



2025-2026

# Okaloosa County Service Values

Standards of Exemplary Service Guide

**P**atriot  
**Poll Worker**  
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS  
OKALOOSA COUNTY FLORIDA



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# SERVICE VALUE PLEDGE



I PLEDGE TO UPHOLD AND DEMONSTRATE THE O.K.A.L.O.O.S.A SERVICE VALUES OF:

**O**ptimism: I understand how important my attitude and demeanor are in creating a positive voter experience.

**K**nowledgeable: I commit to reviewing my training materials and preparing myself to administer a successful election.

**A**ccountable: I commit to doing my part to ensure the Okaloosa County Supervisor of Elections office continues to be recognized as a role model for conducting lawful, courteous, and respectful elections.

**L**eadership: Whether I serve as a Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Inspector or Bailiff, I understand there are no unimportant roles and the way I conduct myself provides an example to others and to voters.

**O**rganized: I understand a successful election day starts by attending training classes, reviewing my manual and other materials, and making sure I am ready to serve the voters.

**O**bjectivity: I commit to approaching my voters with open ears and listening to their concerns in the best effort to assist them.

**S**tandards: I fulfill my duties and assigned task dedicated to continuous improvement, and innovation that have created the standards of excellence of which I am now a part.

**A**ccessible: I commit to making sure that all voters are able to exercise their right to vote in a safe, accessible and transparent manner.

# GENERAL INFORMATION



## OVERVIEW

This manual is for use to better understand the election process and how a new poll worker can participate on Election Day.

A new poll worker will be provided a manual and other election materials as part of their training to work an early voting and Election Day site.

## SOME COMMON DEFINITIONS

<u>BAILIFF</u>	The person who has been deputized and who maintains good order at the polls.
<u>CLERK</u>	The person in charge at a polling place during early voting or on Election Day.
<u>ELECTION BOARD</u>	Consists of the Clerk, Assistant Clerk and inspectors appointed to conduct elections at a polling site.
<u>INSPECTOR</u>	The person(s) that assists a voter during the check-in process, provides the voter their ballot, and assists the voter when they cast their ballot at the voting machine.
<u>POLLING PLACE (SITE)</u>	The building that contains the polling room where early voting or Election Day voting occurs.
<u>POLLING ROOM</u>	The room in which ballots are cast on Election Day, and during early voting.
<u>POLL WORKER</u>	Civic-minded election workers appointed to serve the public during early voting and Election Day.
<u>PRECINCT</u>	The geographic area that local government has divided for election purposes.

## TRAINING

You will be required to attend a training class prior to each election (F.S. 102.014). Upon completion of your training, you will be familiar with the rules and laws that govern the activities at a polling sites during early voting and on Election Day. You will also participate in hands-on training with the voting technologies used during an election.

There are also online review classes and materials you can download to help make your day a success.

As a new poll worker, you must complete the online New Poll Worker Introduction course and then an in-person training class. A class schedule will be provided to you and then registration will be made available online through our website [voteokaloosa.gov](http://voteokaloosa.gov).

## ASSIGNMENT

There are several positions in a polling site and assignments are made depending on the needs of a particular site and the community it serves.

Assignments are made by the Supervisor of Elections and confirmed after you have completed your required training. As a new poll worker, you will either be assigned as an Inspector or as a Bailiff.

## POLL WORKERS VOTE TOO

If you are working in a location that is not your Election Day polling site, you can request a Vote-by-Mail ballot or vote in person at an early voting site prior to Election Day.



# GENERAL INFORMATION



SUPERVISOR LUX WORKING WITH POLL WORKERS.

## STARTING TIME

Early Voting: If you are working at an early voting site, then you will be assigned a shift and a date to report.

Election Day: If you are working at an Election Day polling place, you must report by 6:00 A.M. on election morning. If you are late without notice, you may be replaced by a reserve poll worker.

If you are unable to work after being assigned, please notify the Supervisor of Elections Office immediately.

## BREAKS ON ELECTION DAY

We do not have scheduled lunch hours or breaks. The Clerk will approve your breaks as needed. If you are on a break, you will need to return to your station if lines form or voters need assistance. Remember: You are a member of a team that must work together.

