

# INFO SESSION

THE BASICS OF ELECTION  
PROTECTION & COVID SAFETY



#POWERTHEPOLLS

# IMPORTANT!

- This is an information session **NOT** an official county poll worker training. You will **NOT** be paid for this session.
- If you are selected to be a poll worker **YOUR** county will provide the official training for which you will be paid.

# How To Sign Up

**To be a poll worker in Philadelphia,** we recommend signing-up in two places:

- **The Voter Project:** [www.thevoterproject.com/c70](http://www.thevoterproject.com/c70)
- **Philadelphia:** [www.philadelphiavotes.com](http://www.philadelphiavotes.com)

Join the **The Poll Worker Caucus** Facebook group to ask questions and share tips and ideas with other poll workers.

# When will I hear if I am selected?

- County boards are still filling vacancies, so you may hear back soon, but you may hear as late as a day or two before the election.
- You may not hear from the county, but there are other important volunteer opportunities for you on election day (e.g., Election Protection, City of Philadelphia Rover Program).
  - Signing up at **[www.thevoterproject.com/c70](http://www.thevoterproject.com/c70)** will put you on an email list with information about other opportunities

# What Do Poll Workers Do?

*Ensure smooth operation of voting*

## Beginning of day and throughout

- Arrive by 6:15 am at the latest
- Set up tables, flow of the space, hang required signage and posters
- Unpack and account for materials
- Set up voting machines
- Greet voters at check-in table; verify in poll book
- Help voters with specific questions and needs
- Explain how the voting machine works
- Report any issues or problems (e.g., voter intimidation)

## Closing the polls - Could go late night!

- Polls do not close until the last person who was in line by 8 PM has voted
- Follow checklist for shutting down machines
- Complete paperwork, including payroll
- Prepare and give materials to BoE workers and police
- Take down tables, tidy polling location
- Organize materials and deliver to County Elections office

A young child with blonde hair, wearing a light blue jacket and pink pants, stands in a queue at a polling station. The child is holding onto a metal stanchion. In the background, other people are visible, including a woman in a floral dress and a man in a dark suit. The scene is set in a well-lit indoor space with a tiled floor.

**Poll workers have an important role to play in protecting democracy and making sure every vote counts.**

**Today, we'll cover:**

- **Protecting the right to vote in the polls**
- **Keeping yourself and voters safe - Covid safety training**

# State and federal laws governing the voting process

- **Voting Rights Act of 1965:**
  - Anti-intimidation provision, Section 11(b)
  - Voter Assistance due to disability or inability to read or write, Section 208
- **National Voter Registration Act of 1993**
- **Help America Vote Act of 2002**
- **Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act of 1984**
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**
- **Pennsylvania Election Code of 1937**



# Poll Worker Responsibilities May Include:

- **Resolve voter registration issues**
  - **Voter's name incorrectly left off register due to:**
    - **Incorrect removal procedures**
    - **Clerical errors**
  - **Voter is listed in the supplemental poll book sheets**
  - **Voter is at the wrong polling places or precinct table**
- **Administer provisional ballots**
- **Operate voting system**
- **Follow and implement health and safety guidelines**



# Acceptable forms of ID in Pennsylvania

- If you've voted at your division before, you don't need to show ID to vote.
- If you're a **first-time voter**, or if you moved within Pennsylvania and are voting for the first time at a new division, you must show ID to vote.

## Acceptable forms

- Pennsylvania driver's license or PennDOT ID card;
- ID issued by Pennsylvania or the US government;
- US passport;
- US military ID;
- Student ID;
- Employee ID;
- County Voter Registration Card;
- Non-photo ID issued by Pennsylvania or the US government;
- Firearm permit;
- Copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, or a government check that includes your name and address.

