

Maintenance Notice: Various applications may be unavailable from 6:00 p.m. Friday, August 23, through Sunday, August 25.

EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2023, OUR LOBBY WALK-IN HOURS WILL BE 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. (CENTRAL), MONDAY - FRIDAY.



Texas Secretary of State

Jane Nelson

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Note - Navigational menus along with other non-content related elements have been removed for your convenience. Thank you for visiting us online.

Student Election Clerk Information

What are Student Election Workers?

High school students who are 16 years of age or older now have the opportunity to participate in the electoral process by serving as elections clerks at the polling place during Early Voting or on Election Day. A student who is at least 16 years of age and who is enrolled in a public or private high school or home school and has the consent of the principal (or parent/legal guardian in charge of education in home school) may serve as an election clerk. The elections officials must receive written authorization from the student's parent or guardian for the student to serve in the election for which he or she is appointed.

This program is designed to provide students with a greater awareness of the electoral process and the rights and responsibilities of voters. The students will assist their local election officials by filling positions at polling places during the Early Voting period or on Election Day and working under the direction of the polling place presiding judge.

What are the Benefits of Serving as an Election Clerk?

Some of the benefits of serving as an election clerk are:

- Election workers are paid hourly for their service.
- Students will gain practical experience by serving their community and state.
- Experience as an election clerk is an impressive addition to a resumé or college application.
- Students can take part in a rewarding activity while learning about the democratic process.
- Students can earn community service hours for school.



What are the Responsibilities of an Election Clerk?

Working under the supervision of the judge, student election clerks may assist with the following duties:

- Organizing the polling place before the polls open.
- Ensuring that qualified voters are permitted to vote.
- Checking in and processing voters.
- Distributing ballots to registered voters.
- Providing instructions and assistance to voters.
- Answering voters' questions.
- Explaining the use of the voting equipment.
- Maintaining order in the polling place on Election Day.
- Obtaining results after the polls are closed and closing the polling place.

What are the Required Qualifications of an Election Clerk?

To qualify as a student election clerk, the student must:

- Be at least 16 years old on Election Day;
- Be enrolled in a public, private, or qualified home school;*
- Be a U.S. citizen;
- Have consent of his/her parent or legal guardian to work the election;
- Have consent of his/her school principal* (or parent/legal guardian for home-schooled students); and
- Complete any required election worker training program.

We have volunteers who meet every requirement except enrollment in high school. Can we use them?

Yes. For example, you might have students who just graduated high school, but are not yet old enough to register to vote. We think the legislative intent is to authorize that age group to be election workers. You will still need the consent of the parent or guardian. Under the circumstances, you will not need the consent of the high school principal.

Can a student election worker serve as an interpreter?

Yes. When election workers are communicating with a voter who cannot communicate in English, a student election worker may communicate with the voter in a language the voter and the clerk understands.

Since the Presiding Judge selects their clerks except the alternate judge, how will the judge know which students are interested and available or how to even

contact them?

The Secretary of State's office has an [application \(PDF\)](#) form posted on its website that political subdivisions can use for students to apply to be election clerks. The students can fill out the application, get the required signatures, and send the form to the election administrators who serve the election in which the student wishes to serve. The elections administrator will provide each judge with a list of all eligible student election workers.

Do the school authorities send the election officials student names, addresses, and phone numbers directly? Can the school give out this information without a written approval notice from a parent/legal guardian of the students?

The student will provide all required information directly to the election officials. The [Student Election Worker Application and Permission Slip \(PDF, 30k\)](#) for students to complete and send to their local elections officials includes a consent section for both parent/guardian and the appropriate school official. The student will be responsible for obtaining the principal's consent to serve as an election clerk. The student (not the school) provides the information directly to the election officials. The school will not need to contact the election officials. In addition, the student must obtain parental or legal guardian consent on the same application before the student can serve as an election clerk.

How will the election officials inform the school that the student actually worked on Election Day?

Serving as an election clerk is now included in the Texas Education Code's definition of "excused absence." Student election clerks are entitled to compensation in the same manner as other election clerks. The election official should give each student worker documentation in the form of a time sheet, pay stub, or other letter or form showing that the student served as an election worker and the hours worked. Ultimately, however, it is up to the student to ensure that the school is given the proper documentation in order to have an excused absence.