You are not allowed to leave the polling place on Election Day. With your Clerk's permission, you may step outside, but you cannot leave the grounds. If you leave for any reason, you will be unable to return.

You should bring plenty of food, drink, snacks and any medication for the entire day. You are responsible for your own food.

Some locations may offer you the option to participate in a group lunch arrangement. Your participation is completely voluntary.

## AFTER THE LAST VOTER LEAVES

Even if the early voting or Election Day polling site closes, voters in line or in the process of voting are allowed to continue the voting process and cast their ballots.

Once the last voter leaves, the entire team works together to complete accounting paperwork, clean up and pack up the location.

The press and the public may enter the polling room after all voters are finished and observe the closing procedures.

By working together as a team, you can successfully close down a polling site and enjoy your evening and a job well done.

## POLL WORKER

### PAYMENT

Whether you work an early voting or an Election Day site, you will sign in when you report and sign out when you leave.



Your pay will be direct deposited into your bank account within 1-2 weeks following Election Day.

In referring to payments, there are few items to keep in mind:

1. FRS Retiree: You cannot work as a poll worker for six months after you have retired.
2. You will be paid by Direct Deposit to your bank account so your direct deposit information will be collected with your other onboarding documents.
3. You are being paid public funds, and as such we will need your Social Security Number. You can provide that information to us when you fill out your W-2 which is included with your on-boarding documents.
4. The IRS considers poll workers a special employee and there are tax implications if you make over a certain amount in a year. This will be discussed with you during your training class.

# GENERAL INFORMATION



## BECOMING FAMILIAR WITH OUR VOTING TECHNOLOGY

### DS 200



Our DS200 Ballot Scanner is an electronic voting system that uses an optical scanner to read marked paper ballots and tally the results. The monitor assists the voters by providing instruction in either English or Spanish, and will notify the voter of any voting errors. The voter will be able to correct these errors to ensure that their vote counts.

### EXPRESSVOTE



For voters with disabilities that want to vote independently, our ExpressVote is a ballot marking device that combines touchscreen voting with the production of a voter-verifiable paper ballot.

A voter can have their ballot delivered audibly or in various display modes to assist them.

### BALLOT-ON-DEMAND



Once a voter checks-in, and they are deemed eligible to vote, our Ballot-on-Demand system will print a ballot specifically for that voter.

### EVID



Voters check-in using our electronic poll book. Our electronic poll book makes voter check-in fast and easy and allows for instant voter credit.

***You will receive hands-on training on all of our technology!***

# VOTER SERVICE



## OUR PROUD TRADITION

As an Okaloosa County poll worker, you are part of an elite team that provides a vital service in our democratic society. Voters are members of your community, and they look to you to assist them in exercising their right to vote. They are your neighbors, your friends, perhaps even your own family, and they deserve the best service you can provide. Okaloosa County is an example for other election offices to follow. The excellent service a voter receives at the polls is one of the biggest reasons for that.

## VOTER'S RIGHTS

(SECTION 101.031, FLA. STAT.)

Each registered voter in this state has the right to:

- Vote and have their vote accurately counted.
- Cast a vote if they are in line when the polls are closing.
- Ask for and receive assistance in voting.
- Receive up to two replacement ballots if they make a mistake prior to the ballot being cast.
- An explanation if their registration or identity is in question.
- Cast a Provisional Ballot if their registration or identity is in question.
- Receive written instruction to use when voting, and, upon request, oral instruction in voting from election officers.
- Vote free from coercion or intimidation by election officers or any other person.
- Vote on a voting system that is in working order.

## VOTER RESPONSIBILITIES

(SECTION 101.031, FLA. STAT.)

Each registered voter in this state has the responsibility to:

- Study and know candidates and issues.
- Keep their voter address current.
- Know their precinct and its hours of operation.
- Bring proper identification to the polling station.
- Know how to operate voting equipment properly.
- Treat precinct workers with courtesy.
- Respect the privacy of other voters.
- Report problems or violations of election law.
- Ask questions when confused.
- Check their completed ballot for accuracy.

