

## **C. Election Observer Panel**

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of an Election Observer Panel is to:

1. Provide an avenue for public observation of and input into the election process.
2. Assist in ensuring the integrity of the election process.
3. Encourage participation and build voter confidence in the election process.

### **II. Invitation**

Between E-60 and E-30, prepare letters of invitation (see sample attached) to parties likely to participate, such as the following:

1. County Grand Jury
2. Political Party Central Committee Members
3. Advocacy Groups
4. League of Women Voters
5. Media
6. Other groups or individuals expressing an interest in observing election day activities may also be included in the observer panel, as deemed appropriate.

Note: You may want to consider offering to meet with these groups to provide an opportunity for the group members to ask questions about the process.

### **Appointment Letters (for introduction to precinct workers)**

After the groups have provided the names of interested panelists, prepare letters of introduction (see sample attached) for the panelists to use when visiting polling places on Election Day. Materials to be prepared for each panelist will include a listing of all polling places within the county for that specific election as well as the central counting site location and hours of operation.

### **III. Mechanism for Feedback**

Consider providing observers with a checklist and/or questionnaires to be completed and returned to you. (See samples attached.)

## General Rules for Observers

### **Observers may:**

- Observe the proceedings at the polls, including the opening and closing procedures.
- Obtain information from the precinct index that is posted near the entrance.
- Make notes and watch all procedures.
- View all activities at the central counting site on election day.
- View the canvass of the vote activities following the election.
- View absentee and provisional ballot processing.
- Ask questions of staff or voters at the polls.
- Ask questions of supervisors at the central counting site.

### **Observers are responsible for:**

- Checking in at each site, whether polling place or central counting site.
- Wearing an identification badge.
- Maintaining a professional manner while observing the election processes.
- Ensuring they do not interfere with the elections process.

### **Observers may not:**

- Interfere in any way with the conduct of the election.
- Touch any voting materials or equipment or sit at the official worktables.
- Converse with voters (within 100 feet of the entrance to a polling place) regarding the casting of a vote, or speak to a voter regarding his or her qualifications to vote.
- Display any election material or wear campaign badges, buttons or apparel.
- Wear the uniform of a peace officer, a private guard, or security personnel.
- Use cellular phones, pagers, or two-way radios inside the polling place and/or within 100 feet of the entrance to the polling place.
- Talk to central counting site workers while they are processing ballots.
- Use the telephones, computers or other polling place facilities at polling places or the central counting site.
- Touch election personnel.
- Eat or drink in the polls or the central counting site.
- Assist in operations at any polling place.