identification Envelopes - Provisional Ballot Affirmation ([Form 12-B](#)).
- ☐ Provisional Voter Precinct Verification Form ([Form 12-D](#)).
- ☐ Provisional Ballot Notices (includes list of acceptable forms of proof of citizenship and hotline number) ([Form 12-H](#)).
- ☐ Affidavit of Religious Objection ([Form 12-O](#)).
- ☐ Provisional Ballot Tally Sheet.
- ☐ Precinct Voting Location Guide.

Preparing for Special Situations

Officials should also have:

- ☐ Voter Registration Forms.
- ☐ Notice of Name Change Forms ([Form 10-L](#)).
- ☐ Challenge Forms ([Form 10-U](#)) (for PEOs only, not observers).
- ☐ Alternative language materials, if applicable.
- ☐ Candidate withdrawal notices, if applicable.
- ☐ Be sure that outdated notices from prior elections aren't posted in voting booths or polling location.

Polling Location Supplies Checklist

Setting Up and Closing the Polling Location

- ☐ Chain of custody forms for voting equipment and materials ([Form 400](#))
- ☐ Reference guides for ADA accessibility²³
- ☐ Necessary ADA solution supplies for the polling location
- ☐ New locks and seals for closing the polls
- ☐ Miscellaneous supplies (such as extension cords, tape, paper clips, pens, rubber bands, three-prong adapters, etc.)
- ☐ Other materials and signs that may be required by the Secretary of State
- ☐ Be sure that outdated notices from prior elections aren't posted
- ☐ Officials' name tags

Forms for Record Keeping in the Polling Location

- ☐ Oath and payroll forms
- ☐ Ballot accounting chart (to record ballots issued, used, and remaining)
- ☐ Election Day Precinct Incident Log ([Form 450](#))
- ☐ Voting Machine Event Log ([Form 475](#))

Reference Material for Poll Workers

- ☐ Quick Reference Guide (flip chart) for PEOs from the Secretary of State
- ☐ Official manuals and guides from the county board, including reference guides for voting equipment
- ☐ Precinct Election Official Manual from the Secretary of State
- ☐ Emergency contact list for the board
- ☐ Voter identification requirements from the Secretary of State

PEOs Responsible for Voter Sign-In Need

- ☐ Precinct identifier sign (above the sign-in table and in plain sight)
- ☐ Electronic pollbooks, including backup signature pollbooks (if applicable)
- ☐ Paper pollbooks (if applicable)
- ☐ Official precinct voter registration lists to update and post throughout Election Day
- ☐ Supplemental absentee voter list
- ☐ List of write-in candidates (if applicable)
- ☐ Unvoted paper ballots for the precinct (some counties may store at the provisional table)

PEOs Responsible for Provisional Voting Need

- ☐ Precinct voting location guide for the county
- ☐ Identification Envelope - Provisional Ballot Affirmation ([Form 12-B](#))
- ☐ Provisional Voter Precinct Verification Form ([Form 12-D](#))
- ☐ Provisional Ballot Notices ([Form 12-H](#))
- ☐ Official ballot container for voted provisional ballots
- ☐ Provisional ballot tally sheet

PEOs Responsible for Ballot Casting or Counting Need

- ☐ Encoders or access cards (if applicable)
- ☐ Ballot stub containers (if applicable)
- ☐ Authority to vote envelopes (if applicable)
- ☐ Soiled or defaced ballot envelope

- ☐ "I Voted" stickers

Forms and Envelopes for Special Circumstances

- ☐ Curbside voting envelopes
- ☐ 17-year-old voter ballots and or envelopes (if applicable)
- ☐ Voter registration or change of address forms
- ☐ Notice of Name Change Forms ([Form 10-L](#))
- ☐ Challenge Forms ([Form 10-U](#))
- ☐ Affidavit of Religious Objection ([Form 12-O](#))
- ☐ Alternative language materials (if applicable)
- ☐ Candidate withdrawal notices (if applicable)
- ☐ Precinct or polling location referral cards

EMERGENCY POLLING LOCATIONS CHANGES

Except in emergencies, polling locations can't be changed during the 25 days before an election.³¹ If an emergency change is needed, the board must:

1. Approve the change by a majority vote of the board.
2. Immediately notify the Secretary of State's office by emailing SWVRD@OhioSoS.gov with updated information.
3. Notify all affected voters by mail, phone, and email, if possible.
4. Update the board's voter registration system, website, and social media.
5. Update any lists given to other agencies.
6. Inform community partners and local news outlets.
7. Post signs at the previous polling locations directing voters to the new one.

Boards should consider getting signs that can be quickly customized for emergency polling location changes (such as blank yard signs).

ADJUSTED TRAVEL TO POLLING LOCATIONS

The board should contact all political subdivisions, utility companies, municipal service departments, county engineers, and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) district office at least 90 days before an election and before early voting begins to inquire about planned or ongoing work that would affect access to polling locations.

