

Renville County

Election Judge Training Course

2026 Edition

TODAY'S LOGISTICS

- Required for ALL election judges
- Approximately 2 hours, including questions & answers
- Silence phones
- Restrooms: Located outside rooms 116/117

GETTING TO KNOW US

Renville County Elections Staff

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Election Judge Training & Expectations

- Consider attending the Public Accuracy Test
- Review the Election Judge Guide and training materials / online resources
- Follow the instructions of your local election official and Head Judge
- Check email regularly, including spam — our office relies on email to reach judges

Mark Your Calendars

Early Voting Starts July 24, 2026

Primary – August 11, 2026

General Election – November 3, 2026

Thank you for your service — Election Judges help things run smoothly.

Today's Training

Part One: Leading to Election Day	Part Two: Election Day	Part Three: Closing & Security
Election Judge Role	Overall Considerations	Closing the Polls
Equipment in the Polling Place	Specific Processes	Election Security
Opening the Polls	Election Day Registration	Wrap-up & Next Steps
Election Judge Positions	Election Day Conduct	Questions
New Election Laws		

PART ONE

Leading to Election Day

PART ONE

The Election Judge Role

Election Judge Eligibility

Must Be

- Eligible to vote in Minnesota
- Election Judge Trainees: [minimum age, e.g. 16 or 17 years old]
- Able to read, write, and speak English
- Willing to complete required trainings
- Willing to take the Election Judge Oath

Must NOT Be

- A candidate, relative, or person who lives with a candidate on the ballot
- A relative of another election judge serving in the same precinct at the same time
- A challenger appointed in the same election

Election Judge Actions

Local election officials may remove election judges at any time for:

- Neglect of duty
 - Not following required procedures
 - Leaving the polling place without authorization
 - Repeatedly failing to complete assigned tasks
- Malfeasance
 - Intentionally violating election laws or procedures
 - Knowingly giving incorrect information to voters
 - Mishandling required election documents
- Misconduct in office
 - Behavior that disrupts voting operations
 - Inappropriate interactions with voters or other election judges
- Other cause
 - Health or safety issues preventing duties
 - Conflicts of Interest that arise during service
 - Any behavior that compromises election integrity or operations

In Practice...

- Be impartial, courteous, and professional
 - Maintain an accessible, neutral, and efficient polling place
 - Assist and serve everybody with respect
- Honest mistakes are not malfeasance — Renville County Election Staff are here to support you!*

Election Judge Party Affiliation & Balance

Party Affiliation

- Your party affiliation may be shared with election judges in your polling place, for election purposes only.

Party Balance — Tasks Requiring Two Parties

- Opening / closing the ballot counter
- Retrieving a jammed ballot from the ballot counter
- Helping a voter mark their ballot
- Curbside voting

Make Your Election Judge Plan

Prior to Election Day	Election Day
Request time off work (may be with pay)	Dress comfortably and business casual
Plan your needs (transportation, childcare, food)	No campaign or political clothes/items
Inform polling location staff of any special circumstances	Arrive on time
Watch email for your assignment	Bring food and drink
Communicate with your Head Judge	Work as a team, serve voters
Plan to work your full shift	Follow all election laws and rules
Vote! Or make your own voting plan	Use the Election Judge Guide & resources
	Don't leave until dismissed by the Head Judge

PART ONE

Equipment in the Polling Place

Election Day Equipment

Equipment	Purpose
DS200 / Tabulator	Counts votes cast on paper ballots by voters in polling places on election day
ExpressVote	Assists voters with ballot display, reading, and marking for independent voting

Equipment Information

- All equipment is certified at federal and state levels
- Tested / validated at the local level before each election
- A public accuracy test is conducted for each election
- All tabulating equipment relies on a human-readable and auditable paper ballot
- Results are audited after elections
- Tabulating systems do not connect to the internet
- Physical and cyber security protocols are implemented

Equipment Must Be Utilized in the Polling Place

There are no provisions in law to hand-count ballots or review/audit ballots in the polling place, unless your jurisdiction specifies otherwise.

