



Authority of City and Township Clerks Over Election Inspectors

Election inspectors are directed by the clerk of the city or township in which the election inspector is employed. While the Michigan Election Law requires election inspectors to fulfill certain duties – in particular, to uphold the oath of office taken by each election inspector – each city and township clerk has the authority to issue directions to election inspectors working in their jurisdiction, just as the clerk has the authority to issue directions to any other person the clerk may manage. A clerk may require election inspectors to take particular actions or complete tasks in a specified manner, and the clerk may also require election inspectors to refrain from taking certain actions or behaving in certain ways. An election inspector who fails to follow the directions of the clerk of the city or township in which the election inspector is serving, or who violates any of the duties imposed on election inspectors by the Michigan Election Law, may be dismissed by that clerk.

If an election inspector serving at a polling place is dismissed by the clerk, the election inspector must leave the polling place without disrupting the voting process. An election inspector serving in an absent voter ballot processing facility during the sequestration period who is dismissed by the clerk is still bound by their legal obligation to remain sequestered until the close of polls. To avoid breaching that obligation, the clerk should direct the dismissed election inspector to remain in a room or area of the location containing the absent voter ballot processing facility but which is separated from the area where absent voter ballots are being processed. A dismissed election inspector who breaks sequestration by prematurely leaving the location containing an absent voter ballot processing facility before the close of polls violates the oath they took upon entering the facility. An election inspector serving in an absent voter ballot processing facility who is dismissed by the clerk after the sequestration period ends must leave the facility without disturbing the ballot tallying process.

A dismissed election inspector may be replaced by the clerk if the clerk determines that a replacement election inspector is necessary to ensure the smooth operation of the election process. Once the replacement election inspector has taken the oath and, if applicable, signed the poll book, the replacement election inspector may perform all the tasks and is bound by all the duties of a regular election inspector.