



GASTON COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

410 West Franklin Boulevard, Suite 50, Gastonia, NC 28052

Mailing Address: PO Box 1396, Gastonia, NC 28053

PHONE: (704) 852-6005 / FAX: (704) 852-6011

Precinct Official Description & Guidelines

Nature of Work:

The precinct official plays a critical role in a successfully-run election. This individual is the face of the election to the voters and is the first to handle problems that may occur. Election Day is a long day for precinct officials. The day begins before the polls open at 6:30 a.m. and extends through the closing procedures and cleanup after the polls close at 7:30 p.m. Precinct officials oversee voting activity at the polling place for the entire day, while ensuring that they interact with the public in an impartial, calm and professional manner. You must leave politics at home. Precinct officials must be unbiased, fair to all and may not persuade or induce any voter to vote for or against any particular candidate, proposition or amendment on the ballot. Precinct officials must be able to quickly assess situations and formulate solutions to ensure smooth operations at the polling place. They also enforce electioneering restrictions outside the polling place to ensure that voters have clear access. Following the election, the county board of elections may call upon precinct officials to help in the reconciliation process or account for problems they encountered.

Mandatory training is vital to the success of every precinct official. The county board of elections (BOE) works diligently to ensure that comprehensive and convenient training opportunities are available for those who have taken up the responsibility of serving their community in this role.

Qualifications:

- Be a registered voter living within Gaston county;
- Be of good moral character;
- Be able to read, write, follow directions and decipher information provided by voters while working at a fast pace;
- Must not be an elected government official or a party chair, manager or treasurer/manager of such candidate, political party or organization;
- Must not be a candidate in the elections or the near relative of any candidate during any primary or election in which such candidate participates.
- May not serve as a precinct official at the same precinct with near relatives. (spouse, child, step child, son/daughter-in-law, grandchild, parent, stepparent, brother/sister, mother/father-in-law)

Time Commitment:

- Be able to work from 13-14 hours on Elections Day without leaving the precinct;
- Be able to attend a 2-3 hour training session prior to each election;
- Be available for any post-election matters where the precinct official is needed, such as recounts, audits, or election protests.
- [Chief Judge Only] must pick up supplies from elections office the day before the election and return them immediately after the polls close. Chief may also be required to obtain and return a key to the polling place facility.

Frequently Used Knowledges, Skills and Abilities:

- Ability and knowledge to use computers: laptops and printers for elections applications, data and voter look-ups, including opening and closing procedures for voting machines etc.;
- Ability to provide information to voters;
- Ability to express oneself clearly and effectively in verbal and written form;
- Ability to organize and direct the activities of a polling place;
- Ability to lift or assist in moving voting machines, precinct supply boxes and other materials needed to operate a polling location.
- Assist in setting up the polling place 1 hour on day prior to election.

Positions Available:

The board is always looking for community minded individuals to work Election Day as paid Election Officials. Each precinct is made up of a Chief Judge, Democratic Judge, Republican Judge and a number of Assistants depending upon the election. A list of names considered for the Judge positions are submitted to the board by the Democratic and Republican parties each summer during odd-numbered years. Libertarian and Unaffiliated voters are allowed to serve as Judges and Assistants. These judges serve a two (2) year term while Provisional Ballot Coordinators and assistants are allocated and selected each election. Regardless of selection, they must be approved by our board of elections and complete a formal application with our payroll company, BBSI.

The **CHIEF JUDGE** is the supervising official in charge of Election Day activities at their assigned polling place. Responsible for ballot and precinct supplies, security and transport of these supplies before and after the election as well as precinct set-up. Chief Judges must have a working knowledge of all areas of precinct, equipment set up and operations. Supervise site, obtain assistants and assign tasks.