Ballot Counter (DS200) — Overview

- Automatic optical scan ballot tabulator
- Counts the votes cast by voters on paper ballots
- Specific to precinct (will be labeled)
- Emergency slot for backup ballot storage
- Battery back-up
- Permanent count of ballots tabulated
- Remember the required 6 foot buffer distance around the tabulator
- Manufacturer: Election Systems and Software LLC

Assistive Voting Device

- Any voter may use the device for ballot display, reading, and marking
- Specific to precinct (will be labeled)
- Utilizes universal blank ballot stock
- Voter's selections are printed on the ballot
- Remember to ensure screen privacy from other voters in the polling place
- Manufacturer: Election Systems and Software LLC



Assistive Voting Device — Troubleshooting

Why won't it accept a blank ballot?

Be sure the voter (or election judge) is inserting the blank ballot card correctly, per the marked corner.

How should I keep it clean?

Clean the screen only when necessary using provided alcohol wipes. Keep food and other objects away from the device.

How long can a voter session stay idle?

After a few minutes of no activity, the screen will prompt the voter to continue or exit and return a blank ballot card.

PART ONE

Opening the Polls

Opening the Polls — Key Considerations

- Access: Are all parts of the polling place as accessible as possible?
- Traffic Flow: Are signs and lines clear? Where will bottlenecks occur?
- Privacy: Are voting stations set up with privacy in mind, including the assistive voting device?

Polls Open On Time— No Exceptions!

Even if equipment is not working, polls open and alternative voting measures are used.

Plan for every voter: stable flat surfaces, chairs for waiting voters, and at least one wheelchair-accessible voting booth with a chair.

Opening the Polls — Setting Up

- Work as a team
- Sign the “Oath of Election Judge” form
- Display all provided signs
- Ensure required flag/signage is displayed by the entry
- Designate accessible parking
- Set up the assistive voting device to ensure privacy
- Set up the ballot counter
- Mark the required boundary around the ballot counter
- Prepare (and initial) an adequate ballot supply
- Wear a name tag (first name, no party listed)

Setting Up the Ballot Counter (DS200)

Two judges of different parties • Plug in to power • Be ready by opening time — call immediately with issues

1

Inspect the unit for any possible damage.

2

Plug in the unit.

3

Lower the metal bar and lock in place to open the ballot path.



4

Make sure the ballot bin (both areas) is empty.

5

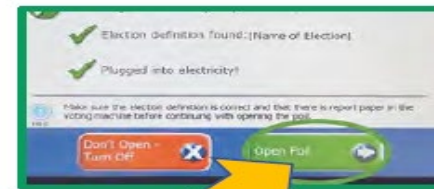
Use the key to open the ballot box lid.

6

Unlock and flip up the screen; the unit will power on.

7

Select "Open Poll." Public count should equal 0.



Setting Up the Assistive Voting Device

Judge party balance not required • Match color-coded parts • Plug in to power • Be ready by opening time

1

Follow the instructions provided.

2

Plug in power cord to the device and to an outlet.

3

Open the side compartment.

4

Toggle power switch to ON.

5

Follow on-screen prompts.



Prepare Ballots

- Verify the total number of packets of shrink-wrapped ballots matches what was certified from the election office
- Open an initial supply of ballots
- Count them to verify the correct number of ballots within each packet
- Record discrepancies (+ or –) on the Ballot Tracking Form
- Two judges initial each ballot (party affiliation does not matter)
- Only open and prepare enough ballots to keep ahead of expected turnout
- Secure all ballots throughout election day

Incident Log

- A document used to record any unusual events or problems that arise
- The official record of the polling place
- Can be used by legal authorities
- Available in all election judge supplies
- Add details so you don't forget
- When in doubt, write it down

PART ONE

Election Judge Positions

Greeter Judge

- Observe entrance activities
- Watch for voters who may need assistance
- Welcome voters
- Ensure the voter is at the correct location
- Check pre-registration status of voters
- Direct flow of traffic
- Manage lines
- Follow end-of-night cutoff procedures

Most Important Reminders

- Ensure voters are at the right location
- Use greeter list, maps
- Be friendly, welcoming, and helpful

Roster Judge

- Check in registered voters
- Ask for name and address
- Check for roster notations
- Exchange signed oath for ballot receipt
- If information is not correct, voter must re-register (check if right precinct)
- Unregistered voters also register with the Roster Judge — one line!

