



Tenth Dems

2026 ELECTION PROTECTION MANUAL

Prepared in conjunction with Lake Dems

<p style="text-align: center;">Legal Coordinators <i>save these numbers to your Contacts</i></p>		
<p>Election Protection Legal Hotline call for any questions or problems</p>	<p>847-433-8683 (847-433-VOTE) voice only / NO TEXTS!</p>	<p>If the Hotline is busy, call or text any of the individuals below</p>
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Paid for by the Tenth Congressional District Democrats and not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for volunteering for the Election Protection Team! Attorneys/poll watchers are critical to free and fair elections. Our goal is to make sure that everyone who is eligible to vote is allowed to vote. We watch for unlawful voter suppression and prohibited electioneering activities. We try to ensure that if a voter meets an obstacle at the polls, the Election Judges offer the best options.

This Manual is a road map through the election process and the laws governing elections in Illinois. No guide can anticipate every question, but careful review in advance will prepare you to deal with most issues you encounter. We recommend that you download this Manual to your phone, tablet, or laptop.

You are our eyes and ears. By observing poll operations and activities at or near polling places, you can identify issues and resolve them before they become problems. And if problems do occur, we can take steps to rectify them. While we do not expect serious issues to arise in most of our polling places, it's best to be prepared.

It's important to realize that your effectiveness as an attorney/poll watcher will depend on more than your knowledge of election law. You will interact with Election Judges, who are mostly ordinary citizens performing a crucial service. When mistakes occur, they are almost always honest ones and are rarely motivated by a political agenda. You will be most effective if you are perceived not as a partisan, but as someone who wants to get things right so voters can vote. Do your best to create a friendly working relationship with Election Judges before any problems arise. If an issue does arise, work with the Election Judges in a neutral and non-confrontational manner to show that your objections are motivated by fairness, not partisanship. If a matter escalates or a confrontation occurs, *call the Hotline* to seek assistance. But a calm, low-key approach based on a fair reading of the applicable rules usually leads to a good result.

Please review the whole Manual. Feel free to call anyone listed on the front page with questions. When you are at a polling place, call the Hotline first, as it is constantly staffed. If you have trouble getting through, contact one of the Legal Coordinators by voice or text.

Note: *Never send texts to the Hotline*; the Hotline cannot receive text messages.

WHAT YOU DO AS A POLL WATCHER

Our goal is to make sure that every eligible voter is allowed to vote. To achieve that goal:

- Watch the polling place opening and closing process.
- Watch Election Judges check in voters. In Lake County, during check-in Election Judges print a ballot, initial it, and hand it to the voter.

- Watch Election Judges hand out and initial ballots. This happens as part of the check-in process in Lake County. In Cook and McHenry Counties, voters get a “receipt” with a ballot style number at check-in and are directed to a “Ballot Judge” who then initials and hands the voter a pre-printed ballot.
- Watch Election Judges help voters deposit ballots in the voting machines.
- Make sure that at the beginning of the day on Election Day and on the first day of Early Voting all voting machines are set to zero so that the first ballot counted is the first one deposited in that machine. (There are two counters on each machine: one records the machine’s total *historical* ballot count that shows the machine’s age; the other counter records ballots in the current election and should start at zero.)
- Make sure that the Campaign-Free Zone is properly demarcated and that no electioneering occurs within that zone.
- Make sure there is no one in the polling place not authorized to be there. Only voters, election officials, and credentialed poll watchers may be present.
- Make sure that no activities are occurring outside the polling place that might suppress the vote.
- Make sure that signs outside the polling place are clearly visible to drivers so that voters can easily find parking and entrances.
- Document any problems you encounter by reporting them to the Hotline and Legal Coordinators. If asked, document your observations, or those of any other witness.
- When there is an issue, make sure the Election Judges try to resolve that issue correctly, and in a manner most likely to lead to all voters’ ballots being counted.

Preparation

- Vote early or by mail.
- Dress with the intention of being taken seriously by Election Judges and voters.
- Remove any partisan buttons, tee shirts, etc. from your clothes or bag before you enter a polling place. (If your car has partisan bumper stickers, be sure to park outside the Campaign-Free Zone.)
- Know where you’re going. When you get your Election Day assignment, check the site’s name carefully as several have similar names. Make sure the address is in your phone and you know how to get there on time, especially if your shift covers the opening or closing of a polling place.

- It's important that openers on Election Day and the first day of Early Voting observe set-up and confirm that the voting machine counters are set to zero.
- Closers *must* be inside the polling place *before* closing time, even if voters are still in line.
- Make sure you have enough signed credentials for the county or counties where you've been assigned.
- Make sure your cellphone is fully charged and that the phone numbers on this Manual's front page have been saved to your Contacts.
- Save this Manual to your cellphone, tablet, or laptop.
- Have paper and pens, in case you need to prepare a declaration. You may want to print some of the form declarations in the Appendix.
- Familiarize yourself with the Election Judge Manuals for the county you're assigned to and link to them on your phone, tablet, or laptop. See p. 8 of this Manual for links to these documents.

Your rights as you serve as an attorney/poll watcher

Right to Be Present

Your signed credentials allow you to enter a polling place as an observer. As soon as you enter, **show your credential to an Election Judge and sign in**. There will be a table for that purpose, separate from the voter check-in tables. You'll probably be asked to hand over your credentials.

- Introduce yourself to the Election Judges if you can do so without disrupting their activities. Election Judges should be wearing nametags. If an Election Judge's name isn't visible, you may ask for it.
- There usually are multiple precincts at each polling location. Generally, you do not have to present more than one set of credentials, no matter how many precincts are voting at the polling place. However, Cook County Election Judges have been known to ask for credentials for each precinct. It is never worthwhile to argue with Election Judges over petty procedural matters; we will give you enough credentials so that you can comply with requests for duplicates.
- It's okay to **leave and return** to the polling place without submitting a new set of credentials. Before leaving, be sure to sign out. Remember to sign in again if you return.

- You may work for a campaign openly when outside the Campaign-Free Zone, but be sure to put away anything partisan before entering a polling place. No one inside the Campaign-Free Zone or a polling place may wear political buttons, shirts, hats, etc. or distribute literature. *However*, voters may bring in materials to help them mark their ballots.

