

# **Poll Watcher Training**

**2025 General Election**



# Disclaimer

This training is current and is kept as up-to-date as possible as we receive new information from FCOE.

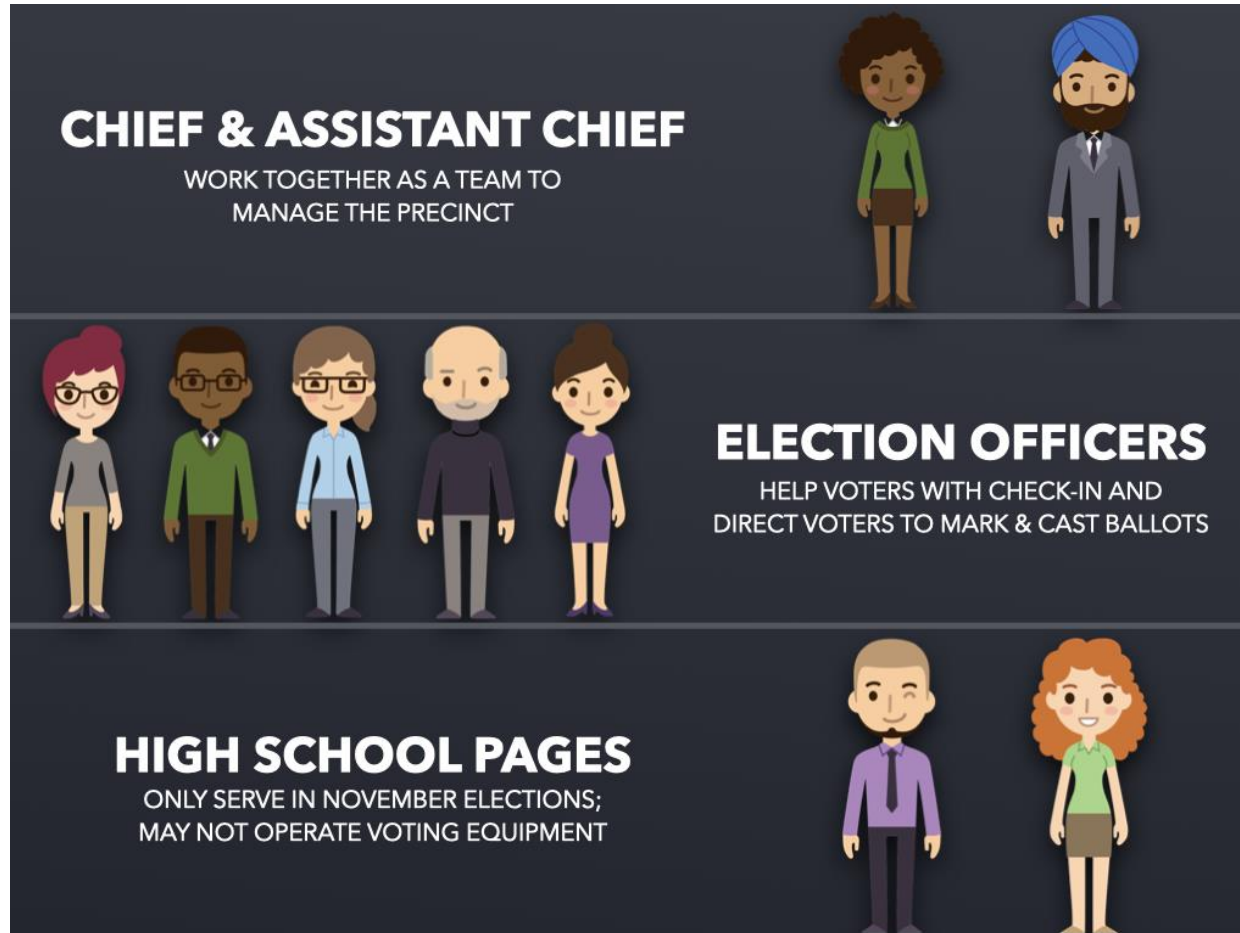
Please refer to our RESOURCES website for any updated information:

**<https://fairfaxgop.org/fairfax-gop-poll-watcher-resources/>**

## 2. POLLWATCHER BASICS



# Who You May See Working in a Voting Location:



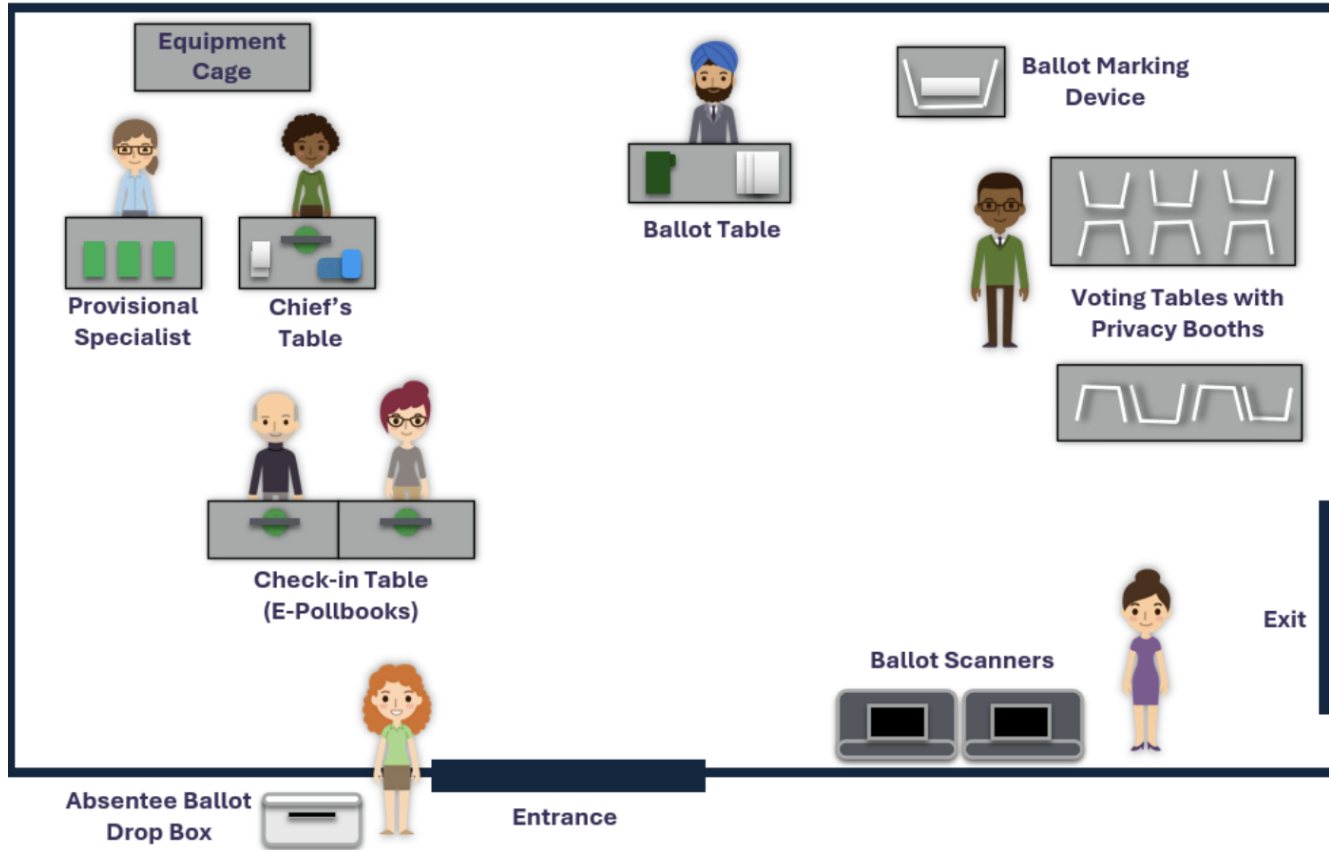
## The Election Officer (EO) Team

**NOTE:** Poll Watchers are allowed in the Precinct before, during, and after the polls are open and after they close.

Election Officer Rovers and Equipment Technicians may also be in a polling place.