Most Important Reminders

- Follow set-up instructions
- Follow the prompts, take your time
- Voter can't “make it work” without proper documentation

Roster Judge — Common Scenarios

1 Voter Presents Identification

- Not required, but may help locate record
- Thank the voter but inform them verbally that it is not required at this point

2 Voter Name Not on Roster

- Check for clerical errors
- Check names in wrong fields
- Is voter in the right precinct?
- If not on roster, voter almost always must register to vote

3 Correcting Clerical Errors

- Use a Roster Correction Form to notify the election office
- Must be an actual error (e.g., transposed spelling)
- Not for name changes, etc.

4 Voter With Roster Notation

- Notation must be addressed before proceeding
- Use discretion / ensure privacy
- Involve Head Judge

Demonstration Judge

- Instruct the voter on how to mark the ballot
- Instruct the voter on how to insert the ballot into the tabulator
- Make all voters aware of the assistive voting device, booths, tables, etc.
- Remain impartial — never point to a specific candidate
- Voters are entitled to a replacement ballot if they make a mistake
- Never interpret ballot question impact

Most Important Reminders

- Be helpful but don't assume
- Remain impartial
- Primary elections: no write-ins or cross-over voting

Demonstration Judge — Common Scenarios

1 Voter Asks Why Ballot Has Two Columns

- Explain it is a primary ballot
- Voter must pick only one column and vote only in that column

2 Voter Asks If They Must Vote All Contests

- Explain the tabulator will only count votes in contests voted
- It is the voter's choice
- Remind voter to check front and back of the ballot

3 Voter Asks How to Fill in the Oval

- Never demonstrate on an actual contest/candidate
- Use a demonstration ballot, or point to instructions on the ballot

4 Voter Asks About Tax Impact of a Ballot Question

- Inform voter you cannot answer that question
- Direct questions to the relevant issuing body

Ballot Judge

- Count and track ALL ballots — blank and unvoted
- Lots of counting
- Two election judges initial each ballot before it is offered to a voter (party affiliation does NOT apply)
- Collect voter receipt before issuing a ballot
- Distribute a secrecy folder unless the voter declines it

Most Important Reminders

- Be helpful but don't assume
- Maintain security of ballots
- Certify / track count of blank ballots

Ballot Judge — Common Scenarios

1 Voter Makes a Mistake on Ballot

- Have voter fold ballot so only precinct name on bottom is visible (votes hidden)
- Verify correct precinct
- Provide a new ballot
- Place spoiled ballot in Spoiled Ballot Envelope
- Document on Incident Log

2 Ballot Is Found in the Polling Place

- Do NOT feed ballot into the ballot counter
- Write on ballot: “found in [location]”
- Document details in Incident Log (time, by whom, etc.)
- Place in Abandoned/Spoiled Ballot Envelope
- Document on Incident Log

Ballot Counter Judge

- Monitor and troubleshoot operation of the ballot counter
- Stay nearby, just outside the required boundary
- Be sure ballot is counted before voter leaves
- Point out the “thank you” screen prompt
- Stay calm with ballot issues and OFFER to help troubleshoot or explain how to get a new ballot

Most Important Reminders

- Two election judges for some tasks
- Stay near, aware, and calm if issues arise
- Offer an “I Voted” sticker

Ballot Counter Judge — Common Scenarios

1 Ballot Counter Screen Displays Error Message

- Offer voter assistance before approaching
- Have voter follow on-screen instructions
- Try feeding ballot again with different orientation
- Choose to cast as-is, or spoil ballot and re-vote

2 Line Forms Near the Ballot Counter

- Be aware of any issues with ballots being accepted
- Remind voters to stay outside the required boundary unless feeding a ballot or invited to help

Head Judge

- Ensure supplies and equipment are present and set up before opening
- Ensure election judges take and sign the Judge Oath
- Ensure election judges wear name tags
- Assign duties throughout election day
- Ensure party balance for required tasks
- Prepare for emergencies
- Greet authorized persons (media, challengers, etc.)