Right to Observe Opening – Election Day and First Day of Early Voting

These are tasks attorney/poll watchers perform prior to polls opening on Election Day and *the first day* of Early Voting.

- Observe as Election Judges check and set up equipment.
- Inspect voting machines to ensure that the count is at zero and there are no completed ballots in the machines.
- View, but don't touch, all paper ballots and forms.

Right to Observe During Voting Hours

You have the right to observe election officials as they process voters, machines, and ballots. You may stand or sit behind them and look over their shoulders, but you **cannot** sit at their table.

- You may watch Election Judges making signature comparisons.
- You may watch to make sure Election Judges hand voters the correct ballot. Make sure an Election Judge initials each ballot.
- When a voter is asked to cast a provisional ballot, you may watch to ensure that the Election Judge inserts all relevant documents into the envelope with the ballot and hands the voter the proper receipt or instructions. You also may ask the Election Judge to explain why the voter is not receiving a regular ballot.
- You may stand close enough to hear conversations between a voter and an Election Judge (except when two Election Judges, one from each party, are assisting a voter with casting their ballot).

However,

- You may not touch equipment or ballots.
- You may not watch voters marking their ballots.
- You may not watch the machine display while someone is inserting their ballot.

Right to Interact with Election Judges

- If you believe that an Election Judge is misinforming a voter or not following proper procedure, **respectfully correct the official**. The most effective way is to direct them to their Election Judge Manual. If you don't have a paper or digital copy of their manual with you, you can ask to look at their copy.
 - Searchable copies of the 2026 Election Judge Manuals for Lake, Cook, and McHenry Counties are linked here: <https://tenthdems.org/2026/02/county-election-judges-manuals/>
 - The 2026 Lake County Election Judge Manual for Early Voting is also linked here: <https://lakedems.org/election-judges-early-voting-manual-2026-lake-county/>
- Whenever you observe something that appears to be a deviation from routine processing of a voter, such as ID being requested or the voter being offered a provisional ballot, you may politely ask the Election Judge the reason, or whether there is another way to handle the circumstance if you think there may be. If you can, address the Election Judge within earshot of the voter as this may help the voter understand the situation.

Right to Communicate with Voters

You have the right to talk to a voter in the polling place, *except* when they are checking in, voting, or inserting their ballot into a machine. You should not interrupt a conversation between a voter and an Election Judge.

- If a voter leaves the polling place without voting, you may follow them outside to find out why they left. Outdoors, you and the voter can talk so that you can determine what caused the voter to leave without voting and whether you can help the voter fix whatever issue kept them from voting.
- If a voter casts a provisional ballot, you may talk to them outside the polling place to make sure they know what to do to ensure the ballot is counted, including the deadline for taking action. If you don't know why the voter is given a provisional ballot, you may ask and suggest a possible alternative. See the Special Circumstances Summary Table on pp. 14-15.

Right to Observe Closing

- You should be inside the polling place *at least 30 minutes before the polls close*. Although voters in line at closing may enter the polling place and vote, poll

watchers will not be permitted to enter the polling place after the official closing time.

- If it appears that there will be a line outside the polling place at closing, call the Hotline as soon as possible, preferably at least 30 minutes before closing. We may need time to get another poll watcher to the location to stay outside and assist. You should remain inside to observe closing.
- You may watch every step of the closing process and request copies of the tapes from the ballot boxes. You will have instructions about whether to report numbers to the Legal Coordinators.

PROBLEMS THAT MAY ARISE AT THE POLLING PLACE AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section flags problems you may encounter as an attorney/poll watcher and suggests solutions to typical problems. Many issues can be resolved onsite. Others will require a call to the Hotline for assistance. **Whenever you resolve an issue onsite, please text one of the Legal Coordinators so we can document it.** Sometimes a problem you resolve may recur later in the day, after you've left the polling place, or be an indicator of a widespread issue.

Provisional Ballots: Voters not being allowed to vote regular ballots

Voters who are refused a regular ballot and asked to cast a provisional ballot raise what are probably the most vexing issues you'll encounter at a polling place. The rules are somewhat complex, and so it's the area where Election Judges are most likely to make the wrong call. Note that, in Lake County, the computers used by the Election Judges at check-in tell them step-by-step what to do when a regular ballot can't be issued, which is likely to minimize, if not altogether eliminate, Election Judge errors.

What is a provisional ballot?

A provisional ballot is the same as a regular ballot, *except* it is not placed in the ballot box at the polling place. Rather, an Election Judge seals the provisional ballot in a special envelope, usually along with a form affidavit the voter will be required to complete. If found to be valid, the ballot is counted only after regular ballots are counted.

You should make sure all relevant documents are inserted into the envelope with the ballot, that the voter is handed a receipt, and that the voter understands what, if anything, they have to do to cause the ballot to be counted.

In what circumstances does a provisional ballot get counted (or not)?

There are two kinds of provisional ballots: (1) those that are counted automatically after verification by the county clerk's office and (2) those that are counted *only if the voter follows up as instructed within seven (7) days after Election Day*.

An Election Judge may choose to offer a provisional ballot in some circumstances because, for them, it's the simplest solution to a problem. But inevitably, many provisional ballots that require follow-up by the voter *will never get counted* since voters often fail to complete follow-up within applicable deadlines. Moreover, even the offer of a provisional ballot that requires no follow-up may cause a voter to leave the polling place without voting—either because they don't have time to fill out the accompanying paperwork or because of an erroneous belief that provisional ballots are not counted.

For these reasons, we should make every effort to get a voter a regular ballot. A provisional ballot that requires voter follow-up should be a last resort. And if we agree that a provisional ballot is necessary, we should do our best to ensure that the voter knows what to do to make sure the ballot will be counted.

Provisional ballots are most often used when a voter does not have acceptable ID. This includes voters on the inactive voter list, challenged voters, and first-time voters who registered online or by mail and whose identities couldn't be confirmed by the county clerk's office. You can help the voter find acceptable ID so they can vote a regular ballot by brainstorming with them. Often a voter may have acceptable ID in their car or on their phone. If necessary, encourage the voter go home and return with acceptable ID; you can call the Hotline if a voter needs a ride.

