



TIPS FOR MONITORING OR OBSERVING THE ELECTION AT POLLING SITES

OUTSIDE MONITORS

Anyone has the right to watch or monitor the election OUTSIDE the polling place. All activity must remain outside the marked 50' line at all times. Outside monitors often include individuals, candidates, political staff, and advocacy organizations. Outside observers must maintain good order at all times. The chief judge has the duty to ensure a safe and orderly voting site and has the right to remove anyone who is disruptive.

Allowed:

- Pass out campaign material and sample ballots.
- Speak to voters.
- Conduct polling.
- Monitor and report concerns and complaints.

Prohibited:

- Enter the polling place or curbside voting area unless they are actually in the act of voting.
- Obstruct, intimidate, or interfere with any person registering or voting.

OBSERVING THE ELECTION INSIDE (appointed by political party)

Members of the public may not enter a polling site to observe the election process. Only election observers appointed in advance by the political party may be inside a polling place. The chief judge will designate a place for observers that is close enough to hear the voter state their name and address, but far enough to not impede the voting process. Each party may assign at least two observers per precinct and an additional 10 at-large observers for the county. No more than 2 precinct-assigned observers and 1 at-large observer from the same political party may be in the voting enclosure at the same time. Precinct observers may be relieved after serving for at least 4 hours.

Allowed:

- Make observations and take notes.
- Observe the registration, ballot, and help tables without impeding voters or precinct officials.
- Walk outside the voting enclosure to observe the curbside voting area.
- Obtain the list of people who have voted at least at the following times: 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 4 p.m.
- May possess personal electronic devices, as long as they are not disruptive to voters or election officials.
- Report concerns and incidents to the chief judge and/or county elections director.
- Observe closing procedures.

Prohibited:

- Do not enter the voting enclosure before the polls open.
- Do not speak to voters or assistants.
- Do not wear or distribute campaign material.
- Do not stand behind the registration table or help table because poll books and laptops display confidential voter information.
- Do not enter the voting booth area.
- Do not interfere with the privacy of a curbside voter while the voter is voting.
- Do not board a bus or other vehicle containing curbside voters.
- Do not provide voter assistance.
- Do not photograph or video voters without the consent of the voter and the chief judge.
- Do not photograph or video a candidate without the candidate's consent (in this instance, it is not necessary to obtain the consent of the chief judge.)

RUNNERS (appointed by political party)

Runners are appointed in advance by a political party to collect lists of people who have voted. The county party chair may send a runner instead of having an observer receive the voting list. The schedule to obtain a list is 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 4 p.m. A party is only entitled to one list at each of the designated times.

NOTE ON VOTER ASSISTANCE

Any registered voter is entitled to assistance entering/exiting the voting booth and filling out a ballot. Any voter may receive such assistance from certain relatives. Voters who are disabled, blind, or unable to read, speak, or write English may receive assistance from a person of the voter's choice, provided that the person is not an employer or agent of the voter's union. There is no limitation on the number of voters a person can assist.

NC State General Statute – OBSERVERS & RUNNERS

NCGS § 163-45. Observers; appointment.

(a) The chair of each political party in the county shall have the right to designate two observers to attend each voting place at each primary and election and such observers may, at the option of the designating party chair, be relieved during the day of the primary or election after serving no less than four hours and provided the list required by this section to be filed by each chair contains the names of all persons authorized to represent such chair's political party. The chair of each political party in the county shall have the right to designate 10 additional at large observers who are residents of that county who may attend any voting place in that county. The list submitted by the chair of the political party may be amended between the one stop period under **G.S. 163 227.2** and general election day to substitute one or all at large observers for Election Day. Not more than two observers from the same political party shall be permitted in the voting enclosure at any time, except that in addition one of the at large observers from each party may also be in the voting enclosure. This right shall not extend to the chair of a political party during a primary unless that party is participating in the primary. In any election in which an unaffiliated candidate is named on the ballot, the candidate or the candidate's campaign manager shall have the right to appoint two observers for each voting place consistent with the provisions specified herein. Persons appointed as observers must be registered voters of the county for which appointed and must have good moral character. No person who is a candidate on the ballot in a primary or election may serve as an observer or runner in that primary or election. Observers shall take no oath of office.

(b) Individuals authorized to appoint observers must submit in writing to the chief judge of each precinct a signed list of the observers appointed for that precinct, except that the list of at large observers authorized in subsection (a) of this section shall be submitted to the county director of elections. Individuals authorized to appoint observers must, prior to 10:00 a.m. on the fifth day prior to any primary or general election, submit in writing to the chair of the county board of elections two signed copies of a list of observers appointed by them, designating the precinct or at large status for which each observer is appointed. Before the opening of the voting place on the day of a primary or general election, the chair shall deliver one copy of the list to the chief judge for each affected precinct, except that the list of at large observers shall be provided by the county director of elections to the chief judge. The chair shall retain the other copy. The chair, or the chief judge and judges for each affected precinct, may for good cause reject any appointee and require that another be appointed. The names of any persons appointed in place of those persons rejected shall be furnished in writing to the chief judge of each affected precinct no later than the time for opening the voting place on the day of any primary or general election, either by the chair of the county board of elections or the person making the substitute appointment.

If party chairs appoint observers at one stop sites under **G.S. 163 227.2**, those party chairs shall provide a list of the observers appointed before 10:00 a.m. on the fifth day before the observer is to observe. At large observers may serve at any one stop site.

(c) An observer shall do no electioneering at the voting place, and **shall in no manner impede the voting process or interfere or communicate with or observe any voter in casting a ballot**, but, subject to these restrictions, **the chief judge and judges of elections shall permit the observer to make such observation and take such notes as the observer may desire.**

(d) Whether or not the observer attends to the polls for the requisite time provided by this section, each observer shall be entitled to obtain at times specified by the State Board of Elections, but not less than three times during election day with the spacing not less than one hour apart, a list of the persons who have voted in the precinct so far in that election day. Counties that use an "authorization to vote document" instead of poll books may comply with the requirement in the previous sentence by permitting each observer to inspect election records so that the observer may create a list of persons who have voted in the precinct so far that election day; each observer shall be entitled to make the inspection at times specified by the State Board of Elections, but not less than three times during election day with the spacing not less than one hour apart. Instead of having an observer receive the voting list, the county party chair may send a runner to do so, even if an observer has not been appointed for that precinct. The runner may be the precinct party chair or any person named by the county party chair. Each county party chair using runners in an election shall provide to the county board of elections before 10:00 a.m. on the fifth day before Election Day a list of the runners to be used. That party chair must notify the chair of the county board of elections or the board chair's designee of the names of all runners to be used in each precinct before the runner goes to the precinct. The runner may receive a voter list from the precinct on the same schedule as an observer. Whether obtained by observer or runner, each party is entitled to only one voter list at each of the scheduled times. No runner may enter the voting enclosure except when necessary to announce that runner's presence and to receive the list. The runner must leave immediately after being provided with the list.

For additional information about observers, runners, and assistance see: **08 NCAC 10B .0101(a), .0103, and .0107**



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