Pages only work on Election Day.

# Election Day Sample Voter Room Layout



**NOTE:** Poll Watchers may sit or stand near the Check-in Table to observe the voter check-in process. In some polling places Poll Watchers won't be able to see the e-Pollbook screens directly due to the room layout.

The Absentee Ballot Drop Box is on the lower left in the diagram. The Drop Box will usually be placed *inside* the polling place. If placed outside, the Drop Box must be manned by a dedicated EO.

The Ballot Marking Device machines are intended for handicapped and foreign language voters, but upon request may be used by any voter.

Chiefs/Assistant Chiefs will use their personal cell phones to receive Curbside voter calls.

# Equipment You'll See



**E-Pollbook** (formerly the Poll Pad) is the electronic register of all Fairfax registered voters. It is used to find the voter in the registration database and “check-in” voters.

**Green Bag** for storing Provisional Ballots (*new*) during the day: it will have a lock and zip tie to thread through the zipper pull and the grommet.



**Ballot on Demand Printer** for printing precinct-specific ballots at check-in during Early Voting.

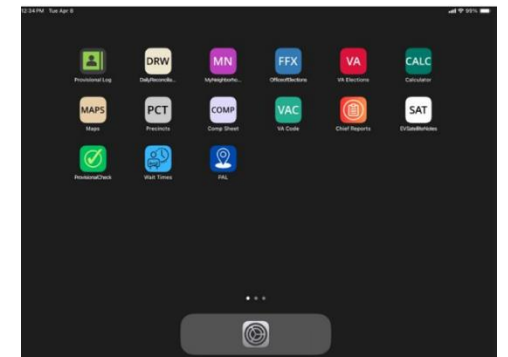


**Ballot Marking Device** (formerly the ExpressVote) is an ADA-compliant ballot marking device for handicapped and foreign language voters, but anyone may use it. The voter makes his choices on a touch screen and then the ballot is printed. The voter then takes the printed ballot and enters it into the DS300 Ballot Scanner.



The **DS300 Ballot Scanner** (*New! formerly the DS200 scanner*) scans and tabulates all ballots and stores all the images on two thumb drives. A **Red** seal covers the thumb drive compartment but is changed to a **Blue** seal if the paper roll needs replacing, printer paper jams and needs to be reset, or if entire the Scanner box is replaced.

**Admin Tablets** are for the Chiefs and Provisional EO Specialists. They are used to log all provisional ballots and to enter admin data.



# A Closer Look at the new DS300 Ballot Scanner

Top lid, Ballot & Emergency Compartments will all have zip ties with seal #s.



Emergency Compartment  
(formerly called the  
Auxiliary Compartment)

Ballot Compartment  
(formerly called the  
Ballot Box)

The Red Seal Sticker covers the thumb drive compartment



Top of the Scanner – removable unit vs the former “clamshell”



Full set-up of the  
new DS300 Ballot  
Scanner

# Authorized Representative Letter

## NOTE:

1. After your training, you will be emailed a personalized copy of the Fairfax County Authorized Representative Letter. Print it out and bring at least one copy each shift.
2. You must submit a printed copy of this letter to the Chief or Assistant Chief *every time* you Poll Watch.
3. You will use this letter to be an authorized representative for Logic & Accuracy Testing, Early Voting, the Centralized Absentee Precinct, and Election Day. The “November 4<sup>th</sup>” date applies to the entire 2025 voting season.



4246 Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, VA 22030-4214

(703) 766-4467

[info@FairfaxGOP.org](mailto:info@FairfaxGOP.org)

## AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE DESIGNATION

\_\_\_\_\_ is a qualified voter of the VA Commonwealth and is hereby designated as an authorized representative for the November 4, 2025 General Election.