If a utility restriction is expected, the board must request priority restoration.³²

If a road closure is expected, the board must:

1. Ask if the road can be reopened for Election Day.
2. Contact local law enforcement and street departments to help direct voters to the detoured route, if necessary.
3. Inform local media about detour routes.
4. Use social media and the board website to inform the public.

³¹[R.C. 3501.18\(A\)](#).

³²Under Ohio law, boards of elections can request priority restoration of services from local utility providers during outages. See [O.A.C 4901:1-10-08](#) (outlining restoration of electric utility services); [O.A.C 4901:1-6-31](#) (outlining restoration of services by telecommunications or local exchange carriers). Each board should proactively contact their local utility companies to arrange for prioritization of restoration for both the board office and polling locations before election day.

5. Place signs at affected intersections to direct voters to the detour. Put the signs up before Election Day to make voters aware of the change.
6. Send letters to affected voters explaining alternate routes.
7. Provide information to the voters about absentee voting options.
8. Engage community partners to help get the word out. For example, flyers at local places such as pizza shops, retail stores, and gas stations may help.

MOVING VOTERS TO ANOTHER PRECINCT OR COUNTY

Another Precinct

When only a portion of a precinct is in an election district, the board may assign those voters to the nearest precinct within that district for the purpose of voting in special elections.³³ An election district may be a school district, municipal corporation, township, or other political subdivision that includes territory in more than one precinct and is allowed to place an issue on the ballot at a special election.³⁴

Board employees must notify these voters about their polling location at least 10 days before the election.³⁵

Another County

For elections where only some precinct voters are eligible to vote, the board may assign voters to an adjoining precinct in another county if fewer than 200 voters are involved.³⁶ Before reassigning voters, the board must get the consent of the other county's board.³⁷

The board of the home county must notify affected voters of their polling location at least 10 days before the election.³⁸

When a county hosts voters from another county for a special election:

- The host county prepares, issues, and counts all ballots for that election.
- The host county provides paper ballots to the home county for provisional voting.
- The home county provides voter registration information to the host county.

³³[R.C. 3503.01\(B\)](#).

³⁴[R.C. 3503.01\(B\)](#).

³⁵[R.C. 3503.01\(B\)](#).

³⁶[R.C. 3503.01\(B\)](#).

³⁷[R.C. 3503.01\(B\)](#).

³⁸[R.C. 3503.01\(B\)](#).

- The Secretary of State's elections counsel should be notified as soon as possible when transferring voters to another county.

The Secretary of State's office will provide instructions to both counties that outline the responsibilities of the home and host counties.

VOTING EQUIPMENT

Counties using direct recording electronic (DRE) voting machines must provide enough machines for all voters. They must:

- Have at least one DRE machine for every 175 registered voters in a precinct or voting location.³⁹
- Not count those who didn't respond to any confirmation notice within 30 days or voters who requested an absentee ballot when determining the number of registered voters.
- Never have fewer than two DRE machines in any precinct or voting location.
- Never have fewer than three DRE machines in a presidential primary or a regular state election.

Counties using other types of ballot marking machines should follow the above guidance as a best practice.

When allocating machines, the board should consider:

- Precinct size.
- Polling location layout.
- Available parking.
- Accessibility.
- Number of contests on the ballot.⁴⁰

SETUP FOR MULTI-PRECINCT POLLING LOCATION

A multi-precinct voting location serves voters from more than one precinct. If the board chooses to create one (by a vote of at least three members of the board), it may:

³⁹[R.C. 3506.22\(B\)\(2\)](#).

⁴⁰[R.C. 3506.12\(A\)](#).

- ☐ Designate a single voting location manager from the political party whose candidate for governor received the most total votes in those combined precincts.
- ☐ Combine the pollbooks for those precincts into a single pollbook for the location.⁴¹

If a multi-precinct location uses electronic pollbooks, the board can vote to reduce the number of PEOs from four to two per precinct.⁴² This will ensure that no less than four PEOs will be assigned to each polling location.

Never consolidate all precincts in a county into one polling location for any election when a countywide or statewide issue or candidate is on the ballot.

⁴¹[R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(2\)\(a\)-\(b\).](#)

⁴²[R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(2\)\(c\).](#)

Setup for Polling Locations Checklist

Best Practices for Polling Locations

Regardless of the voting system, the board must have a sign-in station and a provisional ballot station.

Sign In Station when using paper signature pollbooks

- ☐ Have tables organized by the first letter of the voter's last name.
- ☐ Post signs with the alphabetical division served at each table.
- ☐ Voters show identification (ID) and sign the signature pollbook at a table based on the first letter of their last name.
- ☐ The board must decide on the alphabetical breakdown for the sign-in stations.
- ☐ PEOs must check off the voter's name on the Precinct Voter Registration Lists at the same time the voter signs the signature pollbook.

The same alphabetical division applies to the 6:30 a.m., 11 a.m., and 4 p.m. lists.