# ASSISTING VOTERS



## BI-LINGUAL VOTER MATERIALS AND ASSISTANCE

### SPANISH LANGUAGE HOT-LINE

Some voters have limited English-language proficiency and may request assistance in their preferred language. Many of these voters are Spanish speakers.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965's Section 4(e) prohibits English-only elections for citizens educated in Puerto Rico in Spanish. Under the 14th amendment to our U.S. Constitution, a person educated in an American-flag school where the predominant classroom language was Spanish must be given election materials in Spanish when requested by the voter. They are American citizens.



Ballots, voting and registration materials, and assistance must be available in Spanish.

Okaloosa County has several tools available to provide language assistance.

### SPANISH LANGUAGE BALLOTS

Your polling place is able to print a ballot in Spanish upon request of the voters. When a voter checks in, the Inspector can choose either an English or a Spanish language ballot to print.

### SIGNS AND VOTER NOTICES

You have signs and other election materials that have been translated into Spanish. Please make sure all of your signs are prominently displayed for view by your voters.

### GLOSSARY OF ELECTION TERMS

The Election Assistance Commission has created a guide that list common election terms translated from English to Spanish. Each polling site has a copy of this guide.

### TRANSLATION HOT-LINE

We have a professional translation service that is available to anyone. This hot-line can translate almost every language into English and vice versa.

**Recursos en español**

[Espanol Resources Button on our website](#)



# ASSISTING VOTERS SERVING WITH SENSITIVITY



Almost 20% of Americans have a disability. All voters have the right to request and obtain assistance in voting.

You should treat every voter with the same dignity and respect you would want, expect, and deserve.

## PUT THE PERSON FIRST, NOT THE DISABILITY

You should avoid using old, prejudicial, and hurtful descriptors. Instead, use people first language that puts the person before the disability. This demonstrates good manners, respect, and it can change the way we see a person, and the way a person sees themselves.

Here are a few examples:

Say: The voter who is blind  
Instead of: The blind voter

Say: Kay uses a wheelchair  
Instead of: Kay is confined to a wheelchair

Say: Accessible Parking  
Instead of: Handicapped Parking

## TOOLS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES

Each polling site is supplied with items to assist voters with disabilities. You should know what equipment is available and how to use it so that you can aid voters who request it.

- Magnifiers/Readers: Assist voters with reading the ballot or other election information.
- Temporary ADA solutions: Items, such as parking cones to ramps, that enable physical access to the polling place.
- ADA voting capabilities: Our ballot marking device allows a voter to vote independently on a paper ballot.
- Privacy Screen: This three-sided screen can be used to create a private voting space on a table for a voter who uses a wheelchair or who needs to sit.
- Ballot Call System (if needed): A push button call button to alert the Clerk that a voter is outside and needs assistance.
- Transport Chair: A mobility device used to assist a voter that may need assistance entering and maneuvering around a polling site.



# ASSISTING VOTERS SERVING WITH SENSITIVITY

## MOBILITY IMPAIRED

- Voters who use wheelchairs may have varying abilities.
- Do not lean across a voter using a wheelchair.
- Do not pull or touch a voter's wheelchair.
- Make sure ramps are not obstructed.
- Keep doorways clear of obstacles so wheelchairs can be maneuvered through them.
- Make sure there is a clear path of travel in the polling room.
- Be aware of the reach limitations of voters in wheelchairs.
- When talking with a voter in a wheelchair, sit in a chair so that you are at their eye level. If that is not possible, stand at a slight distance or kneel so the voter is not straining their neck to make eye contact with you.
- A voter may not appear to have limited mobility but may need to sit down.



## BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

A voter who is blind or visually impaired may travel with a guide dog, a cane, a sighted guide or alone. Their visual impairment may not be obvious.



If the voter is using a guide dog, walk on the voter's right side--the side opposite the dog. Do not touch the dog, the harness or the leash.

- Do not allow others to distract the dog. These distractions could be dangerous to the voter's safety.
- Identify yourself before making contact with a voter who is blind or visually impaired. Give your name and your role.
- Do not grab or pull a voter.
- To guide a voter, let them take your arm.
- Do not touch or move the voter's cane or other device.
- Be specific and non-visual with directions. Do not tell someone to turn left at the end of the desk. Instead, say, "Take five steps and turn left."
- Offer magnifiers!
- Be sure they know and are familiar with the audio component of the ballot marking device.

## DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

- Speak clearly, and speak directly to the voter, even if they are accompanied by an interpreter.
- If you have difficulty understanding the speech of a voter, let them know. It is acceptable to repeat back what you heard.
- Use gestures or write notes back and forth to communicate.
- A voter who is hard of hearing, has a speech impediment, or who has had a stroke, for example, may be hard to understand.
- Give the voter your full attention. Maintain eye contact.
- Do not finish sentences for the voter.
- Do not shout at the voter.



# ASSISTING VOTERS SERVING WITH SENSITIVITY



## COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

A person with a cognitive disability has greater difficulty with one or more types of mental task. Most cognitive disabilities have some sort of basis in biology or as a result of physical trauma.



They may face difficulty in memory, problem-solving, attention, reading, math or visual comprehension.

Everyone has a right to vote unless the judicial system has adjudicated a person incompetent. You do not make that assessment.

- Use a calm demeanor.
- Try to decrease distractions.
- Use simple words and short sentences.
- Give them time. Allow the voter to move through the voting process on their own time without feeling rushed.
- You may have to explain the voting process in steps and repeat the process to assist the voter.
- Be patient and understanding.

## ASSISTING A VOTER

All voters can ask for and receive assistance with voting. If a voter request assistance you should let them know that they have the option to vote using an accessible ballot marker or by having someone assist them.

A voter can bring in someone with them to assist them in the voting process. There are certain rules and documents that are designed to protect that voter which will be discussed in your training class.



## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflict can result in an uncomfortable environment and reduce an organization's effectiveness. Conflict arises when trying to work with difficult people. Here are a few helpful hints in working with difficult people.

- Don't escalate the situation. Remain calm.
- Focus on what the person is trying to say.
- Avoid being purposefully hurtful.
- Model behavior you want.
- Focus on the solution.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Blame the process, not the person.
- Be specific in your replies.
- Avoid "always" and "never".
- Avoid name calling.
- Encourage listening.
- Confront in private--praise in public.
- Use your communication skills.
- Contact the Supervisor's office anytime for help.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



How should I respond if a voter asks specific questions about a candidates or issues?

*As a poll worker, you should respond that you cannot advise, instruct, or educate voters on candidates or issues.*

Is there a time limit for voters to vote?

*There is not a state mandated time limit, and you should be flexible. Feel free to ask a voter that is taking a longer time than normal if they need assistance.*

Can I refuse an irate or drunken voter?

*No. All eligible voters should be allowed to vote. Use common sense, prudent judgment, and superior customer service when dealing with difficult voters. If necessary, the sheriff or police may be called by the Supervisor's office for assistance.*

A voter enters the polling location wearing campaign attire. What should I do?

*A voter can enter the polling location and vote while wearing political clothing. However, if the voter wants to loiter or solicit for their candidate or issue, they must do so outside the No Solicitation Zone.*

What happens when a voter goes to the wrong polling location?

*During early voting, a voter can present themselves and vote at any early voting site. On Election Day, however, they must vote at their assigned polling site. If a voter comes into the wrong site, they will be given directions to their correct location.*

What if a voter forgets to bring any identification with them?

*A voter that does not have proper photo or signature identification will be allowed to vote a Provisional Ballot. The Supervisor's office will receive their ballot which is sealed in a Provisional Ballot envelope, verify the voter's signature with their signature on file, and present the ballot to the canvassing board for adjudication.*

Are all Vote-by-Mail ballots counted or are they counted only in close elections?

*ALL ELIGIBLE BALLOTS ARE COUNTED! Each and every eligible ballot, whether it's a Vote-by-Mail ballot, a ballot cast at an early voting site or a ballot cast on Election Day is tabulated and included in the election results.*

I understand, as a new poll worker, I will be an Inspector or a Bailiff. Which position is better and how can I become a Clerk?

*Each and every one position in a polling site is vitally important, so whether you start out as an Inspector or a Bailiff you are a valuable member of the team. If, after a few elections, you are interested in a leadership position simply let the Supervisor's office know and we can start you on the leadership track.*



Thank you for your  
willingness to serve  
and join our cadre of  
Patriot Poll Workers!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Lux".

**Paul Lux, CERA**  
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