

Election Observers Guidelines

Presidential General Election November 5, 2024



RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
2720 Gateway Drive, Riverside, CA 92507
Mailing Address: 2724 Gateway Drive Riverside, CA 92507
(951) 486-7200 or (800) 773- 8683
Fax (951) 486-7335
www.voteinfo.net
rovweb@rivco.org

Safety Measures



UNAUTHORIZED WEAPONS IN PUBLIC / COUNTY BUILDING

ANY PERSON WHO BRINGS OR POSSESSES, WITHIN ANY RIVERSIDE COUNTY OWNED OR LEASED BUILDING, ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WEAPONS IS SUBJECT TO ARREST:

(California Penal Code Section 171b)

1. Any firearm loaded or unloaded.
2. Any deadly weapon described in Section 17235 or in any provision listed in Section 16590 (e.g., switchblade knives, billy clubs, metal knuckles, etc.).
3. Any knife with a blade length in excess of four inches, the blade of which is fixed or is capable of being fixed in an unguarded position by the use of one or two hands.
4. Any unauthorized tear gas weapon.
5. Any taser or stun gun, as defined in Penal Section 244.5
6. Any instrument that expels a metallic projectile, such as a BB or pellet, through the force of pressure, CO2 pressure, or spring action, or any spot marker gun or paint gun.

**VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA PENAL CODE
SECTION 171b IS PUNISHABLE BY
IMPRISONMENT IN COUNTY JAIL OR IN
STATE PRISON UPTO 1 YEAR.**

This County of Riverside Facility reserves the right to refuse access and/or services if you have any of the above mentioned items on you. We ask for your cooperation in maintaining a safe environment for you, other clients and County staff. Thank you.

ARMAS NO AUTORIZADAS EN EDIFICIOS PUBLICOS DEL CONDADO

CUALQUIER PERSONA QUE TRAIGA O POSEE CUALQUIERA DE LAS SIGUIENTES ARMAS DENTRO DE UN EDIFICIO PROPIETARIO O ALQUILADO POR EL CONDADO DE RIVERSIDE ESTA SUJETO A SER ARRESTADO:

(Sección Penal de California 171b)

1. Alguna arma de fuego cargada o descargada
2. Cualquier arma de fuego descrita en la Sección 17235 o en cualquier provisión enumerada en la Sección 16590 (ej. navajas, porra/ macana, nudilleras de metal, etc.)
3. Cualquier cuchillo/navaja que acceda el largo de cuatro pulgadas, la navaja es completa sin protector cuya navaja está expuesta por el uso de una o dos manos.
4. Cualquier arma de gas lacrimógeno
5. Paralizador/ inmovilizador eléctricos, como se definen en la Sección Penal 244.5
6. Cualquier instrumento que expulse un proyectil metálico, tal como los balines o pistolas de presión de aire

**LA VIOLACIÓN DEL CODIGO PENAL DE
CALIFORNIA SECCIÓN 171b ES CASTIGABLE CON
PRISIÓN EN UNA CÁRCEL DEL CONDADO O EN LA
PRISIÓN ESTATAL HASTA UN AÑO**

Esta Instalación del Condado de Riverside se reserva el derecho de rechazar el acceso y / o servicios si usted tiene consigo cualquiera de los artículos mencionados arriba. Le pedimos su cooperación para mantener un ambiente seguro para usted, otros clientes y el personal del Condado. Gracias.



Video Surveillance

Please be advised Video Surveillance is in progress on the premises.
Upon entry you are granting us your consent to be recorded.

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS



Health Measures

Election observers must adhere to all health and safety provisions in place in Riverside County at the time of observing. The elections official shall abide by any local, state, or federal health and safety directives in place during the time of the conducting of the election.

All election observers are encouraged to follow practices that help control and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Election observers should stay home if they are experiencing any of the symptoms below.

- Frequent cough
- Fever
- Difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Recent loss of taste or smell

In addition, the observer should stay home if they:

- Feel sick
- Have tested positive for COVID-19
- Live with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19

*Face masks and hand sanitizer are available upon request

All observers must follow any posted guidelines in order to observe ballot processing activities at the Registrar of Voters office.

Election Observers Guidelines

Check In

- Upon entering any Vote Center, central counting site, or any other location where election processes or activities are occurring, an election observer is required to check in.
- The elections official has the discretion to require an observer to wear identification badge that must always remain visible to ensure observers are readily identifiable.
- To ensure the safety and security of election workers and to prevent interference with the conduct of the elections process, the elections official may restrict the size and type of items the election observer can bring into the location where observation is taking place.

