

MARICOPA COUNTY
Elections Department

Poll Worker Training Manual

2026 Primary & General Elections
Maricopa County, Arizona

Version:	3.1 — Updated February 2026
Prepared by:	Maricopa County Elections Department
Classification:	Official Use — Authorized Personnel Only
Contact:	Election Day Hotline: (602) 506-1511

Table of Contents

Section 1	Welcome & Overview	3
Section 2	Before Election Day	4
Section 3	Opening the Polls	5
Section 4	Voter Check-In Procedures	7
Section 5	Voter Identification Requirements	9
Section 6	Ballot Procedures	11
Section 7	Provisional Ballots	13
Section 8	Accessible Voting	15
Section 9	Electioneering & Prohibited Activities	17
Section 10	Troubleshooting Common Issues	18
Section 11	Emergency Procedures	20
Section 12	Closing the Polls	22
Section 13	Post-Election Responsibilities	24
Appendix A	Appendix A: Quick Reference Card	25
Appendix B	Appendix B: Phone Numbers & Contacts	26
Appendix C	Appendix C: Glossary of Terms	27

Section 1: Welcome & Overview

Thank you for volunteering to serve as a poll worker for Maricopa County. Your role is critical to ensuring that every eligible voter can exercise their right to vote in a fair, secure, and accessible election. This manual provides the procedures and guidelines you need to perform your duties effectively.

Your Role as a Poll Worker

As a poll worker, you are responsible for:

- Setting up the polling location before voters arrive
- Checking in voters and verifying their eligibility
- Issuing the correct ballot to each voter
- Assisting voters with questions about the voting process (not ballot content)
- Maintaining order and enforcing electioneering rules
- Closing the polls and securing all election materials

Chain of Command

Each polling location is managed by an **Inspector** (lead poll worker) who is your primary point of contact. The Inspector reports to the **Field Supervisor** assigned to your area. For urgent issues, the **Election Day Hotline** is available at **(602) 506-1511** from 5:00 AM to midnight on Election Day.

IMPORTANT: You must remain politically neutral at all times while serving as a poll worker. Do not discuss candidates, ballot measures, or your personal political views with voters or other workers.

Key Dates — 2026 Election Cycle

Election	Date	Single Textolls Open	Polls Close
Primary Election	August 4, 2026	6:00 AM	7:00 PM
General Election	November 3, 2026	6:00 AM	7:00 PM

Section 2: Before Election Day

2.1 Training Requirements

All poll workers must complete the mandatory training session before serving. Training covers voter check-in procedures, voting equipment operation, accessibility requirements, and emergency protocols. If you miss your scheduled training, contact the Elections Department immediately to reschedule.

2.2 What to Bring on Election Day

- **This training manual** — keep it with you at all times
- **Two forms of identification** — government-issued photo ID preferred
- **Comfortable clothing** — you will be on your feet for 14+ hours
- **Meals and snacks** — you may not be able to leave the polling location
- **Phone charger** — for emergency communications only
- **Reading glasses** — if needed for reviewing documents

IMPORTANT: Do NOT wear any clothing, hats, pins, or accessories with political messaging, candidate names, party logos, or ballot measure slogans. This includes clothing with the American flag that could be perceived as partisan.

2.3 Polling Location Setup Checklist

Arrive at your assigned polling location by **5:30 AM**. The Inspector will assign duties. Complete the following before 6:00 AM:

1. Unlock the facility and verify all rooms are secure
2. Set up voting booths with privacy screens in place
3. Power on ALL voting machines and run diagnostic tests
4. Verify ballot supply matches the manifest (count all ballot packets)
5. Set up the accessible voting unit (AVU) and test all features
6. Post required signage: Sample Ballot, Voter Rights, Language Assistance Available
7. Set up the voter check-in station with electronic poll books
8. Place directional signs outside the building
9. Verify the 75-foot electioneering boundary and place boundary markers
10. Complete the Opening Certification form (all workers sign)

TIP: Take a photo of the completed setup before polls open. This helps with any post-election questions about polling location configuration.