Suggested Alphabetical Breakdown

- ☐ **Without Clerk Books**
 - 2 precincts > 3 stations > A-G, H-P, Q-Z
 - 3 precincts > 4 stations > A-E, F-K, L-R, S-Z
 - 4 precincts > 5 stations > A-C, D-H, I-N, O-S, T-Z
- ☐ **With Clerk Books**
 - 2 precincts > 2 stations > A-K, L-Z
 - 3 precincts > 3 stations > A-G, H-P, Q-Z
 - 4 precincts > 4 stations > A-E, F-K, L-R, S-Z

Provisional Ballot Station

- ☐ The voting location must have one specific station dedicated to provisional voters.
- ☐ The station must be staffed by PEOs specifically trained on:
 - ☐ Rules and procedures for provisional voting, including citizenship verification at polling locations.
 - ☐ Using Precinct Voting Location Guide and precinct maps (used to determine if the voter is in the right voting location).

- ☐ Correctly completing [Form 12-B](#) (Identification Envelope - Provisional Ballot Affirmation Form).
- ☐ Finding and issuing the proper provisional ballot and ballot style based on the voter's address and precinct. [Form 12-H](#) (Provisional Ballot Notice) must be provided to every person who votes a provisional ballot.

Voting Machines

In general:

- ☐ The board should allow any voter to use any voting device in the location.
- ☐ Voters must still vote the proper ballot style (both precinct and precinct split) for their address.

1. Precinct Count Optical Scanner

- ☐ For optical scanners, clearly mark which scanner accepts which ballot style.
- ☐ Train PEOs to direct voters to the correct scanner.

2. Issuing Ballots: DRE Machine and Hybrid Counties

For DRE machine counties or touch screen ballot marker counties:

- ☐ In some DRE machine counties, programming a smartcard for each voter is the necessary "authority to vote" step to ensure the voter gets the correct ballot style after they sign the pollbook.
- ☐ When a smartcard isn't used, boards should use an "authority to vote" form where PEOs at the sign-in table write down the voter's correct precinct, precinct split, or ballot style (or party for a partisan primary election) for voters to take to the next step in the process.
- ☐ Officials may print the "authority to vote" slip with this information from the electronic pollbook.

3. Issuing Ballots: Optical Scan Counties

- ☐ Set up a ballot station between the sign-in station and voting booths to ensure voters get the correct ballot.
- ☐ Use an "authority to vote" form completed by the PEO and given to the voter after signing the pollbook.

POLLING LOCATION RULES

A polling location is a “neutral zone” with specific rules about who may enter and what conduct is allowed.

Who May Enter

Only these people may enter a polling location:

- voters (and their non-voting age children)
- election officials⁴³
- observers⁴⁴
- police officers⁴⁵
- people checking the 11 a.m. or 4 p.m. voter lists⁴⁶
- someone assisting another person to vote⁴⁷

Neutral Zone Rules

Two small U.S. flags must be placed 100 feet from the polling location entrance, or as close to 100 feet as possible.⁴⁸ Within this area or within 10 feet of voters in line:

- No one may loiter except election officials, observers, police officers, or voters waiting to vote.⁴⁹
- No one may campaign or try to influence voters.⁵⁰
- No one may block voters from entering or leaving.⁵¹

Media Access

Election officials must grant reasonable access to media members as long as they don't

⁴³ [R.C. 3501.35\(B\)\(1\)](#). An “election official” includes the following individuals: (1) Secretary of State; (2) employees of the Secretary of State serving the division of elections in the capacity of attorney, administrative officer, administrative assistant, elections administrator, office manager, or clerical supervisor; (3) director of a board of elections; (4) deputy director of a board of elections; (5) member of a board of elections; (6) employees of a board of elections; (7) precinct election officials; (8) employees appointed by the boards of elections on a temporary or part-time basis. [R.C. 3501.01\(U\)](#).

⁴⁴ [R.C. 3501.35\(B\)\(1\)](#). See [Chapter 9, Section 9.10](#) of this manual for an explanation of the election observer process.

⁴⁵ [R.C. 3501.35\(B\)\(1\)](#).

⁴⁶ [R.C. 3503.23\(C\)](#).

⁴⁷ [R.C. 3501.35\(B\)\(1\)](#).

⁴⁸ [R.C. 3501.30\(A\)\(4\)](#).

⁴⁹ [R.C. 3501.30\(A\)\(4\)](#); [R.C. 3501.35\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁵⁰ [R.C. 3501.30\(A\)\(4\)](#); [R.C. 3501.35\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁵¹ [R.C. 3501.35\(A\)\(2\)](#).

interfere with voting.⁵² When defining “reasonable access,” consider:

- Whether the person is from an accredited media source.⁵³
- How long they’ll be there.
- Length of voter lines.
- Size and layout of the polling location.
- Protecting voter privacy.
- Conduct of the media representative.
- Effect of their presence on voters and election officials.

No person, including media members, may disrupt the voting process, interfere with the election, intimidate voters, or jeopardize ballot secrecy.⁵⁴ If they do, they may be removed. Members of the media are encouraged to ask permission of voters before recording them.

No person can bypass the statutory observer process by trying to gain access to a polling location as a member of the media.

PEOs should tell the director and deputy director if a member of the media visits a polling location.

