



SECTION 2

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

Fairfax County Office of Elections
12000 Government Center Pkwy, Suite 323, Fairfax, Virginia 22035
703-324-4735 or ElectionOfficers@fairfaxcounty.gov
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections>

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

Congratulations, you've been assigned as a Chief or Assistant Chief! You're going to have a great time managing your polling place and helping non-routine voters on election day. But remember, your job starts well before election day to ensure everything goes smoothly.

Your tasks as a Chief or Assistant Chief will begin about two weeks before election day. It is important to complete each of these tasks in order and in a timely manner. Delays may create problems later, interfering with your ability to succeed as a Chief or Assistant Chief. Detailed instructions for each task are set out in chronological order in this section.

Two weeks before:

- **Task 1: Contact your Assistant Chief**
- **Task 2: Contact your polling place**
- **Task 3: Contact your Rover**
- **Task 4: Contact your election officers**

One week before:

- **Task 5: Watch Chiefs Briefing**
- **Task 6: Visit your polling place**
- **Task 7: Develop your election day plan**

Weekend before (Saturday/Sunday):

- **Task 8: Contact election officers again**

Day before (Monday):

- **Task 9: Pick up election supplies**
- **Task 10: Set up polling place**

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

Two weeks before election day...

About two weeks before election day, you will receive emails with important information:

- **Chiefs Notebook:** A PDF version of this notebook.
- **Precinct Roster:** A list of your assigned officers and their contact information.
- **Polling Place Info Sheet:** Information about your specific polling place, including the assigned voting room, designated setup time for the day before election, contact information for your building liaison, and other notes specific to your polling place.

TASK 1: CONTACT YOUR ASSISTANT CHIEF

After receiving the precinct roster, the Chief's first call should be to the Assistant Chief. You will work together on many pre-election tasks, so start communicating and planning together now!

TASK 2: CONTACT YOUR POLLING PLACE

After receiving the **Polling Place Info Sheet**, the Chief should call or email the polling place contact as soon as possible. In speaking to your polling place contact, you should:

- **Arrange the date and time when you (and the Assistant Chief, if possible) can visit the polling place and see the voting room the week before the election.** If there are two precincts at your polling place, meet with your counterparts at the same time, if possible.
- **Confirm the setup time and Monday contact for the day before the election.** You and your polling place contact can agree on whatever setup time works best for both of you, even if it is different than what is listed on the Polling Place Info Sheet.
- **Verify all other information from the Polling Place Info Sheet is correct.**



Call the office if you have trouble reaching facility staff, difficulty setting up a site visit, or if the Polling Place information has changed.

TASK 3: CONTACT YOUR ROVER

Return your Rover's first contact telephone call as soon as possible. The Rover can provide guidance on polling place setup and operational issues. If you need extra signage or supplies (such as extension cords), inform your Rover.

If you are new to a precinct or in a different room, send your Rover a diagram of your polling place layout so you can discuss any unique circumstances you anticipate facing on election day.

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

Two weeks before election day...

TASK 4: CONTACT ELECTION OFFICERS

The Chief (not Assistant Chief) should email or call election officers as soon as possible after receiving the precinct roster and ask them to reply to confirm. If any officers do not respond in a timely manner, follow up with a phone call or text message.

Here is a basic email template you can use. Feel free to modify or add to this!

Dear election officers,

Hello! My name is [Chief name] and I will be the Chief election officer at [precinct name and number] at [building name] for the upcoming election. I am a first-time Chief, but I have previously served in [number of elections] at this polling place.