Electronic Devices

- Electronic devices, including cell phones, pagers, cameras, and other audio or video equipment are prohibited in the observation area(s) **if** the use of such item(s) is interfering with or will interfere with the conduct of the elections process, the privacy of voters, or if the use of those items compromises the security of the location where observation is taking place.

Remote Observation

- In the event an elections official provides a live video feed for a remote observation of an elections activity or processes in response to a threat or emergency that impairs in-person observation of election activities and processes, the elections official shall provide a mechanism for an election observer to ask questions about the activity or process being conducted or make a challenge to that activity or process.

Written Observation Rules

- The elections official shall make available written observation rules and procedures for the election process being observed to the election observers or post the written observation rules and any written procedures for the election process being observed conspicuously at any location where observation is taking place. The elections official can use their own website and make the written observation rules and procedures available online.

Election Observers Guidelines

Facility Observation Area Ground Rules

- Subject to the provisions of Election Code section 15004 the elections official may limit the number of election observers permitted in an observation area in order to prevent interference with the conduct of voting and elections processes. In the event there are more observers than can be accommodated the elections official may also limit the number of observers. If necessary to provide an equal opportunity for those present to observe the elections process or activity, the elections official may provide for a rotation of observers.
- The elections official may require an election observer to remain **silent** inside the observation area if the talk from or the conduct of an observer is disrupting the elections activity or process being observed.
- The elections official, at their discretion, while maintaining the right to observe the elections process and ensuring that observers have the ability to view the election processes or activities being observed, may determine the distance at which the observer(s) shall observe. In making such determination, the elections official may take into consideration, among other things, the following:
 1. the size and area of the Vote Center;
 2. the size and configuration of the building, election office(s) and location where ballots are being processed and counted;
 3. the presence and path of travel of staff;
 4. the elections official's staffing levels and the number of observers who are requesting access to observe a particular process;
 5. the maintaining of security and limiting observer access to voting equipment to ensure that it cannot be touched or tampered with;
 6. the maintaining of privacy and security of the ballot and the voter's confidential information, which does not include the voter's signature or address for the purpose of observing the processing of vote-by-mail envelopes;
 7. the right of a voter to vote safely, securely, and free from intimidation or corruption;
 8. the safety and security of elections officials, workers, and the public, which may include any health and safety measures or requirements in place at the time observation is occurring;
 9. the use of video displays to magnify voting materials and closed-circuit video displays of election processes or activities;
 10. technological limitations of the elections official's office;
 11. the maintaining of security and limiting observer access to other county or city departments; and,
 12. maintaining accessibility for election observers with disabilities.

Election Observers Guidelines

Right to Observer

- An election observer has the right to observe the election processes and activities at the central counting site beginning when the elections official starts processing vote-by-mail ballots, through Election Day, and until the elections official has certified the results of the election.
- An election observer has the right to observe the activities of the semifinal official canvass and the official canvass as defined in Elections Code sections 353.5 & 335.5
- **An elections official need not delay or interrupt scheduled operations and processes solely because an election observer is, will be, or is not yet present, and shall not halt scheduled operations because an election observer is or is not present.**
- The elections official shall provide notice(s) to the public which shall contain the specific date(s), time(s) and place(s) of the election process or activity that may be observed by the public. If there is a change of schedule for an elections process or activity that has been noticed to the public, the elections official shall provide updated information to the public regarding the schedule changes as soon as the changes are made. The notices can be conspicuously posted on the elections official's website where the elections activity or process are taking place. The elections official may also provide notice to voters via email. The following notice(s) are required, as applicable:
 1. One percent manual tally (Elections Code section 15360),
 2. Logic and accuracy testing (Elections Code section 15000),
 3. Early ballot retrieval (Elections Code section 14422; Section 20142),
 4. Vote-by-mail processing and counting (Elections Code section 15104, subdivision (c)).
- When vote-by-mail ballots and envelopes are being processed, the elections official shall use reasonable measures to ensure voter registration information is confidential under Elections Code section 2194(c)(2) is not visible to election observers.
- An Election observer has the right to observe the retrieval of vote-by-mail envelopes from vote-by-mail drop boxes and vote-by-mail drop off locations.

