

DIRECTIVE 2008-77

September 4, 2008

TO: ALL COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS
MEMBERS, DIRECTORS, AND DEPUTY DIRECTORS

RE: Minimum requirements and best practices for poll worker training

Pursuant to R. C. 3501.27 (B), which provides that “[e]ach board shall establish a program as prescribed by the secretary of state for the instruction of election officers in the rules, procedures, and law relating to elections,” the Secretary of State’s office has prepared training materials and compiled best practices to assist boards of elections with their county poll worker training program.

This directive is being issued to outline the minimum requirements and materials that are to be utilized by boards of elections in their poll worker training program. The boards of elections may use additional poll worker training materials prepared by or on behalf of the board to supplement these minimum requirements and best practices.

Training Requirements

Each county board of elections shall make a part of its poll worker training curriculum, at a minimum, the content of the materials or the materials themselves that have been specifically produced by the Ohio Secretary of State’s office and that may currently be found on the Secretary of State’s BOE Extranet, which include: the Poll Worker Manual of Instructions and Poll Worker Reminder Sheet. Also, at least one Poll Worker Quick Reference Guide (currently in printing, but available on the Secretary of State’s BOE Extranet; hard copies will be furnished by the Secretary of State’s office to boards of elections), must be given to each poll worker prior to Election Day, preferably during county poll worker training sessions. At least three Poll Worker Quick Reference Guides must be included in each precinct/polling place kit so that it is available to poll workers on Election Day in each precinct polling location. The purpose for this requirement is to make consistent the application of recent laws passed by the Ohio General Assembly and to minimize the probability of Election Day lawsuits contending disparate application of state laws by the various counties of the state.

In addition to the printed materials required to be utilized as part of a poll worker training program, the boards of elections have the option of using, at no charge to the boards, the Online Poll Worker Training Course that is located at *ohioelectiontraining.com*.

Also, all poll workers must be informed during a board of elections poll worker training program of the requirements outlined in the following directives, advisories and memoranda and any superseding or subsequently issued directives, advisories and memoranda, as they relate to poll workers and polling places:

- **Directive 2007-06** Voter Identification Requirements, Absentee Voting Requirements; Provisional Voting Requirements; and Verification of Parking at Polling Places for Persons with Disabilities (Handicapped Parking)
- **Directive 2007-35** Adoption of Secretary of State's Ethics Policy
- **Directive 2008-25** Polling Place Security and Voting Equipment, Supplies and/or Ballot Chain of Custody Form
- **Directive 2008-29** Rights and Limitations on election observers
- **Directive 2008-30** Ballot Shortages or Machine Failures
- **Directive 2008-59** Optical Scan Ballots for Voters in Counties Using DRE Voting Machines
- **Directive 2008-60** Procedures if a Court Order Causes Any Precinct Polling Place to Remain Open on Election Day Past 7:30 p.m.
- **Directive 2008-65** Precinct Polling Location Arrangement and Diagram for Counties Using DRES
- **Directive 2008-68** Voting Machine Delivery Requirements
- **Advisory 2008-03** Polling Place Conduct; Media Access to Polling Locations; and Exit Polling Within 100 Feet of a Polling Place
- **Advisory 2008-20** Bi-partisan transport of ballots
- **Memorandum dated 2/25/08** Clarification of utility bills as voter identification for college students
- **Memorandum dated 2/26/2008** Special Powers and Responsibilities of Sheriffs on Election Day – March 4, 2008

The Poll Worker Manual of Instructions covers many of these topics; however, boards of elections may wish to supplement what is contained in the manual to provide information more specific to a county or polling location.

In the event that the above-listed directives, advisories and/or memoranda are replaced, the board shall use the most current one in effect for its poll worker training program, plus any others it may deem appropriate to assist poll workers in understanding their responsibilities. A list of all current directives, advisories and memoranda is available on the Secretary of State's Web site at www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections/Directives.aspx.

Contingency Planning

Boards of elections shall develop a contingency plan for poll workers and ensure poll workers are familiar with it prior to Election Day. The plan shall be in effect for all election precincts in the county and cover what to do in the event of:

- a voting machine failure
- a shortage of paper ballots
- the absence of a poll worker
- the early departure of a poll worker due to an emergency

Boards of elections must also develop a contingency plan for each polling location and train poll workers on what to do in the event of an emergency or disaster.

Contacting Poll Workers in the Event of Court Orders

Boards of elections must develop a method to contact poll workers at polling locations in case a court order is issued ordering polls to remain open after the 7:30 p.m. closing time, as outlined in **Directive 2008-60**. Poll workers must be trained in what to do if the polling location must remain open for extended voting. Information on this subject is contained in both the Poll

Worker Manual of Instructions and the Poll Worker Quick Reference Guide. Boards should review the instructions on this subject in both publications and determine if any additional information is needed in training their poll workers.

If you have any questions concerning this directive, please contact an elections administrator at 614-466-2585 or via e-mail.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Brunner