Florida poll watcher sources: official statutes, rules, forms, and guides

Checked October 7, 2026 for the Sample County Supervisor of Elections. Every link below was opened on that date. Rows 28-30 are related items, not mainly about poll watchers. See the Notes tab for dates after today, upcoming deadlines, and things to watch.

#	Type	Exact title (as shown on it)	Direct link	Date or edition shown on it	Where it comes from	Link opened?	What it covers / notes
1	Statute	101.131 Watchers at polls.	https://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0101/Sections/0101.131.html	The 2026 Florida Statutes. Last changed by s. 17, ch. 2021-11.	Online Sunshine (Florida Legislature)	Yes (10/7/2026)	The main poll watcher law. Who may have a watcher (each party, each candidate, and an issue political committee: one per polling room or early voting area at a time). Designation deadlines, who cannot serve (candidates and law enforcement), approval by the Supervisor, and ID badges.
2	Statute	101.111 Voter challenges.	https://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0101/Sections/0101.111.html	The 2026 Florida Statutes. Last changed by s. 4, ch. 2010-167.	Online Sunshine (Florida Legislature)	Yes (10/7/2026)	A poll watcher may challenge a person's right to vote, in writing, under oath. A frivolous challenge is a first-degree misdemeanor.
3	Statute	101.23 Election inspector to keep list of those voting.	https://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0101/Sections/0101.23.html	The 2026 Florida Statutes. Last changed by s. 18, ch. 2008-95.	Online Sunshine (Florida Legislature)	Yes (10/7/2026)	Poll watchers may look at the list of people who have voted during voting hours. The inspector may limit access so it does not disrupt the polling place.
4	Statute	102.031 Maintenance of good order at polls; authorities; persons allowed in polling rooms and early voting areas; unlawful solicitation of voters.	https://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0102/Sections/0102.031.html	The 2026 Florida Statutes. Last changed by s. 23, ch. 2022-73.	Online Sunshine (Florida Legislature)	Yes (10/7/2026)	"Official poll watchers" are on the short list of people allowed in a polling room or early voting area during voting hours (subsection (3)(a)).
5	Statute	102.141 County canvassing board; duties.	https://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0102/Sections/0102.141.html	The 2026 Florida Statutes. Last changed by s. 23, ch. 2026-26.	Online Sunshine (Florida Legislature)	Yes (10/7/2026)	Each party and each candidate may have one watcher at each canvassing board meeting who can see ballots being examined for signature matching (subsection (2)(a)). TAKES EFFECT LATER: this page already shows wording in subsections (3) through (7) that ch. 2026-26 changed. That wording takes effect January 1, 2027. The page does not say so. The watcher sentence in (2)(a) is not changed.
6	Statute	104.0615 Voter intimidation or suppression prohibited; criminal penalties.	https://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0104/Sections/0104.0615.html	The 2026 Florida Statutes. Last changed by s. 76, ch. 2005-277.	Online Sunshine (Florida Legislature)	Yes (10/7/2026)	It is a third-degree felony to use force, threats, intimidation, or knowingly false information to keep someone from acting as a poll watcher. Also bars knowingly false voter challenges.
