

# Election Day – Opening the Polling Place Checklist

## Cell Phone in Polling Place:

- Turn on designated cell phone(s) to communicate with the authority conducting the election.
- Keep a list of important contacts readily available (if applicable).

**Note: Cell phones in the polling place can ONLY be used for official election purposes.**

## Required Postings:

The following forms must be provided to post at your polling place prior to opening the polls. Forms are subject to change and additional forms may be created to post in accordance with Texas election laws or court orders.

ALL postings must be visible to the voter. Place each posting in its required area if instructed by your authority conducting the election. Pay close ATTENTION as you are positioning the postings and ensure that they are placed where they can be viewed at all times and not hidden by doors when propped open/closed. Instruction posters must be printed in English, Spanish, and any other required languages; if separate posters are used, you must post the postings side by side (see Texas Election Code 272.005(a)).

Legally required postings are noted with an asterisk \*.

- Notice of Total Number of Voters Who Have Voted\* (see Texas Election Code 61.007(c))
- Precinct(s) / Vote Centers Vote(s) Here
- Map of Voting Precinct(s) / Map of Polling Places
- Notice of Voting Order Priority\* (see Texas Election Code 63.0015)
- Notice of Prohibition of Handguns in the Polling Place (see Texas Penal Code 46.03(a), 46.15)
- Notice of Prohibition of Certain Devices within 100 Feet of Voting Station\* (see Texas Election Code 61.014, 62.0111)
- Distance Marker\* / No Electioneering or Loitering within 100 feet of the entrance to the polling place (see Texas Election Code 61.003, 61.004, 62.010)
  
- Voter Instruction Poster\* (see Texas Election Code 62.011(a)-(d)) – Poster must contain certain information in each voting station and one or more other locations in the polling place where it can be read by persons waiting to vote.
- Sample Ballot(s)\* / Vote Centers: Bedsheet (see Texas Election Code 62.012)
- List of Declared Write-in Candidates\* (if applicable, post near sample ballot and in each voting station)
- Notice of Acceptable Identification Poster (see Texas Election Code 62.016) – Posted in a prominent place on the outside of the polling place
- Voter Information Poster\* (see Texas Election Code 62.0115)
- Voter Complaint Information Poster\* (see Texas Election Code 62.0112)
- Vote Here Signs\* (In order to direct voters to the polling place from the street)
- Disabled Access Postings\* (Indicating the direction of an unobstructed path to nearest accessible entrance for voter with disabilities)
- Curbside Assistance Signs / Alert Mechanisms – Place in the area designated for curbside voting. Please follow the instructions provided by the authority conducting the election.
- Notices of Debt Obligation,\* if applicable (May be placed in a binder and made available on the check-in table)
- Notice of Four Nearest Countywide Polling Place Locations\* (Vote Center Program) (see Texas Election Code 43.007(o))
- Signs for Parties (Primary Election Only)
- Notice of Party Convention\* (Primary Election Only – see Texas Election Code 172.1111) (Posted on an outside door through which a voter may enter the building)
- Sign for Joint Primary Election\* (see Texas Election Code 172.126)
- Post any other additional signs provided by the authority conducting the election.

## Ballot Marking Devices / DRE – Direct Recording Equipment Station(s):

Follow the directions from the authority conducting the election about how to set up each piece of equipment. If you do not have instructions on how to set up your equipment, notify your authority conducting the election as soon as possible.

- Arrange the voting stations so that they are spaced appropriately.
- Verify all seals and document on chain of custody form.
- Break seal on the outside of the Ballot Marking Device / DRE carrying case.
- Remove Ballot Marking Device / DRE and cords from carrying case.
- Find your surge protector and plug into the nearest power outlet.
- Plug the Ballot Marking Device / DRE into the surge protector provided; position cords to keep a safe work environment.
- Turn the surge protector power button on.
- Follow set-up instructions provided by your authority conducting the election. (If you experience any issues, contact your authority conducting the election.)
- Set up privacy panels around each Ballot Marking Device / DRE.
- DRE – Verify public count is **ZERO**.
- DRE – Print zero tapes and verify each candidate or measure on the tape is set to zero.
- DRE – Election officials who are present must verify and sign the zero tapes printed. If poll watchers are present, up to two poll watchers may sign the zero tape.
- Verify date and time.
- Make disability tools readily available. (e.g. headphones, sip-and-puff device and toggle/extended remote)

## **Preparation of Voting Station(s):**

### **Hand-marked paper ballot station(s):**

- Arrange the voting stations so that they are spaced appropriately.
- Set up privacy panels around each station.
- Post required signs according to instructions.
- Place an indelible marking instrument in each voting station. (See Texas Election Code 62.015)
- Designate an area for a provisional ballot booth, if applicable.

