



Voter Experience Survey November 2017

The November 2017 Voter Experience Survey was administered online with Survey Monkey and distributed via email to Seventy’s 14,000+ election news subscribers, through the organization’s Twitter and Facebook accounts and on www.seventy.org. Paid Facebook promotion was targeted to Philadelphia residents, ages 18 to 65+. The survey was open from Monday, November 6 to Friday, November 10, available before Election Day for voters who submitted absentee or alternative ballots. Respondents were limited to one submission per IP address.

Seventy appreciates the support of the community, civic and media organizations who assisted in disseminating the survey – and to the more than 2,200 citizens who participated. Out of Philadelphia’s approximately one million registered voters, more than 208,000 cast ballots in the November 7 general election. To view previous survey results, visit www.seventy.org/get-involved/voter-experience-survey.

Question 1: Did you vote in person on Election Day or by mail?

I voted in person	2,242	99%
I voted by mail	19	1%

Question 2: Were there any problems getting your absentee or alternative ballot?

No	17	89%
Yes	2	11%

Question 3: Approximately how long did you wait in line to vote?

Not at all	1,599	72%
Less than 10 minutes	546	24%
10-30 minutes	71	3%
31 minutes to an hour	13	1%
More than an hour	5	<1%
I don’t know	0	0%

Question 4: Did you encounter any individuals canvassing or distributing partisan flyers, buttons or posters inside the polling place (i.e. the space or room where the voting machines are located)?

No	2,019	91%
Yes	207	9%

Question 5: Was there a problem with your voter registration when you tried to vote?

No	2,171	98%
Yes	52	2%

If Yes: Were you allowed to vote?

(Continued from Question 5)

Yes, by voting machine	46	88%
Yes, by provisional ballot	4	8%
No, not allowed to vote	2	4%

Question 6: Were you asked to show picture identification, such as a driver’s license, at the polling place?

No	1,992	90%
Yes	227	10%

If Yes: Was this your first time voting at this particular polling place?

No	70	31%
Yes	158	69%

Were you then allowed to vote?

Yes, by voting machine	226	99%
Yes, by provisional ballot	1	<1%
No, not allowed to vote	1	<1%

Question 7: Did you encounter any problems with the voting equipment or the ballot that may have interfered with your ability to cast your vote as intended?

No	2,046	93%
Yes	139	6%
Don’t know	29	1%



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Question 8: Did you need help or assistance voting due to a disability?

No	2,202	99%
Yes	10	<1%

If Yes: How did you receive help or assistance voting at the polling place? (Check all that apply)

A person of my choosing assisted me.	2	20%
I used the audio keypad/headphone device	0	0%
The voting machine was lowered	2	20%
I had to submit an alternative ballot.	0	0%
I did not receive any assistance.	4	40%
I received another form of assistance.	2	20%

Were you able to successfully vote?

No	1	8%
Yes	12	92%

Question 9: Were the poll workers able to address any question or issues you encountered in the voting process?

No	69	3%
Yes	393	18%
N/A	1,749	79%

Question 10: Please rate the job performance of the poll worker at the polling place where you voted.

Excellent	1,521	69%
Good	526	24%
Fair	120	5%
Poor	44	2%

Question 11: How confident are you that the current election process in Philadelphia (or in your particular county) produces fair outcomes?

4 (Very confident)	1,076	48%
3	930	42%
2	148	7%
1 (Not at all confident)	68	3%

Open-ended Responses

The open-ended responses listed below are verbatim as received from respondents. Identifiable information to individuals, polling sites and candidates has been redacted.

Did you encounter any individuals canvassing or distributing partisan flyers, buttons or posters inside the polling place (i.e., the space or room where the voting machines are located)?

- [Candidate A] actively campaigned in the voting line. Judge made her quit.
- I was handed two flyers for [Candidate A] (PA Supreme Court) and [Candidate B] (Judge of Elections) inside the polling place as I was signing in and walking into the voting booth. In the past at this polling station, the woman manning the table actually told me to vote for herself for Election Clerk.
- Man handing out [campaign] flyers, I notified an on-site election official, who asked him to leave. He left without issue.
- There was someone inside the poll place running for judge of elections. I realize that they work at the polls but It was confusing. They said you could write in her name. I had no idea who that name



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belonged to. (she's apparently sitting there) I didn't see anywhere on the machine to do that, so I skipped it. It was awkward.

