

DuPage VBM Pollwatchers

Ensuring Election Integrity

Observers are the Heart of Our Democracy

10/14/2024

VBM BUILDING INFO:

Address:

DuPage Admin Building
421 County Farm Rd. Wheaton IL 60187

Hours:

Mon-Fri
9am-Noon (12-1pm lunch break) and 1-4pm

There will be security at building entrance, then proceed to Atrium.

Pollwatching is in Auditorium or Basement depending on what they are working on. (Security will also give you directions.)

NOTE: DuPage VBM PW Workload Fluctuates.

- We have no way to know what time of day any of the 4 processes of VBM happen on a daily basis (mail flow is unpredictable for the facility).
- Please be flexible. You can observe whatever process they are doing when you arrive.
- If you don't see anyone in the Atrium or Auditorium, go to the office and ask to be taken to the basement.

Who Are Pollwatchers?

Pollwatchers are official election observers in a voting site or during mail ballot verification before, during, and after voting on Election Day.

With proper credentials, pollwatchers and candidates may be present during other election events including:

- Early voting
- At nursing home voting
- **During vote-by-mail processing**
- During provisional ballot processing.
- NOTE, the VBM facility does not allow use of phones in the auditorium or basement processing areas, you can go outside the room to use your phone.

Who Is Eligible to Be VBM Pollwatcher?

All must be trained and carry PW credentials, those who can pollwatch include:

- Registered voter in DuPage.
 - Affiliated with the political party
 - Organization for which they are poll watching.
- (10 ILCS 5/7-34; 5/17-23)
- Precinct committeemen (elected or appointed)
 - Candidates

Your Pollwatcher Credentials Include:

- Your name
- address,
- Municipality (town or village)
- County
 - Fill both top and bottom area
- **Poll watcher Signature** (You may be required to sign at entry so sign upon arrival)

ALWAYS bring extra blank forms

DU PAGE COUNTY CLERK ELECTION DIVISION

421 N. County Farm Rd.
Wheaton, Illinois 60187
Phone: (630) 407-5600
TTY: (630) 407-5631
Fax: (630) 407-5630



DuPage County Clerk
Jean Kaczmarek

POLLWATCHER CREDENTIALS

TO THE JUDGES OF ELECTION:

Pollwatcher Information		Authorized to act as a pollwatcher in:	
Name		Poll ID	VBM
Street Address		Early Voting or Healthcare Facility	
Municipality of Residence		Election	General
County of Residence		Date of Election	November 5, 2024

In accordance with the provisions of the Election Code, I, the undersigned, hereby appoint the individual listed above to act as pollwatcher in the precinct identified herein and at the Election also listed above.

REPUBLICAN PARTY

Appointing Party or Candidate Name

CHAIRMAN

Title of Appointing Officer

James Ray
Signature of Appointing Authority

Issued by:

Scott MacKay

Scott MacKay
Deputy Clerk
DuPage County Clerk Election Division
Wheaton, Illinois

Under penalties of law pursuant to 10 ILCS 5/29-10, the undersigned pollwatcher certifies that he or she resides and is duly registered to vote at:

Street Address	Municipality Providing Postal Service
Name of County	Illinois State
Township and Precinct in which Pollwatcher resides	Signature of Pollwatcher

Surrender Credentials to Judges/Clerk Staff

- Separate credentials are required for each day you observe at VBM facility so make copies.
- Observers may be instructed to sign a logbook and may leave the site and return but should log in and out.
- We will email you your credentials after completion of training.

What Do Pollwatchers Actually Do?

You could observe 4 processes at the DuPage VBM processing areas to guard against violations of election law.

1. Observe envelope sorting, signature capture/bar code scan and envelope slit open in the Agilis machine. (Located in Basement)
2. Observe voter signature verification of VBM envelope. (we will heavily concentrate mainly on this process.) (Located in Basement.)
3. Once signature is validated it moves up to the Auditorium, ballot is removed from envelope, inspection of ballot and EJ (Election Judge) initial on ballot. (Located in Auditorium)
4. Observe ballot scanning -no vote totals are made until election night. (Located in Auditorium).

You have the right to observe all of the procedures of VBM. Voting by mail is governed by 10 ILCS 5/19.