Exit Polling at a Polling Location

Exit polling is allowed within the 100-foot neutral zone.⁵⁵ However, exit pollsters:

- May not enter a polling location.⁵⁶
- May not interfere with or disrupt the election.⁵⁷
- May not wear anything within the 100-foot neutral zone that suggests campaigning for or against any candidate or issue on the ballot.⁵⁸

⁵² [R.C. 3501.35\(B\)\(2\)](#); *Beacon Journal Publ'g Co., Inc. v. Blackwell*, 389 F.3d 683, 685 (6th Cir. 2004).

⁵³ A board of elections does not issue credentials to a member of the media. A member of the media should already possess press credentials. These credentials are sufficient to grant the member access to a polling location.

⁵⁴ [R.C. 3599.01\(A\)\(2\)](#); [R.C. 3599.24\(A\)\(1\), \(5\)](#).

⁵⁵ *American Broadcasting Co., Inc. v. Blackwell*, 479 F.Supp.2d 719, 744 (S.D. Ohio 2004).

⁵⁶ [R.C. 3501.35\(B\)\(1\)](#); [R.C. 3503.23\(C\)](#).

⁵⁷ [R.C. 3599.24\(A\)\(5\)](#).

⁵⁸ [R.C. 3501.30\(A\)\(4\)](#); [R.C. 3501.35\(A\)\(1\)](#).

Collecting Signatures at a Polling Location

People may not collect signatures inside a polling location or within the neutral zone.⁵⁹ However, they may collect signatures outside the neutral zone.

Food and Campaigning at a Polling Location

Within the neutral zone, no one may:

- Campaign.
- Display campaign materials.
- Distribute food.⁶⁰

However, campaigning and the display of campaign materials are allowed outside of the neutral zone.

Ohio law prohibits offering “money or other valuable thing” to influence voting.⁶¹ Food, discounts, and other items are considered “thing[s] of value” under the Revised Code.⁶² Food, for example, can be used to influence voters in different ways. This could include asking voters which party or candidate they support to determine who receives the food, or requiring individuals to vote before receiving it.

Notwithstanding this, Ohio’s election laws do not prohibit a person or entity from freely distributing food outside of the neutral zone of a polling location, so long as the distribution is in no way an inducement to vote or to refrain from voting.

Problems with Conduct at a Polling Location

Officials should contact the board office or law enforcement immediately if they have problems with anyone’s conduct at a polling location. Review the Ohio Secretary of State’s [De-Escalation Training Resources](#) to help minimize and prevent misconduct at polling locations.

Section 6.03 Precinct Election Officials

Precinct election officials (PEOs) help to ensure that elections are conducted lawfully.

⁵⁹[R.C. 3501.35\(A\)\(1\)](#); *United Food & Commercial Workers Local 1099 v. City of Sidney*, 364 F.3d 738, 751 (6th Cir. 2004) (holding that circulators were not deprived of their free speech rights when they were prohibited from collecting signatures within the “campaign-free zone”).

⁶⁰[R.C. 3501.35\(A\)](#); [R.C. 3599.01\(A\)\(3\)](#).

⁶¹[R.C. 3599.01\(A\)\(3\)](#). See also [R.C. 3599.02](#).

⁶²[R.C. 1.03\(I\)](#). Even a professor’s award of extra credit to a student who votes in an election has been considered to be a “thing of value.” [1996 Ohio Atty.Gen.Ops. No. 96-033, at 2-129](#).

Ohio law requires four residents from the county to serve as PEOs in each precinct.⁶³ The board can assign more than four PEOs to a precinct, especially if the board expects a high voter turnout.⁶⁴

One PEO serves as the voting location manager.⁶⁵ This person oversees the entire election process, including opening and closing the polls and transporting materials to the board after polls close.⁶⁶ The manager must be from the party whose candidate for governor received the most votes in that precinct at the last gubernatorial election.⁶⁷

PEOs work as a team to conduct an election at their precinct.⁶⁸ All must:

- Maintain peace and order in the polling location.
- Keep the entrance open and unobstructed.
- Prevent attempts to interfere with voters.
- Protect official observers from harassment.
- Prevent riots, violence, and disorder.⁶⁹

See the Secretary of State [Precinct Election Official Training Manual](#) for info on other duties of the voting location manager and PEOs.

QUALIFICATIONS

PEOs must be registered voters in the county where they serve.⁷⁰ However, they don't have to live in the precinct where they work.

Restrictions

A person cannot serve as a PEO if they:

- Have been convicted of a felony or any violation of election law.⁷¹A
- Cannot read and write English well.⁷²

⁶³ [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁶⁴ [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁶⁵ [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁶⁶ [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁶⁷ [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#); [R.C. 3501.01\(G\)](#).

⁶⁸ See [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁶⁹ [R.C. 3501.33](#).

⁷⁰ [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁷¹ [R.C. 3501.27\(A\)](#).

⁷² [R.C. 3501.27\(A\)](#).

