



# Virginia for America First

## Poll Watcher’s Guide

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Version 9/28/2022

*This manual is a work in progress, and will be updated whenever new or additional information is available. If you have any comments, suggestions, or corrections, please send those to Bill Hawkins [director@va.foramericafirst.com](mailto:director@va.foramericafirst.com).*

September 2022. This manual was developed and published by Virginians for America First, with resources provided by the American Project. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this manual, but given the variance in procedures by locality, and many recent legal and procedural changes, errors and omissions are inevitable; therefore, only the Code of Virginia and official procedures of the Department of Elections are authoritative.



## Introduction

Virginia's elections are a mess. A mix of ill-defined, non-transparent, inefficient, and constantly changing processes; and this confusion was multiplied through ill-advised changes in procedures in response to the COVID pandemic. Specific concerns include a lack of transparency in processes and procedures; a perception of bias in election administration; inaccurate voting lists and lack of effective voter ID; intimidation and fraud through mail-in voting and ballot harvesting; doubt in the accuracy and security of machine-based voting; and the influence of dark money in campaigns and election processes.

Fundamental reforms in law and procedures are required to restore lasting public confidence in the integrity of Virginia elections, but these reforms will take time. Unfortunately, we don't have much time, as our next election season begins September 23, 2022. In the near term, we believe that the most important action we can take to strengthen the integrity of our elections, and confidence in the democratic legitimacy of our elected representatives, is to increase transparency in electoral processes. Your participation is essential to achieving this goal.

This guide aims to provide you, a citizen, with the knowledge and tools needed to help ensure a free and fair election process for all of Virginia's voters. In the guide you will find information on election reform advocacy, becoming an officer of election, and monitoring election processes; all activities aimed at increasing transparency in the elections, and public ownership of that process.

The American republic was founded on the principle and promise of self-government; a promise that began in 1619 with the establishment of our own General Assembly—the first representative body in the western hemisphere—and culminated in the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Now that promise is threatened by a loss of faith in the integrity of the very process that enables self-government, and the republic that so many struggled and fought and died to establish, is at risk.

Once again, Virginia stands at the pivot of history. Virginians led the way in 1619, and again in 1776. Now, once again, we are called to lead; to secure again the right to self-government for ourselves and our families and our fellow citizens. If we are to save our republic, it must begin here, now, with this election, and build across the country in 2022 and 2024. As has ever been, success will require sacrifice and hard work, but with your help, and the guiding hand of God, it is not too late to restore our republic.

*Bill Hawkins  
State Director  
Virginians for America First*

## Operation Eagles Wings

Virginia for Election Transparency and Virginia for America First are part of a national initiative called “Operation Eagles Wings” supported by the America Project (TAP), and through the voluntary contributions of individuals committed to the restoration and strengthening of constitutional democracy in America. OEW grew out of the program developed for the 2021 state and local elections in Virginia, creating a template for issue advocacy and election integrity programing which became nationally known as the “Virginia Model”.<sup>1</sup>

Virginians for America First (VFAF) launched on 09 March 2021 with the intent to elect an America First majority in the Virginia House of Delegates. Bishop Leon Benjamin, initially supported by Americans for Limited Government (ALG), led the efforts as the founder of Virginians for America First. His courageous stand on America First principles resonated with Virginians of all races and social standing. He was instrumental in bringing unity, building coalitions, and reaching into communities not normally engaged.

Once VFAF launched there was great response with hundreds of sign-ups within hours. This came as a surprise. The *overwhelming* interest of those sign-ups was *election integrity* (EI). It became obvious we must include an EI program component to satisfy the interests of our volunteers.

While I was a political appointee during the Trump Administration at the US Agency for International Development, I had worked with Tim Meisburger, who was appointed to USAID by President Trump in 2017 as a director of USAID’s Center for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG).

Tim is an expert in EI, with 30+ years’ experience around the globe working to ensure free and fair elections in third world and developing democracies; so I contacted him, and asked for his help in developing an EI program based on accepted international standards. Tim joined VFAF/ALG and developed the EI program. He generated a manual for election observation specific to Virginia based on recognized international standards.

The EI program in conjunction with the America First voter education component became the complete “Virginia Model.” Parts of this model are being shared in states across the nation by others, but only TAP is providing the model in total.