If a voter who needs ID accepts a provisional ballot, that ballot won't be counted unless the voter takes acceptable ID to the county clerk's office within seven days of Election Day. Obviously, solving the problem on the spot is easier for the voter and ensures that their vote will be counted.

If a voter without sufficient ID has already been issued a provisional ballot, try to talk to them as they leave the polling place. If you can, complete an incident report with the voter's name, the tracking number on their provisional ballot receipt, and any contact information the voter is willing to share so we can follow up with the voter to help them get required documentation to their county clerk within the seven-day deadline.

Specific circumstances in which an Election Judge might offer a provisional ballot, and whether or not follow-up by the voter (usually to produce ID) would be necessary, are outlined in the Table on pp. 14-15.

Vote-by-Mail Voters: How should a vote-by-mail voter who wishes to vote in person be processed?

A voter who requested a vote-by-mail ballot may decide to vote in person. At the polls, they may cast a regular ballot under most circumstances:

- If the voter brings the vote-by-mail ballot or any part of it to the polling place, the voter is entitled to surrender it and receive a regular ballot.
- If the voter received a vote-by-mail ballot and the voter did not use it but doesn't have any part of the ballot with them, the voter will be able to vote a provisional ballot. They will be asked to complete a form affidavit. The provisional ballot will be counted after the county clerk confirms that the mail-in ballot was not voted. The voter will not need to take any additional action.
- If the e-pollbook shows that a ballot was mailed to a voter but the voter did not request a vote-by-mail ballot, or the voter requested a vote-by-mail ballot but did not receive it, the voter should be given an affidavit to complete and sign and then cast a regular ballot, not a provisional ballot. If the Election Judge insists on a provisional ballot, the voter should cast that ballot because it will be counted after confirmation that they did not vote by mail, without the voter having to do anything else. In no instance should such a voter leave the polling place without voting.

Note: When asked to cast a provisional ballot, *many voters will leave the polling place without voting*. Very often, these voters are under the *mistaken (yet widely held) belief* that provisional ballots aren't always counted. But when a provisional ballot is offered as described above, it will *always be counted* once the county clerk has ruled out a duplicate vote. *There is no need for any additional action by the voter*. Make sure you explain this to anyone who appears frustrated or confused when offered a provisional ballot in these circumstances.

Unregistered, Inactive Voters, or Voters Who Moved: When should an Election Judge offer the option of Grace Period/Same Day Registration?

When might a voter be flagged as “inactive”?

A voter may be flagged as “inactive” in the e-pollbook if the county clerk's office is notified by the US Post Office that the voter no longer lives at their registration address, if a mailing to a voter is returned as undeliverable, or if the voter has not responded to a mailed notice directing them to confirm the registration address.

What is Grace Period/Same Day Registration?

Illinois residents can register for the first time or re-register to change their name or address at any polling place, as long as they vote at the same time. This is called Grace Period Registration, and the statute is included in the Appendix. Since the term Grace Period Registration is not descriptive, we call the process of registering and voting at a polling place “Grace Period/Same Day Registration” throughout this Manual.

Who should be encouraged to take advantage of Grace Period/Same Day Registration?

- Unregistered voters
- Voters on the inactive list
- Voters who moved within a county *more than* 30 days before Election Day
- Voters with signature match issues

If Election Judges fail to offer the option of Grace Period/Same Day Registration, you may suggest it within the voter’s hearing. If the Election Judge continues to withhold this option, call the Hotline immediately.

What if a voter moved less than 30 days before Election Day?

Voters who have moved less than 30 days before Election Day do NOT have the right to Grace Period/Same Day Registration at their new polling location because they have not lived at their new address long enough to meet the residency requirement for registration. For this very small group of voters, the following rules apply:

- *If they moved within the county*, they can be issued the ballot for their old address at any Early Voting site. On Election Day, they can vote at the polling place assigned to their old address or at a Vote Center, where a ballot for their old address also can be issued. *If they live in Lake County*, a ballot for their old address can be issued at *any* polling place in the county. An Election Judge may request a signed affidavit and two forms of ID to update the voter’s registration prospectively.
- If a voter in Cook or McHenry County chooses on Election Day to vote at the polling place assigned to their *new* address, they will be issued a provisional ballot and only their votes in federal races (Senate and House of Representatives in 2026) will be counted. Because there are many other important races on the ballot, we want to encourage Cook and McHenry Election Day voters to return to their prior polling place or go to a Vote Center so they can cast a ballot for all offices at their old address. Call the Hotline if the voter requests assistance with transportation. In Lake County, any ballot form can be issued at any location.

- Note that if a voter moved *from a different county* less than 30 days before Election Day, casting a provisional ballot on which only votes for federal offices will be counted is their *only* option.

ID Requirements: When must a voter show ID, what qualifies as acceptable ID, and what happens if a voter can't produce acceptable ID?

When must a voter show ID, and how many forms are required?

- Registered voters generally do not need an ID to vote; their signatures are the only identification required. Election Judges have technology to speed lines by scanning driver's licenses or state IDs. So, if Election Judges are scanning driver's licenses and state IDs and no one is being *required* to produce ID, that wouldn't be a problem. If an Election Judge is *requiring* voters to show ID, call the Hotline.
- For Grace Period/Same Day Registration at a polling place, a voter must show two forms of ID, one of which includes the voter's current address.
- For Signature Recapture, a voter must show two forms of ID.
- When a newly registered voter who registered online or by mail is flagged in the e-pollbook, only one form of ID is required.

What qualifies as an acceptable form of ID?

- Valid identification includes, but is not limited to state ID, driver's license, student ID, library, credit, social security, or public assistance card, passport, utility bill mailed to current address within the last 30 days, bank statement, or vehicle registration. A voter can log into an account on their phone to retrieve any of these documents; however, a photo or photocopy is not acceptable.
- Acceptable ID need not have a photo and need not include a voter's signature. When two forms of ID are required, at least one of them must show the voter's current address.
- In lieu of ID, another registered voter living in the same precinct can serve as a witness to attest to the voter's identity, except in the case of a new registrant. The Appendix includes a declaration that can be used for this purpose.