- Are a candidate on the ballot in that precinct (except unopposed county central committee candidates).⁷³
- Have a family member or business associate on the ballot in that precinct (unless the candidate is completely unopposed).⁷⁴

APPOINTMENT & TERM

By September 15 each year, the board must vote and appoint four qualified voters from the county for each precinct as PEOs, who serve for one year.⁷⁵

Not more than half of the PEOs in a precinct may be from the same political party.⁷⁶ The board may appoint unaffiliated voters to serve as PEOs.

Exception: By majority vote, a board may reduce from four to two PEOs per precinct at a voting location that serves more than one precinct and uses electronic pollbooks.⁷⁷

For special elections, the board may select just two PEOs from different parties if four aren't needed.⁷⁸

RECRUITMENT GOALS

Boards should recruit at least 15 percent more PEOs than the minimum needed to staff the polling locations. These extra poll workers should be fully trained and ready if needed. Boards should consider assigning more than four PEOs to high-turnout precincts.

CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT

The board must give each PEO a certificate of appointment, which the PEO must present to the voting location manager when polls open.⁷⁹ The certificate should specify the precinct, ward, or district where the PEO is appointed to serve, the date of appointment, and the date their term ends.⁸⁰

REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

The board may remove poll workers for neglect of duty, misconduct, or other good

⁷³[R.C. 3501.15.](#)

⁷⁴[Ohio Secretary of State Ethics Policy](#), at 4.

⁷⁵[R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\).](#)

⁷⁶[R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\).](#)

⁷⁷[R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(2\)\(c\).](#)

⁷⁸[R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\).](#)

⁷⁹[R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\).](#)

⁸⁰[R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\); R.C. 3501.27\(A\).](#)

reasons.⁸¹

VACANCIES

The board must fill vacancies for unexpired terms.⁸² For new precincts, the board must appoint PEOs to serve the unexpired term.⁸³

COMPENSATION

Every PEO in a county must be paid the same hourly rate—at least the federal minimum wage (\$7.25 per hour)—and no more than \$133.72 per day.⁸⁴

When the federal minimum wage increases, the Secretary of State adjusts the maximum daily rate by the same percentage.⁸⁵

Boards cannot increase pay during a calendar year unless they notify the county commissioners about the increase by October 1 of the preceding calendar year.⁸⁶

Boards may increase the pay of PEOs during a calendar year by up to nine percent over what was paid the previous calendar year, if the previous pay was less than \$85 per day.⁸⁷ The board can also increase pay up to four and a half percent if the previous pay was \$85 to \$95 per day.⁸⁸

The county commissioners may review and comment on proposed increases.⁸⁹ They can also write an agreement with the board of elections to allow a higher increase in pay for PEOs than the percentages outlined above.⁹⁰

Officials who work less than a full Election Day (i.e., from opening until closing procedures are complete) receive less than the maximum amount owed to them.⁹¹

VOTING LOCATION MANAGERS

Voting location managers receive additional compensation, as set by the board.⁹²

Managers who deliver and return election supplies may receive:

⁸¹ [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁸² [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁸³ [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

⁸⁴ [R.C. 3501.28\(B\)](#), (C); [O.A.C. 111:3-7-01\(B\)](#), (C); [Directive 2009-08, Pollworker Compensation](#).

⁸⁵ [R.C. 3501.28\(C\)](#).

⁸⁶ [R.C. 3501.28\(D\)\(1\)\(a\)](#).

⁸⁷ [R.C. 3501.28\(D\)\(1\)\(b\)](#).

⁸⁸ [R.C. 3501.28\(D\)\(1\)\(c\)](#).

⁸⁹ [R.C. 3501.28\(D\)\(2\)](#).

⁹⁰ [R.C. 3501.28\(D\)\(2\)](#).

⁹¹ [R.C. 3501.28\(E\)](#).

⁹² [R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#); [R.C. 3501.28\(D\)](#).

- Up to \$5 for each trip to the polling location.
- Up to \$5 for each trip from the polling location to the board office.
- Mileage for each trip at the state rate.⁹³

WITHHOLDING PAY

The board may withhold a PEO's pay for failing to follow instructions or comply with election laws regarding their duties.⁹⁴

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

PEOs who earn less than \$2,500 per calendar year are exempt from Social Security and Medicare deductions related to their PEO compensation.⁹⁵

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

State law allows public employees to take paid leave to serve as PEOs. The public employee gets both their regular pay plus the compensation for being a PEO.⁹⁶ Employees must get employer approval first. Local work rules and collective bargaining agreements may limit this opportunity.

SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD PEOS

Ohio has two provisions for 17-year-olds to serve as PEOs.

General Provision

If not enough qualified voters are available, the board can appoint 17-year-olds who are registered to vote.⁹⁷

High School Program

Boards may partner with schools to allow certain high school students to apply as PEOs.⁹⁸ Unlike the general provision, these students do not need to be registered to vote.⁹⁹ However, student applicants must declare their party affiliation.¹⁰⁰

Boards are limited in how many 17-year-olds they can use:

- Precincts with fewer than six PEOs: one 17-year-old (i.e., three or four adults and

⁹³[R.C. 3501.36](#).

⁹⁴[R.C. 3501.28\(G\)](#).

