

# Election Day Operations

## 2014 County Party Executive Committee Certification

*Presented by:  
Elections Division of the  
Mississippi Secretary of State's Office*



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*Secretary of State*

# Election Central

Election Central is often at the Courthouse.

- Party executive committees should work out a schedule prior to the election so at least one member is at the Courthouse at all times on election day.
- Poll managers and voters will call the Courthouse to report problems and ask questions. Someone responsible and competent must be there to assist.
- When members are not at the Courthouse, members are visiting precincts in your districts to ensure operations are running smoothly.



# Election Central (cont.)

- In a county election, the Circuit Clerk, as Registrar, answers questions regarding voter registration and voter rolls.
  - Voter's name not on the pollbook/master list
  - Voter is in the wrong precinct
  - Voter has been purged for reason



# Election Helplines

- SEMS Helpdesk: (877) 357-7367
- SOS's Election Hotline: (800) 829-6786
- SOS Elections Division: (601)576-2550
- ES&S: (601) 922-2476



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# Election Supplies and Machine Preparation

- Voting Machine memory cards, ballots, poll books and supplies are picked-up from the courthouse by the Receiving/Returning Manager.
- Machines are loaded with memory cards and zero tapes are printed by Party Executive Committee Precinct Opening/Closing Officials.



# Opening the Polls

- Poll managers:
  - Arrive and begin opening voting machines at 6:00 AM.
  - Appoint an Initialing Manager and Alternate Initialing Manager
  - Open the box(es) and remove supplies
  - Lock sealed absentee ballot envelopes in ballot box until the polls close
  - Organize paper ballots
  - Complete voter Receipt/Register Book and sign oath
  - Ensure the correct machine is in the right location by checking its serial number.
  - Unlock the machine(s).
  - Unseal the tape and insert the memory card.
  - Reseal the machine and record the seal number(s).



# Opening the Polls (cont.)

- Print the zero tapes and secure the printer, if using the AVPM.
- Post 1 zero tape on the wall of the precinct and place 1 zero tape inside the memory transport bag.
- Ensure all required information is posted.
- Ensure campaign material is not within 150 feet of any entrance to the precinct.
- Open polls promptly at 7:00 AM



# Assess the Precinct

- Ensure all required information is posted:
  - Zero tapes,
  - Hours the polling place will be open,
  - General information on voting rights under federal and state law,
  - List of absentee voters,
  - Sample ballots,
  - Instructions for unverified, first-time mail-in registrants,
  - General prohibitions on fraud and misrepresentation,
  - Instructions for affidavit/provisional voters, and
  - Acceptable forms of photo identification.
- Ensure that campaign material is not within 150 feet of the precinct.
- Ensure that voting machines are positioned to protect the voter's privacy.



# Poll Managers

- As an executive committee member, you should know the duties of the poll managers. Make sure that all jobs are being performed well and in a courteous manner.
- If there is a problem, assess the situation. Know the severity of the situation and take appropriate action.
- Executive committees appoint and train poll managers so the members can take appropriate action to address the situation.



# Voting Procedures

- Executive committees need to be familiar with voting procedures.
- It is the executive committee's duty to train poll workers.
- It is the executive committee's duty to observe procedure on Election Day.
- If a precinct is reported for not following procedure, the executive committee is charged with the duty to address the situation.



# Voting Rules

- A voter may not occupy a voting booth already occupied by another voter.
- The voter may remain in a voting booth no longer than ten (10) minutes if no voters are waiting in line, and no longer than five (5) minutes if other voters are waiting in line.



# Challenged Ballots

- Any person who is lawfully inside the polling place may challenge another person's right to vote, such as:
  - A candidate,
  - A candidate's representative (official poll watcher),
  - A political party's official poll watcher (not applicable in a party primary),
  - A qualified voter from that polling place, or
  - A poll worker in the polling place.



# Basis for Challenge

A voter can be challenged if he/she:

- Is not a registered voter in the precinct;
- Is not the registered voter under whose name he/she has applied to vote;
- Has already voted in the election;
- Does not live in the precinct where he/she is registered;
- Has illegally registered to voter;
- Has taken his/her ballot from the precinct;
- Has cast an absentee ballot but is ineligible to do so; or
- Has been convicted of a disenfranchising crime.

There are no other reasons for a challenge.



# Disenfranchising Crimes

- Arson
- Armed Robbery
- Bigamy
- Bribery
- Embezzlement
- Extortion
- Felony Bad Check
- Larceny under lease
- Felony Shoplifting
- Forgery
- Larceny
- Murder
- Obtaining Money or Goods Under False Pretense
- Perjury
- Rape
- Robbery
- Theft
- Timber Larceny
- Unlawful Taking of a Motor Vehicle
- Statutory Rape
- Carjacking
- Receiving Stolen Property



# Handling a Challenged Voter

When a voter's right to cast his/her ballot is challenged, the poll workers must immediately consider the validity of the challenge, giving both the challenger and the voter the opportunity to speak to the challenge.