**Preparation of Ballot Box / Tabulating Area:** Follow the directions from the authority conducting the election about how to set up each piece of equipment. If you do not have instructions on how to set up your equipment, notify the authority conducting the election.

**Note:** If DREs are being used in the election, this section will not apply in your polling place.

### **Ballot Box** – Paper ballots

- Place the ballot box at an appropriate distance from ballot marking stations and toward the exit door.
- Verify seals with chain of custody procedures outlined by the authority conducting the election.

### **Ballot Tabulator**

- Place the automatic tabulator at an appropriate distance from ballot marking stations and toward the exit door.
- Verify seals with chain of custody form procedures outlined by the authority conducting the election.
- Follow the instructions from the authority conducting the election when setting up the tabulator.
- Verify public count is **ZERO**.
- Print zero tapes and verify each candidate or measure on the tape is set to zero.
- Election officials who are present must verify and sign the zero tapes printed. If poll watchers are present, up to two poll watchers may sign the zero tape.

## **Forms Used to Conduct the Election**

- Statement of Residence
- Reasonable Impediment Declaration Form
- Combination Form
- Oaths of Assistance and Interpreter
- Information of Person That Provided Transportation to Seven or More Voters for Curbside Voting Form
- Affidavit of Provisional Voter Envelope
- Notice to Provisional Voter
- Notice to Provisional Voter for ID Voters
- Secrecy Envelope
- Request to Cancel Ballot by Mail for Use in the Polling Place
- Standard Affidavit
- "I Voted" Stickers
  
- Chain of Custody Form(s)
- Statement of Compensation and Oaths / Timesheets
- Constitutional Oaths
- Election Official Name Tags
- Poll Watcher Name Tags
- Register of Official Ballots
- Ballot and Seal Certificate
- Combined Register of Official Ballots / Ballot and Seal Certificate (if applicable)
- Register of Spoiled Ballots
- Register of Surrendered Ballots by Mail
- Registration Omissions List
- Problem Log Sheet
- List of Provisional Voters
- Tally Sheet Book (for hand-counted paper ballots, if applicable)
- Return Sheet (for hand-counted paper ballots, if applicable)
- Envelope #1 (To: Presiding Officer of Canvassing Authority) (see Texas Election Code 66.022, 66.003)
- Envelope #2 (To: General Custodian of Election Records) (see Texas Election Code 66.023, 66.003)
- Envelope #3 (To: Presiding Judge) (see Texas Election Code 66.024, 66.003)
- Envelope #4 (To: Voter Registrar) (see Texas Election Code 66.0241, 66.003)
- Envelope #5 (Primary Election Only) (To: County Chair only if the County Chair is responsible for paying the election workers) (see Texas Election Code 32.094)
- Envelope for Spoiled Ballots
- Envelope for Requests and Cancelled Ballots
- Secure Container for Provisional Ballot Affidavit Envelopes

**Note:** Paperwork should be filed in appropriate return envelopes. Please follow your election authority's procedures for placement.

## **Primary Forms**

- Certificates of Party Affiliation (Primary Election Only) (Texas Election Code 162.009)
- Affidavits of Non-Participation and Affiliation (Primary Election Only) (Texas Election Code 162.008)
- Notice of Party Convention Handouts (Primary Election Only) (Texas Election Code 172.1114) (If provided by the parties)

**Note:** In a separate primary, each party will have its own complete set of forms. In a joint primary, the parties will have a shared results envelope. All other paperwork and envelopes must be kept separately.

### **Preparation of Check-In Station(s):**

- Place the check-in table so that it is easily seen when voters enter the polling place. Consider the placement of the check-in table(s) as though there is a line of voters waiting.
- Designate a location where you can keep all of your important paperwork secured and organized. This area should not be accessible to voters.

### **Paper List of Registered Voters**

- Place the list of registered voters on the check-in table ready to qualify voters.
- Verify that the list of registered voters has the correct assigned precincts.
- Place the ink pad and "Voted" stamps on the check-in table.
- Place the party stamps on the check-in table. (Primary Election Only)
- Provide magnifying tools, if available.
- Prepare a few combination forms with election name, date, and polling place listed.
- Place pens for signing forms on the check-in table.
- Verify seal and break seal on ballot box that contains the ballots – document as required on the chain of custody form.
- Prepare the ballot stock for voting.
- The presiding judge must sign or stamp his or her **FULL** signature on back of each ballot.
- Ensure the following forms are accessible for the clerk to provide to the voter(s) as needed:
  - Statements of Residence
  - Reasonable Impediment Declaration Forms
  - Oaths of Assistance and Interpreter
  - Lists of Acceptable Forms of ID
  - "I Voted" Stickers
  - Certificates of Party Affiliation (Primary Election Only)
  - Affidavits of Non-Participation and Affiliation (Primary Election Only)
  - Notice of Party Convention Handouts (Primary Election Only) (If provided by the parties)

**ePollbook:** Follow instructions provided by the authority conducting the election. The order may be different for each voting system vendor.

