



For Challengers and Watchers: The Closing of the Polls

We welcome you as a challenger and watcher to the closing of the polls. Learn what's required of you, what happens during the closing of the polls, and what you're allowed and not allowed to do.

Know What's Required of You as You Arrive

Show your signed *Challenger and Watcher Certificate* to a chief judge right away when you arrive at the polling place.

Understand the Work of the Election Judges

Election Judges begin to close the polls once the last voter has voted.

Voting continues until the last voter in line when the polls close has voted. The last voter may be voting after voting hours.

After the last voter has voted, the election judges begin closing the polls by:

- Printing results from the scanning units. The scanning unit is also called a ballot scanner.
- Closing the electronic pollbooks.
- Checking voter turnout against votes cast.
- Accounting for voting supplies.
- Removing signs.

Election Judges Close the Scanning Units

Election judges follow certain processes during Early Voting and other processes during Election Day.

Closing the scanning units during early voting

When the last voter has voted, the election judges compare the tamper tape number on the scanning unit side compartment against the paperwork. When they have verified the number, they record the tamper tape number, close the scanning unit, attach a seal, and record the seal number on the paperwork. No report will print.

Closing the scanning units on Election Day

When the last voter has voted, the election judges compare the tamper tape number on the scanning unit side compartment against the paperwork. The election judges enter a password and tap "End the election" so no more votes can be cast on the scanning unit.

The *Totals Report* automatically prints. An election judge attaches this report to the *Scanning Unit Integrity Report – Closing*. The election judges print a second *Totals Report* and post it in the voting room or polling place.

An election judge turns off the scanning unit and removes the memory stick from the side compartment. The election judges close the scanning unit, attach a seal, and record the seal number on the paperwork. They record or verify the seal and unlock the Main Ballot Box.

The election judges remove the ballot transfer bin. They verify that all voted ballots are inside the ballot transfer bin and no loose ballots are in the main ballot box. They close the ballot transfer bin lid. They attach security seals and/or tamper tape to the ballot transfer bin.

The election judges close each scanning unit using this process.

Election judges close the electronic pollbooks

After the last voter has checked in to vote, the election judges will:

- Close the election in the pollbooks
- Print a report showing the number of voters who checked in to vote.
- Turn off the pollbooks.
- Closing the pollbooks during early voting. The judges may leave the pollbooks connected in the secured voting room. Or, they may store them in the transfer case. After placing the pollbooks in transport cases, they seal the cases and record the seal numbers on the paperwork provided by the local board.

Election judges perform additional tasks to close the polls

Election judges finalize the closing of the polls by:

- Reconciling statistics from the scanning units and pollbooks.
- Completing paperwork associated with closing the polls.
- Accounting for election supplies.
- Removing signs from inside and outside the voting room.
- Cleaning up the voting room.

Election judges return election supplies to the local board

The processes for returning supplies on the last day of early voting and on election night are different.

Returning supplies on the last day of early voting

A bonded transportation company returns the sealed scanning units to the local board of elections.

Returning supplies on election night

Two election officials return supplies to the local board's facility. One must be a Democrat, and the other must be a Republican. The supplies are:

- The memory sticks and voted ballots.
- Orange ballot bag with voted provisional ballots.
- Paperwork and other critical supplies.

What you're allowed and not allowed to do:

You're allowed to:

- Observe the election judges printing the *Totals Report*. Do not touch any election documents that you're viewing.
- Review the posted *Totals Report*.

You are not allowed to:

- Interfere with the work going on.
- Ask questions until the chief judges have completed all their tasks.
- Ask for a verbal summary of what the election judges are doing.
- Look over an election judge's shoulder. You'll hear an election judge read the seal and tamper tape numbers. If you wish, you may record the numbers they read.

Additional Information

The rules of Challengers and Watchers apply to all tasks performed by election judges. Please refer to the Challengers and Watchers Manual for additional guidance.

Find the Maryland State Board of Elections Challengers and Watchers Manual at www.elections.maryland.gov.

Tap "Get Involved" on the side navigation bar to learn how to become a challenger and watcher. You can also learn the rights and responsibilities of challengers and watchers.