In the summer of 2021 TAP learned of VFAF’s project in Virginia and began supporting it financially as the major contributor. TAP recognized early on that this project was making an impact in Virginia, and that what had been effective in Virginia in 2021 could serve as a model for programs in battleground states in 2022.

The EI component of OEW consists of four major parts:

- Voter education of America First issues concentrating on low-propensity voters. These

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<sup>1</sup> See [Fixing Virginia’s Elections to Save America](#)

are voters who are generally not politically engaged but want America First principles in our government.

- Training of poll workers/poll watchers with an in-depth program on election observation, reporting, and the rights of citizens to have free and fair elections.
- Direct citizen observation and review of processes and procedures pertaining to the maintenance of and handling of voter rolls. This is primarily achieved by communicating directly with election officials in each municipality.
- Real time evaluation of absentee ballot processing during election season (45 days of early voting in Virginia). This part of the program will need to be adjusted to correspond with state specific statutes.

The voter education component of the OEW conducts campaigns to inform voters who have historically had little access to information on the America First movement about the of how America First policies can increase their freedom and improve their lives. Increased turnout by new America First voters, particularly in minority communities, was a very important part of the victory in Virginia. We learned through our targeted voter education efforts, and canvassing, that addressing issues that directly affected voters and their families made the difference in turning out minorities to support candidates who embraced America First principles.

Following its successes in Virginia, TAP developed the “Operation Eagles Wings” program to share its approaches with like-minded organizations across the country, and to implement the Virginia Model Template in eight other critical states: Florida, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Wisconsin, Arizona, Texas, and Illinois.

2021 in Virginia was a message sent to every America First Patriot that with dedicated hard work, focus, and a united effort “We the People” can save the Republic for future generations. 2022 offers us the opportunity to repeat a Virginia type victory all around the nation. Join us by going to [www.americaproject.com](http://www.americaproject.com) to volunteer for, and donate to this effort.

*Mark Lloyd  
Director  
Operation Eagles Wings*

## 1 Election Season Observation

### 1.1 What is Election Season?

Elections in the United States used to take place on one day, as required by the Constitution, with very limited exceptions for absentee voting. Over the last decade, and especially since the creation of the COVID virus, early and absentee voting has expanded dramatically, so that now 44 states and the District of Columbia have no excuse absentee voting, for an average period of 22 days. We have defined this period of legal voting before election day as the *election season*.

In Virginia, election season is 43 days long (three days short of the longest election season). Advance voting begins September 23 and from that date any registered voter in Virginia can vote absentee by mail or drop box, or by visiting an advance voting site.

Unfortunately, expanding the election from one day to 43 days decreases the transparency and credibility of its election process. Throughout the election season, chain of custody and chain of observation are regularly broken for long periods, reducing the transparency needed to reassure voters that the process is fair and accurate. Extending the election period also places an unsustainable physical and financial burden on overworked election officials, and the party representatives tasked with ensuring the integrity and legitimacy of the election process.

This imperfect system falls far short of accepted norms and standards for transparent and credible elections and will require fundamental legal and procedural reforms to ever meet or exceed those standards. Until these reforms can be made, the only means to enhance transparency and public confidence in the integrity of the process will be through increased public scrutiny of every stage of the process to the extent possible.

<i>1.1.1 Daily Election Season Observer Form</i> (Submit by email to report@vfet.us)	
<b>County/City:</b> _____ <b>Date:</b> _____ <b>Time:</b> Closing___ Midday___ Opening___	
Observer(s): _____ Location: RO: ___ or SO: ___	
At the Registrar's Office or a Satellite Election Office	
1	Were you allowed to observe all processes at the office? Yes___No___ If no, please provide details (use additional sheets or the incident form, if needed):
2	How many people voted in-person today? __
3	How many of those voted using the statement or address process? _
4	How many provisional ballots were provided today? _____
5	Were two officers of election from different parties present at the office? Yes___No___ If no, was the registrar or assistant registrar present? Yes No
6	Were the absentee ballots received during the day counted, or stored securely?Counted __ Stored securely _____

Election season observation may be conducted by poll watchers authorized and coordinated by county or city party unit chairs, and in some cases by independent observers. The VFET program seeks to increase election season observation by providing training and materials for poll watchers and observers.

