



St. Johns County Canvassing Board Guidelines for Observers

The following guidelines are provided in order to ensure that the canvassing of ballots for all elections is as open, accessible, and safe as possible. The Canvassing Board will convene, as publicly advertised, in a room ("Canvassing Room") suitable to accommodate members of the public who wish to observe the canvassing process. The Board adopts the following guidelines in the Canvassing Room:

- All observers must sign the sign-in log, acknowledging review of, and consent to, these guidelines.
- Pursuant to Section 790.06(12)(a), Florida Statutes, a license to carry a concealed weapon does not authorize any person to carry a concealed weapon into a polling place which includes the Canvassing Room.
- Pursuant to Section 101.5614(8) any "...person authorized to observe, review, or inspect ballot materials or observe canvassing who releases any information about votes cast for or against any candidate or ballot measure or any results of any election before the closing of the polls in that county on election day commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084."
- If at any time, the Canvassing Board Chairperson determines that the number of observers is too large to safely or comfortably fit in the Canvassing Room, then the number of observers, whether from any one party, candidate, group, or other individuals, may be limited as capacity allows.
- The amount of time that individuals may be in the Canvassing Room may be limited if there are others who wish to observe but have been unable to observe the canvassing process.
- The Canvassing Board Chairperson will determine the appropriate distance observers should keep from any vote-by-mail ballots that are being canvassed.
- Observers shall not engage Canvassing Board members in conversation nor interfere with the canvassing process once canvassing has commenced, except to make any objection allowed by Florida law as to any act of the Canvassing Board.
- Ballots may be viewed; however, the signature of a voter is statutorily confidential and exempt from being copied, video-recorded, or photographed.
- Quiet must be maintained at all times in the Canvassing Room. Cellular phones or other electronic devices that produce sound must be turned to "vibrate" or "silent" prior to entering the Canvassing Room and such devices must stay on "vibrate" or "silent" while in the Canvassing Room.

Any individual who violates these guidelines may be required to leave the Canvassing Room. The authority of the Canvassing Board Chairperson with regard to these guidelines is hereby delegated for enforcement purposes to the staff member in charge of any designated ballot activity in whatever room such ballot activity is occurring. The Canvassing Board may revise or enact additional procedures if necessary to ensure that canvassing is performed in an expeditious and orderly fashion while maintaining the opportunity to observe the canvassing process.

Adopted 07/16/26