# Problems Relating to Identification

- Poll workers asking for identification when it is not needed
- Election judges not accepting forms of identification that are acceptable
- Voters not having the required identification
  - If voters do not have the required identification, they should be given a provisional ballot





# Poll Workers vs. Poll Watchers

- What is a poll worker?
- Poll Worker Positions
  - Judge of Elections
  - Majority Inspector
  - Minority Inspector
  - Clerk
  - Machine Inspector






## A poll worker is not a poll watcher

- Poll watchers are registered voters in the county who have been certified by the local Election Board on behalf of a party or candidate to observe at the precinct.
- One poll watcher per party and one poll watcher per candidate may be inside at any given time.
- Watchers must remain at least 6 feet away from the area where voting is occurring.

# Voter Intimidation

- Federal law says that "no person ... shall intimidate, threaten, coerce ... any other person for the purpose of interfering with the right of [that] person to vote or to vote as he may choose." Many states have their own laws prohibiting voter intimidation.
-  **Examples of intimidation may include:**
  - Aggressively questioning voters about their citizenship, criminal record, or other qualifications to vote , in a manner intended to interfere with the voters' rights
  - Falsely representing oneself as an elections official
  - Displaying false or misleading signs about voter fraud and the related criminal penalties
  - Other harassment, particularly toward LEP voters and voters of color



# Voter Intimidation

A photograph of a man in an orange t-shirt and glasses leaning over a table at what appears to be a polling station. He is looking at a tablet device. In the background, other people are visible, including a woman in an orange vest. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

- All partisan campaigners must remain 10 feet away from the polling place (area where voting is occurring)
  - Poll workers are expected to enforce this law

# Voter Accessibility

- Every polling place in Pennsylvania must have at least one accessible voting system. Sometimes this is the general voting system used by all voters. It may be a separate system with features such as audio, tactile keys, and other assistive technology.
- Voters who need assistance due to a disability or who cannot proficiently read or write in English can bring someone with them to assist.



# Every voter has should cast a ballot.

- Every voter has the right to vote by **provisional ballot**.
- Poll workers must provide a **provisional ballot** even if the voter is at the wrong polling place or does not have proper documentation.
  - Any **provisional ballot** cast by a registered voter will be counted

POLLSTAR



# ELECTION PROTECTION



**VOLUNTEER:** Election Protection – led by the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law – is the nation’s largest non-partisan voter protection coalition. Through the **866-OUR-VOTE hotline and their voter assistance field program**, Election Protection helps ensure eligible voters are able to participate in our democracy while collecting data for meaningful reform so that our elections are free, fair, and accessible.

Sign up at **[protectthevote.net](https://protectthevote.net)**

# **Working Elections During COVID-19**

**Thanks to the Stanford-MIT Healthy  
Elections Project for our next slides!**



# Your Service is Important & Appreciated

Working this election means **putting yourself at an increased risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19.**

It also means **protecting our democracy from a pandemic.**

- While you may have engaged in activities like grocery shopping, going to a park without a mask, or dining outside, working this election increases your risk of exposure due to the number of potential interactions and the time in proximity of others
- This training will help you limit your personal risk and help you limit the risk for people voting in your polling place
- Your health and safety are important to us

## Thank you for serving in this election!



# Program Outline

- 1** Staying Healthy Before Election Day
- 2** Reducing Airborne Transmission  
in a Polling Place
- 3** Reducing Surface Transmission  
in a Polling Place
- 4** Potential Election Day Scenarios
- 5** Taking Care of Yourself on Election Day

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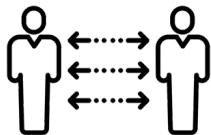
Staying Healthy  
Before Election Day

# How Does Coronavirus Spread?

## Airborne transmission

occurs when virus in the air gets into the body

- Reduce risk of spread by:
  - Practicing physical distancing
  - Wearing face coverings and masks



## Surface transmission

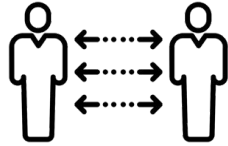
occurs when virus on an object or surface gets into the body

- Reduce risk of spread by:
  - Washing or sanitizing hands
  - Disinfecting objects and surfaces