Election Observers Guidelines

Challenging Voters

- During the processing of vote-by-mail envelopes and ballots, an elections observer shall have the right to make challenges as provided in Elections Code sections 15104(b) and (d).
- Election observers may challenge whether individuals handling vote-by-mail ballots are following established procedures, including all of the following:
 - A. Verifying signatures on the vote-by-mail envelopes by comparing them to the signature(s) in the voter's registration record in accordance with (E.C. § section 3019 and 20960).
 - B. Accurately duplicating damaged or defective ballots in accordance with (E.C. § section 15210).
 - C. Securing vote-by-mail ballots to prevent tampering with them before they are counted on Election Day.
- The elections official shall develop written procedures for maintaining, reviewing, and determining the outcome of challenges made by elections observers. These procedures shall be made available to election observers where an elections activity or process is occurring and shall include:
 1. retaining the name and organization of the challenger,
 2. a description of the proposed issue,
 3. the date and time issue was reported,
- As provided in Election Code section 15106 because the voter is not present, the challenger shall have the burden of establishing extraordinary proof of the validity of the challenge at the time the challenge is made.
- An election observer requesting a challenge under Elections Code section 14240(c) has the burden of providing evidence to the elections official that establishes, at a minimum, probable cause for the requested challenge. Any doubt in the interpretation of the provisions of the California Elections Code shall be resolved in favor of the challenged voter.
- The elections official has the discretion to halt challenges from a person or group if multiple challenges are being made and those challenges are disrupting the processing. In the event the elections official determines that challenges appear frivolous or meritless, the elections official has the right to halt the challenge process in order to prevent interference with the conduct of the elections activity or process being undertaken.

Rights of Elections Officials Continued

Election Observer Conduct

- The elections official will maintain the integrity of the election process and has the discretion to determine what constitutes election observer misconduct or interference.
- In order to minimize distraction or disruption an elections observer shall not interfere with:
 1. Retrieval of vote-by-mail ballots from vote-by-mail drop boxes and vote-by-mail dropoff locations, processing of vote-by-mail ballots and envelopes, or the processing and counting of vote-by-mail ballots.
 2. Touch or handle any ballots.
 3. Physically handle any voting equipment or voting materials.
 4. Move or rearrange tables, chairs, or voting booths at the Vote Center or central counting site without the express permission of the elections official.
 5. Sit at the elections official work stations or view confidential voter information on any computer terminal or document, except as provided in Elections Code section 2194(c)(2).
 6. Engage in any electioneering activities.
 7. Display any political party or campaign material or wear political party or campaign badges, buttons, or apparel.
 8. Wear the uniform of a peace officer, a private guard, or security personnel.
 9. Stop or attempt to stop election officials while they are processing voted ballots.
 10. Eat or drink in a vote center or the central counting site without the express permission of the elections official.
 11. Assist in operations at any Vote Center or the central counting site without the express permission of the elections official.
 12. Intentionally prevent other elections observers from observing election materials, processes or activities.
 13. Enter secure areas or any area other than an identified observation area without the express permission of the elections official.

If an election observer is not following the observation rules provided elections official will give a verbal or written warning to that observer that they shall comply with the observation rules. The warning will include an explanation of what observation rule(s) are not being complied with. If an election observer continues to not comply with the observation rule(s), the elections official may require an election observer to leave the observation area, the premises, or both immediately if the situation warrants such action.

Voter Bill of Rights

Election Code 2300

- ♦ **The right to vote if you are a registered voter.** You are eligible to vote if you are:
 - A U.S. citizen living in California
 - At least 18 years old
 - Registered where you currently live
 - Not currently serving a state or federal prison term for the conviction of a felony
 - Not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court
- ♦ **The right to vote if you are a registered voter even if your name is not on the list.** You will vote using a provisional ballot. Your vote will be counted if elections officials determine that you are eligible to vote.
- ♦ **The right to vote if you are still in line when the polls close.**
- ♦ **The right to cast a secret ballot** without anyone bothering you or telling you how to vote.
- ♦ **The right to get a new ballot if you have made a mistake,** if you have not already cast your ballot. You can:
 - Ask an elections official at a polling place** for a new ballot,
 - Exchange your vote-by-mail ballot** for a new one at an elections office, or at your polling place, or
 - Vote using a provisional ballot.**
- ♦ **The right to get help casting your ballot** from anyone you choose, except from your employer or union representative.
- ♦ **The right to drop off your completed vote-by-mail ballot at any polling place** in California.
- ♦ **The right to get election materials in a language other than English** if enough people in your voting precinct speak that language.
- ♦ **The right to ask questions to elections officials about election procedures** and watch the election process. If the person you ask cannot answer your questions, they must send you to the right person for an answer. If you are disruptive, they can stop answering you.
- ♦ **The right to report any illegal or fraudulent election activity** to an elections official or the Secretary of State's office.