Some information about our polling place:

- We will set up the voting room the day before the election at [time]. Hope you can join!
- Our voting room is the [gym/cafeteria/other]. Use entrance [#] to get there.
- On election day, you should park in [parking information]. Don't park in voter parking!
- [Any other information specific to your polling place]

Some general reminders:

- Arrive no later than 5:00 AM on election day.
- Wear non-partisan business casual clothing. Jeans are fine (no holes). Dress in layers.
- You cannot leave the polling place during the day, so bring all food and medications.
- We will rotate duties every 2 hours, and everyone will be able to take breaks.
- If you do not live in this precinct, vote early!
- If you need a refresher, visit the training website: <https://training.electionofficers.com>

Please reply to this email with answers to the following questions:

1. Are you able to join us for pre-election setup on [day before election] at [time]? It's strongly encouraged, but not required.
2. How many times have you served as an election officer?
3. How comfortable are you with opening and using the Poll Pads, DS200, and ExpressVote?
4. Do you have any questions for me?

Thanks, and I look forward to serving with all of you!

- [Chief name, email address, and phone number]

If this is your first time being a Chief or your first time at a new polling place, you may not have all this information yet. That's OK—let your officers know you will provide that information after a site visit.



If any of your officers say they are no longer able to serve, contact the elections office at ElectionOfficers@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-4735 as soon as possible! The sooner you let us know, the better chance you have of receiving a replacement officer.

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

One week before election day...

TASK 5: WATCH CHIEFS BRIEFING

All Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs must watch a legally required Chiefs Briefing before each election. This is separate from any other training class and is required before each election in which you serve as a Chief or Assistant Chief.

The Chiefs Briefing goes over legal and procedural updates specific to the upcoming election and covers what Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs specifically need to know. You will have an opportunity to ask questions during or after the Chiefs Briefing.

The Chiefs Briefing is always scheduled during the week before the election. You must watch the Chiefs Briefing to be eligible to serve as Chief or Assistant Chief.

The Chiefs Briefing is usually conducted as a live virtual meeting about one week before election day. You will have the opportunity to ask questions during or immediately after the Chiefs Briefing.

If you are not able to attend, that's OK—we will email a recording to all Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs afterwards, which you must usually watch within 48 hours.

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

One week before election day...

TASK 6: VISIT YOUR POLLING PLACE.

Complete the following tasks when you visit your polling place the week before the election. Bring this notebook with you.

Do **NOT** open the equipment cart.

Do **NOT** open the envelopes containing machine keys.

Pre-Election Site Visit Checklist



Meet with the building manager, custodian, and/or office staff and remind them of our election day requirements:

- Building must open at 5:00 AM on election morning.
- Outside lighting, reserved parking, and accessible spaces are required.
- Ask for cones to reserve voter parking places and on which to post signs.
- Heat/air conditioning is required from 5:00 AM to at least 9:00 PM.
- Election officers need all-day access to telephone and restrooms.
- Election officers may be there until 9:00 PM or later.
- Bake sales and fundraisers must be outside the 40-foot Prohibited Area.



Verify building contact names and phone numbers against Polling Place Info Sheet, including:

- Two 5:00 AM election morning building contacts.
- Staff member opening the facility for Monday pre-election setup.



Locate the equipment cart.

- All delivered materials, including DS200 scanners, will be locked inside the equipment cart. Do not open the cart or remove materials.
- Check the attached labels to ensure they are for the correct precinct.
- Verify that the equipment cart is sealed with a zip-tie seal at the top and padlocks at the top and bottom.
- Secure the cart in the same location before you leave.

BEFORE ELECTION DAY



Check for cell phone coverage in the voting room.

- If cell phone coverage is weak, ask for access to a landline.



Check voting room features to plan layout and traffic flow.

- Test power outlets. Determine where extension cords will run depending on number and location of power outlets.
- Assess the physical layout of the voting room to map out placement of equipment, tables, privacy booths, and equipment cart.
- See the **suggested voting room layout diagram** under Task #7.
- Identify places where voting room signage can be posted.
- See **Opening Procedures Signs & Posters Guide**.
- Verify that you have enough adult-size, non-attached tables and chairs.



Check building features for voter access to and from the building and the voting room.