What if a voter can't produce acceptable ID?

- If you have a chance to talk to a voter who can't produce acceptable ID, you may be able to help them brainstorm ID while they're still at the polling place (something in their car or something that they can bring from home). If the voter needs to go home but lacks transportation, call the Hotline.

- If the voter can't get acceptable ID then and there and can't find a witness, the voter may cast a provisional ballot. The ballot will be counted only if the voter follows up by showing acceptable ID at the county clerk's office within seven days of Election Day.

Special Circumstances Summary Table: Provisional ballot or regular ballot? Voter follow-up required or not?

Circumstance	Issue	Type of Ballot
Voter needs assistance	Voter has difficulty speaking, reading, or writing English or Spanish and requests help	Regular , with necessary assistance provided by one Election Judge from each party.
	Voter with a disability requests assistance	
Vote-by-Mail Ballot	Received a vote-by-mail ballot, and is returning it or a part of it today	Regular
	Requested but did not receive a vote-by-mail ballot	Regular with affidavit. If provisional , no follow-up necessary.
	Received a vote-by-mail ballot but doesn't have it to return to the Election Judge	Provisional w/ affidavit. No follow-up necessary.
Voter on the Inactive List	Voter marked "Inactive" in the e-pollbook	If can show two pieces of ID, Regular ballot. Otherwise, Provisional . Follow-up necessary.
Recently registered (not in person)	Voter registered online or by mail and the file is flagged in the e-pollbook	Regular ballot with one ID. If no ID, then Provisional . Follow-up necessary.
Voter not found in e-pollbook	Voter not found has insufficient or no ID	Provisional . Follow-up necessary.
	Voter has sufficient ID (2 pieces)	Regular ballot following Grace Period/Same Day Registration
Name change	Voter's name has changed	Regular ballot. Affidavit required. No ID needed.
Voter status or signature challenged	Challenge is <i>not</i> upheld	Regular ballot
	Challenge is upheld	Grace Period/Same Day registration w/ 2 IDs for Regular ballot (preferred). Otherwise, Provisional . Follow-up necessary.

Voter moved	Voter moved more than 30 days ago and did not re-register	Grace Period/Same Day Registration in new precinct w/ 2 IDs. Regular ballot.
	Voter moved less than 30 days ago within the same county	Regular if old precinct ballot style available. Otherwise, federal ballot only.
	Voter moved more than 30 days ago to another county	Voter must vote in new county
Votes during extended closing time	A court order extends voting hours on Election Day; appeal possible	Provisional. No follow-up necessary.

OTHER ISSUES TO LOOK FOR

Note that not all issues arise *inside* the polling place. It is important to remember during a shift to step *outside* periodically to monitor the Campaign-Free Zone, lines, etc.

The Campaign-Free Zone and the Public Forum Zone

- **What is the Campaign-Free Zone?**

That portion of a polling place property that is within 100 feet of the polling room (see measurement process below), and within which electioneering of any kind is expressly prohibited. The rules are summarized below and the statute is in the Appendix.

- **What is the Public Forum Zone?**

All portions of every polling place property located outside the Campaign-Free Zone. Electioneering must be allowed to take place in this zone, whether the property is publicly or privately owned, *except that* a church or private school may choose to make its entire property a Campaign-Free Zone. However, public sidewalks by a church or private school are a Public Forum Zone *as long as they are 100 feet from the door to the room of the polling place.*

- **How is the Campaign-Free Zone defined?** At the beginning of the day, Election Judges place markers 100 horizontal feet from the entrance to the room where voting takes place.
- **How is the 100 feet measured?**
 - **IF** a polling room is on the ground floor of a building, **THEN** the 100-foot measurement is made from each entrance to that room.
 - **IF** a polling room is in a multi-floor building *and* is above or below the ground floor, **THEN** the markers must be placed on the ground floor,

100 feet from the nearest elevator or stairway used by voters to access the floor on which the polling room is located.

- **IF** a polling room is in a private business building, a school, or church (or other place of religious worship) *and* the distance of 100 feet from the polling room ends within the interior of the building, **THEN** the markers must be placed outside of the building at each entrance used by voters to enter that building.
- **IF** a polling place is in a church (or other place of religious worship) or private school that has chosen to designate its entire property a Campaign-Free Zone, **THEN** the markers must be placed accordingly.
- **What to look for when monitoring the Campaign-Free Zone**
 - If anyone inside the Campaign-Free Zone is distributing campaign literature or wearing political buttons, shirts, hats, etc., that constitutes impermissible electioneering. Parking a vehicle displaying campaign signs within the Campaign-Free Zone also constitutes impermissible electioneering. If a polite reminder doesn't stop the electioneering, and Election Judges don't enforce the Campaign-Free Zone, call the Hotline.
 - Conversely, if our candidates and volunteers are being kept from campaigning *beyond* the Campaign-Free Zone, whether by Election Judges or municipal authorities, call the Hotline.
 - If the boundary between the Campaign-Free Zone and the Public Forum Zone has not been properly measured and defined (or if you believe the markers that the Election Judges set out have been moved), bring the matter to the attention of the Election Judges. Bear in mind, however, that any disadvantage flowing from incorrectly defined boundaries inures equally to all candidates.

Voter intimidation

If something is going on that might make voters reluctant to stay in line or enter the polling place, and Election Judges won't intervene, call the Hotline.

Long lines

If long lines are building outside, or inside the polling place for check-in or Grace Period/Same Day Registration or issuance of provisional ballots, there is a risk that some voters will leave without voting. Call the Hotline immediately.

Excessive provisional ballots

If large numbers of voters are being offered provisional ballots, this slows down voting for everyone and also suggests that Election Judges may be ignoring simpler solutions to voters' circumstances. Call the Hotline.

Excessive voter challenges

Check-in judges routinely compare a voter's signature to the one(s) in their software and check with a second check-in judge for concurrence that the signatures match. If you sense that an excessive number of signatures are being challenged by one or more Election Judges, or if a third party is regularly challenging voters' identities, call the Hotline.