Most Important Reminders

- Coordinate with judges in advance
- Communicate frequently with your election office
- Ensure polling place paperwork is completed and signed

PART ONE

New Election Laws

New Laws — Be Familiar With These

Topic
Electronic signatures allowed
Instructions and sample ballots in languages other than English provided in polling places
Vouchers may now include assisted living facility staff
Intimidation / interference of election judges or voters prohibited
Laws against tampering with election equipment
Election judges must secure passwords away from public access
Ovals must be filled in for write-in votes to count (unless close election, then voter intent is counted)
“Maintains residence” definition changes (200.031 DETERMINATION OF RESIDENCE)

New Laws — Continued

Topic

Felon voting rights restored — if the voter is in front of you, in the right location, and eligible to vote, they can vote

Election judges must immediately seal ballots for return once counts are reconciled

Electronic voting systems must be used where authorized

16 and 17-year-olds may pre-register but must be 18 to vote

Challenger actions must be documented in writing; no communication directly to voter

Exit pollsters must present ID to the Head Judge

Other New Laws In Effect

Topic
Minnesota has a Voting Rights Act
Election judge removal by County Auditor
Only major political parties: Republican and DFL
“Driver's License for All” provisions began in 2024— citizenship still required to vote
Automatic Voter Registration in place — possible delays in data transfers
Campaign prohibitions now in law
Voter assistance provisions now in law
Changes to recount thresholds

Did You Know...?

9100 as of 7am 11/6/2024

Registered voters

502

Election judges trained

14%

Voters who vote before election day

3

Electronic poll books in use

PART TWO

Election Day — Overall Considerations

Polling Place Access

Election Judges	People Engaged in Voting	Authorized Persons
Certified, trained, and appointed	Must be DIRECTLY engaged (voting or helping someone vote)	May need approval or authorization
Completing assigned tasks	Children with voter	Peace officers (if requested)
Includes local election staff	Assisters (while helping)	Observers (if authorized)
Includes judges starting/ending shift	Vouchers	People making a complaint
Includes others directed to fulfill election roles		Media / Exit Poll Interviewers / Challengers

Authorized Persons — Media & Exit Poll Interviewers

Media	Exit Poll Interviewers
Allowed for observation of voting	Allowed to conduct anonymous survey
Present ID and credential to Head Judge	Present ID and credential to Head Judge
Maintain required distance from voters	Can be on polling place property
Refrain from conversing with voters	Cannot be in the voting room
Refrain from interfering with voting	Must not interfere with voting
Must not create lists of voters	Must not share responses to poll
May take audio/video/photos within reason, without creating a list or disclosing private information	May only approach voter as they leave the polling place

Challengers

- Challenger states challenge to the Election Judge — never speaks directly to the voter, based on personal knowledge of eligibility
- Voter takes an oath (provided in Head Judge materials) between voter and Election Judge
- Election Judge questions the voter based on the alleged challenge
- If voter answers correctly, challenge is cleared and voter votes; if voter refuses or fails, they may not vote in that election
- An Election Judge, or another voter while voting, can also contest eligibility, but must meet the same thresholds

Challenger Code of Conduct

- Must complete Oath of Challenge Form
- Cannot converse with voters
- Cannot make a list of who voted (no phones/computers out)
- Cannot handle election materials

Voting Assistance

- Voters can get help from any person of their choice, except an agent of their employer or union
- Voter assistants can help an unlimited number of voters, in all aspects of the voting process, provided the voter requests their help
- If election judges provide help: help only as much as requested; never make assumptions about need; party balance required when marking the ballot

Accessible Voting for Everyone

- Every voter is entitled to vote as independently as they wish
- Give all voters the same options
- Use signature guides and have magnifying sheets available
- Speak directly to the voter, not their assistant
- Give specific and clear directions (e.g., “the booth is five feet to your left...”)
- Use pen and paper to communicate if needed
- Use a language interpretation line for assistance
- Never reveal a voter's vote or challenge a voter based on perceived cognitive ability

PART TWO

Election Day — Specific Processes

Curbside Voting

- Available to any voter who wishes to vote from their vehicle
- Judges cannot ask why
- Curbside voting cannot interfere with access to the polling place or other accommodations