Katherine C. Gorka  
Chair, Fairfax County Republican Committee

§ 24.2-604.4. Polling places; authorized representatives of party or candidate; prohibited activities. (See also § 24.2-633, § 24.2-639, § 24.2-655, ELECT Guidance 9-10-2021, ELECT Advisory 10-6-2021)

A. The officers of election shall permit one authorized representative of each political party or independent candidate in a general or special election, or one authorized representative of each candidate in a primary election, to remain in the room in which the election is being conducted at all times. A representative may serve part of the day and be replaced by successive representatives. The officers of election shall have discretion to permit up to three authorized representatives of each political party or independent candidate in a primary election, to remain in the room in which the election is being conducted. The officers shall permit one such representative for each pollbook station. However, no more than one such representative for each pollbook station or three representatives of any political party or independent candidate, whichever number is larger, shall be permitted in the room at any one time.

B. Each authorized representative shall be a qualified voter of any jurisdiction of the Commonwealth. No candidate whose name is printed on the ballot shall serve as a representative of a party or candidate for purposes of this section.

Each representative shall present to the officers of election a written statement designating him to be a representative of the party or candidate that is signed by the county or city chairman of his political party, the independent candidate, or the primary candidate, as appropriate. If the county or city chairman is unavailable to sign such a written designation, such a designation may be made by the state or district chairman of the political party. However, no written designation made by a state or district chairman shall take precedence over a written designation made by the county or city chairman. Such statement, bearing the chairman's or candidate's original signature, may be photocopied, and such photocopy shall be as valid as if the copy had been signed.

C. Authorized representatives shall be allowed, whether in a regular polling place or central voter precinct, to be close enough to the voter check-in table to be able to hear and see what is occurring; however, such observation shall not violate the secret vote provision of Article II, Section 3 of the Constitution of Virginia or otherwise interfere with the orderly process of the election. Any representative who complains to the chief officer of election that he is unable to hear or see the process may accept the chief officer's decision, or if dissatisfied, he may immediately appeal the decision to the local electoral board or general registrar.

D. Authorized representatives shall be allowed, whether in a regular polling place or central absentee voter precinct, to use a handheld wireless communications device but shall not be allowed to use such a device to capture a digital image inside the polling place or central absentee voter precinct. The officers of election may prohibit the use of cellular telephones or other handheld wireless communications devices if such use will result in a violation of subsection A or C of § 24.2-604 or § 24.2-607.

E. Authorized representatives shall not be allowed in any case to provide assistance to any voter as permitted under § 24.2-649 or to wear any indication that they are authorized to assist voters either inside or the polling place or within 40 feet of any entrance to the polling place.

F. The officers of election may require any person who is found by a majority of the officers present to be in violation of this section to remain outside of the prohibited area.

AUTHORIZED BY THE FAIRFAX COUNTY REPUBLICAN COMMITTEE

# Authorized Representative Code of Conduct

**NOTE:** Poll Watchers must agree to a Code of Conduct as part of the shift sign-up process. The Code of Conduct will be shown as part of the messaging when you sign up for a shift in Argenta, the shift scheduling system.

*As an Authorized Representative, I affirm that I am registered to vote in Virginia. I will be courteous with the public, election officials, election officers and all volunteers, regardless of political affiliation or any other personal attributes. I will comply with federal and Virginia laws including all laws listed on the Authorized Representative authorization form. If I observe non-compliance with election laws and required election processes, I will first communicate with the polling place Chief, and then with the legal resources (Hotline) provided by the Republican Party of Virginia. I will contact these same legal authorities to report incidents of harassment or intimidation of voters, election officials, election officers or any volunteers. As a representative of the Fairfax County Republican Committee, I will always perform my responsibilities as an Authorized Representative in a professional and polite manner.*