Confiscation of papers from voters

Voters are permitted to bring materials with them to the voting booth to assist them in marking their ballots. This may look like campaign material (and often will have been produced by a campaign or political party), but as long as the voter is not actively displaying such material, they are entitled to have it. Election Judges may not deny voters the right to bring such materials into the voting booth. If they do, call the Hotline.

Polling place inaccessible to disabled or elderly voters or voters not literate in either English or Spanish

- Visually impaired voters, voters with limited English and Spanish proficiency, and voters with any other condition that impedes their ability to cast a ballot have the right to assistance. A friend or family member may help such a voter mark their ballot if they first complete an affidavit. Alternatively, two Election Judges, one from each party, may assist the voter. If a voter is denied such assistance, call the Hotline.
- A voter unable to get out of a car and into the polling place may "curbside vote." Two Election Judges, one from each party, should go to the car and remain there while the voter marks their ballot. Election authorities require 24 hours notice from curbside voters but usually will assist even a voter who fails to give notice. If Election Judges are not providing proper assistance to curbside voters, call the Hotline.

Problems with machines or supplies

- If a machine is not working properly, it should be taken out of service. The county clerk's office can send a repair technician or bring replacement equipment. If you're unsure whether Election Judges have notified the county clerk's office, call the Hotline so we can report the problem immediately.
- If anything seems designed to hold down the vote, such as not having enough Election Judges, not having enough ballots, or not having enough voting booths set up, call the Hotline.
- If pre-printed paper ballots, form affidavits, or other supplies are running low and Election Judges have not called for more, call the Hotline so we can report the problem.

Unauthorized people in the polling place

If people are in the polling place who should not be there, and the Site Manager does not have them removed, call the Hotline. Some examples:

- Anyone in the polling place who is not voting or assisting a voter, unless they're an elections official or credentialed poll watcher.
- Anyone, including a credentialed poll watcher or voter, who is electioneering in the polling place.

Poll watchers or others sitting at the table with Election Judges

Poll watchers may stand behind or near judges to observe. If anyone other than an Election Judge is sitting at a table where Election Judges are working, and simply pointing that out doesn't solve the problem, call the Hotline.

Drop Boxes not readily accessible during Early Voting

All Early Voting sites in Cook and Lake Counties, and many in McHenry County, will have Drop Boxes available for returning vote-by-mail ballots. There should be a clear path to the Drop Box so that voters can access it without waiting in the line for in-person voting. If this is not the case, you should bring it to the attention of the Election Judges, and if they can't fix the problem, call the Hotline.

Voter brings vote-by-mail ballot to Election Day polling place

Election Day polling places will *not* have Drop Boxes. The voter should be encouraged to surrender the vote-by-mail ballot and vote in person.

Unclear signage at a polling place

Check that signs are visible to voters approaching the polling place from all directions. Check that all entrances to the polling place are clearly marked, that handicapped entrances are easily found, and that signs leading to a polling room inside a building, especially one not on the ground floor, are easy to follow. If signs are not visible, or are confusing, and Election Judges can't or won't resolve the issue, call the Hotline.

Inadequate parking near the polling place

Check that there's adequate legal parking accessible to the polling place. Inadequate parking can be a serious problem, especially as the last hour of voting approaches. As soon as you perceive that there may be a shortage of legal parking, call the Hotline.

Campaign materials or voter guides left behind in polling room

Election Judges should make sure that voters who bring materials with them to help them complete their ballot do not leave any of it in the polling room. If you notice such materials on a table or in a voting booth, you should not remove them yourself; report what you found to an Election Judge. If that doesn't solve the problem, call the Hotline.

POSSIBLE LITIGATION AND THE NEED TO DOCUMENT EVENTS

Six Major Concerns

There are six major concerns that may result in litigation and the need for declarations. If you observe any of them, it's a legal issue and you should call the Hotline immediately. Please do not file anything in or appear in court on behalf of any campaigns unless you have prior written authorization to do so. There are other volunteers who will handle legal filings, but the information you collect is vital to this process:

1. a polling location opens late,
2. a polling place runs out of provisional ballots or regular ballots,
3. long lines result in people giving up on registering or voting,
4. voters' credentials challenged improperly,

5. large numbers of voters directed to the judge who issues provisional ballots, and
6. incorrect processing of a voter who requested a vote-by-mail ballot and wishes to vote in person.

Form declarations can be found in the Appendix. You will be asked to fill one out if you observe any of the above events.

Accuracy in Your Documentation

The most important thing for any declaration is that it be accurate. If the events you observe do not fit neatly into the form declaration, you should use the generic declaration, make the appropriate changes or just write out on a separate sheet of paper what you observe. After the declaration is completed, you can have it notarized if a notary is available. If a notary is not readily available, you can still sign the declaration verifying its accuracy.

Important Note on Voter Challenges

Third-person voter challenges are a very rare occurrence and must be based on one of the following circumstances.

1. The voter no longer resides at the address at which he is registered.
2. The person attempting to vote is not the same person registered.
3. The person attempting to vote has already voted.

If you observe even one challenge to a voter, that is cause for concern. You can make the Election Judges aware of poll watchers' rights and their own manual. Then take notes as needed to fill out the appropriate form declaration in the Appendix.

Important Note Regarding Long Lines

We have provided two forms of declarations for use if there are long lines (more than a one-hour wait). One is for **you** to fill out and sign based on your observations. The other is to be filled out by a **voter** who leaves the polling location without voting. Try to be non-threatening when asking a voter leaving the polling location to sign a declaration, and don't forget to be polite if they refuse.

If there are other issues of concern, including concerns about intimidation or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, or other group, please call the Hotline.

APPENDIX

Selected Election Code Provisions

Electioneering: 10 ILCS 5/17-29

(a) No judge of election, pollwatcher, or other person shall, at any special, primary or general election, do any electioneering or soliciting of votes or engage in any political discussion within any polling place, within 100 feet of any polling place, or, at the option of a church or private school, on any of the property of that church or private school that is a polling place; no person shall interrupt, hinder or oppose any voter while approaching within those areas for the purpose of voting. Judges of election shall enforce the provisions of this Section.

