



Election Inspector Overview

Michigan elections are conducted under a rigorous check-and-balance system where polling places and absent voter counting boards are operated by bipartisan teams of election inspectors.

In this role, you are part of a team of dedicated individuals who are working diligently to ensure that every vote is counted accurately, that procedures are fairly and impartially followed, and that voters can cast their ballots with confidence.

Duties may include:

- Prepare signage, materials and equipment before polls open
- Greet voters
- Process voters, resolving status flags usually due to incomplete/outdated voter registration information
- Serve as a liaison for challenges
- Check and enter information in the ePollbook
- Issue ballots to voters, including provisional ballots when necessary
- Assist voters, including individuals with disabilities, maintaining a "customer service" approach
- Facilitate curbside voting for voters who need that option
- Address tabulator issues, remaining at least 10 feet from it when in use
- Assist in providing a replacement ballot when a voter surrenders their spoiled ballot
- Process absentee ballots
- Close the polls, allowing anyone in line to vote
- Obtain vote totals
- Follow procedures to reconcile discrepancies
- Assist with proper recording, verification and final closing procedures

Political balance

As you administer the polls throughout the day, it is important to employ a "check and balance" procedure to protect the integrity of the election and eliminate any appearance of impropriety. The following duties must be performed by two election inspectors who have expressed preferences for different political parties:

- Assisting voters who request instruction after entering a voting station.
- Assisting voters in the curbside voting process.
- Opening any electronic tabulating equipment during the day to resolve issues or remove ballots (if necessary).
- Sealing electronic voting devices or any other election materials.
- After polls close, sealing ballot containers and transporting and delivering sealed ballot containers and sealed documents.

Maintaining order in the polls

Michigan election law authorizes the precinct board to "maintain peace, regularity and order at the polling place." Precinct inspectors possess this authority because voters have a right to vote a secret ballot in a secure, orderly environment free of distractions.

Some rules to remember:

Intimidation and disturbance

- It is unlawful for a person to attempt through menace or other means to influence another person in how to vote, or to deter or interrupt another person in voting at an election.
- In Michigan, it is unlawful for a person to make a disturbance at a place where elections are being conducted by interrupting peace and quiet, violating public order or decorum, or hindering other persons in the pursuit of their rights.



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- In Michigan, the open carry of firearms is prohibited in certain places that may be used for election purposes, including school buildings and places of worship. The law prohibits the concealed carry of firearms in school buildings and places of worship unless a specific exception applies to the concealed pistol license holder. It is unlawful for a person to intimidate an election official, including an election inspector, because of their status as an election official and with the specific intent of interfering with the performance of their duties.

Campaigning at the polls

- Persons are not permitted to solicit votes or engage in any type of campaigning within 100 feet of any doorway to enter the building in which a polling place is located.
- Election inspectors must direct voters entering the polls to remove campaign buttons or cover up clothing that refers to a candidate, campaign slogan, or political party or interest group on this election's ballot.

Challengers and poll watchers

- Challengers and observers must follow the directions of election inspectors at polling places and absent voter ballot processing facilities.
- Challengers and poll watchers cannot speak to voters and generally may not speak to election inspectors other than the challenger liaison.
- Challengers may not make indiscriminate challenges, make challenges of qualified and registered electors for the purpose of annoying or delaying voters, or interfere with or delay the work of election inspectors.

Photography

- Voters may use mobile devices while waiting in line at the processing table if not disruptive to the voting process.
- Voters who have entered a voting station to vote may take a photo of their own ballot only, while they are within the voting booth.
- Voters are prohibited from taking selfies or any other type of photograph within the area where people are voting.
- Broadcast stations and news reporters are permitted to briefly take photos or record from the public area—not the voting area. They may not interview voters in the polling place.
- Challengers and poll watchers are prohibited from taking photos or recording in the polling place during the hours polls are open or at the absent voter counting board.

Actions to take if problems occur

If a voter, challenger or poll watcher is disruptive or refuses to observe all applicable standards of conduct, warn the individual that he or she will be ejected from the polls if problems persist. If problems continue, eject the individual from the polling place or absent voter counting board. If the individual refuses to leave, contact the precinct chairperson, the clerk and if necessary, local law enforcement for assistance.

Be sure to document the incident and any remedial actions taken in the Remarks section of the ePollbook. Remember that if an individual appears to be disruptive, it may be because of a mental health condition or disability. Precinct inspectors should remain calm, patient and respectful and provide reasonable accommodations as necessary to ensure voting access.