



MARYLAND STATE
BOARD OF ELECTIONS
Verified. Open. Trusted. Empowering.

2026

Challengers and Watchers

Manual

Published by:

State Board of Elections
Jared DeMarinis, Administrator

151 West Street, Suite 200
P.O. Box 6486
Annapolis, MD 21401-0486

(410) 269-2840
Toll Free Number: (800) 222-VOTE
MD Relay Service: (800) 735-2258
Web: elections.maryland.gov

Revised: May 13, 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Part I: General Information	3
1.1. Can I observe the voting process?	3
1.2. Who can designate me to be a challenger and watcher?	3
1.3. How do I become an accredited challenger and watcher?	4
1.4. What do election judges do and who is in charge of the voting location?	4
Part II: Information for Individuals and Entities Designating Challengers and Watchers	5
2.1. Why should I or my organization designate individuals as challengers and watchers?	5
2.2. What should I do before designating an individual as a challenger or watcher?	5
2.3. Who should sign the Challenger and Watcher Certificate?	6
2.4. Can I designate more than one challenger and watcher for the same voting location?	6
2.5. Should I notify the local board(s) of election that I will be designating challengers and watchers?	6
Part III: During Early Voting and on Election Day	6
3.1. What are my rights as an accredited challenger and watcher?	6
3.2. What should I do when I arrive at a voting location?	7
3.3. What am I permitted to do in a voting location?	7
3.3.a. Before the polls open	7
3.3.b. During voting hours	8
3.3.c. After the polls close	8
3.4. What am I prohibited from doing as a challenger or watcher?	9
3.5. What can I bring with me to the voting location?	9
3.6. What if I see an election judge do something improper or neglect to perform a required task?	9
3.7. I do not have a Challenger and Watcher Certificate. What can I do on election day?	10
3.8. On what grounds can I challenge a voter?	10
3.9. What can I do if I believe a voter is not who they claim to be?	10
3.10. Can a voting location open if the election judges represent only one political party?	11
3.11. Can I stand within the No Electioneering zone?	11
Part IV: Other Opportunities for Public Observation	11
4.1. Pre-Election Demonstration of Voting System	11
4.2. Return of Supplies on Election Night	12
4.3. Counting of Provisional and Mail-In Ballots	12
4.4. Verification of Vote Count and Certification of Election Results	13
Appendix A: Challenger and Watcher Certificate	14
Appendix B: Affidavit for Challenger and Challenged Voter	16
Appendix C: Canvass Challenge Form	18
Appendix D: Relevant Provisions of the Election Law Article of the Annotated Code of MD	19
Appendix E: Relevant Provisions of the Code of Maryland Regulations	20
Appendix F: Contact Information for the Local Boards of Elections	21
Appendix G: Provisional Voting and Identification Requirements	23

Introduction

The mission of the State Board of Elections (SBE) is to provide all eligible citizens of the State convenient access to voter registration; provide all registered voters accessible locations in which they may exercise their right to vote; ensure uniformity of election practices; promote fair and equitable elections; and maintain registration records, Campaign Finance Reports, and other election-related data accurately and in a form that is accessible to the public.

One way to ensure fair and equitable elections is to conduct open and transparent elections. To facilitate openness and transparency, Maryland law permits certain individuals (called challengers or watchers) to be present in voting areas during early voting and on election day and observe the opening, voting, and closing procedures conducted by Maryland's election judges. Additionally, any individual may observe certain other election processes. This manual is for individuals who wish to observe voting during early voting or on election day and those individuals and entities that are authorized to designate individuals as challengers and watchers. This manual also describes other opportunities for the general public to observe certain election processes.

Generally, the authority of challengers and watchers is governed by Section 10-311 of the Election Law Article of the *Annotated Code of Maryland* and Chapters 33.07.07, 33.07.08, and 33.17.06 of the Code of Maryland Regulations. Refer to Appendices D and E for the statutory and regulatory provisions relevant to challengers and watchers.

Chapter 445 of the 2009 Laws of Maryland establishes early voting in Maryland. Under this law, voters are able to vote in person at any early voting location in the jurisdiction where the voter resides. This law also specifies that all provisions of the Election Law Article that relate to election day voting also apply to early voting. As a result, the rights and prohibitions relating to challengers and watchers on election day apply during early voting.

For the purposes of this manual, the term "voting location" means either an early voting center or an Election Day polling place.

Part I: General Information

1.1. Can I observe the voting process?

Section 10-311 of the Election Law Article permits certain individuals to enter a voting location. Any individual can enter a voting location to challenge the right of any other individual to vote. To *remain* in a voting location and observe the voting process, you must be a registered voter and be designated as a challenger and watcher. If you are not designated as a challenger and watcher, you are considered a non-accredited challenger and watcher and may not remain in a voting location to observe the voting process.

1.2. Who can designate me to be a challenger and watcher?

One of the following individuals or entities may designate you as a challenger and watcher:

1. The Maryland State Board of Elections for any voting location in the State;
2. A local board of elections for any voting location located within the jurisdiction of the local board;
3. A candidate, including a write-in candidate who has filed a *Certificate of Candidacy*, for any location where the candidate will appear on the ballot;
4. A political party;
5. A political committee; or,

6. A person required to file reports under sections §13–306 or §13–307 of the Maryland Election Law Article (person or entity that makes independent campaign expenditures or pays for electioneering communications)

The person or entity who designates you as a challenger and watcher can revoke the designation at any time.