# Poll Watcher Responsibilities

1. **DON'T ARGUE:** You may ask questions of the Chief and the Assistant Chief and raise concerns. Do not dispute or challenge their determinations or otherwise interfere with the conduct of the election. If your concern is not addressed, call the Helpline immediately at **804-600-4809** and/or email **help@virginia.gop**
2. **DOCUMENT THE FACTS:** Raise questions and concerns immediately – and then document each incident when you have time on your **Report Form**
3. **SPEAK ONLY WITH THE CHIEF AND ASSISTANT CHIEF:** Do not interrupt Election Officers from doing their jobs. When you're talking, you're not observing.
4. **DO NOT SPEAK:** with voters or offer to help them
5. **DO NOT TOUCH:** machines, ballots, or any voting forms
6. **DO NOT PHOTOGRAPH, RECORD OR VIDEO:** anything or anyone.
7. **BE PROFESSIONAL:** Avoid inflammatory language. Don't give them an excuse to expel you. If you're inside the polling place, you can observe, raise concerns, and report to the Helpline. If you are removed inappropriately, call the Helpline!
7. **STAY CURRENT:** Check for PW resources throughout Election Season at:  
<https://fairfaxgop.org/fairfax-gop-poll-watcher-resources>

# How to Prepare and What to Do

## Get Ready:

1. Wear comfortable clothing and shoes that look respectable; dress in layers in anticipation of outside weather changes and inside temperature fluctuations
2. Do not wear ANYTHING political, law enforcement, or military in nature – e.g., no MAGA hats, no political pins or buttons

## Bring:

1. **At least one copy of your Fairfax GOP Letter of Authorization form and paper Report Form for each shift you work; and for each precinct you visit as a Microshifter on Election Day**
2. Job aid information: Pocket Guide
3. Charged cell phone so you can call the RPV Helpline 804-600-4809 (put it in your cellphone contact list)
4. Your own food and drink; don't eat/drink refreshments provided for the EOs
5. Reading material for slow times with few voters (e.g., initial days of early voting) (N/A for Microshifters)

## Introduce Yourself:

1. To the Chief and present your Letter of Authorization.
  - Note: By tradition in Fairfax County the Chief is a Republican, and the Assistant Chief is a Democrat (based on the party of the current sitting Governor).
2. The Chief will give you a sticker identifying you as a Republican with the role as an AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

# You May See Fleeing Voters

If a voter leaves the precinct before casting his ballot, he is considered a fleeing voter. Alert the Chief or Assistant Chief if you observe a fleeing voter and no EO has reacted.

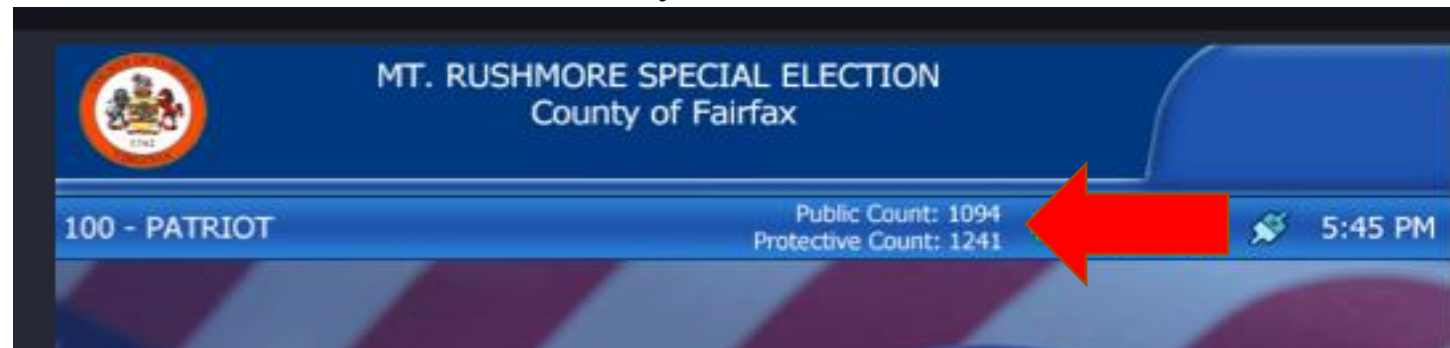
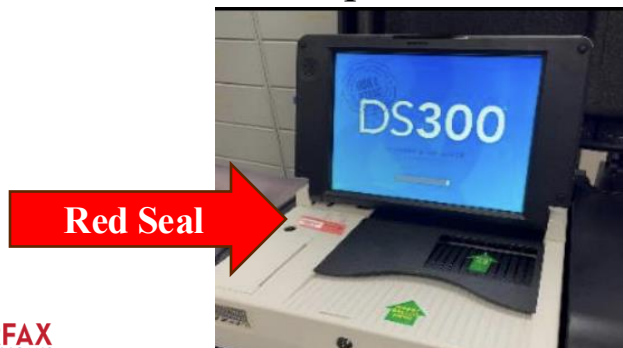
## Process:

- The EO removes the ballot from the voting area and gives it to the Chief or Assistant Chief
- The Chief writes “**VOID**” across the front and back of the ballot
- The Chief places the voided ballot (along with Spoiled Ballots and Surrendered Absentees Ballots) in the #4 Envelope, tallying the count on the front of the envelope
- If the voter was using the ExpressVote, an Election Officer must touch Exit on the screen to eject the ballot card, write “VOID” on the ballot card, and give it to the Chief to place in the #4 envelope

If the ballot was left on the DS300 Ballot Scanner, this is NOT a fleeing voter. An Election Officer can insert the ballot to be scanned.

# The Polls Open: Record the Opening of the DS300 Scanner

- **Observe the numbers on the DS300 Ballot Scanners as they are opened.** The **Public Count** **MUST READ ZERO!** on all first days of voting. Counts will aggregate during early voting, so this is only on Election Day or the first days of Early Voting
  - If not, bring this to the attention of the Chief. If the scanner machine is not corrected immediately, the Chief should take that machine out of service.
  - **NOTE:** The **Protected Count** is how many ballots have ever been scanned in the machine and will be a high number – it's the machine "odometer." The **Public Count** is the number of ballots cast in THIS ELECTION and should read ZERO on the first day of Early Voting or on Election Day.
- Observe and report the DS300 red seal number; find on the DS300 itself, on the Machine Certification Form, or on the Daily DS300 Log sheet.
- We will email in advance for comparison the DS300 data you **SHOULD** see on Election Day and/or the first days of Early Voting: Protected Count, the serial and seal numbers for the first shifts on both Early Voting **OPENING DAYS** for the Special and General Elections, and also Election Day.



# What to Do After the Polls Open

- During a voter lull, walk over and observe the numbers on the DS300 Ballot Scanner and verify they are the same as the number of voters checked in on the E-Pollbooks, minus any voters still marking their ballots. If not, advise the Chief
- Observe if the Chief and Assistant Chief are handling non-routine situations according to the law and in a non-partisan manner – report instances when this is otherwise
  - Observe if all required forms are completed
    - e.g., Voter assistance forms are completed - signed by voter and person assisting (unless the assistant is 15 years old or younger)
- Accompany Election Officer outside for curbside voters – if polling place activity allows
  - Observe that “greeters” aren’t interfering with EO’s attending curbside voters, nor campaigning under the guise of “advising” EOs that there is a curbside voter.
- Note that all SAME DAY REGISTRATION voters are given a provisional ballot; report immediately if the voter tries to put it through the DS300 Ballot Scanner

# Voters Do Not Need to Speak English

## English competency is NOT an indicator of Citizenship

- If voter is over 55 years of age and has lived for at least 15 years in the United States, then he can become a citizen without taking the English test. These years don't necessarily have to be consecutive.
- If voter is a green card holder and has been a lawful permanent resident of the United States for at least 20 years and is over 50 years of age, then he can become a citizen without taking the English test.
- Even if voter qualifies for the “50/20” or “55/15” English language exceptions, he must still take the citizenship civics test – but he will be permitted to take the civics test in his native language.
- For non-English speaking voters: they can use the Ballot Marking Device translation feature, an assistant to translate, or the Language translation phone service for languages other than Spanish, Korean, or Vietnamese