### 1.2 Concerns with Mail-In and Drop-Box Absentee Voting

One of the reasons absentee voting has previously been limited is because it is inherently insecure. Absentee voting enables cheating through ghost voters and ballot (or drop) box stuffing, political pressure and intimidation, vote buying and selling, and other forms of fraud. When it was limited primarily to soldiers and diplomats on duty for the US government, plus very limited exceptions for individuals with provable need, the risks were deemed acceptable; but with the introduction of widespread and often universal (as in Virginia) postal voting, these gaps in security can be easily exploited to alter election outcomes.

Because postal voting occurs in private, malpractice is difficult to monitor and control. A spouse or relative in an abusive relationship, or workers on a farm or in a factory, or the elderly and patients confined in a care facility, may be forced to apply for an absentee ballot, and then be forced to vote the ballot for a particular candidate or party, all out of sight of monitors or law enforcement officials. Postal voting also enables vote buying.

Controlling abuse in the home is difficult, but some deterrence can be expected from public education on the right to vote in secret and to vote your conscience; with a contact number or hotline provided to report abuse. For large farms, factories, businesses, and especially care homes; observers should visit (or recruit a patriot insider) and ask the following questions:

1. *Has anyone asked or required or offered to help you apply for an absentee ballot?*
2. *Has anyone offered to help you fill in an absentee ballot?*
3. *Has anyone tried to force you, or pay you, to vote a particular way?*

Answers to these questions will help you determine if there is a possibility that organized vote fraud is occurring in the location.

Regrettably, homes for the elderly and those requiring cognitive care are particular targets for vote thieves, so it may be important to recruit patriot insiders in these institutions who can monitor and record the activities of people offering to “help” with applications or voting. The best deterrent for this form of theft, which is a felony, is to ensure the thieves know we are watching, and know they will go to prison if caught. If possible, post leaflets in care home that alert residents to potential abuse and provide hotlines for reporting criminal acts.

If concerning issues are discovered, please document these by filling in and submitting an [incident report form](#).

### 1.3 Monitoring In-Person Absentee Voting

In Virginia, in-person early voting is accomplished by visiting an early voting location, then casting a ballot in the same manner as a voter on election day. Early voting locations are normally the county election office, and any satellite election offices that have been established in the

county. Hours of operation are at the discretion of the county elections board and may include weekends and night. You can find the hours of operation and early voting locations for your county [here](#).

Poll watchers can monitor the process at early voting locations as they would at a polling station on election day. If it is not possible to have poll watchers continuously at all early voting locations, then visits can be conducted at any time during hours of operation, and when possible, please vary the times of your visits. Please use the monitoring forms provided in the section below for election day poll watchers, and if concerning issues are discovered, please document these by filling in and submitting an [incident report form](#).

When you arrive at the office, introduce yourself to the staff, explaining your purpose. If you are refused entrance, or not allowed to witness any process (except marking a ballot), include that in your report. For example, if you are visiting an office, but when you arrive are told you cannot enter for any reason (no space, not authorized, closed early, etc.), please submit an incident report with the date, time, place, and reason given.

#### 1.4 Drop boxes for absentee ballots

The use of drop boxes for absentee ballots increased dramatically during the COVID-19 elections of 2020. Drop boxes have been shown to enable election fraud, and should be eliminated, but until that is accomplished, they should be monitored closely. Drop boxes will be located at county and satellite election offices and may be in other areas like city and municipal facilities, public libraries, county facilities, or any other locations decided by the county elections board. The location of drop boxes should be available at the [website](#) of your county elections office.

It is difficult to monitor drop boxes effectively, which is one reason so few people have confidence in their security. No provisions are made for poll watchers or others to review the video tapes in Virginia law. Ballots will be collected at least once a day during the work week by two election officials. Collection times may be available from your county election board (if not, please note that in your report). Ballots collected will then be transported to the county election board by the officials.

This is a remarkably insecure process, that would be unacceptable in any normal democracy. Unless poll watchers can be at the drop box when the ballots are collected every day, and then allowed to accompany the ballots to the election office, there is nothing to prevent ballot box stuffing or other malfeasance during transport of the ballots.

Poll watchers visiting advance voting sites may want to observe collection of ballots at drop boxes from time to time as well, to confirm ballot transport boxes are sealed with individually numbered tamper evident seals prior to departure. Record the number of the seal and time of departure and share that with any poll watchers monitoring the arrival of ballots at the county election office.