If you wish for SBE or an LBE to designate you or members of your organization as a challenger and watcher, you must submit your request in writing and your request must identify the early voting centers or polling places in more than one jurisdiction. You will be required to read this manual and may be required to attend a brief training session. You are strongly encouraged to submit your request **at least** one month before the election in which you wish to be designated.

1.3. How do I become an accredited challenger and watcher?

First, you must be a registered voter. Only registered voters can be accredited challengers and watchers. If you are not registered to vote in Maryland, the State or Local Boards of Elections may require you to provide documentation of your voter registration.

Second, you must have a *Challenger and Watcher Certificate*. A candidate or representative of an entity authorized to designate you as a challenger and watcher must sign the *Challenger and Watcher Certificate* and give it to you. With this signed certificate, you are considered an accredited challenger and watcher. See Appendix A for the *Challenger and Watcher Certificate*. You **must** have this certificate with you when you are acting as an accredited challenger and watcher and strongly encourage you to bring multiple copies of your completed certificate.

Your *Challenger and Watcher Certificate* shall have original, physical ink signature or copies of an original physical ink signature. Electronically created cursive fonts are not acceptable for a signature. The designating individual or representative of the designating entity may sign one certificate, make copies of the signed certificate, and complete the certificates for the registered voters the individual or entity will be designating as challengers and watchers. Please obtain or ask the designating entity to give you extra copies of your certificate so that you can give the election judges a copy of your certificate when you visit a voting location.

You are **strongly encouraged** to observe an election judges' training class. By observing this class, you will understand the responsibilities of election judges (also called poll workers) and what to expect during early voting and on election day. Please contact your local board of elections and ask about observing a class. The local board may:

1. Limit the number of observers for a particular training based on the available space;
2. Designate where you are allowed to sit or stand during the training so that your presence is not disruptive to the trainer or election judges;
3. Prohibit your physical access to all election-related equipment and materials;
4. Prohibit you from asking questions before or during training but allow questions after training;
5. Prohibit you from making audio or video recordings during all or part of the training session; and
6. Tell you to leave if your behavior is disruptive for either the trainer or election judges.

1.4. What do election judges do and who is in charge of the voting location?

Election judges are the individuals responsible for running the voting locations. Most voting locations have four kinds of election judges:

1. *Chief judges* – There are two chief judges of two different political party affiliations in each voting location. The chief judges are the supervisors of each voting location and oversee all voting location activities.
2. *Check-in judges* – These judges are responsible for checking in each voter who arrives to vote.
3. *Voting judges* – These judges may direct or escort voters to available voting booths, issue or verify ballot material, or provide instruction on and help voters with how to cast a ballot.
4. *Provisional judges* – These judges administer provisional voting. In some voting locations, the chief judges may also serve as provisional judges. During early voting, these judges may also perform duties assigned with same day registration and same day address changes.

If you have a question while you are at a voting location, direct all questions to the chief judges. The chief judges are your sole point of contact in the voting location; do not ask other election judges questions.

Part II: Information for Individuals and Entities Designating Challengers and Watchers

2.1. Why should I or my organization designate individuals as challengers and watchers?

You may wish to designate individuals as challengers and watchers if you want your representatives to:

1. Be present in the voting location and observe the opening, voting, and closing procedures during early voting or on election day;
2. Report who has voted during early voting or on election day¹; or
3. On election day, provide you with election results from precincts where you have a designated challenger and watcher.

Challengers and watchers **cannot** act as voter advocates or attempt to exercise political influence while in the voting location or within the No Electioneering Zone. This is **not** the role of a challenger or watcher, and they will be removed from the voting location if they engage in these or any other prohibited activities.

2.2. What should I do before designating an individual as a challenger or watcher?

Before designating individuals as challengers or watchers, you should:

1. Read this manual and understand the role of challengers and watchers;
2. Contact the local boards of elections where you intend to have challengers and watchers and schedule their attendance at election judges' training. If you intend to have a large scale program, contact SBE for training;
3. Submit a draft of the manual or instructions to SBE for review and comment before designating any challenger and watcher if you intend to distribute a manual or written instructions to your designated challengers and watchers;
4. Not provide information to your designated challengers and watchers that conflicts with any information in this manual; and
5. Verify that the individual or individuals you intend to designate as challengers and watchers are registered voters.

¹ Application Deadline: Before any election, neither the State Administrator nor any election director may respond to an application for a voter registration list unless the application was filed on or before the advanced registration deadline. Applications received after that date shall be returned. (COMAR 33.03.02.05B)

Challenger and Watcher Certificate must have an original signature or copies of an original signature. An electronically created cursive font is not an acceptable signature. You may sign one certificate, make copies of the signed certificate, and complete the certificates for the registered voters you will be designating as challengers and watchers. An incomplete certificate may not be accepted by the SBE, LBEs, or election judges.

