

Challenger, Watcher, and Observer FAQs

Q: Since signature rosters are no longer used, are Challengers, Watchers, or Observers allowed to stand behind BOD computers?

A: No. Challengers/watchers/observers are not allowed behind the BOD computers. They must, however, be allowed to sit within reasonable hearing distance of the Election Judge/Clerk.

With regards to challengers, clerks may provide necessary information in the manner which they deem fitting (i.e. laptop, printed source, etc.), provided the information does not contain protected voter information. If the clerk chooses not to provide the information, reason accommodation must be made to allow the challenger to bring his or her own sources.

Q: If there is no physical signature roster, what can challengers reference to inform their challenges?

A: Challengers may obtain a voter data file from their party chair to bring with them to the polling place.

Q: How would Challengers, Watchers, or Observers get their certificate of completion if they complete the training on paper?

A: County clerks will have a PDF version of the certificate of completion in the test packet; this must be filled in by the clerk – a copy will be provided to the attendee, and a copy kept on file by the clerk.

Q: Are county clerk offices allowed to make their own name badges?

A: No, 1-2-24 stipulates that the Secretary of State shall prescribe the form and materials of identification badges.

Q: Will the incident form be provided by the SOS?

A: Yes, the incident form will be provided to county clerk's offices from the SOS.

Q: Will training need to be completed prior to each election?

A: Yes. Challengers and watchers must attend a training and receive their certificate of completion prior to serving in that capacity.

Q: Can Challengers, Watchers, or Observers have their phones or computer in the polling location to make calls or take pictures?

A: No, they may take written notes, but may not use audio recording, phones, or photography. NOTE: If the county clerk did not choose to provide a challenger with voter record material, a reasonable accommodation may be made allowing the challenger to bring a laptop **solely** for the purpose of viewing voter record data.

Q: Does apparel bearing campaign slogans constitute electioneering?

A: If slogans are known to represent a current candidate or issue on the ballot, they are considered electioneering.

Q: Does posting or publishing the training registration link satisfy the statutory requirements of 1-2-22(A) NMSA 1978?

A: Yes, as long as notice of the training is posted at least four days before the training is to be held and in accordance with the definition of “posting” described in 1-1-15 NMSA 1978.