For drop boxes that have video surveillance, request to review the tapes daily or weekly. If not allowed to review the tapes, include that in your county report. For places where there is no video monitoring, or poll watchers are not allowed to review tapes, some volunteers may wish to install hidden motion-activated game cameras, or tiny pinhole video recorders, to record activity at the

drop boxes. Additional cameras on the street to capture car models and license plates could also be useful. In person monitoring of drop boxes through the night may not be feasible, but if undertaken, should be done with caution, and well-armed, as criminals caught in the act can be dangerous.

The online Drop Box Observer Form can be accessed [here](#). A print version is below. If you witness any serious problems during the day or at night, please document those by filling in and submitting an [incident report form](#).

<i>1.4.1 Drop Box Observer Form</i>	
County/City: _____ Date: _____ Time: Closing__ Midday___ Opening_____	
Observer(s):	Location:
1	Is the drop box in a secure location inside a building where it can be observed continuously during normal working hours and secured after working hours? Yes__ No__
2	If no, is the drop box under 24 hour video surveillance? Yes_____No ___
3	Is the video footage regularly reviewed by officers of election from two parties and poll watchers from both parties? Yes_____No _____
4	Were you notified in advance when the ballots from the drop box would be collected? Yes No
5	Were two officers of election from different parties present when the drop box was emptied? Yes__No ___
6	If no, was the registrar or assistant registrar present? Yes__No ___
7	How many ballots were collected from the drop box today:
8	Were the ballots collected from the drop box counted or stored securely? Counted _____ Stored securely _____
9	How many ballots were sent to be cured: ____

## 2 Observing the Voting and Counting Processes on Election Day

### 2.1 Before you Go

Before election day, please read through the observation guidelines. Prepare a lunch or dinner, if needed, and you might like a thermos of coffee or tea. Make sure you have the contact details for your coordinator, and your ID card and designation letter, and an email address or phone number for the registrar responsible for your polling place. Fully-charge your phone, and don't forget a pencil or pen, and your manual and checklist (some may have those on their phone).

## 2.2 Before Opening

If you will be in a precinct all day, or have the first observation shift, you should plan to arrive at your assigned precinct by 5:30 am, a half hour before opening, so you can observe preparations. On entering a precinct, show your ID card and designation letter to the chief election officer. During your time in the precinct be calm and respectful and avoid talking to voters. If you have questions or concerns, address those to the chief.

Between 5:00 and 5:30 the polling staff will arrive at the polling location and begin setting up the station. If any party representatives (poll watchers) are present, the Chief Election Officer will require they prove their identity and their registration status. The Chief will then lead the staff in the Oath of Election, then will sign and have the staff sign the Oath of Election form. The staff will check to ensure all required materials are present, then arrange tables, chairs, and machines, set up the electronic or paper poll book, and post required signs.

After setting up the polling place, with any poll watchers present in attendance, the election officers will confirm the seals on the voting machines are unbroken, and that the numbers on the seals match those in the log, then will open the machines to confirm there are no ballots in the main storage area and the emergency storage area.

The Chief will then confirm the public count and print a zero-tape report for each machine. The reports should list all candidates for the election, with vote totals of zero. The Chief and Assistant Chief Each election officer must sign the zero tape to certify the poll opening count. You should be able to confirm that all candidates who should be on the ballot are listed on the zero tape, and that the totals for each candidate are zero; and if they are not, challenge that, and file an incident report.

The Chief will then confirm that the ballots provided are for the precinct, and match the sample ballots, then will confirm that the number of ballots on hand equals the number provided by the Electoral Board.

At 6:00 the chief will announce the polls are open and allow voters waiting outside into the precinct.

Observer Note: For elections to be transparent and credible, poll watchers must be able to effectively observe all election processes and record their observations. If you are prevented from or hindered in observing any process (except a voter in the process of marking a ballot) at any time during the polling or counting, that is a serious offence, and should be challenged. If the challenge does not result in immediate relief, record the circumstance on an incident report form, and submit that immediately.

One of the security measures of Virginia's election process is hiring of polling staff from each major party, but sometimes that is not possible. Ask the Chief Election Officer if they were able to hire team members representing each major party.

If you are working in shifts, you may want to use a printed checklist, rather than fill in the form on your phone, as then this checklist can be passed on to poll watchers on later shifts, with the last poll watchers transcribing responses from the paper form and submitting one form only for the precinct. Check with your coordinator for practice in your county.

