

POLL MONITORING

Instructions, for LA County, CA, 2008

Be aware that California law permits the public to observe all activities inside the polls, as long as the poll monitoring guidelines are followed.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

***Focus on gathering evidence**, not telling stories. What you observe in the polling place may become evidence in an elections contest, and it may receive coverage in the media, so gather the kind of evidence that is most useful to journalists and attorneys:

Video, Audio, Photographs

Names and phone numbers of witnesses

Voting machine serial number, time of day, names of poll workers.

- **Polling place does not open on time/Equipment not set up or not working on time.**
 - At the opening of the polls, seals securing the voting equipment are intact.
 - The ballot box must be opened, exhibited to be empty, closed, and then must remain locked until the polls are closed.
- **Lack of equipment or supplies** such as not enough ballots or InkaVote machines, no voter records
- **Lack of signs or indicators** showing the public where to vote; proper signage in poll
- ***Election Code mandates that all Ballot containers and voting booths must be visible.** If you see one placed out of sight (behind furniture, in a back room), please report it.
- **Switching or closure** of polling place
- **Provisional ballot not provided** for voters who may not be shown on the voter rolls, etc. The law says that nobody can be denied a provisional ballot.
- **Voters forced to vote with a provisional ballot**, instead of a regular ballot
- **Long waits to vote** (more than 20 min.) Document the actual time.
- **Problems or delays arising due to a PBR. Precinct Ballot Recorders**
(Be aware that voters are not obliged to use a PBR)
- ***Repairman is working on one of the voting machines**
- ***Ballots are rejected, jam, or ballot indicator doesn't advance after taking a ballot**
- ***Machine is replaced**
- **Memory card is replaced on election day (before, during or after voting)**
- **Intimidation** by anyone, police checkpoints, anyone in security uniform or with a firearm.
(Only a pollworker may challenge a person's eligibility to vote.)
- *** Anyone tampering with voter equipment in any way.**
- **Refusal to Provide Non-English Language Ballots or Voter Guides**
- **Demands for excessive ID requirements**
- **Any Voter being treated differently from others**
- **Reports that poll workers are asking questions**, such as or about a voter's finances, criminal history, citizenship, party affiliation, votes, job status or any illegal, unrelated issues
- *** It is illegal for anyone to record the order or time** in which a voter votes.

*** Failure to record all problems and issues with voting equipment in the official log. (THIS IS A DIRECTIVE FROM THE SOS OFFICE)**

- **Anyone spreading disinformation**, inside or outside the poll, such as:
 - (false): “You could be arrested if you vote”
 - (false): “Your Party votes tomorrow”
 - (false): “Mark your candidate and also write in that candidate”
- **Inappropriate or excessive challenges** of voters by poll workers or Party representatives
- **Ethnically inappropriate remarks**
- **Voters being turned away from voting even though they were in line by 8:00 p.m.**
- **At end of polling day: Voting machines, Ballot boxes or memory cartridges sent to County election HQ without proper chain of custody**

If you are observing the closing of the polls, there is a separate POLL CLOSING REPORT FORM to fill out, as you observe every step. The download can be found on the DOWNLOAD DOCS page.

WHAT TO DO if you observe problems or hear repeated reports from voters or witnesses:

- **Focus on gathering evidence.** What you observe may become evidence in an election contest, and may receive media coverage, so gather evidence carefully. Include, at minimum: Who, What, Where, Why and When If possible, document via Video, Audio or Still Photographs
- **Complete an INCIDENT REPORT for every issue, no matter how small**
- **If the issue is serious or if there is a pattern of repetition, call it in to the Election Protection hotline manned by the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights: 866-OUR-VOTE**
- * **To contact the Fraud and Investigations Unit with the Secretary of State’s office, call (916) 657-2166.**
- * **You can leave a recorded complaint with the Secretary of State’s office: (800) 345-VOTE and fill out a complaint form, that is downloadable at this link:**
http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_fraud.htm
- * **To help a voter find his/her correct polling place: (800) 815-2666**

(Parts of this instruction document were excerpted from Black Box Voting Tool Kit, Chapter 12. Thanks, Bev!)