



GUIDELINES FOR ELECTIONEERING DURING ELECTIONS

1- **Conduct Outside of the Polling Place**

- Respect the right of all voters to participate in the election without fear of intimidation or violence. Intimidating any voter is a state and federal crime.
- Be courteous towards those at the voting place, regardless of any difference of opinion.
- Always remain civil and calm. While differences of opinion are expected and should be respected, resolve any disagreements or disputes amicably.
- Disagreements or disputes should not involve profanity or aggressive behaviors.
- Confine electioneering and issue advocacy to designated areas outside of the voting place.
- Election officials strictly enforce the marked line beyond which no electioneering or loitering is permitted.

2- **Buffer Zone (G.S. 163-166.4 (a))**

- Breaching and moving the designated buffer zone is not permitted.
- No person or group of persons shall hinder access, harass others, distribute campaign literature, place political advertising, solicit votes, or otherwise engage in election-related activities inside the voting place or within a buffer zone.
- Dimensions of the buffer zone at each polling place shall be no more than 50 feet and no less than 25 feet from the entrance to the polling place.
- Electioneers may distribute campaign literature, place political advertising, and signage, solicit votes, or otherwise engage in election-related activity in the designated area outside the buffer zone.
- Not all polling locations allow for political signage or literature. You must verify the Restricted Polling Place List on the BOE website under the Polling Place tab.

3- **Area for Election-Related Activity (G.S. 163-166.4(b))**

- Volunteers and electioneers may distribute campaign literature, place political signs, solicit votes, and engage in election-related activities only outside of the designated buffer zone.
- Privately owned polling places might have restrictions on campaign literature and/or placement of political signs on their property on Election Day. Volunteers and electioneers must check the Restricted Polling Place List before every election, found on fcvotes.com under the tab Polling Places.

4- **Curbside Voting**

-The voter's vehicle is considered a voting place. Electioneers must respect it as such and not encroach on the designated curbside area. The buffer zone shall be at least six feet from the vehicle, and a greater distance if possible. Electioneers shall not enter the buffer zone.

-Approaching voters in their vehicles in the curbside area will not be tolerated.

5- **Party Observers and Runners (G.S. 163-45)**

-Only appointed observers and runners are permitted inside the voting place.

-The party chair must provide observer or runner's names to the Board of Elections before 10:00 a.m., five days prior to Election Day.

-An observer shall do no electioneering at the voting place and shall in no manner impede the voting process or interfere or communicate with or observe any voter in casting a ballot.

-The runner may receive a voter list from the precinct. No runner may enter the voting enclosure except when necessary to announce that runner's presence and to receive the list. The runner must leave immediately after being provided with the list.

Example of Prohibited Acts That Illustrate Prohibited Behavior During Elections

1- **Federal law prohibits those around the polling place from displaying badges, uniforms, or credentials that reasonable individuals would interpret to mean that the person is a law-enforcement officer (See 18 U.S.C. § 241 and Williams v. United States, 341 U.S. 97 (1951)).** Ex.: Individuals outside the buffer zone wearing "SECURITY" insignia and informing voters that they are "monitoring" the polling place.

2- **It is a crime to interfere with the ability of a voter to access the voting place. Individuals in the parking lot physically delay or prevent cars from parking.**

3- **No person may engage in election-related activity within the buffer zone. (G.S. 163-166.4(a)).** Ex.: A radio station is played over speakers inside the voting enclosure, and the broadcast includes political discussion or commentary.

4- It is a crime for any person to commit any boisterous act that disturbs any election official in the performance of his or her statutory duties (G.S. § 163-274(a) (5)).

Ex.: Individuals use sound amplification to make racial slurs or otherwise insult those presenting to vote for their preferred candidate, and the chief judge has told the individual that their noise is causing a disruption inside the voting enclosure.

5- It is a federal crime to intimidate, threaten, or coerce anyone to interfere with an individual's right to vote or not vote in an election; this includes conduct intended to force prospective voters to vote against their preferences (18 U.S.C. § 594).

Ex.: Individuals outside the buffer zone threaten a voter if the voter does not vote for or against a particular candidate or party.

6- It is both a violation of state and federal law for any voter to challenge an individual on the basis of their ethnicity, religion, language fluency, or national origin (G.S. § 163-90.1(a)).

Ex.: An Individual attempts to enter a voter challenge without proper basis.

7- Additional examples of voter intimidation.

Ex.: An individual or individuals outside the buffer zone approach only voters who appear to be of a certain ethnic group to ask whether they speak English or to demand that they verify their citizenship.

Ex.: An individual or individuals outside the buffer zone follow a non-English speaker who is receiving assistance from a person of their choice and accuse them of committing voter fraud.

Ex.: An individual or individuals outside the buffer zone yell insults or profanity at people who received assistance in the voting enclosure.

For questions or concerns regarding electioneering during elections, contact the Forsyth County Board of Elections at (336) 703-2800