2.3. Who should sign the *Challenger and Watcher Certificate*?

If a candidate is designating challengers and watchers, the candidate should sign the *Challenger and Watcher Certificate*. If a political party or other group of voters is designating challengers and watchers, the certificate should be signed by an officer, the executive director of the entity, or other person authorized to sign a document on behalf of the entity. (The chairman or treasurer of a political committee formed by a group of voters supporting or opposing a candidate, principle, or proposition on the ballot can sign the certificate.)

You should give your challengers and watchers extra copies of the certificates so that challengers and watchers can give the election judges a copy of their certificate when they visit a voting location.

2.4. Can I designate more than one challenger and watcher for the same voting location?

Yes. More than one challenger and watcher may be assigned to the same voting location. Typically, however, an individual or organization should not designate more challengers and watchers than the number of check-in judges in that voting location. Election judges can limit the number of challengers and watchers to ensure the orderly flow of election business.

2.5. Should I notify the local board(s) of election that I will be designating challengers and watchers?

Yes. You must provide a copy of the completed *Challenger and Watcher Certificate* for all designated challengers and watchers to the appropriate local board(s) of elections before the accredited challenger or watcher may enter the voting location.

Part III: During Early Voting and on Election Day

3.1. What are my rights as an accredited challenger and watcher?

As an accredited challenger and watcher, you have the right to:

1. Enter the voting location at least 30 minutes before voting can begin² (If you arrive less than 30 minutes before voting starts, you will not be permitted to enter until voting starts);
2. Enter or be present at the voting location at any time during voting hours;
3. Remain in the voting location until all post-voting tasks have been completed and the election judges leave the voting location;
4. Maintain a list of registered voters who have voted, individuals who have cast provisional ballots, and individuals who have registered to vote during early voting; and
5. Enter and leave a voting location to take outside information identifying who has voted.

You should be respectful of the responsibilities of the election judges. As an accredited challenger and watcher, you have certain rights, and the local election director and election judges are required to protect you when you are exercising these rights. The requirement that the local election director and

² For both the 2026 Primary Election and the 2026 General Election, early voting centers are open from 7 am to 8 pm for each day of early voting. On Primary Election Day and General Election Day, all voting locations are open from 7 am to 8 pm.

election judges protect your rights, however, is not absolute. A local election director or election judge may remove you if you are exercising your rights in a manner that interferes with the work of the election judges in conducting the election and carrying out their assigned tasks. An election judge, local election director, State or Deputy Administrator of Elections may order the arrest of anyone who violates any provision of State election law and interferes with their work. Election judges and local election directors are required to keep the peace.

3.2. What should I do when I arrive at a voting location?

You should introduce yourself to the chief judges, show them your *Challenger and Watcher Certificate*, and provide them with an extra copy of your certificate. If you do not have an extra copy, present your certificate to the chief judges so that they can record your information in their log. Be prepared to provide a form of identification.

If an election judge questions your accreditation as a challenger and watcher, you may remain in the voting location while one of the chief judges contacts the local board of elections.

3.3. What am I permitted to do in a voting location?

3.3.a. Before the polls open

If you wish to observe the election judges performing their election morning activities, you **must** be at the voting location at least 30 minutes before voting starts. If you arrive less than 30 minutes before voting starts, the election judges will not let you into the voting location to observe the election morning activities and you must wait until the polls open to enter. During this time, the election judges will complete the set up of the polling room which may include posting voting location signs, accounting for ballots, and opening and preparing the voting equipment for voting.

To facilitate your observation, election judges will read aloud the seal number and tamper tape number for each ballot scanner and verbally verify that the numbers match the numbers pre-recorded on the opening certificate. This enables you to record the seal and tamper tape numbers without delaying the election judges. You may not touch any election equipment or documents.

On the first day of early voting and on election day, accompanied by a chief judge or another election judge designated by the chief judges, you may:

1. Observe the election judges printing the Zero Report;
2. Review (but do not touch) the Zero Report signed by the election judges;
3. Verify that new tamper tape or seals has been applied; and
4. Verify that no voters have been checked in on the pollbooks.

Keep in mind that, while you may look, you may **not** touch any election documents or equipment.

While you are permitted to observe the opening of the polls, it is important that you do not interfere with the work of the election judges. You may be removed from the voting location if the local election director or a majority of the election judges in the voting location agree that your presence will prevent the timely opening of the polls.

3.3.b. During voting hours

During voting hours, the chief judges will determine where you will be positioned to ensure that you can see and hear each voter as they check in to vote and that the voting room is efficiently

managed. They are **NOT** required to place you directly behind the check-in table or where you can see the screen of the pollbooks. As long as you can see and hear voters check in to vote, your location is acceptable.

If you do not believe that a voter is who they claim to be, you may challenge the voter's identity. Refer to Section 3.7 for more information about the challenge process.

Periodically throughout the day, you may ask one of the chief judges to:

1. Accompany you to ballot scanner(s) if there are no voters waiting to scan ballots to verify the tamper tape or seals and public counter; and
2. Allow you to see the number of voters who have been checked in to vote (located at the bottom, center of the look-up screen).

While the chief judges must accommodate your request, they have the sole discretion to determine when this occurs. When making your requests, consider how busy the voting location is. During peak voting times, a chief judge will most likely not accommodate your request; ask to verify information during non-peak voting times when there is limited or no voting activity.