Curbside Voting Process

- Two election judges of different political parties go to the curbside voter
- Identify and check in / register the voter
- Judges provide ballot; voter votes from vehicle
- Judges return ballot to be tabulated like other votes

Issuing Ballots

- Only open wrapped ballot packets in preparation of need
- Keep ballot supplies nearby but secure and out of sight/reach of voters
- Count and track ALL ballots — blank and unvoted
- Two election judges initial each ballot before it is offered to a voter (party affiliation does NOT apply)
- Distribute a secrecy folder unless voter declines it

Ballot Judge Responsibility

Maintain security of ballots. Maintain accounting of ballots.

Always collect voter receipt before issuing ballot.

Ensuring Ballots Are Inserted Into the Tabulator

- Voter feeds ballot into the tabulator if able; watch for prompts on screen
- Be sure ballot is counted before voter leaves
- Point out the “thank you” screen prompt
- Offer an “I Voted” sticker
- Stay calm with ballot issues and OFFER to help troubleshoot or explain how to get a new ballot
- Stay nearby (just outside required boundary); monitor and troubleshoot operation of the ballot counter

Tabulator Judge Responsibility

Ensure only ballots issued in that precinct on election day are tabulated. No ballots are abandoned in the tabulator.

PART TWO

Election Day Registration

Election Day Registration (EDR) Basics

- Available to any eligible voter
- Requires proofs, documentation, and a completed application
- Important task to complete correctly — don't rush
- Ask questions, follow guides, and double check

Election Day Registration (EDR):

The process of registering to vote in the polling place.

Common pitfall: “My info is close enough” is WRONG. If a voter's name changes or they move (even within the same building), they must Election Day Register.

Election Day Registration — Talking to Voters

- There are many ways to provide proof of residence and identity — some involve showing an ID, others do not
- Instead of demanding a driver's license, try:
 - “I'll need proof of residence and identity, please.”
 - “A driver's license or ID often helps with registration; do you have one, or I can help you with other options.”
 - “Here is a list of options to provide the required information to register to vote.”

Election Day Registration Eligibility — 3 Checks + an Application

Requirement	Description
Eligibility	Voter must be eligible to vote in Minnesota
Place	Prove their “place” (reside in the precinct)
Face	Prove their “face” (their identity)
Application	Complete application, including signature

Voter Eligibility

Requirement	Detail
Citizenship	Must be a U.S. citizen
Age	Must meet minimum age on Election Day
Residency	Resident of Minnesota for at least 20 days (not necessarily specific precinct)
Incarceration status	Not currently incarcerated for a felony conviction
Court order	Not under a court order that revokes the right to vote or rules voter legally incompetent

Proofs of Residence (“Place”)

- Use precinct finder to confirm the voter is at the right location based on the address they maintain as residence
- Current state-issued license, permit, or ID card (or receipt) with current address — also proves “face”
- Tribal ID with name, current address, signature, and picture from a federally-recognized tribal government
- Other current documents (paper or digital) with voter's name and current address, such as: utility bill, phone/TV/internet bill, residential lease, banking/credit card statement, rent or mortgage statement, student fee statement

Proofs of Identity (“Face”)

- Match the name on the “place” document to the “face” document
- State-issued license, permit, or ID card (or receipt with printed picture) — even if not current, this proves “face”
- Other proofs of “face” (may even be expired): passport, military/veteran ID, tribal ID (may also prove “place” if current address included), college/university ID with photo, high school ID with photo

Vouching Option for Registration

- Used if a voter cannot prove “face” and “place”
- Voucher must be registered in the same precinct and personally know the new registrant maintains residence there
- Voucher can sign an oath attesting to the new registrant's residence
- Each voucher can vouch for a 8 new registrants
- A voucher can also register on Election Day, but a voter who registers by being vouched for cannot then vouch for others
- Complete the voucher process as part of the registration steps
- Track vouching on the jurisdiction's tracking form