(b) Election officers shall place 2 or more cones, small United States national flags, or some other marker a distance of 100 horizontal feet from each entrance to the room used by voters to engage in voting, which shall be known as the polling room. If the polling room is located within a building that is a private business, a public or private school, or a church or other organization founded for the purpose of religious worship and the distance of 100 horizontal feet ends within the interior of the building, then the markers shall be placed outside of the building at each entrance used by voters to enter that building on the grounds adjacent to the thoroughfare or walkway. If the polling room is located within a public or private building with 2 or more floors and the polling room is located on the ground floor, then the markers shall be placed 100 horizontal feet from each entrance to the polling room used by voters to engage in voting. If the polling room is located in a public or private building with 2 or more floors and the polling room is located on a floor above or below the ground floor, then the markers shall be placed a distance of 100 feet from the nearest elevator or staircase used by voters on the ground floor to access the floor where the polling room is located. The area within where the markers are placed shall be known as a campaign free zone, and electioneering is prohibited pursuant to this subsection. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, a church or private school may choose to apply the campaign free zone to its entire property, and, if so, the markers shall be placed near the boundaries on the grounds adjacent to the thoroughfares or walkways leading to the entrances used by the voters.

If an election authority maintains a website, no later than 5 days before Election Day, each election authority shall post on its website the name and address of every polling place designated as a campaign free zone. This information shall be immediately provided to any person upon request, and a requester shall not be required to submit a request under the Freedom of Information Act.

The area on polling place property beyond the campaign free zone, whether publicly or privately owned, is a public forum for the time that the polls are open on an Election Day. At the request of election officers any publicly owned building must be made available for use as a polling place. A person shall have the right to congregate and engage in electioneering on any polling

place property while the polls are open beyond the campaign free zone, including but not limited to, the placement of temporary signs. This subsection shall be construed liberally in favor of persons engaging in electioneering on all polling place property beyond the campaign free zone for the time that the polls are open on an Election Day. At or near the door of each polling place, the Election Judges shall place signage indicating the proper entrance to the polling place. In addition, the Election Judges shall ensure that a sign identifying the location of the polling place is placed on a nearby public roadway. The State Board of Elections shall establish guidelines for the placement of polling place signage.

- (c) The regulation of electioneering on polling place property on an Election Day, including but not limited to the placement of temporary signs, is an exclusive power and function of the State. A home rule unit may not regulate electioneering and any ordinance or local law contrary to subsection (c) is declared void. This is a denial and limitation of home rule powers and functions under subsection (h) of Section 6 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution.

(Source: P.A. 98-1171, eff. 6-1-15.)

Grace Period Registration: 10 ILCS 5/5-50

Sec. 5-50. Grace period. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Code to the contrary, each election authority shall establish procedures for the registration of voters and for change of address during the period from the close of registration for an election until and including the day of the election. During this grace period, an unregistered qualified elector may register to vote, and a registered voter may submit a change of address form, in person in the office of the election authority, at a permanent polling place established under Section 19A-10, at any other early voting site beginning 15 days prior to the election, at a polling place on election day, or at a voter registration location specifically designated for this purpose by the election authority. Grace period registration and changes of address shall also be conducted for eligible residents in connection with voting at facilities under Section 19-12.2 of this Code. The election authority shall register that individual, or change a registered voter's address, in the same manner as otherwise provided by this Article for registration and change of address.

If a voter who registers or changes address during this grace period wishes to vote at the election or primary occurring during the grace period, he or she must do so by grace period voting. The election authority shall offer in-person grace period voting at his or her office, any permanent polling place established under Section 19A-10, and at any other early voting site beginning 15 days prior to the election, at a polling place on election day, where grace period registration is required by this Section; and may offer in-person grace period voting at additional hours and locations specifically designated for the purpose of grace period voting by the election authority. The election authority may allow grace period voting by mail only if the election

authority has no ballots prepared at the authority's office. Grace period voting shall be in a manner substantially similar to voting under Article 19A.

Within one day after a voter casts a grace period ballot, or within one day after the ballot is received by the election authority if the election authority allows grace period voting by mail, the election authority shall transmit by electronic means pursuant to a process established by the State Board of Elections the voter's name, street address, e-mail address, and precinct, ward, township, and district numbers, as the case may be, to the State Board of Elections, which shall maintain those names and that information in an electronic format on its website, arranged by county and accessible to State and local political committees. The name of each person issued a grace period ballot shall also be placed on the appropriate precinct list of persons to whom vote by mail and early ballots have been issued, for use as provided in Sections 17-9 and 18-5.

A person who casts a grace period ballot shall not be permitted to revoke that ballot and vote another ballot with respect to that primary or election. Ballots cast by persons who register or change address during the grace period at a location other than their designated polling place on election day must be transmitted to and counted at the election authority's central ballot counting location and shall not be transmitted to and counted at precinct polling places. The grace period ballots determined to be valid shall be added to the vote totals for the precincts for which they were cast in the order in which the ballots were opened.

In counties with a population of less than 100,000 that do not have electronic poll books, the election authority may opt out of registration in the polling place if the election authority establishes grace period registration and voting at other sites on election day at the following sites: (i) the election authority's main office and (ii) a polling place in each municipality where 20% or more of the county's residents reside if the election authority's main office is not located in that municipality. The election authority may establish other grace period registration and voting sites on election day provided that the election authority has met the notice requirements of Section 19A-25 for permanent and temporary early voting sites.

(Source: P.A. 100-442, eff. 8-25-17.)

First time voter ID requirement: 10 ILCS 5/5-105

First time voting. A person must vote for the first time in person and not a vote by mail ballot if the person registered to vote by mail, unless the person first provides the appropriate election authority with sufficient proof of identity and the election authority verifies the person's proof of identity. Sufficient proof of identity shall be demonstrated by submission of the person's driver's license number or State identification card number or, if the person does not have either of those, verification by the last 4 digits of the person's social security number, a copy of a current and valid photo identification, or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other federal, State, or local government document that shows the person's

name and address. A person may also demonstrate sufficient proof of identity by submission of a photo identification issued by a college or university accompanied by either a copy of the applicant's contract or lease for a residence or any postmarked mail delivered to the applicant at his or her current residence address. Persons who apply to register to vote by mail but provide inadequate proof of identity to the election authority shall be notified by the election authority that the registration has not been fully completed and that the person remains ineligible to vote by mail or in person until such proof is presented.