The **ELECTION JUDGES** work closely with the Chief Judge and are responsible for conducting the election in the Chief Judge's absence. Election Judges must be able to work all stations: *Check-in, Ballot, Help, Curbside* and *Exit*. Assist the Chief Judge with setting up and closing the precinct, verifying tasks, supplies, handling photo identification issues (if applicable), resolve challenge hearings, assist with guarding ballots, ballot counts and signing official paperwork.

HELP STATION COORDINATORS (HSC) and ASSISTANTS serve when needed and must have technical knowledge of laptops and voting equipment to work the *Voter Check-In* and *Help Stations*, including: data entry (typing), printing reports, and changing ink cartridges. Assistants help the Chief Judge with election set-up and closing of the polls, conduct curbside voting, assist with *ballot station* and other duties assigned by Chief Judge. Note: The HSC would be the person that would move up to replace an Election Judge if one could not make it to precinct on Election Day.

EMERGENCY/STANDBY ASSISTANTS are selected in standby mode to replace officials unable to fulfill their duties on Election Day due to emergency or last minute situations. Training is required and assistants will be paid \$25.00 for the training, even if not called upon to work on Election Day.

ROVERS are appointed by BOE as needed to assist with troubleshooting of all precinct computers, voting equipment, polling place inspection, and transporting supplies to or from the polling places. You must have your own transportation. Compensation is at an hourly rate.

OFFICE ASSISTANTS / ELECTION NIGHT ASSISTANTS assist staff as needed with registration, office duties prior to and during an election including precinct support or activities on election day/night. These positions are paid at an hourly rate.

ONE-STOP OFFICIALS are appointed to assist the board of elections with early voting 18 days prior to each election. Experience with our voting equipment, laptops and printers, including data entry (typing), printing reports and changing ink cartridges, is required to work the *Voter Check-In, Curbside, Ballot and Help Stations*. These positions are divided into shifts per day and compensated at an hourly rate based upon the position. There is a separate training class required for one-stop officials.

MULTI-PARTISAN ASSISTANT TEAM (MAT) are appointed by the Board of Elections to provide assistance with registration and mail-in absentee voting to voters living at facilities such as assisted living and nursing homes. The makeup of the Team includes, at a minimum, two persons whose voter registration is affiliated with two different political parties. There is a separate training class required for MAT and compensation is at an hourly rate.

ELECTION OUTREACH TEAM will represent the Board of Elections at various community events and voter registration drives. Looking for personable/outgoing individuals with exceptional customer service skills. There is a separate training class and compensation is paid at an hourly rate.

TRAINING:

All precinct officials are required to attend a 2-3 hour training session conducted by the county board of elections prior to each primary and general election. Each position earns \$25 for attending training. Training pay is included with Election Day pay. An election official must work on Election Day in order to receive payment for attendance. One Stop pay is included with the first week of one stop hours worked. Laptops and staff are available during office hours for supplemental training. There is no compensation for online or voluntary supplemental training.

COMPENSATION:

All officials are compensated for time spent in training and on Election Day. In Gaston County, we pay a flat fee for each election worked and compensation is based upon the position worked. Chief Judges earn \$200 plus an additional \$50 for pickup and return of supplies. Election Judges and Help Station Coordinators earn \$175, while assistants earn \$150 for the day. One Stop and MAT workers are paid an hourly rate based on position.

CHECK LIST:

- ✪ Be aware polls are open on Election Day to voters from 6:30 am to 7:30 pm.
- ✪ Officials are not allowed to leave the voting place and return for any reason.
- ✪ Bring medications and personal items you may need during the day.
- ✪ Arrange for enough food and drinks for the day.
- ✪ Wear comfortable clothing and dress for varying weather conditions.
- ✪ Leave your campaign clothing, buttons, material and political jewelry at home.
- ✪ Discussion of politics is not permitted.

Please Note: *Applying for a position does not automatically guarantee you will work. Gaston County Board of Elections staff or a Chief Judge will contact you for an assignment based upon positions available for each election.*

For more information or to apply please contact us by phone, online or in person.

Office: 704-852-6005, Email: Elections@gastongov.com

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