⁹⁵[26 U.S.C. § 3121\(b\)\(7\)\(F\)\(iv\)](#); [42 U.S.C. § 418\(c\)\(8\)\(B\)](#). See also [Int. Rev. Serv., 2026 Publication 15-A: Employer's Supplemental Tax Guide](#), at 1 (Dec. 15, 2025).

⁹⁶[R.C. 3501.28\(F\)\(1\), \(3\)](#).

⁹⁷[R.C. 3501.22\(B\)](#); [R.C. 3503.07](#).

⁹⁸[R.C. 3501.22\(C\)\(1\)](#).

⁹⁹[R.C. 3501.22\(A\)\(1\)](#).

¹⁰⁰[R.C. 3501.22\(C\)\(2\)\(b\)](#).

one 17-year-old participant).

- Precincts with six or more PEOs: up to two 17-year-olds (i.e., five or six adults and one or two 17-year-old participants *or* four adults and two 17-year-old participants).¹⁰¹

Schools may set additional eligibility requirements.¹⁰² Schools must excuse students from classes on Election Day if they serve as a PEO.¹⁰³

Students cannot serve as voting location managers under this program.¹⁰⁴

TRAINING

Only registered voters who have completed the required training may serve as PEOs.¹⁰⁵ Boards must use Secretary of State training materials, plus any additional materials they create.¹⁰⁶ The board can use unpaid volunteers to help with training and may reimburse their expenses.¹⁰⁷

Boards may pay PEOs for attending training sessions.

New Precinct Election Officials

- Must receive in-person training on voting equipment before their first election.
- Must be trained within 60 days before the election.¹⁰⁸

Experienced Precinct Election Officials

- Must be trained once every three years, when voting equipment changes, or when the board or Secretary of State deems necessary.
- Must receive in-person training on voting equipment.
- Must be retrained before primary elections in even-numbered years when serving as a voting location manager.
- Must be trained within 60 days before the election.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰¹[R.C. 3501.22\(D\).](#)

¹⁰²[R.C. 3501.22\(C\)\(1\).](#)

¹⁰³[R.C. 3501.22\(C\)\(4\).](#)

¹⁰⁴[R.C. 3501.22\(C\)\(3\).](#)

¹⁰⁵[R.C. 3501.27\(B\), \(C\).](#)

¹⁰⁶[R.C. 3501.27\(B\).](#)

¹⁰⁷[R.C. 3501.27\(B\).](#)

¹⁰⁸*See* [R.C. 3501.27\(B\).](#)

¹⁰⁹[R.C. 3501.27\(B\).](#)

Boards may offer online or virtual training for experienced PEOs who are already trained on current equipment. Self-paced training must track participants to ensure they complete the training. The board must give each potential PEO (whether they do live or self-paced virtual training) an assessment to be sure they understand the training information.

Training for Poll Workers on Election Day Mismatch Verification

Poll workers and voting location managers should be prepared to clearly explain to a registered voter the new requirement for correcting a mismatched registration record. Boards must train poll workers on this requirement and should consider providing a step-by-step instruction guide to poll workers who may encounter situations requiring the correction of a voter registration record mismatch. A suggested set of step-by-step instructions is shown in [Chapter 9, Section 9.06](#).

Training for Poll Workers on Citizenship Verification at Polling Locations

Poll workers and voting location managers should be prepared to clearly explain to a registered voter the requirements for citizenship verification. Boards of elections must train poll workers on this requirement and should consider providing a step-by-step instruction guide to poll workers who may encounter situations requiring citizenship verification. A suggested set of step-by-step instructions is shown in [Chapter 9, Section 9.09](#).

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

PEOs set the tone at polling locations. They should treat voters and other election officials with courtesy and respect.

Acceptable Conduct

PEOs must:

- Treat voters professionally.
- Work efficiently with each other.
- Resolve problems so voters can vote with ease and privacy.
- Avoid distracting voters.

Unacceptable Conduct

PEOs **may not**:

- Campaign or try to influence voters.
- Wear or distribute campaign materials, sample ballots, slate cards, campaign badges or clothing, or campaign buttons.
- Use personal electronic devices (such as laptops, cell phones, radios, televisions, etc.).
- Sell raffle tickets or other items (such as baked goods, candy, crafts, etc.).
- Place food or drinks on the check-in table or near voting equipment or supplies.
- Engage in any other illegal or unacceptable activities.
- Refuse to enforce election laws.¹¹⁰

See also [Chapter 16, Section 16.06](#).

¹¹⁰[R.C. 3501.33](#); [R.C. 3501.35\(A\)](#); [R.C. 3599.02](#).

ETHICS REQUIREMENTS

All PEOs must follow Ohio ethics laws and the Secretary of State's Ethics Policy as it applies to them. All PEOs must complete the Ethics Policy Acknowledgment Form ([Form 351](#)). Keep the completed form on file at the board office.

Ethics violations may be reported to the board director or deputy director. Anonymous reports may be mailed to the board's director or deputy director. Reports may also be filed with the Secretary of State's Election Integrity Unit in the office's Public Integrity Division.

Violations of the ethics policy may result in dismissal.