Other Registration Options

Notice of Late Registration	Previous Registration	Photo ID with Institution List
Provided to voter who tries to pre-register but is late	Voter is in that precinct's roster but has a name/address change	Students at local institutions may be on a list provided by that institution
If registered within a set window of the election	Changed names or moved within the precinct	Precinct may be provided with a list of students housed at/near a college or university
Can be used as a proof of residence	Voter informs Election Judge of previous info (and proof of name change, if applicable)	Students on the list register with current photo ID + institution list
		List is only as complete as the info provided by the institution and students

Registration Process — Step Summary

- Verify location — use precinct finder, confirm right location, confirm not already registered
- Verify eligibility — confirm requirements met, confirm not already voted
- Determine best path for EDR — ask what documentation the voter has and what has changed
- Verify proof of “place” — document on election day registration application “Election Judge Official Use Only Section”
- Verify proof of “face” — document on election day registration application “Election Judge Official Use Only Section”
- Complete roster — voter reviews and signs oath, then checks in and receives receipt
- Use Incident Log to document any issues

Election Judge Official Use Only			
W _____ P _____ SD _____ Initials _____	ID with Current Name & Address ID Number: _____ ☐ MN Driver's License, Learner's Permit, MN ID Card, or Receipt ☐ Tribal ID Card	Photo ID + Document with Current Name & Address Document Type: _____ Photo ID Number: _____ ☐ Driver's License, Learner's Permit or State ID Card ☐ U.S. Passport ☐ U.S. Military ID or Veteran ID ☐ Tribal ID ☐ Student ID	Other ☐ Vouched For ☐ Notice of Late Registration ☐ Valid Registration in Same Precinct ☐ ID with College List *Record ID type and number using form to the left

Precinct Finder											
County-Hennepin, Precinct-MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05_1480											
Street Address	House Range Unit Range	O E B	Precinct Code - Name	City	Zip Code	Cty	MCD	WD	SD	J	
ND ST NE	304 to 335	E	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
	400 to 1001	B	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
	9002 to 1002	E	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
	9010 to 1012	E	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
	9016 to 1016	E	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
TH AVE NE	118 to 118	E	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
	201 to 421	O	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
TH ST NE											
TH AVE NE	400 to 912	B	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
	138 to 148	B	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
	208 to 316	E	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	
	317 to 417	O	1480 MINNEAPOLIS W-3 P-05	MINNEAPOLIS	55413	27	135	W-03	0001-00	04	

Registration Resources

- Review Election Day Registration Application's carefully
- 2026 Election Judge Guide
- Your Head Judge (and other experienced judges)
- Other tips/tricks sheets provided in the polling place
- This presentation
- Local election office phone: 320-523-2071 / 320-522-6333

Do Not Make Assumptions
Always ask questions and get answers.

PART TWO

Election Day Conduct

Campaigning

Campaigning is NOT Allowed (During Voting Hours)	Campaigning is Allowed
In the polling place	On private property, regardless of distance
Within 100 feet of the polling place	On property greater than 100 feet away, not on the same public property as the polling place
On any public property of the polling place	

Campaign Materials

- The prohibition on campaigning applies to campaign materials and speech
- Candidate: name, likeness, logo, or slogan
- Political party: name, logo, or slogan of a party represented by a candidate
- Ballot question: number, title, subject, slogan, or logo
- Applies to any candidate, party, or contest on the ballot(s) in your precinct

Addressing Campaign Materials

- It is the election judges' obligation to address campaigning in and near the polling place
- Ask the individual to cover up or remove the campaign materials
- If they refuse: involve the Head Judge to repeat the request
- If they continue to refuse: document the refusal (name, address, material, etc.) in the Incident Log
- Inform the individual that it will be referred to appropriate authorities
- The individual is still allowed to vote; use discretion to process them quickly

Other Prohibited Conduct

- Unauthorized persons cannot linger in the polling place or within 100 feet of the building
- Intoxicated persons or liquor products are not allowed in the polling place
- Disorderly conduct must be addressed immediately
- Smoking, including vaping, is not allowed
- Firearms: follow the building's rules, except election judges are not allowed to carry a firearm while on duty

Phones

While phones are not expressly prohibited, voters cannot record or make lists of other voters, and cannot interfere with or obstruct the voting process.

Behavior of Persons in the Polling Place — “No One May...”

