

ELECTION JUDGES

Their Duties and Responsibilities

Election Judges help to guarantee that the rights of voters are protected on election day. The following provides information about the qualifications necessary to become an election judge and also some of their important duties and responsibilities.

What are judges of election?

Judges of election are responsible for the administration of election procedures in the polling place on election day. They are in the position of ensuring that the election process is administered fairly and in accordance with Illinois law.

What are the qualifications necessary to be an election judge?

be a citizen of the United States;

be of good repute and character;

be able to speak, read and write the English language;

be skilled in the four fundamental rules of mathematics;

be of good understanding and capable;

not be a candidate for any office in the election and not be elected committeeman; and

reside and be entitled to vote in the precinct where selected to serve as judge. However, in each precinct one judge of each party may be appointed from outside the precinct, but from within the county. All judges must be electors within the county.

How are judges selected?

In national, state, county, township and municipal elections, judges of election are selected by the county board, or if appropriate, the board of election commissioners, from lists furnished by the chairmen of the county central committees of the two leading political parties. For each polling place three judges are appointed from one party and two from another.

In precincts under the jurisdiction of the county clerk, the party which cast the highest average number of votes at the most recent three gubernatorial elections in the precinct shall be represented by three judges; the party which casts the second highest number of votes at the most recent three gubernatorial elections in the precinct shall be represented by two judges.

Under the jurisdiction of the board of election commissioners, the two leading political parties alternate having majority representation. One party is represented by three judges of election in each of the odd-numbered precincts and by two judges of election in each of the even-numbered precincts; the other party is represented by three judges in each of the even-numbered precincts and by two judges in each of the off-numbered precincts.

After selections are made, a report is filed in the circuit court and application is made for their confirmation and appointment by the circuit court.

How are election judges trained?

In each precinct at least one judge representing each political party must be certified as having satisfactorily completed, within the preceding six months, a training course and examination for judges of election. This required course covers the duties and responsibilities of election judges and consists of at least four hours of instruction and examination which tests reading skills, ability to work with poll lists, ability to add and knowledge of election laws governing the operation of polling places.

How may I become an election judge?

Contact the chairman of the party of your choice or your County Clerk or Board of Election Commissioners and express your interest in serving as a Judge of Election.

Election judges are vital to the conduct of efficient and honest elections to which voters are entitled.

What are some of the duties of the judges of election?

- to open and close the polls;
- to be responsible for all election materials;
- to ensure that only qualified voters are permitted to vote and that each qualified voter is permitted to vote once and only once;
- to ensure that all votes are cast in secret;
- to give instructions in the method of voting when requested by a voter;
- to give assistance to illiterate and physically disabled voters;
- to maintain order in the polling place throughout the day;
- to tally the vote after the polls are closed, and
- to certify the election results in that precinct.