- Verify seal and break seal on ePollbook suitcase/bag – document on chain of custody form.
- Remove ePollbook, all printers and wires from suitcase/bag.
- Connect the wires to the ePollbook and printers.
- Position and tie together your ePollbook and printer cords neatly.
- Find your surge protector and plug into the nearest power outlet.
- Plug the ePollbook and printers into the surge protector provided; position cords to ensure a safe work environment.
- Turn the surge protector power button on.
- Hotspot/MiFi
  - Place in area that has best cellular signal to connect to ePollbook.
  - Plug hotspot into nearest power outlet and monitor throughout the day.
- Once your ePollbook is connected to all of its devices, follow your election authority's instructions to power on. (If you experience any technical issues, contact your authority conducting the election.)
- Log into ePollbook using assigned logins and passwords.
- Ensure all scanning lights are properly functioning.
- Prepare the ballot stock for voting.
- Judge must sign or stamp his or her **FULL** signature on back of each ballot.
- Ensure the following forms are accessible for the clerk to provide to the voter(s) as needed:
  - Statements of Residence
  - Reasonable Impediment Declaration Forms
  - Oaths of Assistance and Interpreter
  - Lists of Acceptable Forms of ID
  - "I Voted" Stickers
  - Certificates of Party Affiliation (Primary Election Only)
  - Affidavits of Non-Participation and Affiliation (Primary Election Only)
  - Notice of Party Convention Handouts (Primary Election Only) (If provided by the parties)

**Supplies for Curbside Voting:** Follow the instructions provided by the authority conducting the election for curbside set-up procedures. (If you experience any issues, contact your authority conducting the election.)

- Clipboard
- Cart to hold supplies to take outside
- ePollbook (if using ePollbooks to qualify voters) / laptop / tablet / Combination Form (if using paper Combination Forms)
- Ensure the following forms are accessible for the clerk to provide to the voter(s) as needed:
  - Statements of Residence
  - Reasonable Impediment Declaration Forms
  - Oaths of Assistance and Interpreter
  - List of Acceptable Forms of ID
  - Information of Person That Provided Transportation to Seven or More Voters for Curbside Voting Form
  - "I Voted" Stickers
  - Certificates of Party Affiliation (Primary Election Only)
  - Affidavits of Non-Participation and Affiliation (Primary Election Only)
  - Notice of Party Convention Handouts (Primary Election Only) (If provided by the parties)

**Continued on next Page...**

- Pens
- Ballot stock
- Judge's **FULL** signature on back of each ballot
- Sealed ballot bag/box for voter to insert the voted ballot, if required
- Ballot Marking Device or DRE
- Privacy shields
- Electrical cord connections where needed / battery pack, if applicable
- Provide a signature tool (e.g., stylus) ready for voters to sign ePollbook

**Evaluate the Polling Place for ADA Compliance**

- If parking is available, one parking space must be van accessible and marked as disabled parking.
- Designate a parking space for curbside voters and post a sign with a phone number for curbside voters to call or text, in order to alert election officials at the polling place that a voter is at the curbside to vote OR place a button or intercom at the curbside that the voter may use to request assistance from an election officer at the polling place.
- The accessible and curbside parking spaces should be closest to the polling area.
- The polling place may not have any barriers that impede the path of a voter with a physical disability, such as gravel, automatically closing gates, and closed doors without lever-type handles.
- There must be a route of travel that does not require the use of stairs.
- All inaccessible doorways must have disabled access postings indicating the location of the nearest accessible entrance. If applicable, set up a door bell to alert poll workers if nearest accessible entrance is far away from the voting area.
- The door handle must be operable with a closed fist.
- Disabled access postings must be posted designating the path of travel to the voting area.
- Provide extra seating for voters with disabilities.
- If anything protrudes more than 4 inches from the wall and does not contact the floor, a cone must be placed on the floor for safety.
- An accessible table has a surface height of **no more than 34 inches and no less than 28 inches above the floor**. At least 27 inches of knee clearance must be provided between the floor and the underside of the table.
- For more information on ADA compliance, see <https://www.ada.gov/votingchecklist.htm#toc3>.

Open the polls. The official time to open the polls to check in the first voter is at 7:00 a.m.

I \_\_\_\_\_, **Presiding Judge**, on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_

certify that \_\_\_\_\_ polling place complies with all applicable laws and procedures according to the above checklist.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Presiding Judge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Presiding Judge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Alternate Judge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Alternate Judge