Except as described above, you **cannot** move about the voting location during voting hours. You must stay in the area designated by the chief judges when you are in the voting room. You are also prohibited from attempting to:

1. Determine how a voter voted or intends to vote;
2. Talk in the voting location with any voter;
3. Assist any voter in voting; or
4. Physically handle an original election document or election equipment.

If you wish to talk with a voter, you must do so outside the voting location **and** outside of the No Electioneering zone. If a voter initiates contact with you inside the voting location or within the No Electioneering zone, advise the voter that you, as a challenger and watcher, are prohibited from talking to them inside the voting location and refer the voter to an election judge.

Remember, you may be removed if you are interfering with the election process.

3.3.c. After the polls close

If you wish to observe the poll closing activities, you **must** be in the voting location before the polls close.³ If you are not in the voting location when the polls close, you are not permitted to enter the voting location until the results have been printed from each ballot scanner and posted. (Election results will **not** be printed during early voting.)

The election judges will not begin the end of day procedures on the ballot scanners until the last voter in line at 8:00 pm has voted. All voters in line at 8:00 pm are allowed to vote, even if they do not cast a vote until after 8:00 pm.

To facilitate your observation, election judges will read aloud the numbers on the tamper tape or seals recorded earlier in the day and will read aloud the tamper tape and seal numbers placed on the ballot scanner so that you may record the seal and tamper tape numbers without delaying the election judges. You may NOT touch any election equipment or documents. You may record the number of voters in the polling place (on election day) or early voting center (during early voting)

³ During early voting, polls close at 8:00 pm. On election day, polls close at 8:00 pm.

who are recorded on the pollbooks as having been checked in to vote.

When accompanied by a chief judge or an election judge designated by a chief judge, you may also on election day:

1. Observe the election judges printing the Totals Report;
2. Review the Totals Report signed by the election judges; and
3. Verify that new tamper tape has been applied and seal affixed to outside of the unit.

Keep in mind that, while you may look, you **cannot** touch any election documents or equipment.

3.4. What am I prohibited from doing as a challenger or watcher?

You are prohibited from interfering with the work of the election judges in conducting the election and performing their assigned tasks. You are also prohibited from challenging an act of an election judge. The State Administrator, Deputy Administrator, local election directors, and election judges are required to keep the peace and can order the arrest of any person who violates any provision of State election law and interferes with their work.

You **cannot** speak to any voters inside of the no electioneering zones. You must be outside of the no electioneering zones in order to speak to any voter.

You **cannot** act as voter advocates or attempt to exercise political influence while in the voting location. This is **not** the role of a challenger or watcher, and if you do this, you will be removed from the voting location.

You **cannot** bring any political materials, newspapers, or news magazines into the voting location or wear anything with a political message. This includes buttons, shirts, hats, stickers, signs, posters, flyers, and any other political materials.

You **cannot** use cameras and electronic devices, such as phones, smart watches, laptops, and tablets, in the voting location. You must be outside the voting location and the No Electioneering zone to use any electronic device.

3.5. What can I bring with me to the voting location?

You must bring your signed *Challenger and Watcher Certificate* (including multiple copies to give to the chief judges) and a form of identification. We strongly recommend you bring a copy of this manual. You can also bring with you paper, pen, and a folding chair. There may not be an extra chair for you at the voting location.

3.6. What if I see an election judge do something improper or neglect to perform a required task?

As a challenger and watcher, you do **not** have the right to challenge an act of an election judge. If, however, you are certain that an election judge either improperly performed a task or neglected to perform a required task, you should notify the local board of elections or follow the instructions provided by the individual or entity who designated you as a challenger and watcher. See Appendix E for contact information for the local boards of elections. Remember, even if you observe an election judges' training class, you may not have all of the same information provided to the election judges or you may be relying on outdated information.

3.7. I do not have a *Challenger and Watcher Certificate*. What can I do on election day?

If you do not have a *Challenger and Watcher Certificate*, you are considered a “nonaccredited challenger and watcher.” Nonaccredited challengers and watchers are permitted in a voting location for one purpose – to challenge an individual voter’s right to vote. The **only** ground on which a challenge can be made is a challenge to the voter’s identity (*i.e.*, that the voter is not who they say they are). Once the challenged voter shows ID or you and the challenged voter complete the required paperwork, you must leave the voting location immediately.

Both accredited and nonaccredited challengers and watchers do **not** have the right to challenge an act of an election judge. If you are certain that an election judge either improperly performed a task or neglected to perform a required task you may contact the local board of elections. See Appendix F for contact information for the local boards of elections.

3.8. On what grounds can I challenge a voter?

You may challenge a voter **only** if you have a reasonable basis for asserting that the voter is not who they claim to be. You cannot challenge a voter because you believe that they must vote by provisional ballot, that an election judge made a mistake when checking in a voter, or that the voter has moved or is ineligible to vote due to a criminal conviction. Additionally, you cannot challenge a voter based on the voter’s race, ethnicity, or national origin.