- Not in the location but I believe the law states "Any other person or voter not in the process of voting, campaign workers, signs and all other electioneering material must be located at least 10 feet away from the entrance to the room where voting occurs." I have been voting at this location and there are people often less than 10 feet away from the entrance handing out pamphlets or asking what party I affiliate me.
- The acting judge of elections, [candidate A], was signing voters in at the desk. She was also telling every voter that she is the write-in candidate for judge of elections and spelled her name, said the polls worker would show me how to do a write-in vote. then had her assistant go in the voting booth with me and she pressed the button for write in vote and set me up to vote for [candidate A]. I had no intention of voting for her but little did I know I would be unable to vote for [another candidate] whose name was on the ballot for judge of elections because of them setting me up for write-in...
- The volunteers who were working the machines were openly talking about their choice of candidate and were insulting/intimidating those who may vote the other way.
- When I asked how to do a "write in vote" my partner and I was told who to put down for the write in. When I confronted the people working the polling desk explaining why they can't and should not tell people who to write in I was dismissed and mocked. Worse voting experience ever! No one was monitoring.
- Two women sitting inside right next to the voting machines handing out a candidate's fliers.
- One man offered me a sample ballot. I thanked him and declined. He offered again, saying "Are you sure? There's a lot of names on the ballot." I let him know I had done my own research, and I continued into the polling area.
- Person working the voting machine and judge of elections attempted to get us to write in [candidate A] for judge of elections. Illegal.
- Partisan campaign signs posted just outside polling station, individuals distributing partisan fliers inside polling station. Has happened all three elections I have voted in at this polling station.
- I did not see canvassing but there was some politically oriented discussion putting a candidate in negative light between two people in the polling place, one of whom was an election officer.
- [Candidate A] and [Candidate B] handed us hand-written index cards with their names to write-in for Election Inspector and Election Judge. Their names weren't on the ballot.

*Many respondents reported canvassers distributing campaign literature in a location (e.g. lobby, hallway) outside the room or space where the voting machines are located. Electioneering in such a location is legal as long as it occurs at least 10 feet away from the entrance to the voting room or space. Judges of Election are responsible for making sure this threshold is clear.



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Was there a problem with your voter registration when you tried to vote?

- There were two tables in the polling place, one for ##-## and one for ##-##. I couldn't remember my Division but knew I was at the right polling place. After checking my name in the wrong division, I was told by a poll worker that I was at the wrong polling place. I stayed and after confirming my polling location online, approached the other table and they found my name and I voted. There were 2 lines, poor communication about where to go, and I was told to leave despite being a registered voter who was at the right polling place. This despite the fact that there were 6+ poll workers.
- It is always difficult to find my name. I have two last names as many latinx folks have. The order is very bad and makes it difficult to find. It was faster than other time though.
- I was a new voter at this location (having moved from Philadelphia, earlier this year). I showed my Voter Registration Card as proof of identity. Yet, the staff insisted in seeing my Driver's License.
- I was not found in the book, despite having voted in the primary at this location. The poll workers called a number of people but could not confirm my registration and I was not able to vote.
- I was not listed as being registered despite having registered in my district earlier in the year
- They told me since my registration is as independent I could not vote.
- My signature in the book was from someone with an obviously completely different name than mine.
- My name was found in the book to sign but there was no card with my name on it. This confused everyone at the site.
- I changed my registration but was not on the rolls, had to go to my old polling place.
- The question of why I had to present ID was brought up but the ward leader said it was because the person at the sign-in table didn't recognize me.

Did you encounter any problems with the voting equipment or the ballot that may have interfered with your ability to cast your vote as intended?