### 2.3 Voting Process

When a voter arrives, they will say their name and present their ID, and the pollbook officer will find their name in the Pollbook. If the person's voter registration record is not listed in the poll book, they can check the supplemental poll book pages (if any). The voter will then sign the poll book, and an election officer will hand the voter a paper ballot and direct them to the next available voting machine. After marking their ballot, the voter will insert it into the scanner, confirm it has been accepted, and then leave the polling location.

#### Checking Voter ID

Virginia has a nominal voter ID requirement, but in practice the requirement is meaningless, as someone lacking one of the approved forms of ID listed below, merely has to sign an ID Confirmation Statement to be allowed to cast a provisional ballot for any registered voter.

- Virginia driver's license
- Virginia DMV-issued ID card
- Valid employee ID card, containing a photograph,
- U.S. Military ID
- Valid student ID
- Valid U.S. passport or passport card
- Government-issued ID card from a federal, Virginia, or local political subdivision
- Voter ID card issued by the Department of Elections
- Voter confirmation documents
- Valid tribal enrollment or other tribal ID
- Nursing home resident ID
- Current utility bill, bank statement, government check, or paycheck containing the name and address of the voter
- Any other current government document containing the name and address of the voter

Provisional Ballot – There are three types of provisional ballots that can be cast on election day: not-registered provisional; no-ID provisional; and other provisional. A log by type of any provisional votes cast will be maintained throughout the day, and poll watchers should record the totals of each type in the report. Pay particular attention to voters who are required to vote a provisional ballot because someone has already voted in their name, as this is evidence of fraud.

### 2.4 Closing the Poll and the Counting Process

At 6:45 the Chief will announce that the polls will be closing in fifteen minutes. At 7:00 the Chief will announce the polls are closed, and prevent anyone else from joining a line, but anyone in line at closing will be allowed to vote.

When all waiting voters have cast their ballots, the team will open and run any absentee ballots through the scanners, then close the machines and print results reports. Poll watchers should be able to view the tabulation reports and may want to photograph them. The Chief or a designated officer will then call the registrar and report unofficial results and the number of provisional votes cast by type. Any poll watchers or media present during the counting process are not permitted to leave until the counting is complete.

The Chief will then announce the unofficial results inside the polling station and outside the station if anyone is waiting outside (media, voters, etc.). Once the unofficial results have been announced, any poll watchers or media present are permitted to leave. The team will then complete two copies of a Statement of Results, and a printed Return Sheet, and all officers present will sign the Return Sheet.

Poll watchers should confirm the results on the tape correspond to the results on the Statement of Results, then record those results on their report form, along with the total number of provisional votes cast by type. If you are not allowed to collect the results, immediately submit an incident report. When this process is over, your observation is complete. Please fill in the observation form, if you have not already, and add the results, then submit immediately.

Thank you for your dedication to free and fair elections in Virginia!

## 2.5 Poll Watcher Report Forms

During your observation you can use a cell phone or tablet to review and complete your checklist, but if you are working shifts, you may also want to take a paper copy of the forms and guide, so that you can pass the form to a subsequent poll watch, with the understanding that the last shift will fill in and submit just one electronic form for the precinct (check with your coordinator for practice in your county). A paper form may also be useful as a backup, in case your phone gives out.

We prefer that you submit your report, and any incident reports, using your phone, tablet or laptop, as that saves us time; but if that is not possible for any reason, please do not hesitate to fill in and submit the paper forms, as it is most important that we get your information in any format. Print versions of the Poll Watcher Report Form and Incident Report Form are included below.

