



Republican Party of Minnesota Poll Challenger Training

2016 Election

Poll Challenger Background

MN law allows any voter at the polls to challenge another voter's eligibility to vote. MN law also allows for partisan authorized Poll Challengers. This training deals with authorized Poll Challengers.

- What is an authorized Poll Challenger?
 - Each political party may appoint one challenger per precinct
 - Authorized under MN Statute 204C.07
- What is the purpose?
 - Protect citizens' voting rights by watching for any unauthorized activity in the polling place
- Which precinct do they serve in?
 - Poll Challengers receive their precinct assignment from their BPOU or CD Chair

Appointed Poll Challenger Requirements & Expectations

Requirements

- Challenger must be a MN resident
 - Need not be a resident in the precinct assigned
- Challenger must present following to Head Election Judge:
 - Copy of Certificate (Appendix A) signed by CD or BPOU Chair
 - Proof of MN residency, such as a valid Minnesota ID
 - Complete list of accepted residency proofs: <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote/register-on-election-day/>

Expectations

- Challenger is expected to act in a respectful manner toward all Election Judges and voters
- Head Election Judge will often provide a chair in a designated area for the Poll Challenger

Prohibited Activities for Poll Challenger

As a Poll Challenger, please do not engage in the following activities, as most are strictly prohibited by law:

- Make lists of voters or arrive at a polling place with pre-made lists
- Speak to voters or attempt to influence voting
- Approach within six (6) feet of a voter, a voting booth, or any election apparatus
- Attempt to influence an individual's vote
- Wear the campaign gear or sticker of a candidate(s)
- Take pictures inside a polling place

Election Day Activities

- **AM – Polls open at 7:00 am**
 - Arrive at 6:45 am
 - Show Challenger Certificate and proof of Minnesota residency to Head Election Judge
 - Follow all instructions given to you by the Head Election Judge
- **PM – Polls close at 8:00 pm**
 - Ballots are counted immediately after the last person in line at 8:00 pm votes
 - The counting of the ballots is public, and the Poll Challenger must stay until the end
 - No one except Election Judges may touch the ballots, and no bystander may interfere with the counting, under penalty of a misdemeanor
 - After the counting is complete, results are announced
 - The ballot envelopes must be delivered to the county auditor's office within 24 hours. If these envelopes are delivered immediately after election results are announced, Poll Challenger must follow the delivery

Challenging a Voter's Eligibility

Supplementary documents: Appendix B & C

- **When to challenge?**
 - The only action a challenger may take in a polling place is to contest a voter's eligibility, if they have personal knowledge of that voter's ineligibility. Suspicion is not a basis for making a challenge. The challenger must personally know that a specific person is not eligible to vote for a specific reason.
- **Procedure**
 - State desire to challenge to closest Election Judge (DO NOT approach the voter!)
 - Complete and sign the challenge form provided by the Election Judge.
 - Election Judge will then ask the voter to take an oath, and ask questions to establish the individual's residence and right to vote.
- **Resolution**
 - If the voter refuses to take the oath, answer the proceeding questions, or sign a polling place roster, the voter will not be allowed to vote.
 - If the voter completes all of the above requirements, the voter will be allowed to vote.

Other Activity

- Other activity to look out for:
 - Voting machine or other equipment malfunction
 - Polling place opening or closing other than the required times of 7:00 am – 8:00 pm
 - Moving of polling location
 - Voter intimidation or interference with voters
 - Campaigning within 100 feet of a polling location
 - Individual vouching for more than the maximum of 8 people
 - Ballot boxes opened before poll close or other tampering of equipment
- If you see anything out of the ordinary, contact the MNGOP legal team
 - MNGOP: 651-222-0022

Resources

- Appendix

- Appendix A: Challenger Certificate
- Appendix B-D: Relevant Minnesota State Statutes
- Appendix E-G: Instructions and documents for filing a complaint

- Websites

- <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/election-day-voting/polling-place-rules/>
- <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/election-day-voting/rules-for-challengers/>
- <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/election-day-voting/file-a-complaint/>

Other requirements to be aware of

Voter Eligibility

- 18 on or before Election Day
- US Citizen
- Reside in Minnesota precinct 20 days immediately preceding the election
- Must live in the precinct
- Felons must be cleared before voting (judge will have list)
- Must not have voted absentee
- Must not be ruled legally incompetent

Voter Assistance

Federal and State law allows voters with special needs or who do not read English to receive assistance

- Who can assist?
 - Election Judge, friend, relative, or another person
 - NOT: employer, union agent, or candidate
- While an assistant can only physically mark ballots for a maximum of three people, they can help an unlimited number of people in other accessibility ways
- If a voter cannot physically enter a polling location, two Election Judges of different parties shall assist the voter to register and vote outside the polling place
- A voter may request help in marking their ballot from two Election Judges of different parties

Same-day Registration

Process to register to vote same-day

1. Fill out registration form
2. Take the oath administered by the Election Judge
3. Provide one of the acceptable forms of proof of residency
 - Including: Valid Minnesota ID, US Passport, expired ID AND a utility bill, another registered voter to vouch
 - Complete list of proof of residency:
<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote/register-on-election-day/>