3.9. What can I do if I believe a voter is not who they claim to be?

You may challenge a voter’s identity **only** if you have a reasonable basis for asserting that a voter is not who they claim to be. Because you may be required to sign a statement under penalty of perjury, your challenge to a voter’s identity **must** be made in good faith. You **cannot** arbitrarily challenge voters; doing so may violate federal or state law.

If you wish to make a challenge, you must notify a chief judge that you wish to make a challenge **before** the voter has been issued a ballot. Once you have notified a Chief Judge of your challenge, the Chief Judge will ask the challenged voter to provide identification. The acceptable forms of ID are:

1. Voter registration card;
2. Social Security card;
3. Valid Maryland driver’s license or MVA-issued ID card;
4. Any photo ID card issued by any unit of federal, State, or local (county or municipal) government;
5. Any employee ID card with the individual’s photo and issued to the individual in the ordinary course of the employer’s business; or
6. A copy of a current bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the individual’s name and current address.

It is acceptable for the voter to present their proof of identification and residency in an electronic or physical format.

If the individual presents one of the forms of ID listed above, the chief judge must let the voter complete the check-in process and vote. If the individual does not present one of the forms of ID, the chief judge will:

1. Require you to provide, in writing and under penalty of perjury, the reason for the challenge (see Appendix B for the *Affidavit for Challenger and Challenged Voter*);

2. Offer the challenged voter the opportunity to cast a provisional ballot and submit a signed statement, witnessed by the Chief Judge, of their identity; and
3. Submit to the local board of elections the provisional ballot and other materials related to the challenge.

During the provisional ballot canvass (held on the second Wednesday after the election), the local board of canvassers will determine, based on the information submitted by you and the challenged voter, whether the voter is who they claim to be and is otherwise qualified to vote.

3.10. Can a voting location open if the election judges represent only one political party?

Yes. Under advice from the Attorney General, the election judges present must open the voting location by the required time, even if there are election judges of only one political party present.

3.11. Can I stand within the No Electioneering zone?

No. When you leave the polling room, you may not linger in the No Electioneering zone.

All voting locations in every Maryland jurisdiction, except for Montgomery County, have a 100 ft. No Electioneering zone, measured from the entrance and exit of the building (not the voting room) that is closest to the part of the building in which voting occurs. If an early voting center is located in a multi-use facility, the No Electioneering zone is 100 feet from the space where early voting is being conducted. In Montgomery County, the No Electioneering zone may be located anywhere between 25 feet and 100 feet from the entrance and exit of the building.

All ballot drop boxes in every Maryland jurisdiction, except for Montgomery County, have a 50 foot No Electioneering Zone, measured from each side of the ballot drop box. In Montgomery County, the ballot drop box No Electioneering zone is 25 feet from the ballot drop box on all sides.

Part IV: Other Opportunities for Public Observation

Throughout the election process, there are several opportunities for the public to observe the election process. In addition to serving as a challenger and watcher on election day, any individual may observe the following:

1. Pre-election demonstration of voting system;
2. Return of supplies on election night;
3. Canvass of early voting results;
4. Counting of provisional and mail-in ballots; and
5. Verification of vote count and certification of election.

All of these events are open to the public but are subject to certain restrictions. You do not need a form signed by a candidate or political party to observe these events.

4.1. Pre-Election Demonstration of Voting System

Each local board of elections is required to conduct a pre-election demonstration of the Logic and Accuracy (L&A) testing on the voting system and allow the public to inspect the printouts of the test results of the L&A testing. You should contact the local board of elections for the location and time of pre-election demonstration of Logic and Accuracy testing.

Logic and Accuracy testing is the process by which voting equipment is configured, tested and certified for accuracy prior to an election. Each component is tested to verify that it is fully functional, accurately

counts and records votes, and free from mechanical problems and that each ballot scanner accepts the appropriate ballot styles for its designated voting location. L&A testing includes multiple phases:

1. Each ballot scanner is prepared and configured.
2. On the ballot scanner, test ballots are scanned, and the results printed from the scanner are compared with the expected number of votes for each candidate or ballot question. This ensures that the ballot scanner is recording votes accurately.
3. These test votes are also counted by the central tabulating computer. This ensures complete accuracy throughout the entire voting and vote counting process.
4. All test votes are cleared, and the ballot scanners are locked, sealed and secured ready to be used in the election.

4.2. Return of Supplies on Election Night

You may also observe the return of voting location supplies on election night at the local board of elections' designated location. Supplies may be returned to a central location in the jurisdiction or a regional site. As the local boards of elections have the option of creating regional sites, you should contact the local board of elections where you wish to observe the return of supplies to find out where the supplies are being returned on election night.

Depending on the process for returning supplies and available space, you may be required to stand in a designated area. While you may observe this process, you are not permitted to touch any election document or equipment. You should direct all questions about the return of supplies to the designated individual at the local board of elections.

4.3. Counting of Provisional and Mail-In Ballots

The local boards of canvassers meet in public session before and after each election to count mail-in and provisional ballots. Contact the local board of elections for the dates, times, and locations of each Canvass.