- Determine what kinds of signage will direct voters from the parking lot into the building. Where will “Vote Here” and “Polling Place” signage need to be located? Check how far out to the street the “Polling Place” signage must be placed.
- Determine what kinds of signage will direct voters to and from the voting room and where informational signs can be posted.
- Locate voter parking spaces. Locate reserved accessible parking spaces and the best place to put the Curbside Voting sandwich board.
- Assess how the Prohibited Activities Area will be marked.
- See **Opening Procedures Signs & Posters** and **Marking Prohibited Area** guides.
- Note emergency evacuation routes and identify the shelter-in-place location.



Check exterior and interior pathways for accessibility.

- See the *Accessibility* section later in this Notebook.



Call your Rover or office staff at 703-324-4735 if you have any questions or concerns about:

- Additional supplies that you need.
- Construction, voter access, parking, or building issues that need to be addressed.
- Difficulty dealing with facility staff.
- Any other pre-election issues.

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

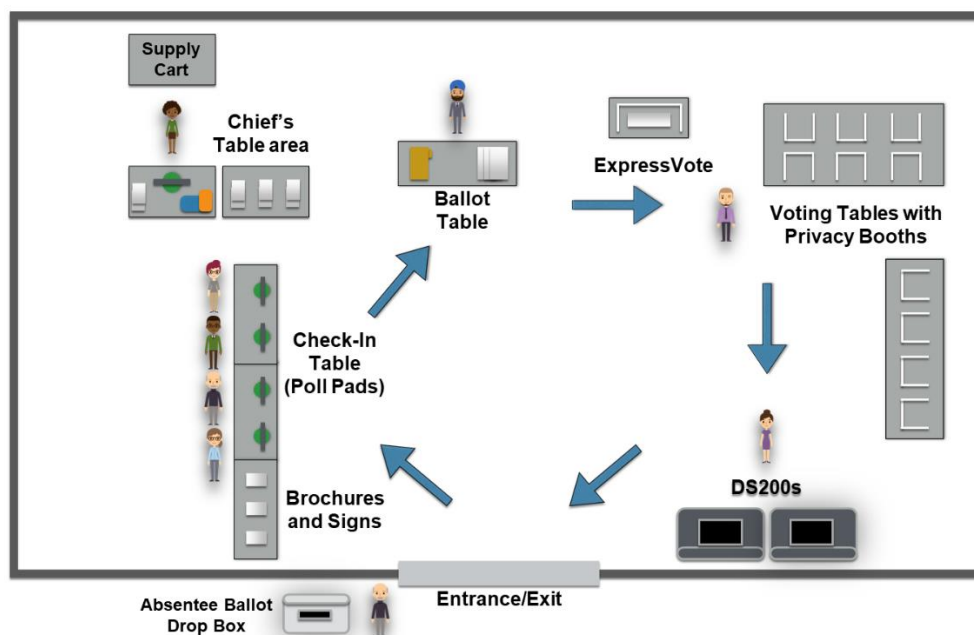
One week before election day...

TASK 7: DEVELOP A PLAN FOR ELECTION DAY

The Chief and Assistant Chief should work together to develop a plan for opening, managing, and closing the polling place.

- ❑ **Meet in-person, virtually, or over the phone.** If meeting in person to set up the precinct on the Monday before election day, give the Assistant Chief their keys envelope and printed copy of the chiefs notebook.
- ❑ **Determine which functions** will be primarily performed by the Chief and/or Assistant Chief. The Assistant Chief should be able to perform all duties of the Chief.
- ❑ **Plan election officer assignments based on the skills and experience of your officers.**
 - Plan assignments for opening the polls and the first morning shift.
 - Assign an experienced, friendly officer at the entrance to the voting room.
 - Put your fastest/most experienced officers on the Poll Pads for the morning and evening rush. At other times, team up an experienced officer with a new officer.
- ❑ **Diagram your room to plan the layout and traffic flow.**
 - Draw a diagram of your voting location and map out the placement of your check-in tables, ballot table, privacy booths, DS200 scanners, ExpressVote machine(s), drop box, equipment cart, and chief's table. Keep in mind voter flow from station to station.
 - Let your Rover know as soon as possible if additional signs or extension cords are needed.
 - If it is your first time working as a Chief at this polling place, send a copy of your room diagram to the Rover and to building staff if they will be assisting with furniture setup or removal, along with number of chairs and tables needed.