# Before Election Day: Keeping Yourself Healthy

Practice physical distancing  
of 6 feet, both at work and  
away from work



Wash hands frequently

- Scrub with soap and water  
for at least 20 seconds



Use face coverings or masks  
to cover mouth and nose



Use hand sanitizer with at  
least 70% isopropyl alcohol





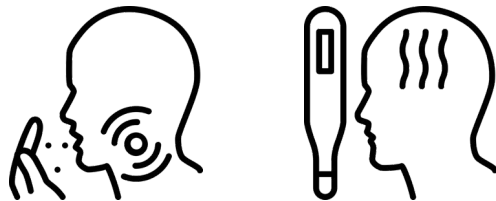
# Knowing When You're Sick

**Don't come to work if you or someone you live with have been recently diagnosed with COVID-19**

**Don't come to work if you have symptoms of COVID-19**

- Frequent Cough
- Fever
- Difficulty Breathing
- Chills
- Muscle Pain
- Headache
- Sore Throat
- Recent Loss of Taste or Smell

- Self-screen at home, including taking temperature and/or symptom checks
- Seek medical attention if symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face



**Inform your election admin ASAP  
if you know you cannot work**

# 2 Reducing Airborne Transmission in a Polling Place

# Reducing Airborne Exposure: **Physical Distancing and Masks**

**Between you and  
other poll workers  
or observers**

**Most control:**  
can establish and  
enforce boundaries

**Between you  
and voters**

**Medium control:** can  
establish boundaries, but  
cannot enforce voter  
compliance

**Between voters  
and each other**

**Medium control:** can  
establish boundaries, but  
cannot enforce voter  
compliance

**Greatest public  
health issue**

# You & Other Poll Workers/Observers: **Space**

## **Setup workstations at least 6 ft apart**

Workstation setup is the same,  
but with increased distance

**Stagger poll worker breaks and  
mark 6ft zones in break areas  
to ensure physical distancing.**

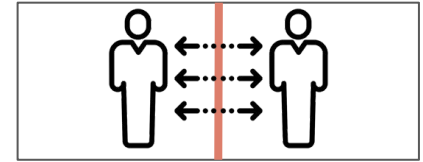
**Manage observer numbers to  
ensure everyone has enough  
space to physically distance**



|  
6ft  
|

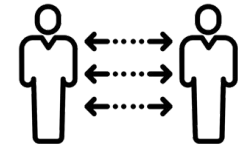


Break Area



— 6ft —

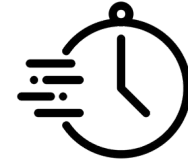
Observers



# You & Other Poll Workers/Observers: **Interactions**

## **Limit time within 6 ft of each other**

Keep close interactions to essential collaborative work like troubleshooting



## **Wear masks at all times except while eating on break**



## **Election Day is long**

Be mindful of “growing comfortable” and becoming complacent. Help remind each other of the safety precautions



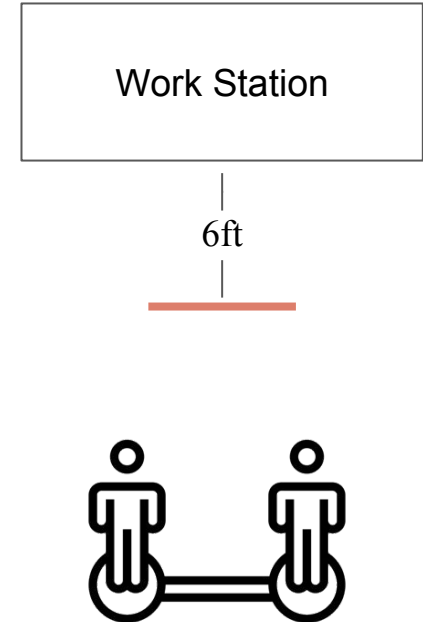


# You and Voters

**Mark “wait here” lines 6ft in front of workstations**

**Have extended interactions between dividers (such as plexiglass)**

**When helping a voter, stand at least 6ft apart,**  
unless that prevents you from effectively assisting the voter



# You and Voters: **Examples**



Houston on Tuesday, July 14, 2020



Oklahoma City on Tuesday, June 30, 2020

# Voters and Each Other

**Setup voting booths/machines 6ft apart.**

Setup is the same, just the distances are greater

**Delineate 6ft-apart lines for voting queue** just as you've seen in grocery stores and elsewhere

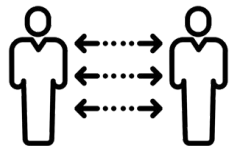
**If possible, separate Entry and Exit and create one-way flow of traffic**