The mail-in and provisional canvasses are open to the public. You may observe all sessions of the canvassing board, including observing the canvassing teams review and open mail-in ballot envelopes and open provisional ballot applications. You may position yourself near the canvassing teams so that you may observe their review of envelopes and applications but are prohibited from trying to ascertain how a voter voted or physically handling an original election document. You must direct all questions concerning the canvass process to the Canvass manager or Election Director.

If you wish to challenge a decision of the canvassing board, ask the Canvass manager or Election Director for the *Canvass Challenge Form* (See Appendix C for the *Canvass Challenge Form*). Complete this form and give it to the Canvass manager or Election Director who will put the completed form with the ballot(s) and related documents and set them aside for consideration by the local board of canvassers. You may only challenge a decision at the canvass at which the ballot was accepted or rejected.

The board's counsel must be present before the local board of canvassers may make a decision on the challenge. If the board's counsel is not available when you present the challenge, the board must delay any decision until counsel is present. With counsel present, the board will decide whether to accept or reject the ballot(s) in question. To reject a ballot, the vote must be unanimous. If the board votes to accept the challenged ballot(s), the ballot will be separated from other ballots and counted on a separate memory device.

4.4. Verification of Vote Count and Certification of Election Results

Before certifying an election, each local board of canvassers verifies the vote count. After verifying the vote count, the members of the local boards of canvassers certify that the election results are accurate and that the vote has been verified. This verification and certification generally take place at the conclusion of the last mail-in ballot canvass, but no sooner than the second Friday after election day.

Appendix A: *Challenger and Watcher Certificate*



Challenger and Watcher Certificate

Page (1/2)

Part I – Instructions and information

For designating persons or entities and challengers and watchers



For designating persons or entities

Who is eligible to be a designating person or entity of challengers and watchers?

- If you are an elections official with the State Board of Elections or a local board of elections, you may designate someone as a challenger and watcher using this certificate.

If you are **not** an elections official with the State Board of Elections or a local board of election, answer the following question to know if you are eligible to designate someone as a challenger and watcher.

Are you:

- A candidate;
- A political party or committee;
- A person or entity required to file reports under sections §13-306 or §13-307 of the Maryland Election Law Article

If you checked one box, you may designate someone as a challenger and watcher using this certificate.

Candidates shall only designate challengers and watchers for locations where the candidate is included on the ballot.

Instructions

1. Read the Challengers and Watchers Manual. Find it at www.elections.maryland.gov.
2. Give the manual to those you designate as challengers and watchers.
3. Provide the local board of elections with a completed signed copy of this certificate.

For challengers and watchers

Instructions

As a challenger and watcher, you will:

1. Read the Challengers and Watchers Manual. The candidate or entity designating you will give it to you, or find it at www.elections.maryland.gov.
2. Bring an extra copy of your Challenger and Watcher Certificate and immediately give it to the election judges when you arrive at an early voting center or polling place.
3. Have your Challenger and Watcher Certificate with you at all times when acting as a challenger or watcher. You may not remain in the voting area without it.

Information about your rights and about prohibited acts

As a challenger and watcher, you have the right to:

- Enter the voting area for the opening of the polls if you arrive at least 30 minutes before voting hours begin.
- Enter or be present in the voting area at any time during voting hours.
- Remain in the voting area until all post-voting tasks have been completed and the election judges leave the voting area.
- Maintain a list of registered voters who have cast a ballot. You can take this list outside of the polling place.
- Be positioned near the election judges so that you may see and hear each voter as the voter checks in to vote.
- You may not attempt to:
 - Determine how a voter voted or intends to vote.
 - Talk with any voter in the voting area.
 - Assist any voter in voting.
 - Touch an original election document or equipment.
 - Interfere with the election process or impede a voter's access to election judges.
 - Use a cell phone, laptop or other electronic equipment in a voting area.
- You may be removed by an election judge or the local election director if you do not follow an election judge's order or attempt a prohibited act.



Challenger and Watcher Certificate

Part II – Certificate designating challenger and watcher

I/We certify that

has designated,

a registered voter, to act as a challenger or watcher for the (choose one):

- 20__ primary election
- 20__ general election

The designated challenger/watcher has (check all that apply):

- Received and read the challengers and watchers manual
- Attended a training with the local or state board of elections (optional, highly encouraged)

This individual will act in this capacity (check all that apply):

- on Election Day (Complete Part A)

Part A: I/We designate this individual as a challenger and watcher for the following precinct(s) on Election Day:

District/Precinct or Ward/Precinct	Name of county or Baltimore City

- during early voting (Complete Part B)

Part B: I/We designate this individual as a challenger and watcher on the following days and at the following early voting locations

Early voting dates	Name of early voting location	Name of county or Baltimore City

I solemnly affirm under the penalties of perjury that the contents of this document are true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

Signature of designating person or entity (Only physical ink signature or copy of physical ink signature allowed)

X		Month	Day	Year
----------	--	-------	-----	------

Email address	Phone number
---------------	--------------

Designating Entity Affiliation <i>i.e. Candidate, Party or Committee</i>

Appendix B: *Affidavit for Challenger and Challenged Voter*

Affidavit for Challenger & Challenged Voter



- If you are the challenger, and the challenged voter is unable to present one of the required forms of identification, you must complete Part I of this form.
- The challenged voter must complete Part II.
- A chief judge must serve as a witness for you and the challenged voter as you sign this affidavit.



