



**ELECTION
PROTECTION
INITIATIVE**

**ELECTION INTEGRITY
TOOLKIT**



PENNSYLVANIA

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Activists involved in the battle for election integrity need to develop a sophisticated understanding of the key players in the administration of elections in their states. A state's Secretary of State is generally the person who certifies that state's election results. Pennsylvania's Secretary of State is Leigh Chapman. Within Pennsylvania, she is the chief election official. However, within Pennsylvania, the Bureau of Commissions, Elections and Legislation oversees the electoral process and the counties certify the results. From there, the certification must be verified by the Secretary of State and the Governor.

But what about one level down? In most cases, the State Board of Elections oversees the county boards of elections and represents the next level down on the "org chart" of election administration. The chain of command for Pennsylvania goes from the Bureau of Commissions, Elections and Legislation to the county board of elections. The county board of elections connects county candidates, political parties, citizens, and various other organizations to resources that allow them to coordinate election efforts. Also, they generally work to establish clear guidelines on issues like early voting dates, poll workers and watchers selection, and the efficient set up of election stations for voting day.

Below the county board of elections (one for each county) are the precinct-level election observers—like you, hopefully. Every precinct in the country has people working to administer the voting in that precinct. These election observers are the people who make sure everything goes as smoothly as possible: checking people in, verifying they can vote, preventing any disruptions, and ensuring that all relevant state laws are abided by on election day. While these workers primarily deal with the events of election day, Pennsylvania requires officers of election to be trained and proficient in the mechanics of that day beforehand.

Each Election Day, officers of elections answer questions and make decisions that matter.

Questions like:

- Why is the voter not on the list?
- Does this voter need to cast a provisional ballot?
- Are multiple election workers attending to those who are voting curbside?

The outcomes of situations like these not only can affect the results of close elections, but also can determine whether voters themselves have confidence in the system. This sentiment is at the heart of the democratic process and election integrity.

Although disputed elections sometimes generate headlines for ending up in the courts or the Secretary of State's office, most disagreements over election processes do not rise to that level. Instead, the people who staff the polling places on Election Day and in the weeks leading up to Election Day handle these situations in early voting and mail-in ballots.

Elections officers play a crucial role in ensuring the validity of each vote and the integrity of elections. Many do not know that when someone casts a ballot, it is counted—period. By the time problems reach beyond the walls of the polling place, it is often too late. The advantage of well-trained election officers is that they can handle problems before they become problems.

The move towards mass mail-in and early voting has boosted the need for well-trained and dedicated election officers. Even as we teach the value of voting in person on Election Day, we still need activists to play a role in running the process at early voting locations, processing absentee ballots, and reviewing and examining the late-arriving absentee ballots.

We at FreedomWorks have consistently heard that our activists who serve as election officers need a support network. As the leading conservative grassroots organization, our job is to ensure our activists have the resources and networks they need to succeed as election officers. As we train activists to become election officers, we will also build this network.

Believe it or not, election administration is an area that has historically been understaffed and underfunded. The left is familiar with this game; we need our people on the inside—all the more reason to get involved today.

You can take steps right now to play a part in our elections from the inside. With many elections offices seeking new people to apply, activists have the opportunity to get involved in this process-right now-to improve the future of our country and the integrity of the election system. Let's not wake up in October of 2022 frantically trying to fill the few election administration spots available before the 2022 midterms. **Let's Act Now.**

1. Reach out to your County Party chairs

- a. Initiate a conversation with them. Form a friendship.
- b. Express an interest in getting involved in elections and applying to be an elections officer. It is likely that the political parties in your jurisdiction provide lists of those who want to be elections officers. Ask to be included on this list.
- c. Ask where the most help is needed, and where any problems are. County Party chairs will have a good sense of these issues.
- d. Get to know the members of your local Election Boards. Become acquainted with others who have served as elections officers.

2. Find the application to be an election officer or election observer on your county's website and fill it out! We need independent-minded people as officers of elections.

3. Even if you talk with your County Party chair and are included in your County Party's list of potential elections officers, you still should apply on the website.

4. After you apply, if you do not hear anything, continue to follow up with the County Board of Elections. Make the occasional phone call and email. Offer to come in for an interview, if you like. Keep yourself on their minds.

5. Recruit your friends and family do the same thing. The more, the merrier! Everyone has something to contribute, and we can learn from each other.

6. Stay in touch with FreedomWorks. Keep us updated on everything. (See Part III for more)

- a. Let us know how your progress towards becoming an election officer or election observer is going.
- b. What are you hearing from others?
- c. What changes could be made to improve the election administration process in your area?

For many conservatives, this is new territory. As you get involved in the process of election administration, here is a partial list of things to think about, both in and out of election season:

- 1. What are your state's election laws that govern:**
 - a. Emergency extensions of voting hours (Ex. if there is a power outage)
 - b. The prompt counting and security of ballots—machine or paper—during and after the polls close
 - c. Procedures for ensuring that all elections officials are in compliance with state law
 - d. What to do when a problem is identified the day of voting
- 2. What nonprofit organizations are active in registering voters and performing other election-related activities in your community? Are conservatives well represented in these organizations?**
- 3. What problems have occurred in past elections in your state? What have you learned from your conversations with others who have worked to administer elections?**
- 4. What is the process for documenting all hotline calls and written reports that identify potential issues as voting is on-going?**
- 5. What is the process of contacting election attorneys, Boards of Elections members, and law enforcement to prevent illegal activities from occurring during voting? Is this process explained accurately beforehand?**
- 6. What does your state do to remove deceased and inactive voters from its lists? How can volunteers assist in this process?**
- 7. What is the process for verifying the registration of new voters? How can volunteers assist in this process?**
- 8. What is the process for protecting vulnerable voters from exploitation, and is this process being followed? Especially considering pandemic related changes to voting practices, plans need to be developed to protect these vulnerable voters:**
 - a. Those residing in nursing homes or assisted living facilities
 - b. Those with disabilities who require assistance in voting
 - c. Those who are receiving care in hospitals
 - d. Those who are homeless or living in shelters

The battle for election integrity is fundamental. For far too long, the left has dominated the election administration space. Just as conservatives must reform and reclaim the educational system, the bureaucracy of government, and the corporate culture in America, so must we involve ourselves in the administration of our elections. The good news is that there are many of us, and everyone has a part to play. This toolkit does not cover every scenario; it intends to provide an overview of states' election infrastructure and the role that elections officers play in it; to shape activists' thinking as they work to involve themselves as elections officers and learn more about election laws.

Here is what you can do right now:

1. Visit FreedomWorks.org/ElectionProtection and sign up for election integrity updates.
2. Reach out to your County Part chair and ask to be included on his or her list of elections officers.
3. Apply to become an elections officer on your county's website.
4. Research your state's election laws and regulations.
5. Befriend your County Board of Elections members and always seek new opportunities to assist.
6. Keep FreedomWorks in the loop!

Working together, FreedomWorks activists will secure our elections for years to come.