SUGGESTED LAYOUT OF VOTING ROOM



BEFORE ELECTION DAY

The weekend before election day (Saturday/Sunday)...

TASK 8: CONTACT ELECTION OFFICERS AGAIN

- Confirm there are no changes to their availability and give last-minute reminders.
- Inform them of the setup time and location for the Monday before the election. Invite them to join you. Preliminary setup on Monday reduces the work on election morning.
- Tell them what their election day 5:00 AM and first shift assignments will be.
- Give officers the entrance number or description for the entrance where you will meet at 5:00 AM Tuesday morning and directions for where to park.

If you have any newly assigned officers, make sure to send them the same information you previously sent all other officers.

IMPORTANT: If any of your officers indicate they are no longer able to serve, notify the elections office at ElectionOfficers@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-4735 as soon as possible! The sooner you let us know, the better chance you have of receiving a replacement officer.

Here is a basic email template you could use. Feel free to modify or add to this!

Dear election officers,

Hello again! This is [name], the Chief of [precinct and building]. I'm looking forward to serving with all of you on Tuesday. If you are no longer available for any reason, let me and the Office of Elections (electionofficers@fairfaxcounty.gov) know immediately.

We have [#] people helping set up the polling place on Monday at [time]. If anyone else can join, let me know - it should only take about 1 hour!

Your assignments for election morning setup and for the first shift on election morning [are listed below or attached]. If you have concerns about your assignment(s), please let me know.

You must arrive no later than 5:00 AM on election day so I can swear in everyone on time. Set multiple alarms! If you're running late, call or text me at [phone number]. If you don't notify me, the elections office may send a replacement and you will be sent home.

As a reminder, here is our polling place information:

- [Building name and address]
- [Voting room]
- [Building entrance]
- [Parking information] (and remember, don't park in voter parking!)
- [Any other information specific to your polling place]

Finally, don't forget to pack all food and medications! You cannot leave the polling place during the day, but you can have items delivered to you.

Thanks and see you all on Tuesday (or Monday, for setup)!

- [Chief name, email address, and phone number]

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

The day before election day (Monday)...

TASK 9: PICK UP ELECTION SUPPLIES

On the day before the election, Chiefs (not Assistant Chiefs) will now pick up all required last-minute supplies for election day, including:

- **Black rolling kit**, containing 2 physical Chief's Notebooks and other materials
- **Poll Pads**, which will have already been updated with the final voter file
- **Envelope containing final materials**, which replaces the past Sheriff's Envelope deliveries

We have 4 pick up depot locations around the county. You should have already enrolled in a timeslot and location from which to pick up your supplies.

- Arrive at your scheduled location and time on the Monday before election day.**
- Pick up your black rolling kit, Poll Pads, and final envelope.**
- Verify that you have received the correct Poll Pad cases and number of Poll Pads for your precinct.**
- Drive directly to the polling place—do not take the Poll Pads home.**
- Do not unseal or open the Poll Pads until election morning.**

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

TASK 10: SET UP POLLING PLACE

Go to your facility at the **pre-arranged time and location** for Monday pre-election setup.

If you are unable to do preliminary setup on Monday, you can do all setup on election morning.

DO NOT CUT or remove seals on DS200 scanners before election day.

DO NOT CUT or remove seals on Poll Pad cases before election day.

DO NOT OPEN the DS200 ballot compartment where ballots are stored.

DO NOT OPEN small envelope containing machine keys before election day.

- Bring all last-minute materials given to you to your polling place on Monday.**
- Meet with building contact, if available.**
 - Verify that the voting room will be secured overnight.
 - Verify that they will be at the facility in the morning to let you in at 5:00 AM and open the voting room.
- Verify that all tasks from first polling place visit are complete.**
 - If you were not able to visit your polling place the week before the election, use the checklist in **Task #6** to verify that those initial tasks are complete.
- Open the equipment cart with the lanyard key if at least two officers are present**

Materials needed: Equipment Cart opening guide, equipment cart key on lanyard, pen, Machine Certification Form, Cart Security Log.