*The online Poll Watcher Report form is available [here](#)*

V : 8/22/22

**2.5.1 Virginia Poll Watcher Report Form**

<b>Precinct:</b>		<b>Name:</b>		
<b>Address:</b>		<b>Phone No:</b>		
<b>City/</b>		<b>Email:</b>		
<b>County:</b>		<b>Arrival:</b>	<b>Departure:</b>	
<b>Representing:</b> Democratic party ___ Republican Party ___ Non-partisan or other observer ___				
Instructions				
<i>Read the questions carefully. Please make a check ( ✓ ) in the appropriate box. If you cannot answer the question, or it is not relevant, leave it blank. If clarification is required, briefly explain in the comment section of the form. If at any time you are prevented from observing any process, please challenge this to the judge, and if the challenge is not resolved, immediately file an incident report.</i>				
Before Opening			Yes	No
1	Were you allowed to observe the set-up of the precinct before opening? (if no, file an incident report)			
2	Are all polling team members and required materials present?			
3	Are there poll workers from both major parties on the polling team?			
4	Did the poll workers swear an oath to conduct fair elections prior to opening?			
5	Did the polling staff confirm the seals on the machines were unbroken, and that the numbers on the seals matched the numbers in the log?			
6	Did the poll workers open the tabulators and show you that the main and emergency boxes were empty, before resealing the machines?			
7	Was a zero tape printed and shown to poll watchers?			
8	Were you able to confirm the zero tape listed all candidates, and showed no votes?			
9	Did the precinct open on time (7:00 AM)?			
The Polling Process			Yes	No
10	Were you able to see each voter's name in the poll book?			
11	Was each voter's name called out so it could be heard by all poll watchers?			
12	Were any provisional votes cast? (if yes, provide number and relevant details in the data section below)			
13	Did any voters complain that someone had already voted in their name? (if yes, provide number and relevant details in the data and comment sections)			
14	Did any voters vote using only an ID Confirmation Statement? (if yes, provide number and relevant details in the data and comment sections)			
15	Could voters mark and cast their ballots in secret, without anyone seeing how they voted? (if no, give details in the comment section)			
16	Were there any problems with the voting machines? (if so, provide details in the comment section)			
17	Were poll watchers present from both major parties?			
Closing the Poll and the Counting Process			Yes	No
18	Did the polling place close at 7:00 PM?			
19	Were voters in the line at closing time allowed to vote?			
20	Were there any ballots in the emergency (auxiliary) ballot storage area of the tabulator? (if yes, question Chief, and provide explanation in comment section, or file incident report)			
21	Was a results report run on the scanner?			
22	Were you allowed to copy the results tape from the scanner? (if no, file an incident report).			
23	Were you allowed to observe all aspects of the polling and counting process? (If no, file an incident report)			
24	Record the total number of voters from Poll Book		Record the total number of ballots cast from scanner	
25	Did the total number of votes cast from the tabulator report equal the total number of voters checked off in the Poll Book? (If no, provide details in the comment section, or file an incident report).			
26	Record total provisional ballots by type:	not-registered	no-ID	other
27	Record the total number of voters that complained that someone had already voted in their name			
28	Record the total number of voters that voted using only an ID Confirmation Statement			



<b>2.5.2 Virginia Poll Watcher Incident Report Form</b>		
<i>Instructions: Please fill in the form as completely as possible as soon as possible after (or during) the incident. Take the time to collect names and contact details of other witnesses. If you collect electronic evidence (picture, video or audio recording), make a copy of the file and submit with your report, but retain the original on your phone or other electronic device. Submit the completed form as soon as possible to: VFET</i>		
<b>REPORTER INFORMATION</b>		
Reported by:	Phone:	
Position (voter, election inspector, poll watcher, etc.):	Email:	
<b>DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT</b>		
Date of incident:	Time of incident:	Were the police notified: Yes / No
Location of incident:		
Description of the incident: (What happened, how it happened, etc. Be as specific as possible. Continue on back if needed and attach additional sheets if necessary)		
Is there electronic evidence of the incident? Yes___ No___		What type of evidence is it? Phone photo__ video__ audio__
Is the evidence in your possession? Yes___ No___		CCTV___ Other_____
Did you witness the incident? Yes___ No___	If no, list the person who reported the incident to you below, along with details of any other witnesses. Attach additional sheets if needed.	
<b>WITNESSES</b>		
Name of Witness:	Phone:	
Role of Witness:	Email:	
Name of Witness:	Phone:	
Role of Witness:	Email:	
Name of Witness:	Phone:	
Role of Witness:	Email:	
Name of Witness:	Phone:	
Role of Witness:	Email:	
<b>PARTIES INVOLVED IN INCIDENT</b>		
Name:	Phone:	
Role:	Email:	
Name:	Phone:	
Role:	Email:	
Name:	Phone:	
Role:	Email:	

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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## 2.6 Observing a Central Absentee Voting Precinct

§ 24.2-712 of the Code of Virginia requires that every governing body of a city or county establish one or more central absentee voter precincts (CAP) to receive, count, and record absentee ballots. Central absentee voting precincts are one of the many “reforms” enacted in recent years that have universally weakened the security of Virginia elections. By separating the counting of precinct votes into two locations and creating a non-transparent central location for counting absentee votes, this process makes ensuring the integrity of precinct voting difficult at best, and at worst, enables the mass “laundering” of illegally cast votes. Nevertheless, until such a time as we have a reform-minded legislature and executive, it will be important for poll watchers to do all they can to enhance the transparency and credibility of central absentee voting precincts.