7	Statute	104.29 Inspectors refusing to allow watchers while ballots are counted.	https://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0104/Sections/0104.29.html	The 2026 Florida Statutes. Last changed by s. 50, ch. 2011-40.	Online Sunshine (Florida Legislature)	Yes (10/7/2026)	After the polls close, up to three people must be allowed near the officials to see whether ballots are being reconciled correctly. An official who refuses commits a first-degree misdemeanor.
8	Rule	Rule 1S-2.054 Poll Watcher Designation Form	https://flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=1S-2.054	Effective Date: 8/8/2016 (History: New 8-8-16)	flrules.org (Florida Administrative Code)	Yes (10/7/2026)	Adopts Form DS-DE 125 (PDF and Excel versions). No later rule notices found. flrules.org copies of the adopted form: PDF https://flrules.org/gateway/readRefFile.asp?refId=7273&filename=DS-DE%20125%20-%20Final%20PDF.pdf and Excel https://flrules.org/gateway/readRefFile.asp?refId=7272&filename=DS-DE%20125%20-%20Final%20Excel.xlsx . These copies show "Eff. ___2016" with the month left blank. The Division's copies (rows 10-13) show "Eff. 8/2016". The text is otherwise the same.
9	Rule	Rule 1S-2.034 Polling Place Procedures Manual	https://flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=1S-2.034	Effective Date: 7/31/2024 (History ends: Amended 7-31-24)	flrules.org (Florida Administrative Code)	Yes (10/7/2026)	Adopts the Polling Place Procedures Manual, Form DS-DE 11 (row 14). Lists s. 101.131 among the laws it carries out. The flrules.org copy of the manual is the same file as the Division's copy: https://flrules.org/gateway/readRefFile.asp?refId=16732&filename=FINAL%20DS-DE%2011%20MANUAL.pdf . No later rule notices found.
10	Form	Designation of Poll Watchers (Form DS-DE 125), English PDF	https://files.floridados.gov/media/696684/dsde125.pdf	Form DS-DE 125 (Eff. 8/2016) Rule 1S-2.054, F. A. C.	Florida Division of Elections	Yes (10/7/2026)	The required form for naming poll watchers. 3 pages: form, extra page, and an instruction page. Separate forms are needed for early voting and Election Day. The Division's Forms page calls it "Poll Watcher Designation" (08/2016).
11	Form	Designation of Poll Watchers (Form DS-DE 125), English Excel	https://files.floridados.gov/media/696685/dsde125.xlsx	Form DS-DE 125 (Eff. 8/2016) Rule 1S-2.054, F. A. C. (page footer)	Florida Division of Elections	Yes (10/7/2026)	Fillable Excel version. Two tabs: Form and Instructions.
12	Form	Designación de observadores electorales (Formulario DS-DE 125), Spanish PDF	https://files.floridados.gov/media/696697/dsde125_spa.pdf	Formulario DS-DE 125 (Fecha efectiva 8/2016) Regla 1S-2.054, F. A. C.	Florida Division of Elections	Yes (10/7/2026)	Spanish version. 2 pages. It does NOT include the instruction page that the English PDF has. Listed on the Division's "Forms Incorporated in Rule" page.
13	Form	Designación de observadores electorales (Formulario DS-DE 125), Spanish Excel	https://files.floridados.gov/media/696695/dsde125_spa.xlsx	Formulario DS-DE 125 (Fecha efectiva 8/2016) Regla 1S-2.054, F. A. C. (page footer)	Florida Division of Elections	Yes (10/7/2026)	Spanish Excel version. Two tabs: Formulario and Instrucciones.
14	Guide (manual)	Polling Place Procedures Manual (DS-DE 11)	https://files.floridados.gov/media/708161/final-ds-de-11-manual.pdf	DS-DE 11 Eff. 07/24 (Rule 1S-2.034, F.A.C.)	Florida Division of Elections	Yes (10/7/2026)	Poll watcher section: Chapter III, Section E, pages 14-15 (badges, where they may stand, no talking to voters, written challenges, phones allowed if silent, but no photos, recordings, or out-loud calls). Also: definition on page 5, a set-aside area for watchers on page 8, required poll watcher signage on page 10. Page 10 cites "104.615"; there is no such section. It likely means 104.0615.

