



## Poll Closing Observation Form Florida Primary Election - 24 August 2010

### Instructions for Poll Closing Observation

Arrive at a precinct a few minutes before 7:00 PM on election-day.  
Materials Needed: This form, a clipboard or backer, pen or pencil

Be courteous and respectful at all times. Pollworkers are at the end of a very long day and we very much appreciate the work they do. We are not there to be activists – only observers. **You should be able to ask questions if you're careful not to interfere with the proceedings. Things like, "Can you repeat that total?" and "What was the reason for the final number of discrepancies?" Remember to say, "Thank you."**

Upon arrival, find the Poll Deputy, who keeps order at the poll and around the door. Let him/her know you're there to observe the poll-closing procedures once the polls are closed. Ask him/her to advise the Clerk (who is in charge of the polling place) that you're there to observe closing procedures.

The Public is allowed into the polls to observe as soon as the last voter has voted. You may not interfere with the proceedings and must mind the Clerk and the other pollworkers. They should allow you to observe closely enough to witness their counts and other details. They do not always provide adequate access. If necessary, ask nicely to be allowed to observe closely enough to witness their proceedings. If they refuse, do not argue – just note it on your form.

This is a limited project observing "ballot accounting" performed at the polls. Ballot accounting is performed immediately after the polls close. It's an inventory of how many voters voted in a precinct compared to how many ballots were cast. The signatures in the precinct registers are counted and compared to the number of cast ballots. The two numbers should match, i.e. there should be one ballot for each voter allowed to vote.

Ballot accounting is done prior to mixing together the totals from other precincts so problems can be isolated and reconciled right away.

It must be done by the sworn pollworkers in that precinct, called "the election board," so there is accountability. The public is allowed to observe the procedures after the polls are closed, so there is transparency.

If there are discrepancies, signatures and ballots must be recounted, and reasons for the discrepancies must be investigated and reported on a form. All that is clearly laid out in Florida law.

The form below allows us to collect information in a uniform way. Please complete all sections – and ***Thanks for helping secure Florida's elections!***

## How to Return Your Completed Form after you're done

### Be sure to keep a copy yourself

There are three ways you can return your form:

1. Scan the form pages and email to [dan@floridavoters.org](mailto:dan@floridavoters.org)
2. Fax (you have to call first) to 786-238-7320
3. Keep a copy for yourself, then mail a copy to:  
Dan McCrea  
Florida Voters Foundation  
6200 SW 63<sup>rd</sup> Court  
South Miami, Florida 33143

For assistance before, during or after observing poll closing, contact Dan McCrea, cell: 305-984-2900 or at [dan@floridavoters.org](mailto:dan@floridavoters.org).

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Legal Authority for public observation of poll closing procedures and ballot accounting:

**Florida Statutes: [101.5614](#) Canvass of returns.--**

(1) As soon as the polls are closed, the election board shall secure the voting devices against further voting. The election board shall thereafter, in the presence of members of the public desiring to witness the proceedings, verify the number of voted ballots, unused ballots, provisional ballots, and spoiled ballots to ascertain whether such number corresponds with the number of ballots issued by the supervisor. If there is a difference, this fact shall be reported in writing to the county canvassing board with the reasons therefor if known. The total number of voted ballots shall be entered on the forms provided. The proceedings of the election board at the precinct after the polls have closed shall be open to the public; however, no person except a member of the election board shall touch any ballot or ballot container or interfere with or obstruct the orderly count of the ballots.

You do not have to say who you are or where you're from but you may if you like. You can say you're a volunteer with **Florida Voters Foundation** or "a member of the public" if you like.

<b>Location</b>					
1	County:				
2	Precinct(s):				
3	Address or Name of Building:				
<b>Time</b>					
4	Time you arrived:				
5	Time you were allowed into the polling room:				
6	Time you departed:				
<b>Contact Information</b>					
7	Your Name:				
8	Your email:				
9	Your best phone number(s):				
<b>Access</b>			Y	N	
10	Were you allowed into the polling room?				
11	Were you allowed to observe procedures closely enough to confirm counts, etc?				
12	Explain <b>No</b> answers or add additional comment if needed:				
<b>Counting the VOTERS</b> (Try to answer Y or N)			Y	N	?
13	Did pollworkers count signatures in the precinct registers?				
14	Did pollworkers count "Voter Authority Slips" or similar?				
15	Did pollworkers count something else to count VOTERS, for instance bubbles, barcodes or checkmarks in the precinct registers?				
<b>16</b>	<b>What was the total number of VOTERS?</b>				
17	Comments regarding counting the VOTERS:				

<b>Counting the <b>BALLOTS</b> (Try to answer Y or N)</b>			
18	<b>How many pages long was the ballot?</b> (Each side counts as one page. For instance a 3-page ballot is usually front and back of one sheet plus front of a second sheet)		
<b>Counting the <b>BALLOTS</b> from Machine Counters</b>		<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b> ?
19	Did pollworkers record “public counts” from voting machines? (Note: the “public count” is supposed to be the total of ballots cast on that machine on election-day only)		
<b>Counting the <b>BALLOTS</b> by Counting Paper Ballots</b>		<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b> ?
20	Did pollworkers count the paper ballots? (to get total whole ballots)		
21	Did pollworkers count separate pages separately? (to get total page 1s, total page 2s, and so on)		
22	If pages were counted separately, what was the total of page 1s?		
23	If pages were counted separately, what was the total of page 2s?		
24	If pages were counted separately, what was the total of page 3s?		
25	If pages were counted separately, what was the total of page 4s?		
<b>26</b>	<b>What was the total number of <b>BALLOTS</b>? (whole ballots)</b>		
27	How did pollworkers determine total number of <b>BALLOTS</b> ?		
	a	From Machine Counters	
	b	From Counting Paper Ballots	
	c	From Both	
28	Comments regarding counting the <b>BALLOTS</b> :		

Identifying <b>DESCREPANCIES - FIRST</b>							
29	Total number of <b>VOTERS</b> (from line 16)						
30	Total number of <b>BALLOTS</b> (from line 26)	-					
<b>31</b>	<b>Total DESCREPANCIES - FIRST</b> (subtract line 30 from 29)						
RECONCILIATION (Try to answer Y or N)			Y	N	?		
32	If there were DESCREPANCIES, did pollworkers recount <b>VOTERS</b> ?						
33	If there were DESCREPANCIES, did pollworkers recount <b>BALLOTS</b> ?						
Identifying <b>DESCREPANCIES - SECOND</b>							
34	Total number of <b>VOTERS - SECOND</b>						
35	Total number of <b>BALLOTS - SECOND</b>	-					
<b>36</b>	<b>Total DESCREPANCIES - SECOND</b> (subtract line 35 from 34)						
RECONCILIATION – continued (Try to answer Y or N)					Y	N	?
37	If there were still DESCREPANCIES after the second attempt, did pollworkers record the number of discrepancies on a form?						
38	If there were still DESCREPANCIES after the second attempt, did pollworkers record any reason(s) for the DECREASEPANCIES?						
39	Reason(s) for remaining <b>DESCREPANCIES</b> and Comments regarding counting the <b>DESCREPANCIES</b> and <b>RECONCILIATION</b> :						
40	Were there any PROVISIONAL BALLOTS cast in the precinct, and if so, how many?						
41	Additional comments & observations:						

**Note: Don't forget to enter time you departed on line 6 and refer to How to Return Your Completed Form on Page 2.**

**Thanks for helping secure Florida's elections!**