



NEVADA ELECTION OBSERVERS: RULES AND CONSTRAINTS

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Election observers, referred to as “polling place observers” in Nevada, are individuals who monitor polling places and ballot counting sites. While election observers play an important role in providing transparency, they can also be a potential source of disruption and intimidation. For this reason, all states have a series of regulations and constraints regarding who can serve as election observers and what they can do. Additionally, both Congress and the Department of Justice may send federal observers to monitor elections for compliance with voting and civil rights laws. More information can be found [here](#). Nevada’s rules on observers, which derive both from the state’s election statutes and from its administrative code, are:

Appointment

- Any member of the general public may serve as an observer at a polling place without appointment, except for members of the press or anyone who “gathers information for communication to the public.”¹
- Any member of the general public may serve as an observer at a central ballot counting place without appointment.²
- In order to observe, a person must sign Form [EL704](#) (for observers at a polling place) or Form [EL 711](#) (for observers at a central ballot counting place), acknowledging that certain conduct is prohibited and could lead to removal.³ All observers are required to wear a name tag that shows their full name.⁴

Role of Observers

- The chair of the election board may designate an area at the polling place in which observers must remain while watching the election, provided that the area allows meaningful observation without infringing on the privacy and confidentiality of voters’ ballots.⁵
- Meaningful observation includes observing the identification of voters who appear at the polling place, the distribution of ballots to voters, the movement of voters to and from voting booths, the return of voters’ ballots to election board officials, and the exiting of the polling place by voters.⁶

1 Nev. Rev. Stat. § 293.274(1), (3). *See generally* Nev. Admin. Code § 293.245.

2 Nev. Rev. Stat. § 293B.353(1).

3 Nev. Admin. Code §§ 293.245(2); 293.356(2).

4 Nev. Admin. Code §§ 293.245(7); 293.356(5).

5 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.245(6).

6 Nev. Admin. Code §§ 293.245(6), (9)(b).



- Observers are not allowed in the polling place before it opens,⁷ but may watch the closing of the polling place and the handling and counting of ballots as long as they do not interfere with the process.⁸
- Observers may watch the processing and counting of ballots at the central counting place as long as they do not interfere with the process.⁹
- The county or city clerk may designate an area at the central ballot counting place in which observers should remain while watching the election, provided that the area allows meaningful observation without infringing on the privacy and confidentiality of voters' ballots.¹⁰

Prohibited Activities

- **Intimidation:** It is a felony under Nevada state law for anyone, including observers, to intimidate a voter or an election official in connection with an election, including by threat of coercion, violence, undue influence, blackmail, or other means.¹¹
- **Interference:** Observers are prohibited from interfering with the conduct of voting,¹² ballot processing and counting,¹³ conduct of a postelection certification audit,¹⁴ and the statutory duties of county or city election personnel.¹⁵
- **Photography and Video:** Observers are not permitted to photograph or record video or sound at a polling place.¹⁶
- **Electioneering:** Observers may not advocate for or against any political party, candidate, or ballot question. This ban includes speaking, displaying information, disseminating written material, or wearing identifying clothing, buttons, or other paraphernalia.¹⁷
- **Voter Interaction:** Observers are prohibited from talking to voters within a polling place.¹⁸
- **Election Worker Interaction at Ballot Counting Places:** Observers are prohibited from talking to workers within the central counting place other than the county or city clerk or someone designated by them to answer questions.¹⁹

7 Nevada Secretary of State, *Elections Procedures Manual*, March 23, 2026, sec. 3, p. 39, <https://perma.cc/3GB6-W4RM>.

8 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.245(5); Nev. Rev. Stat. §§ 293B.330(4), 293C.630(4).

9 Nev. Rev. Stat. § 293B.353(1).

10 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.356(4).

11 Nev. Rev. Stat. §§ 293.705, 293.710.

12 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.245(2)(a)(5).

13 Nev. Rev. Stat. §§ 293B.353(1), 293B.354(3), 293B.380(2)(a); Nev. Admin. Code § 293.356(2)(a)(5).

14 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.490(7) (“Any member of the public who observes a postelection certification audit conducted pursuant to this section shall not interfere with the conduct of the audit”).

15 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.356(2)(a)(4).

16 Nev. Rev. Stat. § 293.274(2).

17 Nev. Admin. Code §§ 293.245(2)(a)(3), (9)(a), 293.356(2)(a)(3), (7). *See generally* Nev. Rev. Stat. § 293.740.

18 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.245(2)(a)(1).

19 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.356(2)(a)(1).



- **Viewing Voter Information:** Meaningful observation does not include viewing a voter's personal information, ballot, or selections on a voting machine.²⁰
- **Listening to Conversations:** Meaningful observation does not include listening to conversations between election board officers or between those officers and voters.²¹
- **Device Use:** Observers may not use a cell phone or a computer within a polling place or central ballot counting place.²²
- **Arguing Decisions:** Observers are forbidden from arguing about or challenging any decisions of election personnel at a polling place.²³

Federal and state law strictly prohibit all people, including observers, from engaging in voter intimidation. Any action that makes a voter feel intimidated, threatened, or coerced (including any effort to prevent a voter from registering to vote, voting, or voting for or against any candidate or ballot measure) could constitute voter intimidation, regardless of whether it breaks a specific rule.²⁴ More information on the federal and state laws that protect Nevada voters from intimidation can be found [here](#).

Removal

- Under Nevada law, city and county clerks have discretion to remove from a polling place or central ballot counting place any observer who violates Nevada's election statutes or engages in any conduct forbidden under Nevada's administrative code.²⁵
- City and county clerks may also remove law-abiding observers to limit the number of people at polling places and central ballot counting places, to maintain public safety, voter privacy, or general order.²⁶

20 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.245(9)(b)(1).

21 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.245(9)(b)(2).

22 Nev. Admin. Code §§ 293.245(2)(a)(2), 293.356(2)(a)(2).

23 Nev. Admin. Code § 293.245(2)(a)(4).

24 18 U.S.C. §§ 241, 594; 52 U.S.C. § 10101(b); Nev. Rev. Stat. § 293.710.

25 Nev. Admin. Code §§ 293.245(3)(b), 293.356(2)(b).

26 Nev. Admin. Code §§ 293.245(3)(a), 293.356(3)(a).