#	Type	Exact title (as shown on it)	Direct link	Date or edition shown on it	Where it comes from	Link opened?	What it covers / notes
15	Guide (calendar)	Election Dates and Activities Calendar 2026 Election Cycle	https://files.floridados.gov/media/711204/2026-calendar-20260713.pdf	"2026 Election Cycle" (no update date printed on the document). The Division's Publications page lists it as 07/10/2026; the file name says 20260713.	Florida Division of Elections	Yes (10/7/2026)	Lists the exact 2026 poll watcher deadlines. Primary Election: pages 9-11. General Election: pages 17-19. The General Election dates are after today; see the Notes tab.
16	Web page	FAQ - Elections	https://dos.fl.gov/elections/contacts/frequently-asked-questions/faq-elections/	Webpage last updated: May 25, 2022	Florida Division of Elections	Yes (10/7/2026)	Two short questions and answers: a poll watcher must be a registered voter of the county, and candidates and law enforcement officers may not serve.
17	Advisory opinion	DE 21-05 Exclusion of Poll Watchers § 101.131, Florida Statutes	https://files.floridados.gov/media/705114/de-21-05.pdf	November 5, 2021	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Whether political parties may have poll watchers in the polling room during a nonpartisan election. Advisory opinions bind only the person who asked for them (see Notes tab).
18	Advisory opinion	DE 12-13 Poll Watchers; Supervisors of Elections - Use of mobile electronic devices by poll watchers in the polls -- §§ 101.111(1), 101.131(1), 101.23, and 102.031, Florida Statutes	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/2012/de1213.pdf	October 24, 2012	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Whether poll watchers may use phones and other mobile devices in the polls. The Polling Place Procedures Manual cites this opinion.
19	Advisory opinion	DE 04-07 Early Voting; §§ 97.021(7), 101.015(4), 101.131, 101.5612(2), 101.5613, and 101.657, Florida Statutes	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/2004/de0407.pdf	August 11, 2004	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Whether the poll watcher law applies to early voting sites. Marked on the document: "The statute addressed in this opinion has changed." (Early voting watchers are now written into s. 101.131.)
20	Advisory opinion	DE 01-04 Watchers at Polls § 102.031(3)(a), 106.23(2) Florida Statutes	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/2001/de0104.pdf	August 20, 2001 (marked RESCINDED)	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Rescinded. DE 10-04 (May 10, 2010) withdrew it: https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/2010/de1004.pdf . Listed only so no one relies on it.
21	Advisory opinion	DE 00-15 Municipal Charter Provisions for Poll Watchers §§ 100.3605 and 101.131(2), Fla. Stat.	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/2000/de0015.pdf	No date printed. The opinion number shows the year 2000.	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Whether a city charter may set a different deadline for city candidates to name poll watchers.
22	Advisory opinion	DE 86-05 Poll Watchers; Political Committees and Other Groups and Organizations; Authorization	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/1986/de8605.pdf	April 30, 1986	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Whether issue political committees may name poll watchers. The law has changed since then; s. 101.131 now speaks to this directly.
23	Advisory opinion	DE 83-15 1. Deputy Sheriff as Clerks and Inspectors 2. County Canvassing Board 3. Poll Watchers "At Large" 4. Age Requirement to Preregister and Vote	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/1983/de8315.pdf	October 18, 1983	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Item 3 covers "at-large" poll watchers. Marked on the document: "One or more statutes addressed in this opinion has changed."
24	Advisory opinion	DE 81-02 Poll Watchers And Recall Committees	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/1981/de8102.pdf	May 11, 1981	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Whether recall committees and political committees may name poll watchers. Old law; read with current s. 101.131.
25	Advisory opinion	DE 79-03 Pollwatcher Designations; s. 101.131(2), F.S.	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/1979/de7903.pdf	October 3, 1979	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Whether a designation deadline that falls on a Saturday moves to Monday. Based on an older deadline (10th day before the election); the deadline has changed since.
26	Advisory opinion	DE 77-31 Poll Watchers Designation Section 101.131, F.S.	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/1977/de7731.pdf	December 5, 1977	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	Who may sign a poll watcher designation (based on the 1978 version of the law). Old law.
27	Advisory opinion	DE 076-33 Section 101.131, Florida Statutes (listed by the Division as "DE 76-33 Poll Watchers")	https://opinions.dos.state.fl.us/searchable/pdf/1976/de7633.pdf	October 28, 1976	Division of Elections advisory opinions	Yes (10/7/2026)	General questions about poll watchers. Marked on the document: "The statute addressed in this opinion has changed."
28	Related (rule)	Rule 1S-2.031 Recount Procedures	https://flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=1S-2.031	Effective Date: 6/27/2022	flrules.org (Florida Administrative Code)	Yes (10/7/2026)	Not about poll watchers by name. Covers who may watch a recount: "representatives" of candidates, parties, and some political committees, plus the public.
29	Related (manual)	Recount Procedures (DS-DE 405)	https://flrules.org/gateway/readRefFile.asp?refId=14411&filename=DS-DE%20405%20Recount%20Procedures%20Manual%201S-2.031.docx	DS-DE 405 (eff 06-22) R1S-2.031, Fla. Admin. Code	flrules.org (Florida Administrative Code)	Yes (10/7/2026)	The manual adopted by Rule 1S-2.031. Word file. Recounts are open to the public; representatives must be named in writing before the recount begins.
30	Related (publication)	The Florida Election Code, Chapters 97-106, Florida Statutes	https://files.floridados.gov/media/709540/election-code-2025-combined-final-20250908.pdf	"(Includes legislation through 2025)". The Division's Publications page lists it as 9/2025.	Florida Division of Elections	Yes (10/7/2026)	A printed copy of all the election laws, including the poll watcher sections. It does NOT include 2026 law changes. Use Online Sunshine (rows 1-7) for current text.