1. Observe envelope sorting, signature capture and envelope slitting in the Agilis machine.

1. VBM Envelope Image Capture for Signature and Date
 2. VBM Envelope slit open
 3. VBM Envelope is moved to the Auditorium once signature verified
- This machine is just an automation process but you are allowed to watch if you are there when this process occurs and you ask.
 - WHAT TO WATCH FOR:
 - Watch for ballots running smoothly through machine without damage
 - Where are ballots put after scanning and slitting?
 - Are there rejected ballots, write them down, name/address
 - Are there election judges from each party observing?
 - Note any irregularities

Runbeck Agilis specs: <https://runbeck.net/election-services/mail-sorting-processing/agilis/>

3. Observe ballot removal from envelope, inspection of ballot and E.J. signature.

Election Judges (E.J) sit at long tables and remove and examine the ballots. Note: You will not be able to see much in this process. The tables are set almost 10 feet away. There are supposed to be monitors but they weren't there on the walk through.

- Ballot's are removed from envelope
- Ballots are checked to confirm there is no white out, bad markings, etc
- Ballots are initialed by Election Judges if ok
- Ballots are put in piles to scan

What to look for:

1. Are election judges removing the ballots from envelope?
2. Are there any rejected ballots? If so, where are they put?
3. Are the election judges initialing the ballot?

4. Observe ballot scanning

- Ballots are run through scanners in batches but VOTES are not tabulated until election night
- At the end of day tabulations are added to Thumb drive
- **What to look for:**
- Does the Election Judge run it through multiple times? (sometimes they have to if a ballot gets stuck while scanning)
- Question why it was run through more than once.
- Is there a count that comes up on the monitors?
- Write down what it says.

2. Observe Signature Verification in Basement

DuPage Signature Verification Process (in basement):

1. You will sit behind two or more election judges who are viewing a monitor. (should be one from each party)
2. On the monitor there will be 3 to 4 different voter envelope signatures on the screen at once.
3. There will likely be multiple monitors with this set up so you will need to pick one to observe.

Voting by mail is governed by 10 ILCS 5/19.

Pollwatcher Rights and Limits

10 ILCS5/17-23 establishes pollwatcher's right to observe.

- May see signature comparisons on screen.
- May request verification of voter for a reasonable cause.
- **Should** report incidents or decisions of serious concern.
- **Your presence alone can support judges to follow statutes.**

2. What to look for when verifying a VBM envelope

- All required information must be completed and accurate on the VBM envelope on the screen:
 - NAME
 - VOTER ID
 - SIGNATURE
 - **Make sure the signature on the VBM envelope matches the official signature on file (details to follow)**

Voting by mail is governed by 10 ILCS 5/19.

Specific Categories for Observation

- Did the election judges “flag” a ballot, (mark it to check the signature or specifics) They click a yellow or red button to see if they can find a signature that matches.
 - Mark this down if this occurs
- Is Ballot Certificate Envelope signed and dated (hard to see a date)?
- Is signature markedly different? Age, incapacity vs different handwriting or printed.
- When scanned image of signature is very small, faint, markedly different, observers have the right to reasonably request determination be paused to allow review of the actual physical envelope.
- Envelope missing signatures must be rejected and voter contacted to remedied.
- There is not an Election Judge from each party verifying signatures.

Documenting the details

- Did the election judges “flag” a ballot, (mark it to check the signature or specifics) They click a yellow or red button to see if they can find a signature that matches.
 - Mark this down if this occurs
 - Do your best to write in voter ID, voter name, whether it was challenged on the provided sheet.
 - Mark if you don’t believe a signature matches as well.

Date and Shift: _____ Name: _____

Pollwatcher Checklist for VBM Signature Validation

Please collect VoterID and as much of the name as possible for each ballot where the initial comparison fails and the Election Judges check an alternate signature source. Use one line per ballot/signature and check the YES box.

We also want to collect stats on signatures that you think are questionable, even if the EJs accept it. Use a line for those, too but don’t check the box.

The notes field can be used to note ballots that are not accepted (challenged), unsigned, etc.

	VoterID	Name	Alt-Sig lookup?	Notes (challenged, unsigned, etc)
1			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
2			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
3			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
4			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
5			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
6			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
7			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
8			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
9			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
10			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
11			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
12			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
13			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
14			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
15			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	

At the end of your shift, please take a picture of each completed sheet and text to Becky Rudolph 1-630-903-7353. Call with any questions. Thank you for your time!