- Fizzano Cannon was missing Cannon as last name and I didn't vote for them because I didn't realize it was same person.
- The actual both wouldn't allow me to answer one of the questions at the bottom. The yes or no button seemed to be stuck.
- I arrived around 7:10 AM. Apparently the machines were not working - or they broke shortly after I arrived. After about 10 minutes the poll workers told us they were calling for help, so everyone in line left. I returned around noon and everything was fine. Waiting another 10 minutes then.
- I found the placement of the referendum questions challenging, requiring bending that is difficult and painful for me. Also the words yes/no on buttons under the questions were so small that I had difficulty reading them.



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- The machine which I used would not let you vote NO on the bond questions. The NO button would not illuminate, but the YES button would. I reported this to the election officials at the polling place but they did not check this out only stating that they would report the issue.
- Machines were not working when I got there at about 7:30 am. Technician had them working after a 10-minute wait.
- The button to vote "no" to one of the questions took about 25 presses before the light came on.
- I didn't, but a person ahead of me in line had difficulty getting a button to register. She eventually got it to work, but a poll worker confirmed afterwards that it required a much stronger push than the other buttons.
- The button was not working to select one of the judges running. I left my vote open and asked a staff member to help. She attempted to push the button as well and it did not work. She suggested I write in the candidate, which I reluctantly did due to no other options.
- Not all of the buttons on my machine worked. Some had to be pushed harder than others. Some didn't work at all.
- The red lights did not line up with the ballot.
- Machine broke at 7:00am. Not replaced until 11:45.
- Machine froze when I tried to do a write in. Judge of elections was not present due to a dentist appointment. Other personnel had no idea on what to do and called the city. They told me I should not have closed the write in window, even though that is what the instructions said. I finally ended up voting on the adjacent machine as the frozen one needed to be reset.
- For judge of elections, no one was running, so I opted to write in my name. When I chose write-in, the system froze up and I had to move to the second polling machine. I am not sure if my original vote was deleted, passed through, etc.
- Ballot was crowded and hard to read, writing very small, hard to see it because of poor lighting in the voting booth.

How did you receive help or assistance voting at the polling place? (If you received another form of assistance...)

- I couldn't see the instructions at the top. A person working the polls told me what I needed to know. They were not aware that the machine could be lowered when I asked.
- My son, who's in a wheelchair couldn't reach the button to vote straight dem/repub. He had to ask for help.
- I use a wheelchair and people at the polls did not know of an accessible booth. It all worked out but maybe there should be training on this.

Were the poll workers able to address any question or issue you encountered in the voting process? (If no, please specify the question or issue...)



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- I did not have a problem. However when I was there, someone was complaining that his daughter was not on the voter rolls, and the election officer said "there's nothing we can do" and "we can't do anything because this is how fraud happens" rather than following the procedure to issue a provisional ballot.
- I'm a registered non-partisan. The poll workers tried to tell me that I was only allowed to vote on the questions. That is the case in primary elections, but not the general...
- My polling place had 6 different districts or wards! And they could not figure out where I was. The staff was very under prepared.
- At [my polling place] I had a problem with the voting equipment where I wasn't able to press a particular button to cast my vote for a judge. The personnel at that voting location were able to help me but, came into the booth and commented that I voted across party lines.
- The machines are rarely up and running by 7:00am. No judges of elections were on site. The volunteers are doing great work, but could benefit from assistance. Provisional ballots were offered when requested.
- The poll worker and the judge of elections were telling me I could not vote for candidates, only questions.
- They were unable to allow us to vote with the machine since they had turned the machine off before the time that the polls were supposed to close
- I mentioned that they're not supposed to ask for ID and they said it was to make it easier to look up names. Clearly some retraining would be very helpful! I was still able to vote, but someone could easily be intimidated or dissuaded from coming back if they forgot an ID/bill with their address.
- The poll workers were able to help me figure out how to perform a write-in vote.
- Yes and no. I had to use a second machine because they weren't able to fix the first one. So I was able to vote, but I'm not sure if they followed procedure. The one in charge of the machines remarked that he had not been trained in their operation.
- No clear instructions for people who wanted to fill out and leave written ballots (rather than waiting for machines to get fixed).
- At 7:15 am nothing was ready. no one but the guard from (Building) was there. The polling booths were covered and on the floor. No city officials were there to certify or check the booths. I went back at 10:30 and two volunteers were running the entire show and they were also helping people in the booths. they did their best...
- Machine was already turned off when I arrived at 7:53pm (polls were to close at 8pm). The volunteer told us that she didn't have a watch to know the exact time and she thought someone had told her it was already 8pm. There were at least three of us who arrived before 8pm but were required to fill out a provisional ballot instead of having our votes counted immediately.
- Our poll workers were great, as usual, but our polling place didn't open till 8:00 a.m. because they were locked out of the room we vote in. The poll workers had been there since 6:30 but weren't able to reach the school official who had the keys.