(Source: P.A. 98-1171, eff. 6-1-15.)

Affidavit/ID Requirements for Signature/Address Verification: 10 ILCS 5/17-10

(a) Whenever, at any election, in any precinct, any person offering to vote is not personally known to the judges of election to have the qualifications required in this Act, if his vote is challenged by a legal voter at such election, he or she shall make and subscribe an affidavit, in the following form, which shall be retained by the judges of election, and returned by them affixed to the poll books or with the official poll record:

State of Illinois)
) ss.
County of)

I,, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a citizen of the United States; that I am 18 years of age or over; that I have resided in this State and in this election district 30 days next preceding this election; that I have not voted at this election; that I am a duly qualified voter in every respect; that I now reside at (here give the particular house or place of residence, and, if in a town or city, the street and number), in this election district; *1. that I registered to vote from said address; *2. that I changed my residence to the above address from, both of which are in this election district; *3. that I changed my name from to that which I have signed below; *4. that I have not changed my residence but my address has changed as a result of implementation of a 9-1-1 emergency telephone system.

So help me God, (or "This I do solemnly and sincerely affirm", as the case may be).

.....

Subscribed and sworn to before me on (insert date).

.....

- *1. If registration is not required, draw a line through 1 above.
- *2. Fill in the blank ONLY if you have moved within 2 years.

*3. Fill in the blank ONLY if you have changed your name within 2 years.

*4. Fill in the blank ONLY if you have not changed your residence but your address has changed as a result of implementation of a 9-1-1 emergency telephone system.

In addition to such an affidavit, the person so challenged shall provide to the judges of election proof of residence by producing two forms of identification showing the person's current residence address, provided that such identification may include a lease or contract for a residence and not more than one piece of mail addressed to the person at his current residence address and postmarked not earlier than 30 days prior to the date of the election, or the person shall procure a witness personally known to the judges of election, and resident in the precinct (or district), or who shall be proved by some legal voter of such precinct or district, known to the judges to be such, who shall take the oath following, viz:

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a resident of this election precinct (or district), and entitled to vote at this election, and that I have been a resident of this State for 30 days last past, and am well acquainted with the person whose vote is now offered; that he is an actual and bona fide resident of this election precinct (or district), and has resided herein 30 days, and as I verily believe, in this State, 30 days next preceding this election.

The oath in each case may be administered by either of the judges of election, or by any officer, resident in the precinct or district, authorized by law to administer oaths.

(b) Whenever, at any regular or special election, in any precinct, district, city, village, incorporated town, town or ward, any person offering to vote has moved therefrom within 30 days prior to said regular or special election, he shall make and subscribe an affidavit, in the following form, which shall be supported by providing to the judges of election proof of residence by producing two forms of identification showing the person's current residence address, provided that such identification may include not more than one piece of mail addressed to the person at his current residence address and postmarked not earlier than 30 days prior to the date of the election, or by one affidavit of a registered voter in the precinct, as provided herein, both of which shall be retained by the judges of election, and returned by them affixed to the poll books or with the official poll record:

State of Illinois)

) ss.

County of)

I,, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a citizen of the United States; that I am 18 years of age; that I have not voted at this election; that prior to 30 days preceding this election I was a duly qualified and registered voter in every respect in this election district; that I have recently moved from (here give the particular house or place of residence, and, if in a town or city, the street and number), in this election district; that I now reside at (here give the particular house or

place of residence, and, if in a town or city, the street and number), in another election district in the State.

So help me God, (or "This I do solemnly and sincerely affirm", as the case may be).

.....

Subscribed and sworn to before me on (insert date).

.....

State of Illinois)

) ss.

County of)

..... Precinct Ward

I,, do solemnly swear (or affirm), that I am a resident of this precinct and entitled to vote at this election; that I am acquainted with (name of the applicant); that I verily believe him to have been an actual bona fide resident and registered voter of this precinct and that he maintained a legal residence therein, 30 days next preceding this election.

.....

Subscribed and sworn to before me on (insert date).

.....

Judge of Election.

The oath may be administered by either of the judges of election, or by any officer, resident in the precinct or district, authorized by law to administer oaths.

(c) For purposes of this Section, the submission of a photo identification issued by a college or university, accompanied by either (i) a copy of the applicant's contract or lease for a residence or (ii) one piece of mail addressed to the person at his or her current residence address and postmarked not earlier than 30 days prior to the date of the election, shall be sufficient to establish proof of residence.

(Source: P.A. 96-317, eff. 1-1-10.)

Templates for Selected Declarations and Other Documents

Late Opening Declaration

COUNTY OF _____, STATE OF ILLINOIS

)

) **Plaintiff,**

)

) **vs** **NO.**

)

)

) **Defendant.**

DECLARATION REGARDING LATE OPENING OF POLLING LOCATION

I, _____, verify pursuant to section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, that if called to testify, I could testify competently about the following facts which are within my personal knowledge, to wit:

1. I am ____ years old and am registered to vote in Illinois. I reside at the following address:

_____.
2. On this __ day of _____, 202__, I was present at the Polling Location referenced below in my capacity as [poll watcher/Election Judge/other] _____.
3. I arrived at the polling place located at _____, which polling place serves the following precincts in the Township of _____: precinct numbers _____ (referred to herein as "Polling Location").
4. I arrived at the Polling Location at approximately _____ on this __ day of _____, 202__, and I remained present at the Polling Location through _____.
5. At 6:00 am, the Polling Location did not open. In fact, the Polling Location did not open until _____, at which time the first voters were let into the Polling Location room.

Further affiant sayeth naught.

Under penalties provided by law pursuant to Section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and

correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that s/he verily believes the same to be true.