# Handling a Challenged Voter (cont.)

- If the poll workers unanimously consider the challenge frivolous or not made in good faith, the voter votes on the machine/regular ballot.
- If the poll workers unanimously consider the challenge well-taken, the voter votes a paper ballot. The poll workers write the name of the voter on the back of the ballot, mark the ballot “REJECTED” and place the ballot in a strong envelope marked for rejected ballots.
- If the poll workers cannot unanimously agree upon whether the challenge is valid or frivolous, the voter votes a paper ballot. The poll workers mark the ballot “CHALLENGED” and place the ballot in a strong envelope marked for challenged ballots.
- A challenged ballot is not an affidavit ballot.



# Challenged Ballots

At the close of the polls and after all the unchallenged ballots have been counted, tallied and totaled, the challenged ballots are separately counted, tallied and totaled, with a separate return made of the challenged ballot.



# Voter Assistance

- It is extremely important that a voter's right to vote by secret ballot is preserved.
- Who may receive assistance? Any voter who says he/she is:
  - Blind;
  - Disabled; or
  - Unable to read or write.

Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-549



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# How Does a Voter Get Assistance?

To receive assistance a voter must:

- Tell the poll manager he/she needs help to mark the ballot;
- State one of the reasons indicating why help is needed; and
- Choose someone to help him/her.



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# Who Cannot Assist a Voter in the Voting Booth

The voter may have anyone help mark his/her ballot, except:

- His/her employer or the employer's representative, or
- A representative of any union in which the voter is a member.



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# Instruction of Voters

- In case any voter, after entering the voting machine, asks for further instruction concerning the manner of voting, two (2) election officials enter the booth and give him/her instructions.
- No manager or person assisting a voter shall, in any manner, request, suggest or seek to persuade or induce the voter to vote for any particular ticket, issue or candidate.
- After giving instructions and before the voter casts his/her vote, the manager or person assisting him/her shall leave and the voter then casts his/her vote in secret.

Miss. Code Ann. § § 23-15-437; 23-15-477; 23-15-517



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# Curbside Voting

- A physically disabled voter who does not vote by absentee ballot may vote curbside on election day.
- A voter who drives, or is driven, to the polling place but is unable to enter the polling place where actual voting is taking place may be provided assistance in voting and be allowed to vote curbside.
- If the managers, in exercising sound discretion, determine the voter is at the polling place, two (2) or more managers take the pollbook, the receipt book and a ballot or voting device to the vehicle.
- The voter marks his/her ballot in secret, folds the ballot and returns the same to the poll manager.
- The curbside ballot is placed by the poll manager directly into the sealed ballot box. The ballot is NOT placed in an affidavit ballot envelope.

Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-541



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# Prohibitions at the Polls

- **Loitering**

No loitering is allowed within 30 feet of the polling place.

Miss. Code Ann. Section 23-15-245

- **Disturbances**

If anyone becomes unruly or abusive, the bailiff may ask him/her to leave. If he/she does not leave, call the sheriff, constable or police. All managers and persons in the voting place are to aid in keeping the peace.

Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-241



# Prohibitions at the Polls (cont.)

- **No Liquor/Alcohol**

All intoxicated or disorderly persons disturbing the peace by noise or violence in the polling place shall be arrested, jailed, or kept in custody. Such persons may be permitted if a qualified voter, to vote while in custody.

Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-893

- **Use of Sample Ballots**

It is permissible for an individual voter to bring a sample ballot into the polling place for the voter's own use as a reminder of the candidate(s) for whom he/she intends to vote . However, it is not permissible to use the sample ballot as campaign literature in attempting to influence other voters within the polling place.



# Prohibitions at the Polls (cont.)

- **“150 Foot Rule”**

Posting or distributing cards, posters or other campaign literature within 150 feet of any entrance to the polling place is prohibited.

Note: If a polling place is located within 150 feet of private property, the owner may permit the posting and distributing of cards, posters and other campaign literature.

It is the position of the Secretary of State that the wearing of a T-shirt with a candidate's name and or picture on it within 150 feet of any entrance to a building in which an election is being conducted constitutes the posting of campaign literature and is prohibited.

Miss. Code Ann. § 23-15-895



# POLL WATCHER PROHIBITIONS

## Poll Watchers shall not:

- Campaign within 150 feet of any entrance where the election is being held
  - Move about the polling places greeting voters
  - Influence or harass voters
  - Interrupt the election process



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# Poll Watchers and Candidate Representatives

- Each candidate on the ballot shall have the right to be present at the polling place, or to have a representative at the polling place.
- Political parties with a candidate on the ballot may have two (2) representatives present at the polling place in general or special elections only.
- Poll watchers and candidate representatives may be present at the public counting of the ballots.



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# Secretary of State's Office Publications

- Poll Manager Guide
- County Election Handbook
- Lobbying Handbook
- Campaign Finance Guide
- Candidate Qualifying Guide
- Elections Calendar



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# For Additional Information

Mississippi Secretary of State's Office

401 Mississippi Street

Jackson, MS 39201-1012

Toll Free Answer line

(800)829-6786

[www.sos.ms.gov](http://www.sos.ms.gov)



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