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- It wasn't my question per se, but an Asian woman was having real difficulty finding a translator.
- Poll workers for my division didn't show up. Polls being worked by workers from other division sharing the space. Those workers were doing their best but polling place was running poorly. No signs or sample ballots posted at site at all. I offered to post them for them and offer was declined. Confusion as to whether polling place was up and running at 9 AM.

Other issues or comments

- There is a consistent group of women who work the polls (I have voted at this location for 12 years) They are helpful and cheery and I am grateful for their service and commitment to democracy.
- I am new to Philly and this was my first election I was voting in and I'm happy to report that it was super smooth and encountered no issues.
- It wasn't the ballot, but, rather the polling place (Ward ## Division ##). The polling station's address is listed as ##th street, but the entrance was around the corner on #####. The building wraps around a building in the corner, so it I see not immediately obvious that there could be another entrance. There was not a single sign marking that it was a polling place, where the entrance was, any demarcation point for where people can hold political signs outside (there were no political signs or people outside the polling station), etc.
- Absentee ballot received late. Had to take off work to vote.
- Our poll workers were friendly, kind and considerate. No issues at all to speak of.



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Methodology

The Voter Experience Survey was piloted in November 2015 to identify issues that the electorate may be encountering during the voting process. Most questions have been collected from academic studies conducted in other states and have been kept consistent each election season. Responses are anonymous.

These results are not drawn from a random and representative sample of Philadelphia-area voters. Despite the large number of respondents, only rough generalizations can be inferred about the experiences of the more than 2,200 survey participants – not the broader universe of voters.

Please contact **Policy Program Manager Patrick Christmas** at pchristmas@seventy.org with questions or feedback on the survey. Find past results online at: www.seventy.org/get-involved/voter-experience-survey.

Demographics of November 2017 Respondents*

Zip Code

Philadelphia Responses 1,966		
Center	337	15%
North	231	10%
Northeast	198	9%
Northwest	391	17%
South	543	24%
West/Southwest	265	12%

Suburban County Responses	289	13%
Other/No data	8	<1%
TOTAL	2,263	

***Center** (19102, 19103, 19106, 19107, 19123, 19130),
North (19120, 19121, 19122, 19124, 19125, 19132, 19133, 19134, 19140), **Northeast** (19111, 19114, 19115, 19116, 19135, 19136, 19137, 19149, 19152, 19154),
Northwest (19118, 19119, 19126, 19127, 19128, 19129, 19138, 19141, 19144, 19150), **South** (19112, 19145, 19146, 19147, 19148), **West/Southwest** (19104, 19131, 19139, 19142, 19143, 19151, 19153)

Race, Ethnicity or Origin**

Asian	83	4%
Black / African American	124	5%
Hispanic / Latino	72	3%
Native American	21	1%
Pacific Islander	2	<1%
White / Caucasian	1,924	82%
Other race or ethnicity	42	2%
Multiracial	61	3%

Age

18-35	916	42%
36-55	861	39%
56-74	405	18%
75+	13	1%

Gender**

Female	1,409	64%
Male	765	35%
Transgender	16	<1%
Do not identify as female, male, or transgender	17	<1%

*Respondents were not required to include demographic information.

**Respondents could select multiple categories.