Prohibited Behavior
Stay or linger in the polling place to “observe” (poll watchers/observers are not a recognized role in most jurisdictions)
Threaten, compel, intimidate, obstruct, or bribe voters
Tear down, deface, damage, or manipulate election signs or supplies
Remove election files/supplies from the polling place unless otherwise permitted by law
Act in a disorderly fashion after being warned
Discuss candidates, issues, or campaign matters in the polling place
Vote if obviously intoxicated, or smoke while at the polling place

Voter Complaints

Feedback Form	State Election Law Complaint	Federal Complaint
Voter can provide feedback about voting experience	Only for allegations of state election law violations	Only for federal elections and specific allegations
Not for law violations	State laws only: voter eligibility, absentee voting, election day activities, etc.	Voting machines, voter information/signs, and voter registration laws
For informal reporting of concerns/comments	Must be notarized	Must be notarized
Use as a customer service tool		

Did You Know...? (Sample Local Statistics)

37

Election day precincts

8,117

Votes cast on election day

8:30 pm...

First returns received after polls closed

9%

Voters who register on election day

PART THREE

Closing the Polls

Timeline to Closing the Polling Place

Approx. Time	Activity
Before closing	Follow Head Judge instructions to prepare for closing polls; organize workstations and supplies
At closing time	Head Judge may direct some initial packing up; ensure polling place is open and welcoming; announce “Polls are Closed”
Just after closing	Polling place becomes open to the public for observation; ensure Head Judge is ready to start closing; last voter in line casts ballot
During close-out	Secure voted ballots; organize and count voter receipts; assist with reconciliation as assigned; pack up equipment, signs, etc.; sign records and seals
Final step	Election records and ballots returned to the election office by the Head Judge and one other judge

Closing the Polls Specifics

- Voters in line at the closing time are entitled to vote
- Work as a team
- Make sure all voted ballots are tabulated
- Start closing equipment only after the last voter
- Complete the End of Night Checklist
- Pack up items according to instructions
- Seal and sign envelopes, statements, etc.
- Election judges stay until directed to leave
- Call your election office with questions — they can help!

Polls Close at 8:00 p.m.

However, voters in line at closing time can complete the voting process, provided they don't leave their spot in line.

Closing the Polls — Responsibilities

Reconciling Records	Signing and Certifying	Security
You may be asked to help verify the number of voter receipts and the number of ballots noted on the results tape	You will be asked to sign results tapes and across sealed flaps of multiple envelopes	All election judges must secure the polling place, equipment/supplies, and ballots, records, and results
Reconciling these numbers ensures the number of ballots voted and counted matches the number of persons voting	Signing and certifying election results and records establishes a chain of custody and demonstrates integrity of results	Securing the polling place and materials is critical to election day

Closing the Ballot Counter

Leave machine fully operational until last voter has voted • Two judges of different political parties must complete

1

Make sure the last voter has cast their ballot.

2

Check the auxiliary slot for any ballots.

3

Unlock the access door and press and hold “Close Poll.”

4

On screen, select “Close Poll.”

5

Allow reports to run as needed.

6

Raise the metal bar and lock in place to close the ballot path.

7

Do not remove the memory device.

Closing the Assistive Voting Device

Judge party balance not required • Leave machine fully operational until last voter has voted

1

Follow instructions provided.

2

Open side compartment.

3

Toggle power switch to OFF.

4

Unplug power cord from the device and outlet.

5

Attach keypad to side of unit.

6

Place all items in the padded travel case (don't forget headphones).

Observing the Closing of Polls

Observers MAY	Observers MAY NOT
Watch the closing processes	Interfere with processes
Read the results tape, once ready for posting	Touch, review, or record any voter information
View the packing up of materials, supplies, and equipment	Count ballots or attempt to count/reconcile
	Obstruct, intimidate, or interfere

The polling place becomes open to the public after the last voter completes voting; observers may be present during closing procedures.