Part I: For the challenger to complete

Challenger information
Required

1	Last name		First name		Middle name		Suffix	
	Residence Address						Apt # or Lot #	
	City or Town				State		Zip Code	
	Birthdate <i>(Not today's date)</i>		Month	Day	Year	Phone number		

Reason for challenging voter's eligibility
Required

2	Name of voter whose identity is being challenged							
	Last name		First name		Middle name		Suffix	
Why do you believe that the voter named above is not the person he or she claims to be?								
<hr/> <hr/>								

Declaration
Required

3	I do solemnly swear under the penalties of perjury that the information provided above, in Part I: Affidavit by Challenger, is true to the best of my knowledge.							
	Challenger, sign here (power of attorney not allowed) Today's Date							
X				Month	Day	Year		

Chief judge to complete.

Witnessed by: Print your name	Sign here
<hr/>	<hr/>

Challenged voter complete the back. →

Part II: For the challenged voter to complete

Eligibility Required	Last name				First name				Middle name				Suffix			
	4	Birthdate <i>(Not today's date)</i>				Month				Day				Year		

**Reason
Required**

Provide any information that would help the local board of canvassers in making a determination about this challenge:

5

**Declaration
Required**

I do solemnly swear or affirm under penalties of perjury that I am the person whose name appears above.

6

6	Voter, sign here (power of attorney not allowed)								Today's date										
	X								Month				Day				Year		

Chief Judge to complete

Witnessed by:
Print your name

Sign here

If you have any information that would be helpful to the local board of canvassers in making a determination about this challenge, please provide it in the space below.

Under §10-312 of the Election Law Article, an individual may challenge another individual's right to vote based only on the individual's identity.

Appendix C: Canvass Challenge Form

Maryland State Board of Elections Canvass Challenge Form

Instructions: State regulations permit an individual to challenge an action of a local Board of Canvassers. If you wish to challenge a decision to accept or reject a mail-in or provisional ballot, notify the election director or his or her designee, complete this form, and return it to the election director or his or her designee. You may only challenge a decision during the canvass at which the ballot was accepted or rejected.

Once you submit this completed form, the ballot(s) being challenged and related documents (oath and envelope if a mail-in ballot or provisional ballot application if a provisional ballot) will be put aside for consideration by the local Board of Canvassers. The local Board will review the information on this form to decide whether to change its decision to accept or reject the ballot(s) in question. All challenged ballots will be separated from other ballots. If the local Board affirms its acceptance of the ballot(s), the ballot(s) will be counted on a separate memory card.

Date _____

Part 1 – Completed by challenger

Challenge of mail-in ballot(s)

Challenge of provisional ballot(s)

Name of Organization (if applicable) _____

Last Name _____ First _____ Middle _____

Street Address _____ Apt _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Email address _____

Number or description of ballots being challenged: _____

Reason for Challenge _____

Signature _____

Part 2 – Completed by election director or designee

Challenge # _____

Number of challenged ballots _____

Number of challenged ballots accepted _____

Number of challenged ballots rejected _____

Comments _____

Appendix D: Relevant Provisions of the [Election Law Article of the Annotated Code of MD](#)

§ 10-301.1 Early voting and early voting centers.

§ 10–303 Authority and duties of election judges.

§ 10–304 Duties of police officers.

§ 10–308 Access to voting room.

§ 10–309 Responsibilities of election judge on election day – Before the polls open.

§ 10–311 Challengers and watchers.

§ 10–312 Challenge of an individual’s right to vote.

§ 10–314 Closing of the polls.

Appendix E: Relevant Provisions of the [Code of Maryland Regulations](#)

33.07.07.01-.04 Challengers or Watchers

33.07.08.01-.03 Challenging Voters

33.17.06.08-.09 Early Voting Activities

Appendix F: *Contact Information for the Local Boards of Elections*

Allegany County

701 Kelly Road, Suite 231
Cumberland, MD 21502-3401
301-777-5931

Anne Arundel County

6740 Baymeadow Drive
Glen Burnie, MD 21060
P.O. Box 490, Glen Burnie, MD 21060-0490
410-222-6600

Baltimore City

Charles L. Benton Bldg., Room 129
417 East Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21202-3432
410-396-5550

Baltimore County

5 Crossing Way
Owings Mills, MD 21117
410-887-5700

Calvert County

30 Duke Street, Lower Level
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
P.O. Box 798, Prince Frederick, MD 20678-0798
410-535-2214

Caroline County

Health and Public Services Building
403 S. Seventh Street, Suite 247
Denton, MD 21629-1335
410-479-8145

Carroll County

1135 Business Parkway South, Suite 60
Westminster, MD 21158
P.O. Box 3191, Westminster, MD 21158
410-386-2080

Cecil County

200 Chesapeake Boulevard, Suite 1900
Elkton, MD 21921-6395
410-996-5310

Charles County

201 East Charles Street
La Plata, MD 20646
P.O. Box 908, La Plata, MD 20646-0908
301-934-8972

Dorchester County

1000 Goodwill Ave.
Cambridge, MD 21613
P.O. Box 414, Cambridge, MD 21613-0414
410-228-2560

Frederick County

8490 Progress Drive
Frederick, MD 21701
301-600-8683

Garrett County

2008 Maryland Highway, Suite 1
Mountain Lake Park, MD 21550
301-334-6985

Harford County

133 Industry Lane
Forest Hill, MD 21050
410-638-3565

Howard County

9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 200
Columbia, MD 21046
410-313-5820

