ADVISORY 2008-13
August 4, 2008

To: All County Boards of Elections

Re: Poll Worker Political Party Affiliation

In response to numerous questions received by the Secretary of State's office, this advisory addresses the political party affiliation of poll workers. There are two distinct standards regarding the political affiliation of poll workers, also known as precinct elections officials. Application of these different standards depends upon the role to which the individual is appointed.

Poll Workers, Generally

R.C. 3501.22(A) provides that, on or before September 15 of each year, boards of elections must appoint four poll workers for each precinct, **no more than one-half** of whom may be members of the same political party.[1] According to this language, each of the following combinations of poll workers potentially would be valid:

- Two Democrats – Two Republicans
- Two Democrats – One Republican – One unaffiliated elector
- One Democrat – Two Republicans – One unaffiliated elector
- One Democrat – One Republican – Two unaffiliated electors

R.C. 3501.22(A) also provides that boards of elections may, at any time, designate any number of *additional* (in excess of four) precinct pollworkers, no more than half of whom shall be members of the same political party. If additional poll workers are appointed for a precinct, they must be appointed in increments of two; each must have a political party affiliation and the additional poll workers must be equally split between the two major political parties which, at this time, are the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. These additional poll workers may not be unaffiliated, according to the language.

Presiding Judge

Under R.C. 3501.22(A), the board shall designate one of a precinct's election officials who is a member of the dominant political party to serve as a presiding judge for that precinct.[2]

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[1] "Political party" is defined in R.C. 3501.01(F) to mean, "Any group of voters meeting the requirements set forth in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code for the formation and existence of a political party."

[2] "Dominant political party" is defined in R.C. 3501.01(G) to mean that political party whose candidate for governor at the most recent gubernatorial election received more votes than any other gubernatorial candidate in that precinct at that election.

If you have any questions about this advisory, you may contact the elections attorney assigned to your board by email or via telephone at (614) 466-2585.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Brunner

Directive/Advisory Routing/Review
Acknowledgment Form

(Please initial and date)

Draft	Routing	Initials	Date	Comments
Initial Draft	Primary Attorney	gaq	7/30	KW
Primary Attorney Sends to Director of Elections				
Initial Draft	Director of Elections Reviews/Makes Comment	DMF	7/30	
Director of Elections Sends Back To Primary Attorney				
Initial Draft	Primary Attorney Incorporates/Rejects Changes	gaq	7/30	KW
Primary Attorney Sends To Copy Editor				
Interim Draft	Copy Editor Reviews/Makes Comments	bmc	7/31	
Copy Editor Returns To Primary Attorney				
Interim Draft	Primary Attorney Incorporates/Rejects Changes	gaq	7/31	All changes incorporated.
Primary Attorney Sends Copy-edited draft to Taylor (copies Dir of Elections)				
Formatted Draft	Taylor Jacklin Formats Document	taj	8/01	
Taylor Sends Chandra Formatted Draft/Chandra Forwards to Secretary				
Formatted Draft	Secretary Reviews/Makes Comments			
Secretary Sends Her Draft Back To Primary Attorney (copies Dir of Elections and Copy Editor)				
Secretary's Draft	Final Review made by Primary Attorney			
- If no legal concerns, Primary Attorney sends to Taylor (copies Dir of Elections) for publishing - If there are legal concerns, Primary Attorney sends back to Secretary or discusses at L&L, then sends to Taylor (copies Dir of Elections) for publishing				
Final Draft	Taylor obtains Secretary's signature or confirms permission to autopen			
Once document has the Secretary's signature, Taylor issues document				