POLL WATCHERS

Letter of Credentials

- To be permitted in the polling place, poll watchers must provide a designation form to the precinct officials upon arrival to the polling place, showing which political party or organization appointed them.

Poll watchers MAY:

- Observe, but not interfere with, the election process
- Examine signed declarations of eligibility slips or voter rosters
- Write down the names of people who have or have not voted
- Challenge a voter’s qualifications (challenger must be a registered voter in the county)
- Report perceived problems in the precinct to the county auditor

Poll watchers SHALL NOT:

- Interfere with the election process in any way
- Challenge a voter solely because the voter is registering to vote or changing address on Election Day
- Inspect documents produced by voters for the purpose of establishing identity
- Compare the signature on record to a signature on any document or ballot or ballot envelope
- Disenfranchise voters by encouraging challenged voters to cast provisional ballots in precincts where they do not live
- Engage in arguments with PEOs, voters, or other poll watchers
- Interrupt, hinder, oppose or talk to a voter while in or approaching the polling place to vote
- Solicit votes for candidates or questions
- Offer advice or literature to voters, or solicit votes
- Wear buttons, stickers, jewelry or clothing of a political nature
- Use polling place supplies

Challenging a voter’s qualifications

- Challenges must be made before a voter casts a ballot
- The challenger must notify precinct election officials of intent to challenge a voter
- Precinct election officials inform the voter of the challenge to his/her qualifications
- Challenges containing false information are not legal
- “Blanket” challenges are not legal
- Challengers must complete and sign the Challenger's Statement for each voter they challenge
- With permission of the precinct officials, challengers may participate in the questioning of a voter to determine the voter’s qualifications
- If the voter is able to prove that he/she is qualified to vote in the precinct, the challenge may be withdrawn

Number of poll watchers

- No more than 3 at a time from each political party
- No more than 1 at a time from each non-party political organization
- No more than 1 at a time for each non-partisan candidate
- No more than 3 for public measures on the ballot (except for primary and general elections)

Any person violating any of the above laws is guilty of Election Misconduct in the third degree
Code of Iowa §§ 39A.4; 49.79-81; 49.104

-Iowa Secretary of State