Are there any labor laws about how many hours a student can work during a school day?

Under the Texas Labor Code, the employment hours of persons 16 or older are not restricted by state law. Persons 16 or 17 years of age have no restrictions on the number of hours or times of day they may work.

Are there any curfew laws that the student could run afoul of if they were out late due to extended voting hours?

There are no state law curfews in Texas. However, some municipalities and perhaps counties have curfews by local ordinance; therefore, the answers would vary depending on the details of any applicable local ordinance. It is likely that most local curfew ordinances give exceptions for school or work-related activities, under which this would likely qualify.

Also, the student will not be in violation of the compulsory attendance law for schools because, again, the legislation provides for an excused absence when serving as an election clerk.

How many student election clerks can serve at each polling place?

Not more than two student election clerks may serve at a polling place, except that not more than four student election clerks may serve at any countywide polling place.

What do we do with multiple student requests from a single precinct? Can they work outside of their home precinct?

Students can work outside of their home precinct because election clerks are not limited to working only in their own precincts. The positions in each precinct should be filled in the order in which the students apply, assuming they meet all the requirements. Any extra student applicants for a given precinct may work in another precinct that does not already have its authorized number of student election clerk positions filled.

What if the parents and student give their general consent, then the student is later assigned to a polling place or time that he or she does not want to work?

The student clerk may simply turn down the assignment (just like any other voluntary election clerk offered an assignment that presents a conflict).

How to Apply

- Fill out the [Student Election Clerk Application and Permission Slip \(PDF\)](#).
- Have your parent or guardian sign the Parent/Legal Guardian Permission portion.
- Have your school principal sign the School Principal Authorization portion. Also, take the proper steps to ensure that your absence from school in order to work during Early Voting or on Election Day will be excused.
- Send the application to the local elections officials conducting the election in which you wish to serve (county clerk/elections administrator, city secretary, school superintendent, etc.). Try to send application at least 60 days prior to Election Day (even though there is no statutory deadline).
- If selected, attend the required election training class prior serving as a clerk. This training provides all the necessary information and knowledge to be a successful elections clerk.
- Work at the polls as assigned during Early Voting or on Election Day.

Important Notes

- A school district may excuse a student for the purpose of serving as an Early Voting and/or Election Day clerk for a maximum of **two days in a school year**.

- Example: A student could work two weekdays during Early Voting for an election held on Saturday, May 9, 2015, and then also work on Election Day, as the student would only have to be excused from school for two days
- Up to four student election clerks may work at a single Early Voting site at a time, and up to two student clerks may work at an Election Day polling place at a time.

Remember...When you turn 18 you will have reached the age to serve as a regular election clerk or judge!

Revised: 09/2020

Student Election Clerk Application and Permission Form

Name of Student _____ Date of Birth _____
Home Address _____ Telephone Number _____
School Attending _____ Election Date _____

Student Affidavit: By signing this application, I acknowledge the following:

- I am interested in working the following election(s) _____ (election date).
- I am/will be at least 16 years of age on Election Day.
- I am currently enrolled at _____ (name of school).
- I am a United States citizen.
- I will complete the required training course prior to Election Day.
- I agree to obtain an excused absence from my school office for Election Day. I will promptly notify the election office if I am unable to obtain an excused absence. It is my responsibility to collect and complete any and all school assignments for the day.

(signature of student)

(date)

Parent/Legal Guardian Permission: This is to certify that I give permission for my son/daughter, named above, to serve as a student election clerk for _____ (election).

(signature of parent/legal guardian)

(date)

(print name)

(telephone number)

School Principal Permission: This is to certify that the student named above is currently enrolled at _____ (name of school) and has my consent to serve as an election clerk on _____ (date).

(signature of principal)

(date)

(print name)

(Home-schooled students must have the Parent/Legal Guardian Permission section completed by the parent/legal guardian responsible for their education.)

Send the completed form to your local elections office conducting the election for which you wish to serve (county clerk/elections administrator, city secretary, school superintendent, etc.). For more information about elections, go to the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.state.tx.us.