What this is

A list of official Florida sources about poll watchers, found on the Division of Elections website (dos.fl.gov and its files and advisory-opinion sites), Online Sunshine (statutes), and flrules.org (rules). Checked October 7, 2026. 30 items: 7 statutes, 2 rules, 4 versions of the one poll watcher form, 3 guides, 11 advisory opinions, and 3 related items.

Links that would not open

None. All 30 links, plus the extra links named in the notes, opened and showed the right document on October 7, 2026. The Division's own pages link to dos.fl.gov/media/... addresses; those forward to files.floridados.gov/media/..., which is the address used in this list.

Text that takes effect after today (October 7, 2026)

1. Section 102.141, Florida Statutes (row 5). The Online Sunshine page already shows new wording in subsections (3) through (7), from section 23 of chapter 2026-26, Laws of Florida. That chapter says it takes effect January 1, 2027, except where it says otherwise, and section 23 does not say otherwise. So that wording takes effect January 1, 2027. The page does not mark it as future text. These changes are about canvassing and recount wording. They do NOT change the poll watcher sentence in subsection (2)(a).

Chapter 2026-26, Laws of Florida (approved and filed April 1, 2026): https://laws.flrules.org/2026/26

2. No other item on the list has a future effective date. The two rules (1S-2.054 and 1S-2.034) have no pending changes posted on flrules.org. The poll watcher law itself, s. 101.131, was last changed in 2021.

Upcoming poll watcher deadlines (not new law, but after today)

From the Division's 2026 Election Dates and Activities Calendar (row 15), for the November 3, 2026 General Election:

- Saturday, October 10, 2026: deadline to turn in early voting poll watcher designations (before noon).
- Saturday, October 17, 2026: deadline for the Supervisor to approve early voting poll watchers and give out badges.
- Tuesday, October 20, 2026: deadline to turn in Election Day poll watcher designations (before noon).
- Saturday, October 24 through Saturday, October 31, 2026: mandatory early voting period.
- Tuesday, October 27, 2026: deadline for the Supervisor to approve Election Day poll watchers and give out badges.

Please double-check these against s. 101.131 and your county's own early voting dates. The early voting deadlines are counted from the start of mandatory early voting.

Small differences worth knowing

- Deadline wording: s. 101.131(2) says designations are due "before noon." Form DS-DE 125 says "No later than noon." The 2026 calendar says "Before noon." The statute controls.
- The flrules.org copies of Form DS-DE 125 show "Eff. ___2016" (month left blank). The Division's copies show "Eff. 8/2016." The rule took effect 8/8/2016.
- The Spanish PDF of Form DS-DE 125 has no instruction page. The Spanish Excel version does have an Instrucciones tab.

- The Polling Place Procedures Manual (DS-DE 11), page 10, cites "104.615." There is no section 104.615. It most likely means 104.0615.

- The Florida Election Code book (row 30) includes laws only through 2025.
- Advisory opinions bind only the person or group that asked. The Division says to check current law before relying on one. Several older opinions on this list are marked as changed, and DE 01-04 is rescinded.

Checked but not listed

- Advisory opinions that mention poll watchers only in passing: DE 78-27 (Voter Residency), DE 82-04 (Polling Place, marked obsolete), DE 02-18 (Solicitation near polling places), and DE 22-08 (Release of information about votes cast; ballot duplication).
- 2026 Division handbooks with no poll watcher content found: Candidate and Campaign Treasurer Handbook (Rev. 09/30/2026), Political Committee Handbook (Rev. 07/15/2026), Electioneering Communications Organization Handbook (Rev. 07/15/2026), Candidate Petition Handbook (Rev. 05/20/2026), State Qualifying Handbook (Rev. 07/22/2026), Federal Qualifying Handbook (Rev. 05/20/2026), and the Voter Registration and Voting Guide (Updated 07/20/2026).
- No Division directive about poll watchers was found. Department of State "election observers" under s. 101.58 are a different role and are not listed.

Where to check for updates

Division of Elections Forms page: https://dos.fl.gov/elections/forms-publications/forms/
Forms Incorporated in Rule (includes the Spanish form): https://dos.fl.gov/elections/forms-publications/forms/forms-incorporated-in-rule/

Publications/Reports page: https://dos.fl.gov/elections/forms-publications/publicationsreports/
Advisory opinions by year: https://dos.fl.gov/elections/laws-rules/advisory-opinions/advisory-opinions-by-year/
Chapter 1S-2 rules list: https://flrules.org/gateway/ChapterHome.asp?Chapter=1S-2