Judging a Signature Match

- Most signature comparisons meet the “reasonable” match standard.
- Remember observers are not present to attempt to disqualify voters, but to ensure election laws are followed and unintentional errors do not occur due to heavy workload.
 - Challenging a signature stops the process of verification of that ballot*.
 - 3 judges need to review the challenge.
 - Challenges maybe put aside and reviewed later.
- Most ballot signature are fine – watch for the odd ones!
- Let’s review some examples of signature matches.

10 ILCS 5/19-8 (G-5) The election authority shall appoint a panel of 3 election judges to review the contested ballot, application, and certification envelope, as well as any evidence submitted by the vote by mail voter.

How Closely Must Signature Match?

Evaluating Signatures

What to Look For

- General uniformity and consistency between signatures
- Agreement in the overall style and general appearance of the signatures
- Irregular spacing, slants, or sizes of letters are duplicated in both signatures.
- Agreement of the most distinctive, unusual traits of the signatures

Cues to Observe in Handwriting Matches

Handwriting Characteristics

Proportion

- The relative heights and widths of the strokes of the letters
- Heights of the uppercase to lowercase letters
- Ascenders/descenders to letters which lack these features

James K. Polk

James A. Garfield

W. Van Buren
Zachary Taylor

John Quincy Adams

Abraham Lincoln

George W. Bush

Cues to Observe in Handwriting Matches

Handwriting Characteristics

Spacing

- Many types of spacing
- Examples include the space between words and numbers and between letters

James Madison

John A. Kennedy

Warren G. Harding

Theodore Roosevelt

Andrew Jackson

Ada Lovelace

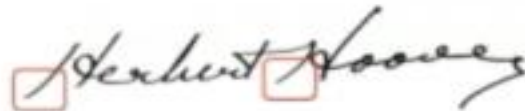
Walt A. Ritz

Cues to Observe in Signatures

Handwriting Characteristics

Pen Lifts

- Hiatus in written line, may be subtle or dramatic
- Found in genuine writing and signatures, and also in forgeries



Reasons for Pollwatcher Challenges:

1. **If, in your opinion, the voter's signature doesn't match, a vote by mail ballot may be challenged by pollwatcher or rejected by the election judge or official.**
 - Pollwatchers have a right to challenge a signature match, but the final decision is up to EJ's
 - Pollwatchers should always be polite and non-confrontational when challenging.

However, pollwatchers SHOULD DOCUMENT the following if you challenge a signature match:

- Note if the EJ's look further in the file for other possible signatures?
- Write down voter's name, voter number, any specifics(as much info as you can.)

Reasons for Pollwatcher Challenges (cont'd):

1. If the EJ's look further for a signature match by pushing a yellow or red button to view more signatures on file.
2. If you believe the signature doesn't match you may challenge or write info down.

Reference to second paragraph of 10 ILCS 5/19-8 (c)

3. If the ballot envelope image is damaged and unreadable
4. If any of the required information is missing:
 - Name
 - Date received by VBM
 - Signature

When to Raise Concerns – Is It Time to Call?

- **Not allowed to view signatures** at close enough range to see specimens.
- **Reasonable signature concerns are dismissed** systematically.
- **Refusal to pull the original envelope** for examination when scanned image is poor.
- **Pollwatchers are allowed to observe EVERY process of the election, if you are denied, raise concern.**

Choose Words Carefully

Challenging a mail ballot does not mean the voter has giving false oath.
The challenge is to **safeguard the voting process AND the voters.**

1. Signatures **do** change over time or due to illness or medical condition.
2. Postal workers **do** make mistakes.
3. Family members who move and ask other family to send mail do make mistakes.
4. Government agencies conducting registration can cause problems when not trained on election laws.

Reminder: DuPage VBM PW Workload Fluctuates.

- We have no way to know what time of day any of the 4 processes of VBM happen on a daily basis (mail flow is unpredictable for the facility).
- Please be flexible. You can observe whatever process they are doing when you arrive.
- If you don't see anyone in the Atrium or Auditorium, go to the office and ask to be taken to the basement.
- NOTE, the VBM facility does not allow use of phones in the auditorium or basement processing areas, you can go outside the room to use your phone.

Thank you!

- We can always use more help, let us know if you are available to poll watch and have flexibility.
- It will be important to cover mail ballot processing when the level of voted ballot return is very high.
- We may not always have much lead time on changes from the Clerk's office.
- CONTACT INFO IN EMERGENCY:
Becky Rudolph 1-630-903-7353.
- Your contributions are GREATLY APPRECIATED and help all voters.