Section 3: Opening the Polls

3.1 Pre-Opening Verification

Before opening the doors at 6:00 AM, the Inspector must verify:

- All voting machines show zero totals on the printed zero tape
- Electronic poll books are connected and loaded with the correct precinct data
- All required signage is posted and visible
- At least one accessible voting unit is operational
- All poll workers are present and have signed in
- Emergency supply kit is accessible (paper ballots, flashlights, incident forms)

3.2 Zero Tape Procedure

The zero tape is a printed record showing that all vote counters on the machine are set to zero before voting begins. This is a critical step for election integrity.

1. Print the zero tape from each voting machine
2. Verify all candidate and measure totals show **0** (zero)
3. Have two poll workers initial each zero tape
4. Seal the zero tape in the designated envelope
5. Record the zero tape seal number on the Opening Certification form

IMPORTANT: If any machine does NOT show zero totals, do NOT use that machine. Call the Election Day Hotline immediately: (602) 506-1511

3.3 Opening the Doors

At exactly **6:00 AM**, the Inspector announces that the polls are open. If voters are waiting in line, begin processing them immediately. Greet each voter warmly and direct them to the check-in station.

TIP: A positive first interaction sets the tone. Smile, make eye contact, and say: "Good morning! Welcome to your polling location. May I help you check in?"

Section 4: Voter Check-In Procedures

4.1 Standard Check-In Process

Follow these steps for every voter:

1. **Greet the voter** — "Welcome! May I have your name please?"
2. **Ask for name and address** — Look up the voter in the electronic poll book
3. **Verify identification** — Check ID per Arizona requirements (see Section 5)
4. **Confirm the voter's information** — "Can you confirm your address is [address]?"
5. **Have the voter sign** — The voter signs the electronic poll book
6. **Issue the ballot** — Provide the correct ballot style for their precinct
7. **Direct the voter** — Point them to an available voting booth

4.2 Voter Not Found in Poll Book

If a voter's name does not appear in the electronic poll book:

1. Ask the voter to verify their name spelling and current address
2. Search using alternative spellings or partial name matches
3. Check if the voter is at the correct polling location
4. If the voter is in the wrong location, provide directions to the correct one
5. If the voter insists they are registered and at the right location, **offer a provisional ballot** (see Section 7)

IMPORTANT: NEVER turn a voter away without offering a provisional ballot. Every person who believes they are eligible to vote has the right to cast a provisional ballot.

4.3 Voter Has Already Voted (According to Poll Book)

If the electronic poll book shows that a voter has already cast a ballot (e.g., early ballot received):

- Inform the voter that records show they have already voted
- If the voter insists they did not vote, offer a **provisional ballot**
- Document the situation on an Incident Report Form
- Do NOT accuse the voter of attempting to vote twice

4.4 Voter Name Change

If a voter's name has changed (e.g., due to marriage) but their address is the same:

- The voter may still vote if their ID matches other identifying information

- Have the voter complete a name change form
- Update the electronic poll book if possible
- If in doubt, offer a provisional ballot

Section 5: Voter Identification Requirements

5.1 Acceptable Forms of Photo ID (One Required)

Any ONE of the following is sufficient:

Accepted Photo ID	Notes
Valid Arizona driver's license	May be expired if voter is 65+
Arizona non-operating identification card	Issued by MVD
Tribal enrollment card or other tribal ID	With photo
Valid U.S. federal, state, or local government ID	With photo
Valid U.S. military ID	Active or retired
Valid U.S. passport or passport card	Current or expired within last 5 years

5.2 Acceptable Non-Photo ID (Two Required)

If the voter does not have a photo ID, they may present TWO of the following:

- Utility bill dated within 90 days of the election
- Bank or credit union statement dated within 90 days
- Valid Arizona vehicle registration
- Indian census card
- Property tax statement for the current year
- Vehicle insurance card
- Any official document from a government entity (federal, state, county, city, tribal) that shows the voter's name and address

5.3 Voter Without ID

If a voter does not have any acceptable identification:

1. Offer the voter a **provisional ballot**
2. Inform them they have **5 business days** after the election to provide valid ID to the County Recorder's office
3. Provide the voter with the County Recorder's address and contact information
4. Be polite and reassuring — this is a standard procedure

IMPORTANT: NEVER refuse to let someone vote because they lack ID. Always offer a provisional ballot. The voter's provisional ballot will be verified after the election.

Section 6: Ballot Procedures

6.1 Issuing Ballots

After the voter has been checked in and verified, issue the correct ballot. Maricopa County uses multiple ballot styles based on voter precinct and district assignments.

1. Check the electronic poll book for the voter's **ballot style code**
2. Select the correct ballot from the corresponding packet
3. Verify the ballot style matches before handing it to the voter
4. Provide the voter with a secrecy sleeve
5. Direct the voter to an available voting booth

6.2 Spoiled Ballots

If a voter makes a mistake on their ballot before submitting it:

1. The voter may request a new ballot
2. Write "**SPOILED**" across the original ballot in red ink
3. Place the spoiled ballot in the Spoiled Ballot envelope
4. Issue a new ballot of the same style
5. A voter may spoil up to **two (2) ballots**. After the third ballot is issued, no additional replacements are permitted.

6.3 Ballot Scanning

When the voter has completed their ballot:

1. Direct the voter to the ballot scanner/tabulator
2. Instruct the voter to insert the ballot face-down into the scanner
3. If the scanner accepts the ballot, the voter is done
4. If the scanner rejects the ballot, see Section 10 (Troubleshooting)

TIP: Never look at a voter's completed ballot. If you accidentally see ballot selections, do not comment on them. Voter privacy is paramount.

Section 7: Provisional Ballots

7.1 When to Issue a Provisional Ballot

A provisional ballot **must** be offered in any of the following situations:

- The voter's name does not appear in the electronic poll book
- The voter does not have acceptable identification
- The voter's eligibility is in question for any reason
- The voter's record shows they already voted (but they claim they did not)
- The voter moved within the county and did not update their registration
- Equipment failure prevents normal check-in

7.2 Provisional Ballot Procedure

1. Provide the voter with a **provisional ballot affidavit envelope** (green envelope)
2. Instruct the voter to complete ALL fields on the affidavit
3. The voter marks their ballot in a voting booth
4. The voter places the completed ballot inside the green affidavit envelope
5. The voter **seals** the envelope and **signs** the outside
6. Place the sealed envelope in the **Provisional Ballot bag**
7. Record the provisional ballot in the **Provisional Ballot Log**
8. Give the voter a **Provisional Ballot Receipt** with their tracking number

IMPORTANT: Do NOT insert provisional ballots into the scanner/tabulator. Provisional ballots are verified and counted separately by the County Recorder after Election Day.

7.3 What to Tell the Voter

When issuing a provisional ballot, inform the voter:

- Their ballot will be verified by the County Recorder's office
- They can check the status of their provisional ballot using the tracking number
- If ID was the issue, they have **5 business days** to present valid ID to the County Recorder
- The County Recorder's office address: **111 S. 3rd Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85003**

Section 8: Accessible Voting

8.1 Accessibility Requirements

Federal law (the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Help America Vote Act) requires that every polling location provide accessible voting options. Every voter has the right to vote privately and independently, regardless of ability.