- Match the zip-tie seal number on the cart top with the number on **Machine Certification Form**.
- Follow instructions in the **Opening Procedures Equipment Cart** guide to unlock the cart.
- Verify the cut seal number against the previous entry on the **Cart Security Log** located in the pocket on the inside of the right door. Place cut seal in **Envelope #7**.

NOTE: Whenever the cart is unsealed / opened or resealed / closed, you are required to complete and sign the **Cart Security Log** located in the pocket on the inside of the right cart door. Two officers must do this together.

BEFORE ELECTION DAY

❑ Remove contents from the cart

- Decide whether you want to remove the DS200s during Monday setup to access all other materials in the cart. Do not attempt this unless three officers are present. **The DS200s must be locked in the cart overnight.**
- Give the **Opening Procedures Equipment Cart** guide to officers. **For the safety of all election officers, make sure they use the guides for the new equipment cart!**
- Follow the unpacking sequence.
- **⚠ Do not open or unload ballots from the DS200 where they are stored.**
- Distribute cart contents to assigned teams to inventory or assemble or post.

❑ Set up voting room, but **NOT** voting equipment.

- Do as much preliminary setup as your facility administrator allows *and* if the voting room will be secure overnight.
- Check equipment seal numbers against the **Machine Certification Form**.
- Arrange tables, secure electrical cords to prevent tripping, set out privacy booths, and post indoor signs. Put up interior signs using the **Opening Signs & Posters** guide handout. Use blue painter's tape for signs.
- **⚠ Do not tape anything to school gymnasium floors!**
- Assemble the drop box and curbside sandwich board sign with telephone number. Assemble the wire signs.
- Arrange on a table the materials you will need on election morning before cart is opened, such as interior and exterior signage, Prohibited Area kit, tape, scissors, and cones.

❑ Secure materials in cart and re-lock cart

Materials needed: Equipment Cart closing guide, equipment cart key on lanyard, pen, Machine Certification Form, Cart Security Log.

- If you removed the DS200s from the cart, three officers carefully load the DS200s back into the cart. Use the **Equipment Cart** closing guide. **The DS200s must be locked in the cart overnight.**
- Store Poll Pads, Admin Tablet, and ExpressVotes in cart.
- Follow the procedures in the **Equipment Cart** closing guide to lock and seal the cart.

NOTE: Whenever the cart is unsealed / opened or resealed / closed, you are required to complete and sign the **Cart Security Log** located in the pocket on the inside of the right cart door. Two officers must do this together.

❑ OPTIONAL: Create a folder for items you will need immediately on election morning:

- **Election Officer Oath form** and a pen
- Name badges for election officers, authorized representatives, and student pages
- **Machine Certification Form**
- Password card
- Equipment cart key on lanyard and small unopened envelope containing keys
- Opening guides for the equipment cart, Poll Pad & Check-In Table, DS200 scanner, ExpressVote, Ballot Counting Table, and absentee ballot drop box.

EQUIPMENT CART (AS DELIVERED)



BEHIND SCANNERS:

- A-frame curbside voter sign
- Cardboard box
 - Absentee ballot drop box
 - Wire sign frames (for real estate signs)

ON TOP OF SCANNERS:

- Cardboard privacy booths

INSIDE LEFT SCANNER BALLOT BIN:

- Empty (for most precincts)

INSIDE RIGHT SCANNER BALLOT BIN:

- Boxes of blank ballots

BELOW LEFT SCANNER BALLOT BIN:

- Privacy folders

ON RIGHT SIDE OF RIGHT SCANNER

- Extra flat cardboard boxes for ballots
- Handicapped voter sign

BETWEEN THE SCANNERS:

- Blue supply bag
- 2 ExpressVotes in black padded cases
- Standing privacy booth (blue hard case)
- Clipboards
- Real estate signs
- Canvas bag with extension cords and surge protectors