VOTING LOCATION MANAGER DUTIES

The voting location manager oversees the precinct polling location and is responsible for the overall conduct of the election there.

Key Ethics Rules

1. Officials cannot serve in any precinct where they are on the ballot (except unopposed party committee candidates).
2. Officials (including rovers, scouts, or similar, temporary election workers) cannot serve where family members or business associates are candidates.
3. Officials (including rovers, scouts, or similar, temporary election workers) cannot wear or distribute campaign materials (shirts, buttons, stickers, or other campaign items) at the board office or polling locations.
4. Officials (including rovers, scouts, or similar, temporary election workers) cannot engage in political activity while on board time.
5. Officials (including rovers, scouts, or other similar, temporary election workers) should avoid actions that could undermine public confidence in Ohio elections.

Voting Location Manager Checklist

Before Election Day, the voting location manager should:

- ☐ Pick up any election supplies.
- ☐ Check supply containers' labels without breaking seals to make sure they are for the correct precinct or polling location.
- ☐ Visit the polling location to find parking and voting equipment.
- ☐ Contact the facility about getting in to set up for the election.
- ☐ Contact other PEOs to confirm their commitment for Election Day and arrange a time to set up the polling location.

On Election Day, the voting location manager must:

- ☐ Arrive by 6 a.m. or earlier if required.
- ☐ Administer the oath to other PEOs.¹¹¹
- ☐ Create work and break schedules (if the board hasn't already done this).
- ☐ Oversee the set up the polling location and voting machines.
- ☐ Review special instructions with PEOs.
- ☐ Break the seal on the election supply container and confirm the supplies, including ballots, are for the correct precinct or polling location.
- ☐ Before the polls open, check off absentee and early provisional ballot voters listed on the Supplemental Absentee List on the Official Precinct Voter Registration List.
- ☐ Post the Official Precinct Voter Registration List at 6:30 a.m. and updates at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., showing who has voted in the precinct.
- ☐ Officially open and close the polls.
- ☐ Administer the oath to observers.
- ☐ Ensure PEOs keep campaigners and campaign materials outside the 100-foot zone.¹¹²
- ☐ Complete chain of custody procedures.

¹¹¹[R.C. 3501.31](#).

¹¹²[R.C. 3501.30\(A\)\(4\)](#); [R.C. 3501.35\(A\)\(1\)](#).

- ☐ Return ballots, voting materials, and supplies to the board with an official from the opposite party.
- ☐ Perform any other duties assigned by the board.

BIPARTISAN CUSTODY OF ELECTION MATERIALS

Ballots and required voting materials and supplies must be transported to the board by a voting location manager and an official from the opposite party.¹¹³ See specific transport instructions from the board for more details.

Each board must arrange for voting equipment delivery to polling locations before or on Election Day. If it will be delivered before Election Day, board employees must arrange for its security.

Equipment Storage Rules

- Never store voting equipment at an official's home, vehicle, or workplace.
- At a polling location, store voting equipment as recommended by the manufacturer. Keep it in a clean, climate-controlled environment.
- Never store equipment on the ground in an area that might flood.

Removable Media Devices

If removable media devices are inserted into the voting machines before delivery, the board must:

- Use tamper-evident seals with unique identifiers.
- Document each seal's identifier for each voting machine.

This documentation of the unique identifiers should be kept on three lists (one list must be kept in a secure location at the board office, one of them in a secure location with the director, and the other with the deputy director, also in a secure location).

PEOs must inspect voting equipment for damage during setup and closing. They must document the inspections on a maintenance log from the board and note any signs of damage or tampering.

Boards must use a Chain of Custody Log ([Form 400](#) or local equivalent) to document all transfers of voting equipment, election supplies, and/or ballots. Train PEOs on tamper-evident seals so they know what to look for when inspecting the equipment.

POLLING LOCATION SECURITY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

PEOs must control all voting equipment, keys, removable media devices, ballots, and other election supplies at all times. They must report suspicious activity or damage immediately. The board must give each voting location manager emergency contact

¹¹³[R.C. 3505.31](#).

information.

In emergencies, a PEO's first priority is safety. They should only remove voting equipment, election supplies, and ballots if it is safe to do so. At least one official (preferably two from opposite parties) must stay with any removed equipment and supplies.

Secure Return of Ballots and Election Day Supplies

At poll closing, a bipartisan team must return all ballots and election supplies to the board office or other designated location. The bipartisan team must:

Include the voting location manager and an official from the opposite party than the manager who "has taken an oath to uphold the laws and constitution of this state, including an oath that the person will promptly and securely perform the duties [of promptly and securely transporting and delivering ballots and election supplies to the board of elections]." ¹¹⁴

Travel in the same vehicle.

Additional people, such as law enforcement, may accompany the team. One bipartisan team may transport the ballots and election supplies for an entire multi-precinct polling location.

Other Precinct Election Official General Duties

A precinct election official must:

- ☐ Visit the polling location before Election Day to know how to get there, find parking, and be familiar with where the voting equipment can be found.
- ☐ Arrive at the polling place by 6 a.m. or earlier if needed on Election Day.
- ☐ Take and sign the precinct election officials' oath of office. ¹¹⁵
- ☐ Sign the payroll sheet.
- ☐ Conduct the election properly.

