



Republican In-Person Absentee/Early Voting Observer Guide

When Arriving at the Observing Location

- Upon arriving at the clerk's office or alternate designated voting location, sign in with the clerk or their staff & present photo ID.
- The clerk may reasonably limit the number of Republican observers (as well as Democrat observers) who are permitted to observe and who present to observe at the same time.
- Follow directions of the clerk or their staff concerning the locations designated for observing.
 - The observation areas should not be less than 3 feet nor more than 8 feet from the registration table or the ballot table. The observation areas should be positioned in order to permit observers to readily observe all public aspects of the voting process. The clerk may remove any observer who disrupts operations at the location or who violates applicable law.
 - The clerk may remove any observer who disrupts operations at the location or who engages in electioneering or who posts/distributes election related material.

Voting Process at In-Person Absentee Voting (IPAV)/Early Voting sites

- In person absentee voting in the clerk's office or another designated absentee voting location may not begin any earlier than 14 days before an election. In person absentee voting may not take place the Monday before an election.
- Proof of identification must be presented. The clerk must initial the absentee certificate envelope indicating that the clerk has viewed acceptable proof of identification. See: Wis. Stat. § 6.86(1)(ar).
- The applicant does not need to fill out a separate written request if they only wish to vote absentee for the current election. According to WEC, the absentee certificate envelope doubles as an absentee request and certification when completed in person in the clerk's office.
- Before issuing the ballot, the clerk must review the Ineligible Voter List to confirm that the elector is eligible to vote on the day of the election.
 - If the name of the elector appears on the list, the clerk shall inform the elector that the elector is ineligible to vote per Department of Corrections.
 - If the elector agrees that they are ineligible, the absentee application should be rejected and the voter registration inactivated.

*material was provided by the Wisconsin Elections Commission or Wisconsin State Statute



- If the elector maintains that they are eligible to vote in the election, the clerk shall make a reasonable effort to contact the WEC to verify the elector's felony status.
 - If WEC confirms the elector is eligible to vote, the clerk should document on the Absentee Ballot Log (EL-124) that they confirmed the voter's status with WEC and then allow the elector to proceed to vote.
 - If WEC confirms that the elector is NOT eligible to vote or if the clerk is unable to contact the WEC, the clerk should:
 - Give the elector the Ineligible Voter Information Sheet that explains to the elector what they need to do to resolve the issue with the Department of Corrections.
 - Permit the elector to vote, but mark the Absentee Certificate Envelope (EL-122) as "ineligible to vote per Department of Corrections."
- If the voter is determined eligible by the clerk, they should receive their ballot.
- Once the ballot is received by the voter, they then take their ballot to the voting booth (if applicable) and fill out their selections.
- Once their ballot is filled out, they then hand their ballot back to the clerk and the clerk should take it and secure it for processing on Election Day.

Challenging Electors

- Observers who are qualified electors of Wisconsin do have the right to challenge the eligibility of an individual for cause under Wis. Stat. § 6.925.
- Challenging voters and ballots should only be used when there is clear and sufficient evidence that a person is not eligible to vote because: 1) the person is not a citizen of the United States; 2) the person is not at least 18 years of age; 3) the person has not resided in the election district for at least 28 days; 4) the person has a felony conviction and has not been restored to civil rights; 5) the person has been adjudicated incompetent; 6) the person has made a bet or wager on the election; or 7) the person has voted previously in the same election.
- As an observer, you can state: "As an elector, I challenge the eligibility of this individual for cause under Wisconsin Statutes Sections 6.925 and 6.93."
- The challenge shall be resolved by the election inspectors. If the challenged individual "does not fully answer any relevant questions" put to them, the inspectors shall reject the elector's vote under Wis. Stat. § 6.94.
- If the challenged elector answers all relevant questions from inspectors, the challenge is not withdrawn, and swears an oath that they are eligible at that election, the challenged individual's ballot shall be accepted under Wis. Stat. § 6.94.
 - NOTE: For central count municipalities, the challenge process is slightly different from the above and shall be determined pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 7.52(5).

When Leaving the Observing Location

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- Ensure that you have all your belongings with you before leaving.
- Inform the clerk or their staff you are leaving for the day, and thank them for their assistance and time.
- If there are any matters that require follow-up on, communicate and/or provide necessary information to your local EI Director or coordinator.

FAQs

- As an observer, do I need to wear a mask? *Observers may be required to wear a mask inside the site they are observing at. However, no voter can be turned away at an IPAV site for not wearing a mask.*
- What if a voter requested an absentee ballot by mail, but comes to vote in person? *In this scenario, the election inspector should review the absentee ballot log to make sure the absentee ballot was not received and, if it was not received, the voter must be asked and must confirm that he/she did not mail or deliver the absentee ballot to the clerk's office. If the voter makes such confirmation, he/she is allowed to vote in person.*
- Does every voter need to show ID at the early voting site? *Generally, yes. However, note that there are some voters with a confidential listing under Wis. Stats. 6.47 who may just provide their confidential identification card or give their name and serial number in lieu of presenting proof of identification and stating their name/address. Please note this is a fairly rare occurrence.*
- May I bring a note pad or use my phone? *You should bring a note pad and pen to take detailed notes. Do not make phone calls from inside the clerks office/voting areas and, if you need to make a call, step outside before making the call. You may text or e-mail from your phone, but only do it in a way that makes it clear that you are not taking pictures or video (e.g., turn away from voting areas and point your phone towards the ground). Observers are prohibited from taking pictures or videos inside voting areas.*
- Does the clerk always need to listen to my requests? *Unless you are challenging an elector, no. That is why it is important to fill out the observer reporting form so that we can contact the proper election officials if something is not immediately resolved.*

Reminders

- Always be respectful and courteous
- Respect any requests of the clerk and their staff
- Provide as much detail as you can while reporting an issue
- Do not wear campaign materials in/around a IPAV site
- Do not engage in discussions with voters, inspectors, or fellow observers
- Do not speak to the press

Definitions to remember

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- **Election Inspectors:** Individuals who staff and oversee the polling place (a/k/a poll workers).
- **Election Observer:** An individual who observes the public aspects of voting at the polls or clerk's office for in-person absentee ballot voting (a/k/a poll observer). They are not an election inspector.
- **Tabulator:** Machine that counts ballots. Voters will input their ballot after marking it into these machines.
- **Poll List:** Identifies registered voters in a ward and is the means in which election inspectors keep track of voters on election day. This list can either be in electronic (Badger Books) or paper form. This table in which the poll list is kept is also where voters are asked to present ID and state their name and address on election day.
- **In-Person Absentee Voting (IPAV):** Early in-person voting can begin no more than 14 days before the election and must end by the Sunday prior to Election Day. Hours and days of operation vary by municipality across Wisconsin, but early in-person voting cannot happen the Monday before Election Day. IPAV takes place in a municipal clerk's office, unless the governing body of the municipality designates an alternate site(s). (IPAV is the statutory term for in-person "early voting").
- **Central Count:** Instead of processing and counting absentee ballots at polling places, municipalities can designate a central counting location for absentee ballots.

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