

Poll Watchers Brief Guide to Voter Eligibility, Challenges, Electioneering and Provisional Ballots

As a poll watcher you may encounter these common problems facing voters:

See BALLOT ENTITLEMENT SHEET

Voter is not on the voter rolls:

The voter may **not** be at the correct precinct or polling place. The election judges should be able to direct the voter to the correct polling place. Call the party, campaign office, or voting organization, to verify the correct location.

Voter has moved:

The voter moved ***within*** the jurisdiction, but did not notify the election officials. He or she can vote in **federal races at the polling place for the voter's previous address.**

Provisional Ballots:

If there is no polling place that has the voter listed as registered, the voter can request a **provisional ballot**. **The majority of provisional ballots are not counted—so every effort should be made to get the voter a regular ballot.**

Voter is listed but is challenged:

If the challenge is ***unwarranted for any reason, it should be contested.*** If the challenge is **won**, the voter may have a ***regular ballot.*** If it is **lost**, then the voter should have a ***Provisional Ballot.***

Electioneering

Electioneering is not permitted within a polling place or within 100 feet of a polling place.

Election material—signs, buttons, pamphlets, cards, or other material is prohibited within this zone.

Electioneering also includes any verbal campaigning for candidates or for a political party.

This “campaign free zone” is to be marked with cones or flags.

The area is generally 100 feet from the entrance of the doorway to the poll room rather than the entrance of the building.

A polling place in a private business, a public or private school, or in a church may apply the campaign free zone to its entire property.

The law is to be “construed liberally in favor of people engaged in electioneering on all polling place property outside the campaign free zone....”

Campaigners are likely to win an electioneering issue, such as the temporary placement of a sign, or the handing out of campaign material so long as the campaigner is beyond the permitted zone 100 feet from the poll.

Local laws that contradict this are void (have no effect.) Illinois election code follows.

(10 ILCS 5/17-29) (from Ch. 46, par. 17-29) A person shall have the right to congregate and engage in electioneering on any polling place property while the polls are open beyond the campaign free zone, including but not limited to, the placement of temporary signs. This subsection shall be construed liberally in favor of persons engaging in electioneering on all polling place property beyond the campaign free zone for the time that the polls are open on an election day.

(c) The regulation of electioneering on polling place property on an election day, including but not limited to the placement of temporary signs, is an exclusive power and function of the State.