8.2 Accessible Voting Unit (AVU)

Each polling location must have at least one AVU with the following features:

- **Audio ballot** — headphones with audio instructions and ballot content
- **Large print display** — adjustable font size on screen
- **High contrast mode** — for voters with low vision
- **Sip-and-puff device** — for voters with limited hand mobility
- **Rocker paddle** — alternative input device
- **Wheelchair accessible** — adjustable height table

8.3 Assisting Voters with Disabilities

Key guidelines:

- **Never assume** a voter does or does not need assistance
- **Ask first:** "Would you like any assistance today?"
- A voter may bring anyone they choose to assist them (except their employer or union representative)
- If a voter requests poll worker assistance, **two poll workers of different parties** must assist together
- Assistance means helping the voter operate the equipment, **NOT** telling them how to vote

8.4 Curbside Voting

If a voter is unable to enter the polling location due to physical limitations:

1. Two poll workers (of different parties) go to the voter's vehicle
2. Verify the voter's identity and check them in using a portable poll book or paper roster
3. Provide the voter with a ballot and secrecy sleeve
4. Allow the voter to mark the ballot privately in their vehicle
5. Return the completed ballot to the polling location and process it

8.5 Language Assistance

Maricopa County is required to provide language assistance in **Spanish** and **Navajo** in addition to English. If a voter requests assistance in another language, they may bring their own interpreter. Post the "Language Assistance Available" sign prominently.

Section 9: Electioneering & Prohibited Activities

9.1 The 75-Foot Rule

Arizona law prohibits electioneering within **75 feet** of the polling location entrance. The Inspector must measure and mark this boundary before polls open.

Within the 75-foot boundary, the following are **prohibited**:

- Distributing campaign literature, flyers, or stickers
- Displaying campaign signs, banners, or posters
- Wearing campaign apparel (for poll workers and poll observers)
- Soliciting votes for any candidate or measure
- Conducting exit polls or surveys
- Gathering signatures for petitions

9.2 Voters Wearing Campaign Apparel

IMPORTANT: A voter wearing campaign clothing, hats, or buttons MUST still be allowed to vote. Do NOT ask them to remove items or turn clothing inside out. Do NOT turn them away. Simply process them normally.

9.3 Handling Electioneering Violations

1. Politely approach the person and explain the 75-foot boundary rule
2. Ask them to move beyond the boundary marker
3. If they refuse, do NOT physically confront them
4. Call the Election Day Hotline: **(602) 506-1511**
5. Document the incident on an Incident Report Form

9.4 Media at the Polls

Members of the media may observe outside the 75-foot boundary. They may NOT enter the polling location without prior authorization from the Elections Department. If media arrive, direct all questions to the Election Day Hotline.

Section 10: Troubleshooting Common Issues

Issue	What to Do
Ballot scanner rejects ballot	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Check for stray marks or damage2. Offer the voter a new ballot (spoil the original)3. If the scanner continues to reject, use the emergency ballot box4. Call the Hotline if the scanner rejects multiple ballots
Electronic poll book freezes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Wait 30 seconds for it to respond2. If unresponsive, restart the device3. Use the paper backup roster while it reboots4. Call the Hotline if it does not come back online
Long lines forming	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Open additional voting booths if available2. Ensure check-in is running at maximum speed3. Provide water to voters waiting in line (nonpartisan groups may do this)4. Remind voters they can use any open booth
Voter becomes agitated or disruptive	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Remain calm and professional2. Listen to the voter's concern3. If the situation escalates, the Inspector should intervene4. If safety is threatened, call 911 first, then the Hotline
Power outage	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Use emergency paper ballots from the supply kit2. Use flashlights from the emergency supply kit3. Call the Hotline immediately4. Do NOT close the polling location — voting must continue
Voter requests to change ballot after scanning	Scanning is done. Once a ballot is scanned and accepted, it is cast. Politely inform the voter that their ballot has been recorded.