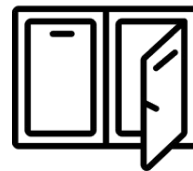
Remember: you must ensure all eligible voters can vote, even if non-compliant with COVID safety

# In General

Practice physical distancing  
of 6 feet from all people



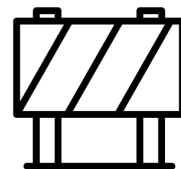
Keep doors and windows  
open, if weather permits



Use face coverings or masks  
to cover mouth and nose



Use barriers when physical  
distancing isn't possible



# 3 Reducing Surface Transmission in a Polling Place



# Supplies for Cleaning, Disinfecting & PPE

## Your polling place should have

- Hand sanitizer or hand washing stations
- Disinfecting wipes and spray
- Disposable gloves
- Masks and other face coverings



# Sanitation Station

One person (or a small team) may be put in charge of staffing the sanitation station and managing supplies for the polling site.

**Be aware of the location of supplies at your polling site and communicate with your fellow poll workers about supply needs**



# Remember What People Touch

## **Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces and tools**

- Door Handles
- Voting Booths
- Pens and/or Styluses
- Voting/Activation Cards
- Voting Equipment



Disinfect **BEFORE** voting begins and  
at regular intervals **DURING** voting



# Remember

**If you're a returning poll worker**, many procedures will be similar to what you've done in the past, but a lot of the layout and some procedures may be new or different, **which will require working differently than you have in the past**

**Consistency in these COVID safety practices is key**

**Thousands of poll workers have worked elections under COVID conditions without getting sick.** These practices are proven methods for reducing the airborne and surface transmission of COVID-19, and implementing them will help keep you and voters safe

4

Potential Scenarios on  
Election Day



# Keep In Mind

1. It can be harder to hear each other and understand what people are saying when masks or face coverings are being worn
  - a. Masks muffle voices and distort words
  - b. Masks prevent people from seeing mouths/lips for additional info like lip reading and emotional cues
2. Voters/observers might have more questions than normal
3. Stress levels may be higher

# If Tensions Run High

1. **Reassure** voters that you are protecting their right to vote
2. **Slow down** and remain calm. Repeat what you heard slowly or ask voter to repeat themselves, even if you heard them
3. **Check in** with fellow poll workers for advice or support
4. **Ask for help**, if you feel threatened at any point, and **call the authorities** or your election administrator

<b>Reassure</b>
<b>Slow down</b>
<b>Check in</b>
<b>Ask for help</b>

# Scenario 1: **Voter forgot PPE**

**How would you handle this?**

**Reassure**

**Slow down**

**Check in**

**Ask for help**

# Scenario 1: **Voter forgot PPE**

## 1. **Reassure them they will still get to vote**

- a. “Hi. I noticed you don’t have a face covering. Don’t worry, you will still get to vote as normal.”

## 2. If supplies allow, offer one.

- a. “We have some extras, would you like one?”

<b>Reassure</b>
<b>Slow down</b>
<b>Check in</b>
<b>Ask for help</b>

## Scenario 2: **Voter refuses face cover**

**How would you handle this?**

**Reassure**

**Slow down**

**Check in**

**Ask for help**

## Scenario 2: **Voter refuses face cover**

1. **Slow down.** Take an extra moment before responding or ask for clarification.
  - a. “I hear that you do not want to wear a face covering.”
  - b. “No problem. You don’t need a face covering to vote.”
2. Reassure them again.
  - a. “As I said, you will get to vote like everyone else. There is no problem.”
3. Ask them to give voters around them space.
  - a. “Do you mind giving voters around you a few extra feet of space?”