Kent County

135 Dixon Drive
Chestertown, MD 21620-1141
410-778-0038

Montgomery County

18753 N. Frederick Avenue, Suite 210
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
P.O. Box 4333, Rockville, MD 20849-4333
240-777-8500

Prince George's County

1100 Mercantile Lane, Suite 115A
Largo, MD 20774
301-431-7300

Queen Anne's County

110 Vincit Street, Suite 102
Centreville, MD 21617-0724
410-758-0832

St. Mary's County

23250 Hollywood Road
Leonardtown, MD 20650
P.O. Box 197, Leonardtown, MD 20650-0197
301-475-4200 ext. 71614

Somerset County

11916 Somerset Avenue
Princess Anne, MD 21853
P.O. Box 96, Princess Anne, MD 21853-0096
410-651-0767

Talbot County

215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
P.O. Box 353, Easton, MD 21601-0353
410-770-8099

Washington County

17718 Virginia Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21740
240-313-2050

Wicomico County

345 Snow Hill Road
Salisbury, MD 21804
P.O. Box 4091, Salisbury, MD 21803-4091
410-548-4830

Worcester County

100 Belt Street, Suite C
Snow Hill, MD 21863-1367
410-632-1320

Appendix G: Provisional Voting and Identification Requirements

Provisional Voting

Provisional voting is a safeguard that ensures that no individual who asserts that they are registered and eligible to vote is prevented from casting a ballot. A provisional ballot will only be counted after the local board of canvassers has reviewed the provisional ballot application and made a determination that the individual is registered and eligible to vote.

An individual may be issued a provisional ballot for the following reasons:

1. The voter's name was not on the election register – This usually happens if an individual's name is not on the list of voters for that county for early voting or in that precinct on election day is that the individual moved and did not update his or her voter registration.
2. The voter did not show identification – See "Identification Requirements" below for an explanation of this requirement.
3. The individual wanted to register and vote during early voting, but election officials had not yet determined whether the voter was eligible to vote.
4. The individual wanted to register to vote or change his or her address but could not prove where s/he lived.
5. The voter has not yet met the verification requirement – An individual must provide a driver's license or social security number on his or her voter registration application and the number provided must be verified or the individual must present alternate identification.⁴

⁴ An individual who does not have either a driver's license or social security number must check the appropriate box on the voter registration application. Neither federal nor State law requires an individual to have a driver's license or

6. The voter is not eligible to vote a regular ballot – The voter has either moved more than 21 days before election day and did not provide his or her new address to the local board of elections or the election register indicates that the voter received a mail-in ballot or has already voted (either during early voting or earlier on election day).
7. In a primary election, the voter claims that they are affiliated with a political party other than the one shown in the precinct register.
8. The voter's identity was challenged.

Identification Requirements

Under Maryland law, most registered voters do **not** need to present identification before voting. There are three categories of individuals who are required to show ID before voting:

1. Individuals who registered to vote by mail after January 1, 2003, and have not yet satisfied the federal ID requirement;
2. Individuals who applied to register to vote after January 1, 2006, provided a driver's license or full or partial social security number that could not be verified by the Motor Vehicle Administration or Social Security Administration, and have not yet provided alternate ID; and
3. Voters whose identity is challenged by either an accredited or non-accredited challenger.

The individuals described in #1 and #2 above are clearly marked in the pollbook as needing to show ID. No other voter should be asked to present ID.

When a voter described in #1 checks in to vote, social security number to register and vote.

the election judge will ask him or her for an acceptable ID. If the voter presents an acceptable ID, the election judge will record the ID the voter provided and the voter will be permitted to vote and scan his or her ballot into the ballot scanner. If the voter does not provide acceptable ID, the voter will be required to vote a provisional ballot. The voter will have until the start of the provisional ballot canvass (2nd Wednesday after the election) to present acceptable ID and have his or her provisional ballot counted.

The type of ballot an individual described in #2 can vote depends whether they are voting during early voting or on election day. During early voting, the voter can vote and scan his or her ballot into the ballot scanner if the voter can complete his or her registration. On election day, the voter will only be permitted to vote by provisional ballot. The provisional ballot judge will ask the individual to show ID and will record on the back of the provisional ballot application the ID presented. If the individual does not present acceptable ID, they will have until the start of the provisional ballot canvass (2nd Wednesday after the election) to present acceptable ID and have his or her provisional ballot counted.

The forms of acceptable ID are different for voters described in #1 and #2 than for challenged voters. Refer to section 3.8 of this manual for a list of acceptable ID for challenged voters. Voters described in #1 and #2 above will be asked to present one of the following forms of ID:

1. Current and valid photo ID (*i.e.*, Maryland driver's license or MVA-issued ID card, student, employee, or military ID, U.S. passport); or
2. Current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document with the voter's name and current address.