Absentee votes delivered by mail, in person, or through drop boxes, will be counted at the CAP on election day. The CAP cannot begin counting until 7:00 am on election day but can open later than that if so directed. A CAP will be manned by at least three election officers. To determine where CAPs will be in your area, and their hours of operation, contact your county registrar.

In a process identical to that used to count absentee ballots at a regular precinct, absentee ballots will be processed by the officers of election prior to the closing of the polls, but no ballot count totals can be transmitted outside of the central absentee voter precinct until after the closing of the polls. To maintain secrecy, the use of cellphones or other communication devices is prohibited until the closing of the polls, and any person present in the central absentee voter precinct must sign a statement under oath that he will not transmit any counts prior to the closing of the polls.

As soon as the polls are closed in the county or city, if the counting is complete, the officers of election at the central absentee voter precinct will report results to the registrar, as they would from a regular precinct.

The chief officer and the assistant chief officer, appointed to represent the two political parties, are always on duty; and no officer, political party representative, or other candidate representative shall leave the precinct after any ballots have been counted until the polls are closed and the count for the precinct is completed and reported.

*The online Virginia Central Absentee Precinct Report form is available [here](#)*



2.6.1 Virginia Central Absentee Precinct Report Form

<b>CA Precinct:</b>		<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>		<b>Phone No:</b>	
<b>City/</b>		<b>Email:</b>	
<b>County:</b>		<b>Arrival:</b>	<b>Departure:</b>
<b>Representing:</b> Democratic party ___ Republican Party ___ Non-partisan or other observer ___			

**Instructions**

Read the questions carefully. Please make a check ( ✓ ) in the appropriate box. If you cannot answer the question, or it is not relevant, leave it blank. If clarification is required, briefly explain in the comment section of the form. If at any time you are prevented from observing any process, please challenge this to the judge, and if the challenge is not resolved, immediately file an incident report.

<b>Before Opening</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1	Were you allowed to observe the set-up of the precinct before opening? (if no, file an incident report)		
2	Are all polling team members and required materials present?		
3	Are there poll workers from both major parties on the polling team?		
4	Did the poll workers swear an oath to conduct fair elections prior to opening?		
5	Did the polling staff confirm the seals on the machines were unbroken, and that the numbers on the seals matched the numbers in the log?		
6	Did the poll workers open the tabulators and show you that the main and emergency boxes were empty, before resealing the machines?		
7	Was a zero tape printed and shown to poll watchers?		
8	Were you able to confirm the zero tape listed all candidates, and showed no votes?		
9	Did the precinct open on time (7:00 AM)?		

<b>The Counting Process</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
10	Were absentee ballots still in their outer envelopes when processed?		
11	Were you able to confirm that the information on the inner envelope matched the voter information in the poll book?		
12	Were all of the ballots for a district processed before tabulation began?		
13	Did anyone in the CAP use a cell phone, laptop, or other communication device before results were announced? (if yes, file an incident report, and provide relevant details in the comment sections)		
14	Did anyone leave the CAP at any time before results were announced? (if yes, file an incident report, and provide relevant details in the comment sections)		
	Were there any problems with the voting machines? (if so, provide details in the comment section)		
	Were poll watchers present from both major parties?		

<b>Tabulation and Reporting</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	Were there any ballots in the emergency (auxiliary) ballot storage area of the tabulator? (if yes, question Chief, and provide explanation in comment section, or file incident report)		
	Was a results report run on the scanner?		
	Were you allowed to copy the results tape from the scanner? (if no, file an incident report).		
	Were you allowed to observe all aspects of the CAP process? (If no, file an incident report)		
	Record the total number of voters from Poll Book		Record the total number of ballots cast from scanner
	Did the total number of votes cast from the tabulator report equal the total number of voters checked off in the Poll Book? (If no, provide details in the comment section, or file an incident report).		

**Please record each candidate and the total votes below**

Candidate Name	Votes	Candidate Name	Votes	Candidate Name	Votes