<b>Reassure</b>
<b>Slow down</b>
<b>Check in</b>
<b>Ask for help</b>



# Scenario 3: **Voters are arguing**

**How would you handle this?**

**Reassure**

**Slow down**

**Check in**

**Ask for help**

## Scenario 3: Voters are arguing

1. **Check in** with another poll worker and ask for support, since there are multiple parties
2. Talk to each voter 1:1, separately
3. **Reassure** each and **slow them down**
  - a. “Do not worry, you will get to vote.”
  - b. “Can you help me understand what’s happening?”
4. Ask them to disengage
  - a. “Please give each other space.”

<b>Reassure</b>
<b>Slow down</b>
<b>Check in</b>
<b>Ask for help</b>

# Scenario 4: There is disruption

**Follow your existing safety guidelines for when to seek additional help** from your election administrator or law enforcement.

## **COVID-specific examples:**

- Bullying, harassment or intimidation regarding a voter's choice to wear or not wear PPE
- Electioneering related to COVID safety practices
- Prohibiting the implementation of COVID safety practices
  - Not respecting physical distancing
  - Removing or destroying protective barriers
  - Etc.

<b>Reassure</b>
<b>Slow down</b>
<b>Check in</b>
<b>Ask for help</b>

# Keep In Mind

Mild tension should be expected, but **escalation is rare**

**Millions of voters have voted peacefully** under COVID conditions

**We trust that you are capable of handling most scenarios**, and are ready to support you in scenarios that are beyond your capability.

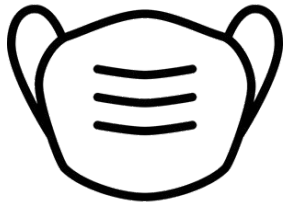
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Taking Care  
of Yourself  
on Election Day

# Use of Personal Protective Equipment

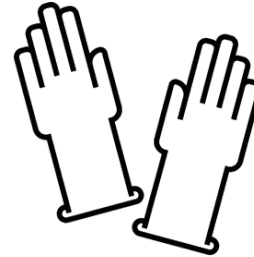
## Masks/Face Coverings

- Cover both mouth and nose
- Wash hands before and after use or adjustment
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose, or mouth



## Gloves

- Wash hands before putting gloves on and after removing them
- Only wear gloves when cleaning or disinfecting





# Bathrooms

## **How to use the bathroom without compromising safety**

1. If wearing disposable gloves, throw them out, but maintain face covering
2. Wash/sanitize hands before using the bathroom
3. Use the bathroom as normal
  - a. If you have disinfecting wipes in the bathroom, wipe down surfaces you will be touching
4. Wash hands thoroughly again (for at least 20 seconds) or use sanitizer
5. Put new gloves on (if wearing for your specific tasks)

# Breaks

## **Try to stagger breaks with your fellow poll workers**

We know the camaraderie of an election is a big benefit, but staggering breaks helps promote physical distancing

## **Do not share food or bring communal food/potluck meals**

We understand that this can be disappointing or inconvenient, but it helps reduce risk of COVID transmission

## **Take breaks in fresh air**

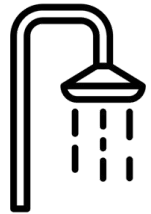
If weather permits, go outside. If not, try to be near an open door or window

## **Take your protective gear off (if safe to do so)**

When safe and possible, take off your protective gear to give your body a break. Wearing a mask, gloves or face shield for multiple hours can be tiring

# When You Get Home

- Throw out any disposable masks, gloves or other PPE you did not discard before leaving the polling place
- Remove your clothing and set aside what you wore to be washed (including reusable masks or face coverings)
- Consider showering right away
- **Be more mindful of physical distancing for 2 weeks**
- **If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive within 2 weeks, inform your election administrator and fellow poll workers**



# Final Thoughts: **Remember**

Maintain 6 ft of physical distancing from everyone
Continually wash and/or sanitize hands
Wear your PPE properly and consistently

Take care of yourself and each other.

**Thank you for serving in this election  
and protecting our democracy!**

THANK YOU!