Section 11: Emergency Procedures

11.1 General Emergency Protocol

In any emergency, follow these priorities in order:

1. **Safety first** — Ensure the safety of all voters and workers
2. **Call for help** — Call 911 for life-threatening emergencies, then the Election Day Hotline
3. **Continue voting if possible** — Elections must proceed unless ordered to stop by authorities
4. **Document everything** — Complete an Incident Report Form for every emergency

11.2 Power Outage

- Switch to **emergency paper ballots** immediately
- Use flashlights from the emergency supply kit
- Continue voter check-in using the paper backup roster
- Place completed paper ballots in the **emergency ballot box** (gray container)
- Call the Hotline: **(602) 506-1511**
- Do NOT close the polls — voting must continue

11.3 Equipment Malfunction

- If a **single machine** fails: Take it out of service, redirect voters to other machines
- If **all machines** fail: Switch to emergency paper ballots
- Call the Hotline immediately for a technician
- Document the failure time and machine serial number

11.4 Security Threat

1. **Call 911 immediately**
2. Then call the Election Day Hotline: (602) 506-1511
3. If safe to do so, calmly direct voters away from the threat
4. Follow law enforcement instructions
5. Do NOT attempt to physically confront any individual

11.5 Medical Emergency

1. Call 911 immediately
2. If trained, provide first aid (AED locations should be noted during setup)

3. Clear the area around the individual
4. Document the incident and notify the Hotline

11.6 Bomb Threat

1. Call 911 immediately
2. Do NOT use cell phones near the suspected area
3. Evacuate the building calmly
4. Move all secured election materials if safe to do so
5. Do NOT re-enter until cleared by law enforcement

Section 12: Closing the Polls

12.1 At 7:00 PM

At exactly **7:00 PM**, the Inspector announces: *"The polls are now closed. Any voter currently in line will be allowed to vote."*

IMPORTANT: ANY voter who is in line at 7:00 PM MUST be allowed to vote. A poll worker should stand at the end of the line at 7:00 PM to mark the last voter. No one who arrives after 7:00 PM may join the line.

12.2 Closing Procedures

After the last voter in line has voted:

1. Shut down all voting machines per the posted shutdown procedure
2. Print the **results tape** from each machine
3. Post one copy of the results tape on the wall of the polling location (public posting requirement)
4. Seal the results tape in the designated envelope
5. **Reconcile ballots:** Number of voters checked in must match ballots cast + spoiled + provisional
6. Complete the **Closing Certification form** (all workers sign)
7. Seal all ballots in the designated transport containers
8. Record all seal numbers on the Chain of Custody form
9. Pack up all equipment, signage, and supplies
10. Transport all materials to the **Central Receiving facility** as directed by the Inspector

12.3 What Gets Sealed

Container	Color	Contents
Ballot Transfer Container	Blue	All scanned ballots
Provisional Ballot Bag	Green	All provisional ballot envelopes
Spoiled Ballot Envelope	Red	All spoiled ballots
Emergency Ballot Box	Gray	Paper ballots used during equipment failure
Results Tape Envelope	White	Machine results tapes + zero tapes
USB Drive Bag	Yellow	Machine USB/memory devices

Appendix B: Phone Numbers & Contacts

Contact	Phone Number	When to Call
Election Day Hotline	(602) 506-1511	Any election-related question or issue
Emergency Services	911	Life-threatening emergencies, security threats
County Recorder	(602) 506-3535	Voter registration questions
Equipment Support	(602) 506-2844	Machine malfunctions, technical issues
ADA Coordinator	(602) 506-2977	Accessibility questions or complaints
Language Assistance Line	(602) 506-1511 ext. 2	Translation support needed
Secretary of State	(602) 542-4285	State election law questions
After-Hours Security	(602) 506-8611	Facility security issues after hours

Notes

This manual is provided for training purposes by the Maricopa County Elections Department. Procedures are subject to change based on updated Arizona Revised Statutes, court orders, or directives from the Secretary of State. Always follow the most current guidance provided by your Inspector or the Election Day Hotline.

Maricopa County Elections Department

510 S. 3rd Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85003

elections.maricopa.gov

(602) 506-1511