They may also need to:

- ☐ Help set up the polling location.
- ☐ Help open and close the polls.

¹¹⁴[R.C. 3505.31.](#)

¹¹⁵[R.C. 3501.31.](#)

- ☐ Assist voters courteously and respectfully.
- ☐ Know how to use the voting machines.
- ☐ Keep voting machine(s), materials, and supplies secure.
- ☐ Verify and sign forms.
- ☐ Keep campaigners outside the 100-foot zone.¹¹⁶
- ☐ Record important information.
- ☐ Post the Official Precinct Voter Registration List for the precinct at 6:30 a.m., 11 a.m., and 4 p.m.
- ☐ Check voter ID.
- ☐ Manage pollbook(s) and check-in voters.
- ☐ Issue correct ballots.
- ☐ Complete other assigned duties.

Official's Oath¹¹⁷

On or before Election Day, each precinct election official must take this oath of office:¹¹⁸

State of Ohio, County of _____: I do solemnly swear under the penalty of perjury that I will support the constitution of the United States of America and the constitution of the state of Ohio and its laws; that I have not been convicted of a felony or any violation of the election laws; that I will discharge to the best of my ability the duties of precinct election official in and for precinct _____ in the _____ (township) or (ward and city or village) _____ in the county of _____, in the election to be held on the _____ day of _____, _____, as required by law and the rules and instructions of the board of elections of said county; and that I will endeavor to prevent fraud in such election, and will report immediately to said board any violations of the election laws which come to my attention, and will not disclose any information as to how any elector voted which is gained by me in the discharge of my official duties.

(Signatures of precinct election officials)

¹¹⁶[R.C. 3501.30\(A\)\(4\)](#); [R.C. 3501.35\(A\)\(1\)](#).

¹¹⁷[R.C. 3501.31](#).

¹¹⁸[R.C. 3501.31](#).

Chapter 6 Checklist: Precincts, Polling Locations, and Precinct Election Officials (PEOs)

Precinct Management

- ☐ Ensure precincts have no more than 1,400 voters.
- ☐ Draw precinct boundaries along census block lines.
- ☐ Request waivers from Secretary of State if needed.
- ☐ Notify voters of any precinct changes by mail.
- ☐ Notify Secretary of State of boundary changes within 45 days.

Polling Location Selection

- ☐ Use public buildings when possible.
- ☐ Evaluate all locations using the [Secretary of State's Accessibility Checklist](#).
- ☐ Reevaluate locations when new checklists are issued.
- ☐ Maintain files of completed accessibility checklists.
- ☐ Have directors sign verification forms before each election ([Form 16](#) and [Form 17](#)).
- ☐ Coordinate with political subdivisions about potential road closures.
- ☐ Have plans for emergency polling location changes.

Equipment Allocation

- ☐ Provide at least one DRE machine per 175 registered voters (if applicable).
- ☐ Ensure a minimum of two machines per precinct (three for presidential/state elections).
- ☐ Consider contests, location size, parking, and accessibility when allocating equipment.
- ☐ Use tamper-evident seals with unique identifiers on removable media devices.
- ☐ Document all equipment with Chain of Custody logs.

Precinct Officials

- ☐ Appoint four qualified voters per precinct by September 15 each year.

- ☐ Ensure no more than half in each precinct are from the same political party.
- ☐ Recruit at least 15 percent more officials than the minimum required.
- ☐ Issue certificates of appointment to all officials.
- ☐ Train new officials in person within 60 days of their first election.
- ☐ Retrain experienced officials at least every three years.
- ☐ Have all officials complete Ethics Policy Acknowledgment Form ([Form 351](#)).
- ☐ Determine compensation rates and notify county commissioners if increasing rates.

Multi-Precinct Locations

- ☐ Designate a single voting location manager from the appropriate party.
- ☐ Combine pollbooks for all precincts.

All Polling Locations

- ☐ Determine alphabetical breakdown for sign-in stations for paper poll books and backup paper poll books.
- ☐ Create a dedicated provisional ballot station.
- ☐ Train officials on proper ballot distribution procedures.

Election Day Preparation

- ☐ Prepare supply packages for each location.
- ☐ Include all required forms, pollbooks, and materials.
- ☐ Create emergency contact lists for voting location managers.
- ☐ Arrange secure delivery of voting equipment.
- ☐ Plan for bipartisan return of materials after polls close.

Accessibility Compliance

- ☐ Verify all locations have accessible parking spaces.
- ☐ Provide signs for alternate accessible entrances.
- ☐ Confirm doorways are at least 32 inches wide.
- ☐ Check for and remove potential barriers along voter paths.

- ☐ Provide temporary equipment to fix accessibility issues (signs, ramps, etc.).
- ☐ Train officials to properly set up accessibility equipment.
- ☐ Ensure 36-inch pathways throughout voting areas.
- ☐ Provide chairs for voters who need to rest while waiting.