By: _____ Date: _____

Voter Challenge Declaration

COUNTY OF _____, STATE OF ILLINOIS

)
) **Plaintiff,**

)
) **vs** **NO.**

)
) **Defendant.**

DECLARATION REGARDING VOTER CHALLENGES

I, _____, verify pursuant to section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, that if called to testify, I could testify competently about the following facts which are within my personal knowledge, to wit:

1. I am ____ years old and am registered to vote in Illinois. I reside at the following address:

_____.

2. I am a poll watcher for _____ for the election held this __ day of _____, 202__.

3. I have observed polling activities at the polling place located at _____, which polling place serves the following precincts in the Township of _____: precinct numbers _____ (referred to herein as "Polling Location").

4. I arrived at the Polling Location at approximately _____ on this __ day of _____, 202__.

5. At approximately, _____ am/pm (circle one), I observed a person who identified themselves as _____ (the "Challenger") issue a challenge to the voting eligibility of an individual presenting themselves to vote. The Challenger issued the challenge to a person by the name of _____ and asserted as grounds for the challenge that:

_____.

As a result of the challenge, the voter was/was not permitted to vote.

Thereafter, I observed the following:

Further affiant sayeth naught.

Under penalties provided by law pursuant to Section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that s/he verily believes the same to be true.

By: _____ Date: _____

Long Lines Declaration (Poll Watcher)

COUNTY OF _____, STATE OF ILLINOIS

)

) **Plaintiff,**

)

) **vs** **NO.**

)

) **Defendant.**

DECLARATION REGARDING LONG LINES AT POLLING LOCATION

I, _____, verify pursuant to section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, that if called to testify, I could testify competently about the following facts which are within my personal knowledge, to wit:

1. I am ____ years old and am registered to vote in Illinois. I reside at the following address:

_____.
2. On this __ day of _____, 202__, I was present at the polling place referenced below in my capacity as _____.
3. The polling place is located at _____, which polling place serves the following precincts in the Township of _____: precinct numbers _____ (referred to herein as "Polling Location").
4. I arrived at the Polling Location at approximately _____ on this __ day of _____, 202__, and I remained present at the Polling Location through _____. At ____ am/pm (circle one), I observed approximately _____ people waiting to vote at the Polling Location. The line of people waiting to vote went outside the room in which the voting is being conducted.
5. For ten minutes starting at ____ am/pm, I counted the number of voters who entered the room at the Polling Location in which voting is conducted. The total number I counted was _____.

Further affiant sayeth naught.

Under penalties provided by law pursuant to Section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that s/he verily believes the same to be true.

By: _____ Date: _____

Long Wait Declaration (Voter)

COUNTY OF _____, STATE OF ILLINOIS

)
) **Plaintiff,**

)
) **vs** **NO.**

)
)
) **Defendant.**

DECLARATION REGARDING LONG WAIT TO VOTE

I, _____, verify pursuant to section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, that if called to testify, I could testify competently about the following facts which are within my personal knowledge, to wit:

1. I am ___ years old and am registered to vote in Illinois. I reside at the following address:

_____.

2. On this __ day of _____, 202__, I voted at the polling place located at _____, in _____, _____ County, Illinois.

3. I arrived at the Polling Location at approximately _____ on this __ day of _____, 202_, and I had to wait in line to vote for approximately _____ minutes.

Further affiant sayeth naught.

Under penalties provided by law pursuant to Section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that s/he verily believes the same to be true.

By: _____ Date: _____

Inability to Wait in Long Line Declaration (Voter)

COUNTY OF _____, STATE OF ILLINOIS

)

) **Plaintiff,**

)

) **vs** **NO.**

)

)

) **Defendant.**

DECLARATION REGARDING INABILITY TO WAIT IN LINE ANY LONGER

I, _____, verify pursuant to section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, that if called to testify, I could testify competently about the following facts which are within my personal knowledge, to wit:

1. I am ____ years old and am registered to vote in Illinois. I reside at the following address:

_____.

2. On this __ day of _____, 202__, at approximately ____ am/pm, I arrived at the polling place located at _____, in _____, _____ County, Illinois, for purposes of voting in the election held this day.

3. I waited in line to vote for approximately _____ minutes but had to leave before casting my ballot.

4. I am unable to return to the polling place before 7:00 pm, but if the polls remain open until ____ pm, I would be able to make it back to the polling place to vote. Further affiant sayeth naught.

Under penalties provided by law pursuant to Section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that s/he verily believes the same to be true.

By: _____ Date: _____

Generic Declaration

COUNTY OF _____, STATE OF ILLINOIS

)
) **Plaintiff,**

)
) **vs** **NO.**

)
)
) **Defendant.**

DECLARATION

I, _____, verify pursuant to section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, that if called to testify, I could testify competently about the following facts which are within my personal knowledge, to wit:

1. I am ____ years old and am registered to vote in Illinois. I reside at the following address:
_____.
2. On this __ day of _____, 202__, I was present at the Polling Location referenced below in my capacity as [poll watcher/Election Judge/voter/other] _____.
3. I arrived at the polling place located at _____, which polling place serves the following precincts in the Township of _____: precinct numbers _____ (referred to herein as "Polling Location").
4. I observed the following:

Further affiant sayeth naught.

Under penalties provided by law pursuant to Section 1109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that s/he verily believes the same to be true.

By: _____ Date: _____

Incident Report Form (p.1 of 2)

Polling Place Location: _____

Election Judge: _____

Your name: _____

Your phone number: _____

1. Subject of the Report (check one)

- Machine problems (supply, operations, instructions or other)
- Lines
- Challenges to voters
- Election Official Demands for Voter Identification
- Polling Place Times (closed, opened late, opened past closing time, etc.)
- Voter intimidation or suppression practices (at polling location or elsewhere)
- Ballot shortages
- Denial of regular or provisional ballots, as appropriate
- Improper electioneering
- Refusal to register voter having proper identification

2. Source of Report (check one or more)

- Voter
- Press
- Poll watcher or monitor
- Other (describe)

3. Time of Report: _____ am / pm (circle one)

4. Please describe the incident [WRITE LEGIBLY!!]:

Continued on next page.

Periodic Vote Count Worksheet

	<u>Precinct #</u>	<u># Votes</u>
10:00 am		
2:00 pm		
5:00 pm		

If requested, at the designated times, please text the vote count for each precinct (or a picture of the worksheet) to the number you are given.