PART THREE

Election Security

Polling Place Access — Ongoing Monitoring

- Election judges should constantly monitor who is in the polling place
- Categories to track: election officials, election judges, voters, voter assistants, media, challengers, other authorized individuals
- Immediately report suspicious or unauthorized persons to the Head Judge and local election office

Peace Officers and Sergeants-at-Arms

Question	Peace Officer	Sergeant-at-Arms
Appointed to serve in polling place?	No	Yes
Present throughout election day in polling place?	No	Yes
Maintain peace and polling place security?	No	Yes
Assist with orderly operation of polling place?	No	Yes
Election office consulted prior to request/appointment?	Yes	Yes
May remove individual after a warning to desist?	Yes	Yes
Only present when summoned to restore the peace?	Yes	No
Must maintain distance from polling place unless summoned or voting?	Yes	No

Polling Place Security

- You are the first line of defense
- Physical and cyber security of the election
- Know your exits and the detailed address
- Throughout election day, frequently monitor or inspect:
 - Voting equipment
 - Seals and data ports
 - Removable memory device compartments
 - Ballots and supplies
 - Exits and storage areas in voting room(s)
 - Polling place building, grounds, and parking lot

Polling Place Security Documentation

- Report to the Head Judge and local election office any:
 - Incidents
 - Suspicious behavior
 - Concerning communications
 - Attempts to disrupt or influence
- Document, with detail, on the Incident Log
- Also document security measures taken, such as reviews of the parking lot, etc.

Election Activity Protections

Protection From...	For Voters	For Election Officials
Intimidation or pressure	Yes	Yes
Deceptive practices or sharing false information	Yes	Yes
Interfering with voting/registering	Yes	
Interfering with election administration		Yes
Dissemination of personal information		Yes
Obstruction of access to locations of duties		Yes
Tampering with equipment, ballot boxes, rosters, etc.		Yes
Criminal penalties for violating laws	Yes	Yes
Civil remedies if victim of crimes	Yes	Yes

Security During the Close of Polls

- Follow directions of Head Judge and election office
- Security includes equipment/supplies and ballots, records, and results
- Consider chain of custody for materials
- Ensure activities are completed in pairs when needed
- Be mindful of surroundings when leaving the polling place

All election judges have a responsibility to maintain the security of the polling place when it becomes open to the public at the close of polls.

Polling Place Emergencies

- Take immediate steps to protect yourself and the other people in the polling place
- Call 911 or your election office: identify yourself by name, state you are an election judge, provide the address, state you are at a polling place
- If you can do so safely: preserve records, secure voted ballots, retrieve the ballot counter, maintain some/all blank ballot stock

Polling Place Relocations

- Contact the election office if the polling place becomes unusable
- The election office will help relocate to a new location, as near as possible to the original, and must approve the new site
- Relocation process: publicly announce the change to voters present; post a notice visible to voters from their vehicle; post notice of the change at the new polling place; election office will communicate with media and online; hours the polls are open may be extended

PART THREE

Wrap-Up, Next Steps & Questions

Questions?

How do I complete Election Judge training?

This training fulfills all the training requirements for election judges.

When will I know my assignment?

Assignments are typically communicated by the head election judge or township clerk of the precinct you are serving.

How do I become a Head Judge?

Contact your election clerk. If it's the right fit, you'll be placed with an experienced Head Judge.

Can I pick my Election Day polling place?

Cities and Townships hire election judges independently. If you have the ability to work in another precinct due to a conflict (ballot, family, etc) you may be able to serve in another township. Reach out to the County Staff as there may be other townships looking for judges.

Do I need to attend the Public Accuracy Test?

Optional but encouraged, especially for new election judges.

What's next?

Please review the online resources so you can be prepared for election day.

Election Public Accuracy Testing

- Optional — especially beneficial to new election judges
- Opportunity to learn about equipment and to ask questions

Other Resources

- 2026 Election Judge Guide: <https://www.sos.mn.gov/media/lglkr552/election-judge-manual.pdf>
- Renville County website: <https://www.renvillecountymn.gov/>
- Minnesota Election Judge Training website: <https://www.sos.mn.gov/election-administration-campaigns/election-administration/election-judge-training/>
- Public Accuracy Test (optional)
- Your Head Judge (and other experienced judges)
- Election day information provided in the polling place
- Local election office: 320-523-2071 — elections@renvillecountymn.gov

Thank You!

Renville County Elections Staff

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