www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-bill-rights

Electioneering & Exit Polling

Electioneering

Electioneering includes any effort to influence opinion, for or against, an issue or candidate. Electioneering is prohibited within the immediate vicinity of a person in line to cast their ballot or within **100 feet** of the voting room entrance, curbside voting or drop box. Some forms of electioneering are unintentional such as wearing a garment, sticker, pin, etc. depicting a candidate, political party, or a measure. In such cases, politely ask the voters to remove or cover the articles before entering the voting room. A blue smock is provided in the "Resource Materials" bag to cover clothing. Other types of electioneering include circulating a petition, posting of signs (on stakes, fences, on or in automobiles, etc.), approaching or yelling at voters, or distributing campaign literature.

Remain composed when asking those engaged in electioneering to move the activity past the 100 foot boundary. A 100-foot long string will be included in the "Resource Materials" bag to measure the boundary. Note that within 100 feet of a voting location means a distance of 100 feet from the room or rooms in which voters are signing the roster and casting a ballot.

If a situation occurs that threatens the security of you, your staff, or voters contact the Registrar of Voters office and if necessary contact your local authorities at 911 (E.C. §18370 and E.C. §18540 -18541).

Exit Polling

Exit Polling is a brief interview of a voter when leaving the voting location. Voters are under no obligation to speak to anyone engaged in Exit Polling. Interviews are conducted by either members of the media, campaign staff, or interest groups. Exit Polling is not permitted within 25 feet of the exit door of the voting room.

Exit Polling differs from electioneering in that voters are addressed as they leave the voting location. Occasionally, the media will contact the Registrar of Voters office and advise them that they intend to do Exit Polling at a particular voting location. When the Registrar of Voters is so advised, we will notify the Leads (Mandated by the Secretary of State).

Poll Watchers & Press/Media

Poll Watchers

Anyone may be a Poll Watcher, but most often Poll Watchers are people who work with a political party or a campaign. A Poll Watcher is someone who observes the procedures at voting locations where ballots are being cast and/or they monitor who has, or who has not voted. Although the law allows poll watching, the following rules and guidelines must be followed:

- ♦ Poll Watchers are NOT permitted to disturb voters or interfere with the election process in any way.
- ♦ Poll Watchers may NOT sit at the processing table.
- ♦ Poll Watchers are NOT permitted behind the voting equipment or in the "voting area." Do not allow anyone other than a voter to touch the voting equipment unless they show you a County of Riverside Registrar of Voters ID.
- ♦ Poll Watchers may NOT remove any processing documents from the voting room. Documents may be viewed, but they must be returned.
- ♦ Poll Watchers may NOT at any time, handle ballots.
- ♦ Poll Watchers may NOT photograph or videotape voters for the purpose of intimidation (E.C. §18541(3)).

Poll Watchers may ask for a list of voters who have not voted in a particular precinct. This list is referred to as the "Street Index" and is found in the "Vote Center Processing" database. It can only be viewed on the laptop. The Poll Watcher would have to know which district they would like to see. In the "Street Index" on the laptop you can show them the list of voters based on the district's precincts. Poll Watchers cannot video or take a picture of the processing table laptop screen.

Press/Media

Members of the press/media may come by your location to observe and speak with staff or voters. As with Poll Watchers, they may not interfere with the voting process. Ensure that they observe the rules concerning Exit Polling by staying 25 feet beyond the entrance of the voting location.

Media may film or take pictures inside the voting location, however, **all present voters and Election Officers must give permission before being photographed or filmed (Mandated by the Secretary of State)**. Call the Registrar of Voters office with any questions.

Election Observer Questions and Comments Sheet

Thank you for participating in the election process. As an election observer you may have questions or comments that require research and input from different operations and/or various levels of management. Depending on the question(s) more time may be necessary to provide a response. To facilitate a response, please provide your contact information, questions, and comments in the space provided below. Questions and comments may also be submitted via email on our website at www.rovweb@rivco.org

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: (____)_____

Election Observer Acknowledgement



I, _____, hereby acknowledge
(Print Name)

that I have received and read a copy of the **Election Observers Guidelines**. I agree to abide by the rules set forth for election observers following the **November, 5, 2024 Presidential General Election**. I understand that failure to comply with the rules and guidelines set forth by the California Secretary of State can result in my immediate expulsion from the building by Law Enforcement or building security should I not abide.

(Election Observer Signature)

(Date)

Note: Observers who decline to sign this acknowledgment are still obligated to follow these rules and guidelines.